

Inspection of Little Fishes Nursery

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

Inspection date: 20 November 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Staff support children to feel settled and secure. They have a strong understanding of children's individual needs. Staff provide cuddles and reassurance to children, particularly to those who may need extra support. Staff warmly praise and encourage children, which helps them to develop their confidence well. They implement appropriate behaviour management strategies with children and promote their understanding of simple rules and boundaries.

Children develop their independence securely. For example, babies and toddlers learn to feed themselves and pre-school children help to clear their plates after eating. Children enjoy activities, such as discussions with staff, singing and reading books. Babies and toddlers show that they are learning the words and actions to familiar songs. Staff provide babies with some individual time and attention. For example, they introduced new words while babies explored paint and glue during an activity. Pre-school children develop skills for school, including listening and concentration during small-group activities.

Staff understand their roles in supporting children's learning. They have a good knowledge of the curriculum's learning intentions and their key children's needs. Overall, most aspects of staff's practice support children consistently. Children's learning and development are closely monitored. Staff identify if children need any additional help and put in place plans to support children's individual learning needs. This helps all children to make good progress from their starting points.

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

- Since the last inspection, leaders have worked hard to make improvements, including providing effective staffing arrangements. They have developed staff's understanding of their roles and built on their teaching skills. Leaders have improved mealtime arrangements and provided effective training to staff for completing nappy changes. These promote children's good health securely.
- Staff know how to promote children's learning and progress through activities, play experiences and teaching. They offer activities and resources that promote children's curiosity and keep them interested in their learning. For example, staff used spontaneous events to support children's learning when ice formed in a tray outside. Children demonstrated high levels of interest as they observed how the ice melted and changed from one large piece into many smaller pieces.
- Overall, staff engage and interact with children well. Toddlers are introduced to Makaton alongside words to support their communication. Children show that they recall this learning, such as using signs for 'more' at mealtimes. At times, some staff relay information to children quite fast. This does not always give some children time to process information and support their developing

understanding.

- Staff take steps to address any gaps in children's learning and development. They speak to parents, and when needed, they contact outside professionals for advice and guidance. They work closely with any professionals involved and parents to agree and plan the support children need to help them progress. Staff work with parents about the use of any additional funding to identify how best to support children's individual needs.
- Staff provide a caring environment for children and are good role models. They remind children about the expectations, such as politely reminding pre-school children to stay sitting at the table during lunchtime. Staff explain the routines to children, which particularly supports those needing more reassurance about their day. Sometimes, not all daily routines are managed to consistently meet children's needs. For instance, staff asked pre-school children to sit in a small space to look at books after lunch. For a short time, this led to some minor disagreements between some children and others not engaging as well.
- Leaders put a high emphasis on staff's well-being. They provide staff with a dedicated room for mindfulness sessions and offer sources of support to promote their well-being. Staff have access to training and professional development, and they benefit from regular individual and team meetings. This helps staff to build on their knowledge and skills.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Parents are kept well-informed about their children's day, learning and progress. Staff provide daily feedback and parents have access to an online app with information about their child's care and learning needs. Parents speak highly about what the nursery provides. They say their children are 'thriving' and comment positively about the 'lovely, welcoming staff' and the 'home from home' approach.

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

- enhance the overall good support for children's communication and language development, to help children to process information and build on their understanding
- develop the daily routines so that these meet children's needs more consistently.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2753222
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10327220
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 4
Total number of places	42
Number of children on roll	66
Name of registered person	Little Fishes Nursery Limited
Registered person unique reference number	2753220
Telephone number	07772752991
Date of previous inspection	5 January 2024

Information about this early years setting

Little Fishes Nursery registered in 2023. It is located near the village of Steventon, Oxfordshire. The nursery is open from 7.30am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, all year round. The provider employs 16 staff. Of these, 10 hold appropriate early years qualifications, including one of the managers/owners who holds a level 6 qualification. Six staff hold level 3 qualifications, and a further three staff have level 2 qualifications. The provider offers government funded places for childcare and receives specific funding for disadvantaged children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Sheena Bankier

Inspection activities

- The manager took the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about the nursery curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children.
- 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 deputy manager and the inspector observed an activity together and evaluated the impact of this on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to some parents and carers available during the inspection and reviewed some written feedback provided by other parents and took account of their views.
- The inspector held discussions about the leadership and management of the nursery with the registered individuals.
- Staff spoke to the inspector about their roles and responsibilities.
- Children chatted to the inspector and interacted with her during the inspection.
- A sample of documentation was reviewed as part of the inspection process.

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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