

Lymington Little Dolphins Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

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Description of the setting

Lymington Little Dolphins Pre-school opened in 1992. The Pre-school is managed by a voluntary committee made up of parents of children at the pre-school and operates from a purpose built community room within Lymington Infant School. A maximum of 18 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open 08:45 to 15:00 on Monday and Wednesday and from 08:45 to 11:45 on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. They also run afternoon sessions for older children on Mondays, and Wednesdays from 12.30pm until 3pm. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area and a separate garden. There are currently 30 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 29 children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school is able to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The pre-school employs seven staff. All the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The school is on the Early Years Register and linked to the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Lymington Little Dolphins Pre-school is well organised and has the good capacity to become even better. The manager and her team have built up a positive, inclusive and welcoming learning environment in which the children are happy and flourish. They recognise and have identified the areas which will improve the provision. The key person system ensures that all children are well cared for, looked after, and their needs are met. The pre-school has very good systems to help children through the transition from nursery to the reception class in the neighbouring infant school.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- extend children's vocabulary and help them to clarify their thinking and ideas, for example, by disseminating training received on the 'role of the adult'
- develop more focused observations in order to identify children's next steps in learning more clearly.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding takes a high priority at Little Dolphins. The manager and committee have made sure all the necessary policies and procedures are well organised and available for parents and carers to examine. The policies are robust and updated regularly and the records of accidents and medication administered are comprehensive. Child protection procedures are detailed and staff are well trained and confident in the steps they must take if they have any child protection

concerns. Staff are suitably vetted and given plenty of opportunities to attend courses to extend their knowledge and understanding of how young children learn and how to keep them safe from harm. Fire drills are carried out regularly.

All staff have relevant early years qualifications and are actively encouraged by the manager and committee to further their knowledge. For example, they keep up to date with legislation, planning the curriculum and the latest in care and educational ideas. Two members of staff have attended a course on adult intervention, 'The Role of the Adult'. However, this is not effectively disseminated across the staff to improve adult/child interactions and the progress of the individuals.

The staff work very well together. They are a small happy team who ensure children develop and flourish. The key workers know their children and families very well and ensure their needs and interests are met. Everyone contributes to the monitoring of the provision. At the formal and informal staff meetings, everyone contributes their thoughts, ideas and suggestions. This results in actions being taken, for example, being aware of the need to provide more challenge for the more able and one member of staff has been employed with this remit.

The staff actively work towards providing a safe, friendly and stimulating environment where children take their first steps towards independence. Children's progress is monitored regularly and records kept, but accurate assessment of the next steps required for each individual is not fully in place. There is a wide selection of resources for the children to use inside and outside, with free access to them all. Children use the garden creatively to explore the world around them, for example, they take part in a spider hunt. The resources are well maintained and well organised to promote children's learning. Resources are stored, wherever possible, at the children's height to allow them to be independent and take responsibility for what they wish to play and work with. The needs and interests of the children are identified and met as far as possible.

Little Dolphins has strong links with the parents and carers. Parents are encouraged to volunteer and there is a rota. Those parents and carers spoken to made reference to the progress made by their children. The manager encourages parents and carers to contribute further to the development stories of their children. The local authority early years team visit regularly and offer advice. There are strong links with the infant school with joint training undertaken. The children have the use of the music room and a larger outside space. This provides good transition for those starting in reception.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

The pre-school is welcoming, attractive and cosy. Children have helped to make the room feel welcoming, with their bright colourful paintings and other work that is displayed. There are warm relationships between children and adults and there is lots of laughter and comforting smiles throughout the session. Children mix well, share resources and are keen to participate.

At the start of their 'Learning Journeys', parents and carers provide relevant information to ensure that the children's particular needs are met. Children are provided with a good range of planned activities within the themes to help them learn and develop. Children want to come into the room and begin their work and they quickly become absorbed in learning and progress rapidly.

For example, as soon as they register, they look around at the activities and quickly go to the activity they want to work at. While children are working, adults engage the children in meaningful conversation to increase their vocabulary and give children the ability to hold conversations with each other and the adults. However, some learning opportunities are missed because the adults' intervention is not always focused on developing understanding or language. Further opportunities occur at table time during the 'rolling' snack time and during the two 'circle times'.

Children really enjoy making things and share their creative ideas with each other. For example, as they bake pretend cakes, partake in role play activities and as they create rockets together. There is a good balance between child-chosen tasks and key worker led activities. Children rise to the praise given to them by staff and they know what is expected of them. They are active learners and this helps them to make progress and gain appropriate skills for the future.

Children learn about healthy lifestyles. At snack time, they know that they must pay attention to washing their hands and deciding on a healthy drink and snack of fruit. One said that the milk is good for his teeth and another said that bananas had vitamins. Children know why exercise is important and they engage enthusiastically in physical activities, such as trampolining. They confidently run, jump and engage in a range of creative activities, such as making patterns with colourful wooden shapes and nails. Outside activities, such as growing produce and a planned spider hunt in the garden, visits to the library, and the fire station further enhance children's learning. Their curiosity is nurtured to help them explore the world around them. Children develop a good awareness of safety. For example, they understand why it is unsafe to run in the room. They know how to use scissors safely and children are clear about what to do in the event of a fire.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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