

Little Stars Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY269734
Inspection date 11 February 2008
Inspector Susan Janet Lee

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Registered person Joanne Louise Farnworth
Type of inspection Integrated
Type of care Full day care

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 was registered in 2003. It operates from a detached building located close to the A5085 Blackpool Road to the north side of Preston. The setting is run by an individual.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 06.45 until 18.00 throughout the year. Children have access to three playrooms, bathroom facilities and an outdoor play area.

The facility is registered to provide care for a maximum of 52 children at any one time and there are currently 76 children on roll. Of these, 29 children receive funding for nursery education. The setting currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities and also a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 12 staff, including the manager. Of these, 11 staff hold an appropriate early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in well maintained premises. They stay healthy because staff exercise good hygiene practices to minimise the risk of cross infection. For example, they follow good cleaning rotas to maintain cleanliness and follow good standards of hygiene when changing nappies to help protect the youngest children. The children learn about hygiene practices and personal care routines as they wash their hands at appropriate times of the day. The older children know they need to wash their hands to make sure they are clean. The written sick children's policy ensures effective measures are in place when children are ill.

Children's dietary needs are successfully met as staff gather information from parents about their children's dietary needs and take this information into account when planning snacks and meals. The children are well nourished and develop an awareness of healthy eating as the setting provides snacks and meals that are well balanced and wholesome, aiding children's growth and development. The children have their own vegetable plot in the garden. They grow vegetables, such as potatoes, carrots, peas and turnips. When ready, the children dig up their harvest and it is used for making meals. The children also take their vegetables home to eat with their parents.

Staff follow babies' individual sleep and meal routines, providing a secure and familiar environment. They benefit from lots of positive physical contact and interaction during personal care routines. Babies are able to move around freely to practise their large physical skills, such as rolling, sitting, stretching and walking. The children benefit from a large outdoor play area that comprises of a safety surface area, a paved area, a grassed area, a digging area and a vegetable plot. They have lots of opportunities to enjoy and develop their physical skills as they play outdoors twice a day and this contributes to their good health and physical development. The children have access to a wide range of outdoor play equipment to help them learn about their bodies and develop control and coordination. The toddlers have fun playing ring games outdoors. The children hold hands to form a large circle and sing and play 'ring a ring of roses'. They bend their knees and jump up to the chorus line and then they play 'the farmer's in his den'.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in a warm welcoming environment. Children's artwork, posters, photographs and information is displayed, making the environment bright, stimulating and informative for children, parents and visitors. There is a good selection of equipment and furniture available allowing babies and older children to play, rest and eat in comfort. The setting provides a wide range of resources to meet the needs of the children being cared for. Staff check resources on a regular basis minimising risks to children. The children also help to clean toys as they play. All items are in a safe and clean condition.

Comprehensive risk assessments are in place and adhered to at all times. Staff have a good understanding of safety. They conduct a safety check of internal and external areas each day, ensuring the environment in which children are cared for is safe and secure. Staff supervise the children well enabling them to play safely and independently. They encourage children's understanding through a range of daily routines, stories and play activities. Staff practise the

evacuation procedure with the children on a regular basis, helping them to develop an awareness of what to do in the event of an emergency, such as a fire. They remind the children to walk down the stairs carefully and to sit properly when eating lunch. The police recently visited the nursery to talk to the children about 'stranger danger'. Staff follow a clear outing's procedure to keep the children safe on outings.

All required documentation is in place and staff have a secure understanding of child protection matters and procedures, ensuring children's welfare is effectively safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The daily routine meets children's needs and promotes their welfare. All staff working with children under three years of age have attended training in relation to the 'Birth to three matters' framework. They have a good understanding of the framework and plan and provide a wide range of interesting activities and experiences to help the children to develop physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. Effective and clear systems are in place in relation to planning; observing and charting children's developmental progress.

The effective key worker system allows staff to get to know the children well and ensures the children are cared for by consistent and familiar adults. Staff share close relationships with the children, who are relaxed and content in their care. Staff deploy themselves well to enable them to provide good care and support to the children. They sit at the same level as the children as they play and the children invite staff into their play.

