

Inspection of Little Fishes Nursery

East Lodge, Milton Hill, Steventon, Abingdon OX13 6BD

Inspection date: 5 January 2024

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Although the staff present are deployed appropriately, there are times when there are not enough staff on duty to maintain the required adult-to-child ratio. This does not put the children's safety at risk, and the provider arranges for additional staff to work, who arrive quickly. Staff know the children well. However, they do not always ensure health and hygiene routines are maintained to minimise the spread of infection. Despite this, children are generally happy and feel safe in the care of staff. For instance, babies separate from their parents easily and settle quickly. They enjoy comfort as required from caring staff.

Overall, the quality of teaching is variable. For example, staff plan and provide activities for the children. However, they do not ensure that all children become absorbed and interested in the activities. In addition, some staff do not have a secure understanding of the learning intentions of activities. As a result, they do not fully tailor their teaching to support children's learning at times. This means that children's learning is not always supported well enough to help them make more progress. When staff's teaching is of a better quality, children are interested in their play. For example, younger children enjoy exploring with water using different tools to scoop and pour. Older children enjoy being creative as they explore with paint and glitter. Staff communicate well with the children and mainly promote children's positive behaviour well.

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

- Children are happy. They have a variety of toys and resources available to support their interests and the curriculum learning intentions. However, staff's quality of teaching is not consistently good. Staff's approach to teaching is not always purposeful. They do not always offer activities that inspire and challenge all children's learning consistently, particularly for the older children. Despite this, staff know their key children well. They understand where the children are in their development and what their next steps are.
- Children enjoy freshly prepared meals that meet their individual dietary needs. The nursery is clean and well maintained. However, not all staff promote good hygiene well. For example, staff were seen to give drinking beakers and bowls that have been dropped on the floor back to the children they belong to, without washing these first. Additionally, some staff do not consistently implement the nursery's nappy changing routine to promote children's good health effectively.
- Children play in a suitable and safe environment. Changes to the environment have ensured that children have areas where they can sleep peacefully and safely. All children enjoy playing outside. They develop their confidence as they ride bikes and explore on the climbing frame. This promotes children's development of their physical skills, such as to navigate space and balance.

Children's small physical skills are well supported as they investigate sensory materials, including dough and paint.

- Children behave well and are starting to form some good relationships. For example, pre-school-age children are seen to enjoy playing on the see-saw together. Staff manage children's behaviour well. However, on occasions, they do not consistently explain to children about the expectations to help them develop a deeper understanding of the rules.
- Staff communicate with the children well. They sing songs and read stories to the children to help build on vocabulary and support their listening skills. When staff engage well with children, they ask suitable questions to help enhance children's thinking and speaking skills.
- Staff have positive relationships with parents. They ensure they gather sufficient information about children's routines, likes and dislikes when they first start. Staff share verbal information with parents daily about what their children have been doing. Parents have access to electronic updates about their children's learning and development. This helps to keep parents updated well.
- The manager, who is the provider, shows a strong commitment to enhancing the quality of the nursery. She is aware of areas that need advancing and has plans in place to address the weaknesses, such as recruiting additional staff. The manager provides effective well-being support for staff and offers training. She understands the importance of offering supervision sessions and has scheduled these accordingly for all staff now their induction period is finalised.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due date
ensure that the minimum adult-to-child ratios are maintained and met at all times	08/01/2024
take necessary steps to consistently prevent the spread of infection and ensure that children's health is not compromised	25/01/2024

implement an ambitious education programme that inspires, challenges and clearly supports what children need to learn next to build on their individual stage of learning.	25/01/2024
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To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- build on the good behaviour management strategies to help support children's understanding of the rules and boundaries even further.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2753222
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10319785
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 3
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	54
Name of registered person	Little Fishes Nursery Limited
Registered person unique reference number	2753220
Telephone number	07772752991
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Little Fishes Nursery registered in 2023. The nursery employs 11 members of childcare staff. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications. Three staff hold qualifications at level 6. The nursery is open from 7.30am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, all year round. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Tracy Bartholomew

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.
- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The inspector spoke with the nominated individual about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The manager, deputy manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children spoke or communicated with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- Parents available at the time of the inspection shared their views on the setting with the inspector.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

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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