

Inspection of Little Fishes Pre-School

St Mary's Church Centre, Churchgate Street, Old Harlow, Essex CM17 0JR

Inspection date: 10 June 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

All children are happy to enter the setting on arrival and excitedly go off to play. Teachers take time to get to know each individual child and use a variety of teaching methods to support the children to make good progress. Children demonstrate high levels of engagement in activities and are curious about what is going on around them. For example, they ask teachers questions about things they notice. Children are confident to move between activities and play with the activities on offer.

Children demonstrate learning by regularly recalling what is learned in small groups and during free play. They enjoy talking about past activities they have taken part in. For example, children talk excitedly about the sunflowers they planted at pre-school, which they are growing at home. They also demonstrate a clear understanding of the routine of the pre-school, the behavioural expectations and rules and boundaries. This supports them to behave impeccably. They are kind and courteous towards their peers and their teachers.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Teachers place an emphasis on children's mathematical development and provide numerous opportunities for children to acquire and use mathematical language. Children demonstrate learning in these areas by confidently counting objects, using mathematical language and correctly answering mathematical questions. Children are supported to recognise numerals in the environment, and older children are encouraged to write numerals.
- Teachers are very responsive to children, and intervene and support when necessary. Teachers use a variety of teaching methods to support children to behave appropriately and, as a result, children behave impeccably. The children demonstrate a clear understanding of the rules and behavioural expectations of the setting and are kind and respectful towards each other.
- All children are supported to make progress. Their key person has an in-depth knowledge of the individual child, how they are doing, what progress they are making and the next steps needed to further enhance the child's learning. They confidently talk about their key children and demonstrate they take time to get to know each child and work with them to make good progress.
- There is a clear intent of what staff want children to learn. Activities on offer are carefully planned and set up to support children to learn in these areas, particularly in their communication and language, mathematics, physical and personal, social and emotional development.
- Children are engaged and demonstrate enjoyment from the activities on offer to them. However, the activities on offer are adult led and set up for the children. The activities are prescriptive and this has an impact on the children's ability to

make their own choices, express themselves and guide their own play and learning. For example, children are not able to self-select resources that interest them to enhance their play and learning.

- Children are supported well in their communication and language development. They recall songs and the timetable of activities, and demonstrate that they know what comes next. The children listen to instructions and go and find requested objects. Children recite a story about a hungry caterpillar. They show their understanding of life cycles and talk about the foods the caterpillar eats, and how it gets bigger and bigger.
- Parents speak highly of the setting and are very pleased with the progress their children have made since attending, in particular with their communication and language development.
- Robust supervision and monitoring of staff practice is in place and used to drive continuous improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff know what to do to keep children safe. They know what signs to look for to identify concerns and know what to do if they had a concern about a child. They talk confidently about how to appropriately record and report any concerns they may have. Leaders have a strong understanding of how to safeguard the children in their care and what procedures to follow if they are notified of any concerns. They understand their responsibilities and ensure children's safety is paramount. Leaders and staff all regularly review their safeguarding training to ensure their knowledge is up to date. All staff are confident to stand up for the children and know what to do if the concern involved the pre-school's leadership team. Staff's suitability to work with children is reviewed regularly and safer recruitment guidelines are followed.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- give children more opportunities to guide their own learning by making choices and decisions about what they do and the resources they want to use.

Setting details

Unique reference number	402043
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10072905
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	30
Name of registered person	The Parochial Church Council of The Ecclesiastical Parish of Harlow
Registered person unique reference number	RP535398
Telephone number	07790929274
Date of previous inspection	21 March 2016

Information about this early years setting

Little Fishes Pre-School registered in 1992 and is situated in Old Harlow, Essex. The pre-school employs five members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during term time only from 9.15am until 12.15pm, and also offers a lunch club from 12.15pm until 1.15pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Jessica Whiteley

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed the pre-school's curriculum and what it is that they want the children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation together.
- Parents provided the inspector with oral feedback.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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