Babies have access to a good range of resources that are colourful, tactile and that make noises, helping them to explore using their senses. They have access to a lovely exploratory play area with sensory lighting and a treasure basket. Babies shake bottles that are filled with different fillings to hear different sounds. They lean into the treasure basket to choose different items. The children feel the texture of soft bristles on brushes and stroke their hands, faces and hair with them.

Babies begin to find a voice and listen and respond as staff nurture their attempts to communicate. They listen when the babies babble and respond in gentle tones, helping to reinforce early speech patterns.

The older children have access to a lovely creative area which includes a wealth of creative materials and media. They have access to a book area, sand, water, paint, chalk, collage, a home corner, construction, a computer, play dough and small world resources. They are happily engaged and occupied and have lots of opportunities to explore and investigate; make meaning and connections and to be creative and imaginative.

The children enjoy a quiet time with staff as they relax on cushions and listen to a story. They eagerly wait as they turn the pages to continue with the story. The children have fun as they paint pictures, chalk, make collage pictures and model with the play dough. Staff interact with the children at every opportunity to answer their questions, extend their language and to challenge their thinking.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage. They plan and provide a broad and balanced range of activities to help the children make

good progress towards the early learning goals. Effective systems are in place regarding planning and assessment. The children have developmental files which chart their developmental progress. Staff also use photographs and examples of children's work to illustrate their enjoyment and development. Staff prepare well for focused activities. They are adept in engaging the children's interest and they support and guide the children well. There is a good balance of child initiated and adult led activities. Children are able to make choices and develop their own ideas and play. Staff are spontaneous to children's interests and follow their lead.

The children clearly feel safe and secure. They make attachments to members of staff and form friendships with other children. The children show high levels of interest and involvement in their chosen activities and they persist for long periods of time. They develop good self-help skills and independence as they operate independently and manage developmentally appropriate tasks, such as using the bathroom, putting on their coats, pouring drinks and helping to tidy up. The children make connections between different parts of their life experiences as they chat to staff about what they did at the weekend. The children have a positive self-image and are comfortable with themselves.

The children are confident speakers and use language well to explain what they are doing, connect ideas, describe key events and recall past experiences. They have many opportunities to enjoy rhythmic activities and are able to distinguish which sounds represent some letters. The children have access to a lovely book area and enjoy listening to stories in small group settings. They learn that we write for a purpose as they have access to mark making in a variety of role play situations. The children recognise their own name as they self-register on arrival. The younger children begin to form recognisable letters and the older children are able to write their own name.

Mathematics is well used across the curriculum. Children learn about mathematical concepts, such as number, shape and size through a range of daily routines, play activities, stories and songs. They count confidently during their play and at circle time. Staff give the children lots of opportunities to begin to use problem solving skills to help them calculate. The children are able to match using colour, shape and type and they are able to sequence objects according to size. They are able to name shapes and use them to make representational models. The children develop an awareness of capacity as they fill and empty containers in the sand and water. They show an interest in early science as they look at hot and cold and wet and dry.

The children have many opportunities to explore and investigate a wide range of natural and man made materials. They show an interest in the world in which they live. They investigate living things to find out more about them. For example, they care for the setting's pet rabbit and grow vegetables and plants. The children enjoy using construction resources and they build with a purpose in mind. They develop a sense of time as they follow the setting's daily routine, talk about days of the week and daytime and night time. The children develop a sense of place as they go on trips out to neighbouring amenities and they are able to describe a simple journey. The children are able to express their feelings about significant events in their life.

The children are able to move around freely. They adjust speed and change direction to avoid obstacles, negotiate space well and show respect for other children's personal space. The children move bodies to create intended movements. They run, skip and jump, kick and bounce footballs, and have fun playing on a wide range of mobile equipment. However, there is a limited range of large play equipment to present challenge for the older children. The children also benefit from going swimming on a weekly basis.

