



Little Stars

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY225426
Inspection date	19 October 2006
Inspector	Sally Ann Smith
Setting Address	Swadlincote Learning Centre, Rinkway, Swadlincote, Derbyshire, DE11 8JL
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Registered person	Swadlincote Learning Centre
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Crèche

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

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Stars crèche opened in May 2002. It operates from one room within Swadlincote Learning Centre in Swadlincote. A maximum of 15 children may attend the crèche at any one time. The crèche is open each weekday from 09:00 to 16:00 during school term times.

There are currently 42 children from three months to under five years on roll.

There are five full time staff who work with the children, of whom four have an appropriate early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children understand the importance of personal hygiene and wash their hands before they eat their snack and after playing in messy activities such as paint. Children are supervised by staff when using the toilet but many children know that they need to wash their hands without staff having to remind them. Children dry their hands using the paper towels provided, therefore reducing the risk of cross-infection. Tissues are placed within children's reach should they need to wipe their nose. Children participate in focused activities to explore and develop their understanding of why they need to wash, brush their hair and take good care of their teeth. Staff wash their hands and ensure that tables are regularly cleaned with an anti-bacterial solution before serving snacks. A comprehensive written medication policy is in place which staff are fully conversant with. Written consent is obtained from parents for seeking medical advice and treatment for their child in the event of an emergency. In addition, all staff have a current first aid certificate. These factors combined ensure that children's good health is effectively promoted.

Children are provided with snacks whilst at the setting to include fresh fruit such as apples, bananas and grapes. Children also have biscuits and breadsticks on occasions. Whilst staff attempt to develop children's awareness of healthy foods, the arrangements to include parents in promoting children's healthy eating is not implemented effectively. Children are offered a drink with their snack and although they are unable to help themselves to water throughout the session, children can ask a member of staff for a drink at any time. Children sit together at tables for their snack joined by staff, making these social occasions.

Although there is no outdoor provision, good use is made of the indoor space to develop children's physical play. Children have regular exercise and particularly enjoy bending and stretching exercises, touching their toes and raising their arms to touch the sky. They run up and down on the spot, feeling their heart beat after their exertion. Children enjoy sitting in a circle and gently roll a ball to each other or practise their catching and throwing skills. Children enjoy a range of action songs and rhymes to promote physical activity and develop an awareness of their bodies.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children are closely supervised by staff and the adult to child ratios are good. Space is organised so children can move freely and safely. Staff closely monitor access to the provision and all visitors are requested to produce identification and sign the visitors book. Parents register children's arrival and departure times and staff ensure this is accurately recorded. In addition, staff maintain a separate register to record children's attendance. Children learn about safe procedures such as sitting on their chairs correctly as they may topple over and not to throw toys as they might hurt themselves or other children. This helps them to take responsibility for themselves. Effective procedures are in place for emergency evacuation and these are practised regularly, taking account of children's patterns of attendance. Written risk assessments are in

place and staff check safety aspects daily to ensure that children are safe and well cared for. However, not all staff submit to appropriate vetting procedures therefore compromising children's safety.

Staff recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and are aware of their responsibility to report any concerns in order to protect children in their care. However, they are not fully conversant with Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures in particular where an allegation is made against a member of staff and the implications it has for their practice.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children generally enter the crèche happily and are warmly greeted by staff. Children who are less confident are supported and reassured by staff to help them settle into the routine. Staff plan activities taking account of children's preferences and children can also select resources from the wide range on offer. They enjoy participating in more structured activities planned by staff, such as kite making. Regular themes are incorporated into the routine and as a result children learn about the wider world. Autumnal themes develop children's awareness of harvesting fruit and vegetables and how animals hibernate. Children explore how the wind makes objects move and watch as their hand-made kites fly in the air. Children enjoy stories linked to the theme such as 'The Wind Blew', and listen intently. Visual displays are child-led and these create a bright, attractive environment.

Staff encourage the children to be interested in what they are doing and motivated to learn. Children enjoy operating the radio cassette player for example, switching buttons and knobs on and off and selecting tapes to listen to. Music and movement is a particular favourite of the children and they enjoy playing the variety of musical instruments available, such as African drums, tom toms and maracas. Children learn to distinguish between loud and soft, fast and slow. A good range of resources are available for younger children and planning ensures that all children can participate in the activities available. Staff are aware of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. However, they have not received training to enable them to enhance play and learning for children under three years.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children play in a warm and welcoming environment where staff are friendly, approachable and sensitive to individual children's needs. A range of activities are arranged by staff but children can also select some resources independently and confidently initiate their own play. Partnerships with parents are generally good and staff care for children according to their wishes. Parents opinions are sought through questionnaires and surveys to determine their perception of the quality of care provided. Staff take account of these to improve practice and create a positive play and learning environment for the children. An information board displays policies and procedures including what to do should parents' have a complaint. However, this does not include correct details regarding the regulator.

Children are well behaved and have a good understanding of right and wrong, responding positively to guidance and instructions from staff. Explanations are given to children as to why certain behaviour is unacceptable. For example, children learn that they must not throw toys as they may get broken and they could hurt somebody. Staff encourage children to explore how they would feel if they had a toy taken from them. This helps children understand the effect of their behaviour on others. Children are generally polite and say please and thank you spontaneously. Staff establish clear boundaries and as a consequence children become aware of the routines and what is expected of them. A calm environment is created where raised voices are discouraged. Strategies for managing children's behaviour are appropriate and consistently implemented by staff.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported as staff have a satisfactory understanding of addressing all children's needs in consultation with their parents and other staff. Children are encouraged to recognise people's differences. For example, they learn that some people communicate through sign language or use wheelchairs, walking frames or sticks to move around. Visual displays, some of which the children have completed themselves, help to develop their awareness of children and adults with different needs and from other cultures. Planned activities incorporate festivals and celebrations and there are a good range of books, puzzles and resources to support children's play and learning. For example, children look at different faiths and places of worship such as churches, temples and mosques.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Staff work well together to provide an atmosphere that is friendly, relaxed and welcoming. Staff take time to establish children's likes and dislikes so that activities can be planned accordingly. Staff interact with the children positively and ensure that they are effectively deployed to supervise and play with them. A variety of different activities are thoughtfully planned to take account of the age range of children attending. Children are cared for by staff with suitable knowledge and understanding of child development. Staff work together well to ensure that the care, learning and play provided for the children is consistently implemented.

Relevant documentation is used to record medication, accidents and incidents and this information is shared with parents. Policies and procedures are implemented effectively to ensure that the children are well cared for, although some lack all the necessary detail.

However, the registered person is not conversant with their roles and responsibilities such as notifying Ofsted of any significant changes or ensuring that they comply with appropriate vetting procedures, therefore compromising children's welfare.

The provision does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the crèche were required to ensure procedures were in place for lost and uncollected children. A written policy is now in place which all staff are familiar with. Staff were also required to ensure that arrangements were in place to share child protection procedures

with parents. A written child protection procedure is displayed for parents' perusal. However, the child protection procedure is being revised to take account of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure that there are effective procedures in place for checking that staff are suitable to work with children
- ensure that Ofsted are notified about any significant changes or events.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk