

Little Fishes Pre-School Group

Lodge Farm Community Centre, Off Crestwood Road, LINGS, Northamptonshire, NN3 8JJ

Inspection date	11/12/2014
Previous inspection date	10/05/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- All staff demonstrate excellent teaching skills. Their interaction during children's activities significantly contributes to children becoming fully engaged and thoroughly enjoying their chosen activity.
- Staff have very high expectations of the children and provide challenges that effectively promote their learning and curiosity. This results in each child making rapid progress given their individual starting points and ability.
- Children are safeguarded because the staff have a secure knowledge of their responsibilities and the procedures for protecting children and regularly refresh their knowledge. This means that children are safe within the premises and when playing in the garden.
- Children benefit greatly from the highly successful partnerships that are in place with their parents and with other professionals who are involved with them. They share information and work very closely together to meet each child's specific needs.
- The manager and staff team work together in a highly efficient manner. They are well-organised to provide consistent routines for the children which help them to feel secure. The staff's practice is underpinned by effective policies and procedures that ensure everyone's safety and well-being.

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.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the main hall and in the outside learning environment.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager and with one member of staff.
- The inspector spoke with the staff, the children and with a specialist speech and language therapist during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with the children and the provider's self-evaluation form.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers who were spoken to on the day of the inspection.

Inspector

Melanie Eastwell

Full report

Information about the setting

Little Fishes Pre-School Group originally opened in 1987 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in the Lings area of Northampton and is managed by a charitable trust. The pre-school serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The pre-school employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 7, 3 and 2, including one with Early Years Professional status. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during term time. Sessions are from 9.15am until 3.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 41 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of and 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 already excellent opportunities for children to enhance their physical skills, for example, by providing an even wider range of resources and equipment in the pre-school garden that can be used in a variety of different ways.

Inspection judgements

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

Children clearly enjoy their time at this calm, productive and harmonious pre-school. The staff work to a higher than required adult to child ratio which enables them to spend time with individual children. They are highly skilled in their teaching and they plan activities for them that are exciting and fun which offer entirely appropriate challenges. Children are learning about mathematics and numbers because the staff use every opportunity to develop and build on children's interest. For example, they count during their activities and are encouraged by the staff to point at or touch the items they are counting as they do so. During talk time where children work as a large group, they take turns to count how many children are present and then find the number on a bunting number line display. The children's learning is actively consolidated because of the regular discussions about numbers throughout the session.

Children are excited to learn and to take part in all the activities because the staff provide them with such positive interactions. They are skilled in using lots of visual clues to support the children to be successful and independent in what they choose to do. For example, they help to sort out a display board showing the key-person groups. The staff enable even the youngest children to take part because they ask them to look at their name card which has a shaped sticker denoting which key group they are in. The children

then find their names by referring to the first letters and look for the large shape on the board before sticking their name on. This support for all children to become aware of their name, and the discussion around shapes as well as their enthusiasm for the activity means that their preparation for the eventual move onto school is very well supported. The staff team have exemplary skills in working with children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They work extremely closely with their parents to discuss their needs to be sure they can meet them to their very high standards and they embrace the input from other professionals who are involved with the children. They welcome them into the setting to observe the children and fully take in their suggestions for how to continue to best help them with their ongoing learning. Professionals report highly complimentary comments about how committed the staff are in working with their suggestions and how well the children are progressing with the consistent support from the staff.

Children's progress is clearly evident in their extremely well presented books that show samples of their work and photographs alongside the regular and excellent, well focused observations made by the staff. The key persons make regular observations that inform a summary of each child's progress each term. This, alongside the very effective use that is made of the progress check summary that is completed for children between the ages of two and three years informs each child's very well focused next steps in learning. The staff fully value and welcome information from children's parents from the outset of care. They use this information along with their own observations to successfully identify each child's starting points and to inform the ongoing planning of activities for them. Parents are welcomed to look at their child's record of achievement whenever they want. Parents also receive detailed daily feedback from the staff both verbally and written in a communication book about what they have enjoyed. Parents are kept very well informed about the Early Years Foundation Stage because there are hard backed display books showing the children during their activities with their comments and links to the relevant areas of learning. This highly effective partnership with parents means that children are able to continue their learning at home. The staff plan for their individual learning and are completely responsive to the children's interests, accommodating this wherever possible. For example, when children arrive excited by the diggers and vehicles they have seen on an adjacent building site, the staff alter the planning to facilitate this interest, offering activities both inside and outside which the children are enthusiastic to get involved with.

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

Children show very clearly that they feel safe and a real sense of belonging in this welcoming and friendly group. They are able to settle in when they start attending because the staff visit them at home and they come to visit the pre-school. During the home visit, the staff talk to their parents about their learning and the activities they enjoy. When they come to the pre-school, the staff ensure they provide some toys that were mentioned during the home visit, which helps the children to relax and to play. The staff greet them warmly when they arrive and they quickly settle to play. Children are very secure with the routines of the day. They are actively encouraged to be independent. For example, they choose when they have their snack, serve themselves following a visual list of instructions and pour their own drinks from small jugs. When they get ready for outside

play they are eager to put their own coats and hats on and ask for their gloves from their bag. Children's awareness of the benefits of maintaining a healthy lifestyle is rapidly developing. They are supported to be independent when using the bathroom, closely supervised by the staff and prompted by more visual clues. This results in them knowing the routines for washing their hands before their meals and after using the toilet. They can make their own choices from a healthy and balanced range of foods at snack times including cereal, cheese and fruit. They do not become thirsty because they can pour their own drinks and are confident to ask for more as they need it.

Children have daily opportunities to use the very spacious and extremely well-equipped outside play area. They enjoy being able to move between the inside and outside areas as they wish. They are able to develop their physical skills through using a wide range of equipment, such as, ride-on toys, bikes, climbing frames and balls among many others. They are exceptionally well supervised by the staff who encourage them to explore and challenge themselves in a safe way. The staff team want to continue to offer even more equipment and resources in the outside area that children can use in a variety of ways to promote their imagination and physical skills even further. Children are able to be highly motivated to select their own activities because they develop close attachments to the staff. They thoroughly enjoy their involvement in their play and demonstrate that they are very confident to talk to the staff, to ask for items that they want and they approach them for comfort and reassurance as they need it. For example, they sit closely together while reading stories and become completely engrossed in listening and talking about the pictures. Children are developing a strong sense of belonging and well-being at the pre-school and become excited to take part in seasonal activities. For example, each day they excitedly search for a Christmas elf character that is positioned in a different area of the room each day. When they find the character they smile with pride and relish the praise from the staff for their achievement.

The pre-school staff have very strong links with the local schools and arrange gradual visits for the children as the time draws closer for them to move on. They also invite the teachers to visit the children at the pre-school. The continual support from the staff in developing children's independence skills and their personal, social and emotional development significantly contributes to them becoming ready to move on. For example, a group of children who are keen to explore the interactive vehicles are encouraged to sit a little distance from each other and press the button on the toy to make it trundle between them. The member of staff talks to the children about sharing, taking turns and the benefits of working together. She provides lots of praise and positive facial expressions to show the children that they are doing well. The children are extremely responsive to the staff, they listen to them and begin to understand the expectations for behaviour. The staff provide a very consistent approach and clear instructions for them so they know what is expected and this results in a very calm atmosphere where children are fully engaged and learning during their play.

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

The management team and staff in this inspirational pre-school work extremely well together with the support of the committee to successfully meet each child's and their family's needs. They always work to a high adult to child ratio which means that they can spend plenty of time with individual children. All the staff demonstrate a secure understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. For example, they maintain close supervision of the children at all times and know how to safeguard the children in their care. They have taken part in safeguarding training updates. Appropriate checks are carried out on staff before they commence working in the pre-school to ensure the welfare of children. The designated lead for safeguarding demonstrates a full understanding of the role. Detailed risk assessments are in place for all aspects of the pre-school and these are reviewed and updated as required to keep children safe. The premises are secure and children's safety during arrival and departure times is given high priority. A member of staff supervises the main door while another supervises the door to the playroom and children are called when their parents arrive. The consistent and robust attention to safety continually promotes children's welfare.

The committee and the manager has recruited and retained a strong staff team who are experienced, well qualified and continue to develop their knowledge through attending courses and in-house training sessions. As a result, the quality of the learning environment and planned activities are exceptionally well matched to each child's age and stage of development. This means that all children are supported most effectively to make rapid progress in their learning and development. The manager recognises the highly positive impact that staff training has on the quality of activities that are planned and the teaching that is provided for individual children. The manager and deputy work closely together to monitor the consistently very high quality of teaching and they have an accurate and sharply focused view of each child's needs and how to tailor the planning and resources to maintain this. The staff are supported through team meetings, training sessions and daily de-briefing to maintain and continually reflect on their inspirational activity with the children.

Since the last inspection this pre-school has maintained the very high standards it sets itself and continues to strive for continued improvement in order to meet the needs of the children attending. For example, the manager said that the planning and assessment processes continue to evolve and are sharply focused because all members of staff are involved in the planning which enables activities to be planned for children individually. She said they have further extended the partnerships with parents, inviting them for parents' days where they can try put the activities that are offered to their children which has a very positive impact on children being able to continue their learning at home. They have extended their support for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities even further. The manager and a number of the staff have extensive skills and experience in this area and the manager is actively involved through the local authority in mentoring and supporting other settings when working with children who have specific needs. Parents report very positive and complimentary comments about the pre-school. They report that the staff are very welcoming and genuinely interested in them and their child, and about the rapid progress their children have made since they started to attend. The staff team clearly demonstrate their commitment to the children attending and their

families and this is significant in supporting their care and learning.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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	EY270171
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	848544
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	41
Name of provider	Storehouse Community Trust
Date of previous inspection	10/05/2011
Telephone number	01604 495292

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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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