Children are able to express their own thoughts and ideas using a wide variety of creative materials and media. They explore and are able to describe the texture of different materials. The children enjoy joining in with singing and action songs. They explore the different sounds of instruments and enjoy a weekly music and movement session. They have lots of opportunities to re-enact their own experiences and develop their understanding of the world in which they live as they participate in a wide range of role play situations. The children introduce story lines into the play and they play cooperatively with their friends who are involved in the same narrative.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff provide an inclusive environment for all the children who attend. They help the children to make a positive contribution and to reach their potential. Staff work closely with parents to ensure that their children's cultural backgrounds are respected. The children have access to a good range of resources that reflect diversity, helping them to learn about themselves, other people and the wider world. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to meet the needs of children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Staff have a good understanding of the behaviour management policy. They are consistent in their approach to managing children's behaviour, giving the children a clear message. Staff act as good role models to the children. They treat them with care and concern, use please and thank you, encourage them to share and take turns and to find positive ways of expressing their feelings. As a result, the children develop an awareness of what is expected of them and they are polite and behave well. For example, a child reminds another child that they are speaking. The other child waits their turn before speaking. The children receive lots of encouragement and praise for their efforts and achievements, helping them to develop confidence and self-esteem. The children develop a good sense of belonging. They enter with ease and go happily to play with their friends. The children make decisions as they choose what to play with. They show care and concern for other living things. For example, they care for the setting's pet rabbit and grow and water their vegetables and plants. The children clearly enjoy their time at the setting and they thrive on staff's interaction and attention. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff share good working relationships with parents, who are greeted warmly on arrival. Effective systems are in place to keep parents informed about their children's activities and forthcoming events. Recent 'thank you' cards show that parents are happy with the service provided, levels of care and activities afforded. The partnership of parents whose children receive funding for nursery education is good. Parents are provided with a good source of information when their children become eligible for funding for nursery education. Effective systems are in place to keep parents fully informed about their children's progress. For example, they receive a written report each term about their children's progress and they are invited to attend parents' evenings twice a year. Parents are kept well informed about their children's activities and they feel fully involved in their children's learning. Good systems are in place to seek the views of parents as they ask them to complete a questionnaire on a regular basis. Their comments show that they feel that staff work hard and are approachable and that parents have lots of confidence in them.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The effective vetting procedure helps to protect the children. A good induction procedure is in place and this gives staff a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Effective procedures are in place enabling staff to meet with the manager for regular supervision and appraisal meetings. However, staff do not meet as a team on a regular basis. Staff have regard for children's well-being as they attend training to further develop their childcare practices. All staff have a valid first aid certificate ensuring they have up to date knowledge of what to do in the event of an accident or minor injury.

The record of children's attendance shows that ratios are maintained to promote children's care, learning and play. There is a good quota of experienced and qualified staff. They work well together as a team and they organise space, time and resources well to effectively meet children's needs.

All required policies and procedures are in place and these work well in practice to positively promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. However, the child protection procedure does not refer to the procedure to be followed, should an allegation be made against a member of staff and the complaints record does not have a written format to follow, should a concern be raised. All required documentation is in place. This is well organised for easy reference and stored securely to maintain confidentiality.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. The management team is made up of the manager, who is also the registered person and the deputy. There is a clear vision in place and this is imparted to staff during their induction. Good systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the delivery of nursery education. The manager and deputy work well together to support staff in their work. The manager has a good understanding of the strengths and areas of development. The management team and the staff work towards the continual improvement of care and education for all the children.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection recommendations were agreed in relation to policies and procedures and training. The child protection procedure has been developed and now includes details of the designated person and relevant contact details. The designated person has now attended child protection training. The complaints procedure now includes Ofsted's contact details.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 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.

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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 opportunities for staff to meet on a more regular basis
- develop the child protection procedure to include the procedure to be followed regarding allegations against staff and ensure the complaints record has a written format to follow, should a concern be raised.

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):

- provide more large outdoor play equipment to present challenge for the older children.

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