

Little Fishes Day Nursery

4 Molivers Lane, Bromham, BEDFORD, Bedfordshire, MK43 8JT

Inspection date	21/08/2013
Previous inspection date	30/11/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Children freely explore and investigate exciting materials and as a result, they are fully engaged in their learning. The thoughtfully planned playrooms create enabling environments for all ages of children to promote independence.
- The procedures to help children settle into the nursery, move between rooms, and transfer to new settings are extremely thorough and well-planned. As a result, they form very good attachments and their self-confidence is enhanced.
- Children thrive in their health and physical development because the nursery offers flexible play between indoors and outdoors where children explore a range of natural materials and learn to take risks in a safe environment.
- The managers engage with staff in very effective methods of performance management and professional development. Consequently, they are motivated and committed.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to involve parents further in the planned learning for children by fully incorporating information gained from parents about what their children know and can do and offer more ideas so that parents can extend children's learning at home.
- Children are not always provided with consistent messages and examples from staff to enable them to learn to manage their own behaviour and understand boundaries.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in all rooms and the outside area.
- The inspector looked at a selection of policies, procedures and information provided by the provision.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager and deputy manager.
- The inspector spoke with the management team, staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector reviewed a selection of children's observation and assessment development files with key persons.

Inspector

Lynne Talbot

Full Report

Information about the setting

Little Fishes Day Nursery was registered in 2006 and is on the Early Years Register. The nursery is privately owned and operates from two buildings in Bromham, Bedford. One building is set across a single storey while the other building has a staircase to the first floor playrooms. There are enclosed areas available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 26 members of childcare staff. Of these, 23 hold appropriate early years qualifications at levels 2, 3 and above. The nursery opens Monday to Friday throughout the year. Sessions are from 7.30am to 6.30pm; children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 106 children attending all of whom are in the early years age group.

The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- extend the involvement of parents further in the learning and development of children by encouraging them to share greater information about their learning and achievements, and offer ideas to guide children's development at home
- develop children's understanding of acceptable behaviour by making sure all staff consistently provide clear guidance and strategies.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children are happy and motivated in the nursery, and consequently, make good progress in their learning and development given their starting points. Staff offer resources and experiences that support children to learn, and provide opportunities for children to practise their emergent skills and knowledge. This ensures that they are well-prepared for a move to school. For example, children experiment with materials, such as guttering and balance cones with a ball pool and balls to make obstacles. They discover how to balance the guttering at different angles before they roll the balls down and into the ball pool. Staff skilfully observe what children are doing before offering observations or asking questions. This broadens children's language and reinforces the learning. Children of all

ages investigate natural and tactile materials. For instance, babies explore shaving foam and mix paints, pipettes are used in water by toddlers, and pre-school children design and make musical instruments. Staff skilfully model language describing the marks children make, talk about how the pipettes work, and support children to plan tasks themselves. As a result, children are motivated learners who make decisions and review what they have done. This prepares them for future learning and school.

All children love singing, dancing and stories. They sit together to share books and predict what may happen in a story. Younger children love to dance with ribbons, they squeal with laughter as they carry out actions and the enthusiasm of the staff means that they continue to be engaged. All children benefit from active learning outdoors. Older children develop games and work together to explore size, shape and measurement. For instance, they design and build containers from construction materials before filling them with other blocks. Children have free access to materials to carry out experiments. For example, they mix flour, water and food colouring to make dough. Children talk together about how much of each ingredient they need to add to make the dough softer or less sticky. In this way they guide their own learning. Staff closely observe children's emerging interests and maximise the opportunities for learning. For example, when children become interested in insects and nesting birds, the staff develop a 'Bugs Home' area and 'Bug Finders' hideout. They provide children with further materials, such as non-fiction books and binoculars, which extend their interest in the world around them. Children are very interested in new places and cultures. They develop a world map together on which they locate places they have visited and add photographs and pictures showing themselves and their families. Staff invite parents into the nursery frequently to share stories and events in their own homes with the children. This enhances children's interest in each other and other cultures.

Observation and assessment is focused and builds from an initial assessment that parents also contribute to. Ongoing assessment tracks children's progression carefully and fully informs the weekly planning with next steps for each child. This also includes individual education plans for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities so that their specific learning needs are fully met. Each six months staff complete a summary assessment for each child and carry out a review with parents. 'Wow' boards are used by both parents and staff to celebrate children's new achievements at home and in the nursery. Face-to-face contact with parents plays a key part in the communication about children's learning and development. Diaries are used to record welfare areas and some play and learning. As a result of the sound sharing of information, the care for children is consistent. However, while information is shared, the facility that is provided to share achievements made at home is not fully used and thereby not all parents are fully involved in the planned learning for children. Also the staff do not consistently offer parents ideas to guide children's development at home. This means that the progress made by children is not always maximised. Close monitoring of all children's progress towards the early learning goals takes place by the Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator. In this way the nursery ensures that they are using the information that they do have to help children to make the most progress possible. A 'progress check at age two' is completed and shared with parents as appropriate. Children show that they are well-motivated and eager to join in; they demonstrate good characteristics of effective learning. Staff are supportive and as a result the children confidently display their knowledge, solve problems, and

initiate activities. This means that they are practising in preparation for new learning within any new setting, such as school.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

