



Little Stars

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY312022
Inspection date	21 June 2006
Inspector	Sally Ann Smith

Setting Address	4 Cherry Garth, Hilton, Derby, Derbyshire, DE65 5FT
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Telephone number	01283 734488
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Registered person	Little Stars
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Type of inspection	Integrated
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Type of care	Full day care
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ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Stars Day Nursery opened in 2006. It is privately owned and operates from five rooms in a converted house. It is situated in Hilton, South Derbyshire. A maximum of 47 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:30 to 18:15 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are 47 children on roll aged from birth to under eight years. Of these 15

children receive funding for nursery education. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The nursery employs eight members of staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children demonstrate a good awareness of appropriate hygiene routines, meticulously washing their hands and face with their personal flannels, requiring little intervention from staff. They wipe their noses and discard tissues in the bin provided. Planned topics help children to learn about caring for their teeth and bodies and this is further developed as they use role play to visit the dentist or doctor's surgery. Staff implement effective and consistent hygiene procedures such as disinfecting nappy changing mats, table tops and food preparation areas. Staff are conversant with communicable and notifiable diseases and the necessary responses and have appropriate procedures for administering medication and seeking emergency medical advice or treatment. This ensures that the good health of children is promoted.

Children are provided with a varied range of snacks, all of which are healthy and nutritious. Meals are freshly prepared to include fresh fruit and vegetables, some of which the children have grown in the garden. Children's independence is fostered as they serve themselves to vegetables to accompany their meals and pour their own drinks. Older children choose when they want to eat their snacks throughout the morning session and help themselves when they are hungry. Children help to lay the tables for meals and sniff the air as they smell the cooking aromas, guessing what they are having for lunch. Children spend time savouring their food and are encouraged to try new tastes and textures. Children play in their 'healthy café' and this helps to develop their awareness of healthy foods. In addition, topics help children to recognise the difference between healthy and unhealthy foods. For example, they know that too many sugary foods are bad for their teeth.

Children are engaged in a variety of healthy exercise both inside and outside. They have great fun as they play with the parachute and giggle as they vigorously shake the parachute up and down. They enjoy the opportunity to play with ribbons and windmills from their 'wind resource box' and watch intently as the windmills move round with gusts of wind. Children paint at easels, play with the sand and water and chalk on the slabs to enable them to get plenty of fresh air. They particularly enjoy digging in their mud patch and use small trowels competently.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. Furniture is organised so that babies and younger children have sufficient floor space to crawl and toddle and

all rooms enable children to move around safely. Access to the nursery is closely monitored and all visitors are requested to produce identification before entering the building. Staff maintain room registers of children's attendance and parents are required to sign children in and out of the nursery, recording their arrival and departure times. However, on occasions some parents have to be reminded to do this and as a result the registration system is being reviewed to ensure that an accurate record of children's attendance is consistently maintained. Staff regularly check that toys and equipment are in good condition and safe for children's use.

Comprehensive safety policies and procedures are in place to ensure children are safe and well cared for. A designated member of staff takes responsibility to ensure that these are continually reviewed and staff implement them effectively. Staff carry out risk assessments inside and outside the nursery and help children learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, children are shown how to handle tools such as trowels safely when digging in the garden. Children know the colours of traffic lights and understand that green means that it is safe to cross the road but red means they must stop and stand still. Effective written procedures are in place for the safe evacuation of children in the event of a fire and staff are fully conversant with these. However, whilst fire drills have been practised, consideration has not been given to the frequency of these with regards to the attendance patterns of children and staff.

Staff demonstrate a sound understanding of child protection and their responsibility to report any concerns to the relevant agencies. They are familiar with procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff. This means children are well protected from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enter the nursery enthusiastically and greet staff with smiles. Staff take time to make the children feel welcome and have a friendly word for each child. Babies are given lots of cuddles to reassure them as their parents leave. Older children are eager to see what is available to play with and happily separate from their carer. They know the routine well, taking off their shoes and coats and hanging them on their pegs. Children are responsive and contribute to group discussions and many children are confident to ask questions. Children sit and listen to stories well and enjoy singing. Staff use innovative methods to develop and extend children's concentration skills. For example, they encourage children to take on different roles such as the spider in Little Miss Muffett or use props to maintain children's attention. Staff encourage the children to be interested in what they are doing and motivated to learn. Staff are approachable, kind and patient and give good individual support to children to promote their development. Staff plan a good range of activities for younger children which incorporate the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Planning is shared primarily with the managers although all staff are given the opportunity to share and contribute their ideas. It effectively covers the six areas of learning and clearly identifies the stepping

stones that children are intended to learn to develop their skills and understanding. Children are engaged in a good range of interesting activities, all of which are stimulating and are generally appropriate to their age and ability. Children concentrate well and this is enhanced by the quality of interactions of the staff and the varied strategies they use to maintain children's attention, such as voice intonation and props when telling stories. Children use good quality resources to support their care, learning and play. They are proud of their achievements, particularly their art designs and paintings which they independently display on the wall. Children are confident and readily able to express their likes, dislikes and preferences. They select resources for themselves and like to pour their own drinks or serve their own food at meal-times.

