

Little Stars

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY315147
Inspection date	18/06/2009
Inspector	Patricia Webb

Setting address	The Village Hall, Crowberry Lane, Barton under Needwood, Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire, DE13 8AF
Telephone number	07875958503
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

Description of the setting

Little Stars Pre-School originally opened in 1999. The current owners have been operating since 2005. The group operates from a main playroom within the village hall of Barton-under-Needwood, Staffordshire. There is a fully enclosed play area available for play. The premises are accessed via a slope with direct access to the outdoor area. The pre-school opens term time only. Sessions are offered Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 09.15 to 11.45, with sessions on Tuesday and Friday from 09.15 to 13.00. During the summer term only, additional sessions are offered on Monday and Thursday afternoons from 12.30 to 15.00.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 57 children aged two years to under five years on roll. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language.

There are five members of staff all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Every child and their family is warmly welcomed into a stimulating environment where individual needs are identified and met, acknowledging their uniqueness. A strong staff team works cohesively to ensure that children enjoy their time in the pre-school, planning and assessing to continually improve children's play and learning opportunities. Consequently children make strong progress in all areas of their development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- explore further strategies for involving parents actively in their children's learning and development including their input with regard to the systems for evaluating the quality of the provision
- extend the arrangements for inclusive practice with regard to broadening the use of some of the strategies available.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Well-organised documentation is successfully used to ensure the smooth and efficient running of the provision, as well as ensuring children's individual needs are met. Staff are highly motivated and committed to providing a quality service. Consequently, the quality of the care and education offered continues to improve. Each child has an individual learning plan which is shared regularly with parents and carers as they are becoming involved in their children's progress. The

managers and staff are endeavouring to extend the strategies used to further involve parents more actively, although parents do have the opportunity to attend forum meetings regularly and speak with key workers as and when they feel necessary. This ensures an effective exchange of information takes place to meet any specific requirements for children and their parents.

Arrangements for developing partnerships with other providers delivering early years care and education are very well established and reciprocal visits have been undertaken to promote a consistent approach to practice and in particular to ease the transition to primary school for some older children.

Children are kept safe and safeguarding procedures are understood and followed by all staff. Procedures for the recruitment and selection of staff are robust and stringent to ensure that all adults working with the children are suitably qualified and experienced to do so. A comprehensive appraisal system is in place to identify training needs and utilise individual skills for key roles within the setting. The use of detailed risk assessments and weekly health and safety checks further enhances children's safety.

The processes for evaluating the quality of the provision are well established although the managers are eager to extend the involvement of parents, carers and children in this process. This is already being implemented in some aspects, such as having consulted with the children when the arrangements for snack time were re-organised. Such practice demonstrates how highly children and their families are valued.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are well supported in their learning through the staff's comprehensive knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are provided with well-planned learning areas and focused experiences, helping them to make good progress towards the early learning goals. Activities are well planned, purposeful and cover a broad and well-balanced curriculum. Children enjoy free flow access inside and outdoors, engaging in all activities in both areas. There is a strong emphasis on developing planning around individual children's interests in order to effectively cover all areas of learning in a meaningful way for that child. For example, a child delights in playing with the wooden construction of a castle and staff use effective planning and interaction to promote conversation, enabling the child to seek out further information about castles and consider who may live in such a building.

There are very effective systems in place to identify starting points, and to record, monitor and extend children's progress through both focused and spontaneous observations. There are strategies available for enabling all children to participate, such as using the laminated book of resources and equipment to make their own selections and choices and some pictorial symbols displayed around the setting. Staff have not yet fully developed the use of further strategies such as sign language to expand inclusive practice broadly.

Children are able to engage in imaginative play and role play based on their own firsthand experiences. For example, two children hold a quiet and intense conversation about the imminent visit of one of them to the dentist and they discuss what sort of sticker the dentist may hand out after he has counted their teeth. Role play is well defined as children's imagination is promoted and the 'princess' goes outside to play in the sand tray and paint on the wall with the water. They discuss going on holiday and how they are likely to travel. Musical activities are especially enjoyed as children create their band and make music loudly and with gusto. Skilled staff then extend this by developing a game and children delight in making other children and adults turn away whilst they select an instrument, play it and ask others to guess what instrument it is.

Children's health is effectively promoted as they understand the well-practised routines for hand washing and snack time. Recent changes to the organisation of snack time mean that children can enjoy café style arrangements, develop their independence in pouring drinks, peeling their own fruit such as bananas and mandarins, and develop social skills. They also understand codes of behaviour in this and other expectations during the session and some quieter children are confident in approaching adults for sensitive support. Some children show well-developed awareness of helping their friends, as for instance two children struggle with finding and counting the rockets on the computer game and another child assists eagerly as they each benefit from developing their self-esteem. Minor accidents and the administration of medication are managed efficiently to keep children healthy and they understand about keeping safe within the setting. They participate in fire drills and staff have worked imaginatively to ensure that the procedures used encourage children to understand the seriousness of such an event as they know to hold on to the 'fire rope' where the red tapes are marked.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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