

Little Stars

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY359612
Inspection date	25 June 2008
Inspector	Jill Steer
Setting Address	Ascot Way, Rustington, Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN16 3SB
Telephone number	01903 850 221
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Registered person	Kirstie Louise Wood
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 inadequate – notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Stars Playgroup is privately run. It opened under its current registration in 2007 and operates from a portacabin in Rustington. The playgroup is open each weekday from 09.00 to 16.00 during term time only. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 35 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 26 children receive funding for early education. Children attend from the surrounding areas.

The playgroup employ seven members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications and two members of staff are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

Children are at risk as there is not always a first aid qualified member of staff present to effectively manage children's accidents and illness. Accidents are recorded but these forms are

sent home with parents so the playgroup does not hold any record of children's accidents and injuries. These are a breach in regulations.

Children enjoy the opportunities they have to play outside and develop their large muscle control as they use the equipment. For example, they climb and balance on the large apparatus, pedal cars and trikes and jump and hop as they practise for the annual sports day event.

Daily routines help children learn about personal hygiene as they routinely wash their hands after messy activities and using the toilet, and before eating. Children are encouraged to cover their mouths with their hands when coughing and sneezing, and to use the tissues for their noses as they need to. Systems such as regular cleaning routines are in place to protect the children from the spread of germs. Children are sent home if they become unwell and a clear sickness policy informs parents of this procedure.

Children eat food prepared by their parents, as they sit at tables together whilst being supervised by the staff. They encourage the children to eat up and discuss what they are eating. Snacks are provided for all children in three sittings and include healthy options such as fruit and crackers that the children spread themselves with butter. However, as the oldest children have their snack first, the youngest children have a long wait, which is difficult for them to endure. Drinking water is freely available and children pour their own drinks whenever they are thirsty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Some staff have attended training in child protection in order to identify and address any concerns of abuse. However, children are not adequately safeguarded, as the settings policy is not well written. Procedures remain unclear to ensure staff can act appropriately to safeguard the welfare of the children and do not give clear details about how allegations against staff will be managed.

Children are at risk as daily risk assessments of the premises are undertaken each morning are ineffective. Hazards are not identified and addressed to ensure the safety of the children. For example, many stacks of chairs stored in the barked area of garden which children climb on and are unstable, a large gap in the perimeter fencing which children can crawl through and general clutter. The main door to the building is kept locked when children are inside, keeping them safe, but the gate from the street is not locked so children are not cared for in secure premises. Basic guidelines enable children to begin to keep themselves safe, such as safe and appropriate use of the toys, picking things up from the floor and respecting each other.

Children and parents are made to feel welcome as staff are on hand to greet them on arrival. Displays of topic work create a colourful backdrop in which children play with a good range of interesting resources, which are stored at low level so children can be independent. The indoor environment is well organised to provide differing areas of activity which promote children's development.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children confidently choose what to play with from the ready prepared activities and resources. Staff supervise and support children appropriately so they make some developmental progress.

Children are eager to participate and share what they know during group activities. For example, whilst cleaning the fish they know not to give them cold water because 'they will be shivery'.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Basic planning provides children with an interesting range of experiences across the six areas of learning. However, staff do not regularly complete children's developmental records to identify their individual stages of learning and help to plan activities to ensure they make suitable progress through the stepping stones.

Children are becoming eager learners as they move between and readily ask to join in the activities. They confidently approach staff to talk to them and ask for help when needed. However, children have limited opportunities to make independent choices about what they do, as all activities are prepared for them and staff actively discourage children from choosing whether they play inside or outside.

Children enjoy books and stories, discussing the title and author, knowing that he is the person who wrote the book, and show interest and familiarity in their content. Some opportunities exist for children to practise mark making, which some are enthusiastic to do. However, opportunities to practise making marks independently are not actively encouraged, which inhibits their natural progression towards writing. Children are confident speakers and use language for thinking as they engage in conversation with adults and each other. Children see and identify words around the setting such as their names and some can identify the sound of the letters.

Activities based upon children's interests are integrated into the planning, which greatly increases the learning potential. For example, following children discovering a worm whilst outside, they were provided with a bug hunting kit to further investigate the environment to study mini beasts and find out where they live. However, many other activities are very adult led, such as display work, which prevents children from developing skills such as cutting, being creative and having a sense of achievement.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have some opportunities to celebrate range of festivals and participate in activities, which help them to learn about various cultures, and local outings help them learn about their own community. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Staff offer suitable support for children with special needs. Close liaison with parents and outside agencies helps to ensure all children's needs are planned for and met.

Children behave well. They are able to share toys together and play cooperatively with each other. They generally understand the boundaries of the setting through the group rules, which are displayed, such as be kind to other people and all help to tidy up. At snack time children are encouraged to sit down to eat, to say please and thank you and to share the jugs of milk and water with other children on the table.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Staff gather some relevant information before children are placed in the setting, such as their likes and dislikes. Some systems are in place for staff and parents to share information about children's individual progress, such as daily discussion and notices to inform of future and daily activities. However, this is not regularly

updated, so parents do not always receive the information about what their children have done. All children are valued as individuals and their needs are understood using the information gathered from parents.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Documentation is not available to demonstrate that all staff are trained or vetted as suitable to work with children. Attendance of staff, children and visitors is not accurately recorded. Therefore, children are not suitably safeguarded. Written policies are not updated to comply with regulations and so do not provide staff with suitable guidelines for good practice. Not all documentation is stored according to requirements and is therefore not available for inspection or for the efficient operation of the setting.

Staff are not always suitably deployed so that children are sufficiently supervised and supported as they play. Their safety is further compromised through insufficient security and the lack of staff members trained in first aid and poor recording of accidents. The provider does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Staff are competent within their roles and have a satisfactory knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how to use it in practice to support children's development. However, they do not regularly record children's progress to plan their future development. Staff are supported in their work and encouraged to develop as a team. Parents are kept up to date about their child's progress through daily contacts with staff but receive little information about the weekly planning. The range and quality of activities provided for children ensures they make steady progress.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration there has been one complaint made to Ofsted. Concerns were raised that children were transported unsafely in a vehicle (National Standard 6: Safety), that members of staff are not suitable to be working with children (National Standard 1: Suitable person) because they bite children when they misbehave (National Standard 11: Behaviour management). Three actions were set. Ofsted was satisfied that the provider met the National Standards and remained qualified for registration at the time the investigation was closed.

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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The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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:

- develop rigorous and robust recruitment procedures to ensure there are effective systems in place for checking that staff members are suitable to work with children
- keep an accurate register of attendance which clearly shows the arrival and departure times of children (compliance)
- deploy staff effectively to ensure the safety, welfare and development of children
- take positive steps to promote safety in the outside area including identifying and reducing hazards and improving security of the premises
- ensure there is at least one member of staff with a current first aid certificate on the premises or on outings at all times and ensure first aid qualifications include training and first aid for infants and young children which is consistent with any guidance issued to Local Authorities by the Secretary of State
- keep a signed record of all accidents to children
- review and update your child protection policy
- ensure that all records relating to day care activities are readily accessible and available for inspection at all times

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

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):

- develop the planning and assessment arrangements to promote children's progress towards the early learning goals, track their achievements, and plan for the next steps in their individual learning
- improve opportunities for children to make independent choices
- ensure there is a balance of adult and child led activities, children have an input into planning, and structured activities cater for children's individual needs

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