Children enjoy using their imagination as they play in the hospital, travel agents or restaurant. They particularly enjoying taking on the role of the chef or waitress and take orders from their customers. Children listen intently to stories and think carefully about what might happen next. They like discussing their favourite part of the story and staff ask children if they can remember how the story began and ended. Children act out characters from songs and stories such as Little Red Riding Hood and learn to understand the moral behind the tale. Children are beginning to explore rhyming words, for example they change Humpty Dumpty to Bumpy Rumpy.

Children's mathematical understanding is developing well although they see few numbers in their environment. However, they sing songs such as five currant buns and ten green bottles using their fingers to count on and back. Children recognise different shapes such as circle, square, heart and rectangle. They count the points of a triangle and the sides of a hexagon. Good use is made of the outdoor space and children particularly enjoy having supervised access to the wild life garden and pond. Here they watch butterflies and bees as they are attracted to the brightly coloured flowers, observe tadpoles as they turn into frogs and have great fun swishing through the long grass. They grow fruit and vegetables in the poly tunnel and water their produce.

Children have opportunities to develop their creativity and enjoy experimenting with paints as they mix different colours together and observe the results. However, children rarely look at how things work which limits their opportunities for exploration and investigation.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff are aware of children's individual needs and liaise closely with parents to ensure that these are met. Children are given time to settle into the nursery routine and parents are encouraged to help in this process, staying as long as necessary to help children gain confidence. Children participate in activities of their choosing, deciding whether they play inside or outside and selecting resources independently. Children feel a sense of belonging as they self-register and display their name and photo on the display board for all to see. Parents receive good quality information regarding the nursery to include all the relevant policies and procedures. They have regular

discussions with their child's key worker regarding their child's progress.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are very well behaved and know the routine well. They willingly help with tasks such as laying the tables for meals or helping to tidy away. They take turns when playing with toys and listen to each other when speaking in a large group. Staff create a calm atmosphere where there are clear routines and boundaries so that children know what is expected of them. Children learn that everyone is different and develop at different rates. For example, older children know that they use a knife, fork or spoon to eat their food whilst younger children sometimes use their fingers. However, opportunities for children to develop their awareness of different cultures is limited as there are few resources such as posters, books, puzzles and toys or planned activities to promote this area of children's knowledge and understanding. However, activities are planned and adapted to ensure the inclusion of all children and ensure each child is treated with equal concern and respect.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff listen to parents' observations about their child's development and use these to plan for their learning. Staff share children's assessments with parents so that they are well informed of their child's progress and have regular opportunities to discuss the educational programme with staff. An information booklet informs them of policies and procedures and an overview of the six areas of learning for the Foundation Stage. They receive a regular newsletter informing them of themes and topics. Whilst planning is discussed with parents, the long, medium and short term curriculum plans are not displayed for parents' perusal. Staff offer limited suggestions for parents to help with their child's learning at home which means that children's knowledge and understanding is not always consolidated.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Staff work well together to ensure that the routines run smoothly and children feel settled and secure. They are aware of their roles and responsibilities and consequently deploy themselves effectively to ensure that children are interested in their play. Staff have a good understanding of the setting's policies and procedures and are generally effective in their implementation. Children benefit from staff who are enthusiastic about all areas of their work and committed to providing a stimulating environment for the children. Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are workable and ensure that the welfare of children is paramount.

Leadership and management is good. The managers ensure that staff feel valued and included in all aspects of decision making regarding the running of the nursery. Staff meetings enable staff to share good practice and identify areas for improvement. Staff discuss and contribute ideas for children's learning so that the activities are varied, fun and stimulate their interest. Activities and planning is regularly evaluated so that staff can build on children's interests. They determine which activities have been successful or unsuccessful and share observations of children's care and learning. Staff are committed to developing and improving all

areas of their practice. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

The provider is required to keep a copy of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop the procedures for emergency evacuation to take account of staff and children's patterns of attendance
- increase the range of resources and positive images to develop children's awareness of diversity and the wider world. (also applies to nursery education)

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- increase the opportunities for children to see numbers in their environment and look at how things work
- make effective use of observations and assessments to inform planning so that activities are differentiated and provide sufficient challenge for all children

- develop the planning to ensure that it takes account of children's patterns of attendance, it is shared with parents and they are provided with suggestions to continue some play and learning activities at home.

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