The key persons in this nursery are attentive and form very good relationships with children and families and, as a result, children form close bonds and attachment with them. Each child has a second key person and this helps to reinforce the stability for children. The managers complete audits throughout the day to make sure that the deployment of staff is managed in the best possible manner to meet the needs of all children. Each child and parent is introduced to the nursery using a very clear induction process. Staff are enthusiastic, model good social behaviour for children and offer them frequent praise throughout the day. Children understand that they are all respected as individuals. They are asked their views and are given time to make choices. The 'golden rules' focus on positive behaviour and a clear positive behaviour policy, shared with parents, demonstrates the views of the nursery. However, some staff, in the two- to three-year-old room do not always provide consistent and clear messages to children about their behaviour. This means that some children are not always guided to learn to manage their own behaviour.

Children show clear self-care skills and develop a secure understanding of healthy eating. They are very well-nourished and their good health is fostered. The cooks deliver a menu that is freshly cooked and which accommodates every child's specific need. Detailed personal healthcare plans are in place to ensure that dietary needs are closely observed. Children are encouraged to self-select and serve their own meal. This promotes independence and prepares children for their move to school. Children's health is well-supported. For example, all children have access to water to drink at all times and receive frequent reminders to have a drink. Children know that the play water is not for drinking, they show that they care for each other by letting staff know when another child is drinking the play water. Children develop very good physical health. Younger babies and pre-school children have free movement between indoors and their own garden areas, while the children aged two to three years are brought to their shaded garden as much as possible. The garden areas offer extensive facilities for natural and exploratory play, and offer this same quality of play in inclement weather due to a soft surface and shaded areas. This helps them to explore physical movement and activity further, for good health.

Children learn to take risks within a safe environment. For example, they use crates, guttering and pipes to build tracks in the garden, and build tents with a selection of fabrics. They learn about keeping safe when they carry out daily excursions in the village. Children's moves between rooms are extremely well-planned to ensure that they are settled and ready for the move. The staff use detailed plans for each child to support them through the process. This ensures that children's security is promoted to the optimum level. They have a 'buddy' in their new room and this helps them to form new relationships. Children are prepared extremely well for any move to school. Their independence is emphasised and activities focus on the exciting forthcoming move. For example, children develop a wall display showing 'our new school' with their own

photographs alongside a photograph of their school. As a result of such steps, all children are extremely well-prepared for school or a move to another room in the nursery.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The management team has high expectations for the quality of care that is offered to children and families. Regular and robust reviews of all paperwork and procedures take place to ensure that all requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage are met. Arrangements to safeguard children within the nursery are particularly robust. All staff have mandatory safeguarding training and it is reviewed at every team meeting. There are extremely clearly mapped procedures for monitoring any safeguarding concern within the nursery. As part of the safeguarding procedures there are extremely thorough recruitment and suitability checks, which include a detailed induction and probationary period for new staff. New staff have a mentor and have a clearly outlined professional progression path developed. As a result, the nursery ensures that children are completely protected. Staff create an environment that is stimulating where children engage in active learning. The environment is very secure. External doors are kept locked; fingerprint entry for parents and staff is in place. Managers organise staffing deployment carefully in order to meet the required ratios and, in addition, move extra staff in areas to support the welfare of children. They have a clear overview of what is taking place in all areas, at all times, through constant monitoring throughout the day. Hence, children's welfare and well-being is shown to be of the utmost priority.

High-quality professional supervision is provided in the form of regular observation by managers and the Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator, and annual appraisal reviews. Peer observations also take place to help in all staffs understanding of good practice. The quality of staff teaching is shown to be prioritised in the nursery. The supervision methods used feed into an individual improvement plan and staff engagement within the nursery is assessed to form part of their professional development plans. Thorough reflective practice includes input from all members of the management team, staff, parents and carers, and children. Each room has its own reflective plan, which feeds into the overall self-evaluation plan and actions for development. The manager and her management team have a robust awareness of how to monitor staff practice and the educational programme to ensure that children progress in their individual learning. For example, they carry out review of all planning and development files each week to ensure that every child is fully engaged and progressing well. Parents are involved in the practice of the nursery. For instance, there is a parent 'champion' who represents the parent group and meets with the managers to raise issues, feedback positive comments, and scrutinise plans for development. Regular questionnaires are evaluated and actions set in place to address any suggestions made by parents. As a result of these clearly embedded methods of working with parents, their feedback helps to drive the continuous methods that maintain the good levels of achievement.

The extremely close work with all other agencies involved with children means that children's needs are quickly identified and extremely well met. The partnerships with other settings that children attend are enhanced by the use of communication link books. In this

way the shared information fully promotes continuity in learning. The dedication seen in reflecting on practice and continuing to improve all aspects of the nursery shows that there is a strong drive to maintain the good levels of achievement. Children are very secure and confident, and clearly enjoy their play and learning. Consequently, children embark on their learning career ready to seek out new experiences and learn.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY315940
Local authority	Bedford Borough
Inspection number	915541
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	53
Number of children on roll	106
Name of provider	Julie Ann Lawrence
Date of previous inspection	30/11/2010
Telephone number	01234 825152

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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