

Little Stars

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Debbie Molly O'Callaghan

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Little Stars Nursery, previously known as Saplings Nursery, is now one of 26 nurseries owned by Casterbridge Nurseries Limited and was registered in 2006. The nursery is housed in a converted chapel situated in a residential area of the London Borough of Bromley. It is made up of five main play rooms, a kitchen, office and staff room. There are two fully secure outdoor play areas. The group serves a wide area of the community and is within walking distance from the main line station, local transport links, shops, schools and parks.

A maximum of 74 children may attend at any one time. The nursery opens each weekday throughout the year from 8:00am until 6:30pm, closing for one week in the spring and at Christmas. There are currently 97 children aged from 3 months to 5 years on roll. There are currently 30 children that receive funding for nursery education. Children attend a variety of sessions during a week. The nursery currently support children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 19 staff members who directly care for the children. Of these 16 hold a relevant childcare qualification equivalent to NVQ level 2 or 3. All room leaders hold NVQ level 3 qualification in childcare. Two staff members are currently training towards a childcare qualification. The group employs a qualified cook.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children make suitable progress in their learning and development as the setting provides an appropriate range of activities, although assessment procedures are not yet fully effective in ensuring that children's learning potential is fulfilled. The environment promotes children's welfare and all of the essential documentation is in place to promote their health and safety. There are plans in place to make changes to improve the outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the observation, assessment and planning to ensure all learning is identified and children's next steps are highlighted and their learning is extended
- ensure a consistent key person system is in place to help children become familiar with the setting and to feel confident and safe within it.
- strengthen the procedures for risk assessments by ensuring that everything children come into contact with is assessed to identify and quickly address any potential hazards
- ensure staff are deployed appropriately in order to meet children's individual needs, particularly at meal times

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are protected because all staff have a satisfactory understanding of safeguarding procedures and know what to do if they should have concerns about a child. Additionally, controlled entry at the door and a visitors' book help to ensure that children are kept secure. Children's safety is appropriately managed through the use of safety checklists that identify most potential hazards on the premises and the actions taken to reduce these, though not all areas that children come into contact with have been fully considered. For example, the cord from a window blind is within children's reach. This is hazardous to children.

Staff deployment is generally adequate and children are supervised. However, staff organisation at meal times does not fully support children's independence and ability to serve themselves. There is a key person system in place. However, due to a high level of staff changes this is inconsistent throughout the nursery. As a result, this impacts on some toddlers feeling safe and secure, in particular when moving rooms.

Systems of self-evaluation are generally effective. For example, the new manager has shared her vision for the setting with staff and has some ideas and action plans in place relating to areas for further development, such as more regular room meetings to further enhance communication between staff. However, these systems are not yet secure enough to show how the quality of teaching and learning, including assessment and planning arrangements, will be monitored and evaluated to ensure that sufficient progress is made in this area.

The manager has identified areas for improvement and areas where she feels the provision needs to adapt or alter to further improve outcomes for children. For example, the nursery is seeking funding to make improvements to the garden and to purchase new outdoor equipment.

Partnerships with parents are satisfactory. They receive information about the setting through monthly newsletters and a wealth of information displayed on notice boards. They get regular feedback about their children's day, achievements and progress through daily chats with staff and parents' meetings are held termly. The manager understands that she needs to work with others to ensure consistency of care.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are generally settled in the nursery and most are meaningfully engaged in the activities provided. Babies feel safe and secure as they have their physical and emotional needs met, following their individual routines. Babies make suitable progress in their language development through activities, such as singing, reading, sharing books and repetition of key words. Staff take time to listen to children when they initiate discussion about things important to them, for example,

following a visit to the zoo, one child says "I have a polar bear at home", another says "a lion, a mouse and a real dog". Children laugh as they talk about the polar bear.

Children enjoy singing 'Seven Cheeky Monkeys', they are familiar with the song and all join in with the actions enthusiastically.

Older children show confidence in their use of a computer and manoeuvre the mouse with increasing control when playing an educational programme, while younger children are learning that simple electronic toys make different noises when they push various buttons. Children enjoy cooking, modelling with clay, sand, water and free painting. Older children count the grapes at snack time and are encouraged to add and subtract, they recognise their names and have opportunities to mark make in various activities.

Children play in the garden daily, they jump and play in the puddles. The weather is drizzly but children are dressed appropriately for the wet weather and stand under the guttering to get their hair wet; children giggle with delight as they style their hair while it's wet to have "sticky up hair", children say to each other "stand under here and you can have sticky up hair".

Although staff make some observations on the children, these are not always used to assess children's progress and identify next steps in learning or to extend children's learning.

Children are offered a healthy, balanced diet. The nursery cooks and provides a hot meal for children and the setting provides a range of healthy snacks and a suitable tea. Drinks are freely accessible to all aged children which ensures they remain hydrated. The setting is generally clean and appropriately maintained and children follow good hygiene routines. For example, they know to wash their hands after using the toilet and before meals. They are learning how to keep themselves safe as they practise regular fire drills.

Staff demonstrate an appropriate understanding of behaviour management strategies. Children behave well, they join in, co-operate and share with each other, they are kind to each other and some have made good friendships. Although resources depicting positive images are limited, they celebrate festivals from around the world and staff have reference books to widen knowledge and understanding.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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