

Little Stars

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY362567
Inspection date	09 July 2008
Inspector	Valerie Block
Setting Address	30a Church road, Harrington, Workington, Cumbria, CA14 5PT
Telephone number	01946 834439
E-mail	
Registered person	Little Stars (Workington) Limited
Type of inspection	Childcare
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

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 (Workington) Limited is run by a Board of Directors. It opened in 2007 and operates from a building on the main street in Harrington, near to Workington, Cumbria. The children have use of a main playroom for children aged from two to eight years and a baby play room for children aged under two years. Children also have use of an adjacent resource play area and sleep room. A maximum of 24 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The setting is open each weekday from 07.00 to 18.00 throughout the year, apart from one week over the Christmas period and bank holidays. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 70 children aged from six months to eight years on roll. The setting does not provide places for children receiving funding for early education. Children come from the local and surrounding area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with additional needs.

The setting employs six staff. All of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because they are well protected from infection and are well taken care of if they have an accident or become ill. Illnesses are minimised by the effective sick child policy, which ensures that the children's health is satisfactorily maintained. Children are very carefully cared for and comforted following accidents. There are several staff who hold up-to-date first aid certificates.

Staff are well aware of children's individual health needs as these are recorded in the children's records. Particular information that needs to be remembered on a daily basis, such as information about allergies, is displayed confidentially for staff use in the kitchen.

Children learn about personal hygiene routines as they are encouraged to regularly wash their hands after using the toilet. The staff talk to children about why this is important and the children know they are washing germs away that might make them feel unwell. The staff also encourage children to follow hygienic procedures as they have placed reminder posters and photographs of children washing their hands above the sinks.

Children are well nourished as the nursery promotes healthy eating. At snack time children enjoy drinks of milk or water and fruit. Lunchboxes are prepared by parents for children's mid-day meal. The nursery encourages parents to provide healthy food for their children's overall health needs. Children enjoy being able to access their drinks independently throughout the day and therefore are beginning to take some responsibility for ensuring their ongoing good health.

Babies and young children form warm, trusting relationships with regular carers and so their emotional good health is nurtured. Young children and babies benefit from flexible daily routines allowing them to have a quiet time or sleep that reflects their individual needs.

Children benefit from daily fresh air and exercise as they regularly play outside in the outdoor play area. The nursery are providing continuous play for children over the age of two where children can choose to play inside or outside for a good amount of the day, weather permitting. Times are set aside for the younger children and babies to have outdoor play also.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are kept safe as the setting review the written risk assessment regularly and maintain the premises efficiently both to prevent accidents and ensure children's security. Children cannot leave the premises unsupervised as there is a very robust procedure to allow people to enter and leave the building and children are very well supervised. Children benefit from the provision of a very inviting environment where a good amount of interesting, new equipment is very accessible to children. High chairs are not fitted with over shoulder harnesses to prevent children falling from the high chairs. When this is pointed out as a hazard, the manager arranges immediately for the staff to purchase these items which are fitted to the high chairs straight away.

Walls are covered with very attractive displays using children's work to good advantage. Posters display numerals and letters so children are able to begin to recognise them as part of their

everyday life. The play area is organised into different learning areas so children can easily find activities and resources.

Children understand how and why to keep themselves safe as the staff explain basic risk avoidance. For example they teach children not to run inside as this could cause an accident and someone could be hurt

Children are protected well because staff understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. Some staff have undergone specific training in this area to ensure they are up-to-date regarding required procedures to protect children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children's individual care needs are well known by staff and children are well-cared-for by their staff who treat children with a good deal of warmth and sensitivity. Children benefit from an interesting range of activities that are planned well by qualified staff who take account of children's current learning and development. They regularly talk to parents about the children and observe and assess children at play. Development and learning records are regularly completed and shared with parents for their information. These records inform future planning of activities to stimulate children's learning. Children's interests are absorbed into activity planning. For example, a child had an interest in outer space and the role play area was changed accordingly to allow this interest to develop.

Children are learning about transport as their current topic. They really enjoy imaginative play sitting in their car. The car is a box that the children have painted blue. A driving wheel has been put inside. Children play together, talking about their game and so enjoy being creative and communicating about their play. Later, staff lead a group of children in an activity where children design and build cars from rubbish materials. Staff skilfully use questions to make children think about the features a car needs and why. For example, children find materials that resemble circles for wheels and so children's learning is enhanced.

The setting encourage children to choose to play inside or outside, weather permitting and provide play equipment in both areas conducive to building children's independence and developing children's learning in all areas.

Staff have put together treasure baskets for babies to explore, containing different sensory materials. This helps children to become competent learners, learning about the world around them. Children are well supported as they begin to recognise themselves in mirrors and explore their environment whilst making close, warm relationships with their adult carers.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are developing their awareness and understanding about diversity, through discussion and activities. There is a very good amount of varied play equipment that promotes positive images of diversity, as well as attractive posters showing peoples from around the world.

Parents are made very welcome by staff at the group and all necessary consents and information is received to ensure the children are well-cared-for and parents' wishes met. Parents interviewed

show a good level of satisfaction with the care their children receive. The setting make every effort to include parents in the life of the setting and are interested in parents' views. They recently asked parents to complete customer satisfaction questionnaires.

Children behave well. When children argue over play equipment the staff try to help children resolve their conflict by giving them prompts as to how to negotiate a settlement. When the children are unable to do so, they limit the time each child can use the favoured piece of equipment. Children therefore are supported and shown how to behave well in a safe environment. Adults behave well to the children and one another in a polite respectful way. This gives children good role models as to how to behave well and sets a positive culture of behaviour at the group.

Children with additional needs are made welcome at this group. Staff ensure that children are included and that their parents are also fully involved in any strategies to meet their needs.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The setting has not acted within their conditions of registration as they have cared for more children than their registration allows. The regulations have been misunderstood in that older babies under the age of two years have been transferred to the older age group and new babies under two years have been admitted to the baby room. This means that the maximum numbers of children under the age of two years has been exceeded. This is a breach in regulations. When children have been transferred to the older age group their required adult-child ratios have not been upheld as appropriate for their age.

Children benefit from the setting employing qualified staff who are robustly vetted to ensure their suitability to care for children. Children also benefit from the setting ensuring that staff continue to undertake training in relevant areas to increase their skills. There are good systems to give relief cover to staff that also give children continuity of care.

Record keeping is well done and confidentiality is well upheld. The policies are very well written and accessible to parents for their information.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 required adult: child ratios are met when children are transferred to an older group.

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