

Little Stars Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY331503
Inspection date 10/08/2009
Inspector Linda Margaret Nicholls

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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).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

Little Stars nursery was registered in 2006. It is privately owned and managed. Registration is for the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and the voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. Registration is for 18 childcare places at any one time, of whom 18 may be in the early years age range. Registration does not include overnight care. There are currently 24 children on roll, of whom 21 are in the early years age range. The nursery operates from four rooms in a house in Gravesend, Kent. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.00 to 19.00 for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery employs four staff. All of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is satisfactory. Generally the learning and development and welfare requirements are met. Children know their work is valued and they are recognised as individuals by staff who are suitably qualified. Boys and girls play together happily, making adequate personal progress because they are supported by staff who now evaluate observations to plan individual next steps to learning. An informal monitoring and evaluation process, together with support from local authority specialists and including information from parents, identifies procedures to be reviewed and areas for further improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- consider methods to promote diversity and difference of written and spoken languages so that children broaden their understanding, learn to value and respect others and are helped to make a positive contribution to society.
- extend the appraisal system to all staff, to identify continuing professional development and training needs so that they understand how the provision meets the Early Years Foundation Stage and their role within the self-evaluation process.
- ensure risk assessments, whether displayed or on the computer, are rigorously checked, dated and signed
- continue to develop the confidence of all staff in applying knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage learning requirements to extend and support children's individual progress.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Team discussions are used to monitor and evaluate activities although these are not recorded as part of the self-evaluation process. Staff are now vigilant in maintaining a safe environment for children. Policies and procedures are being

reviewed to meet current requirements. Children are safeguarded and all staff are aware of the procedures to follow should they have concerns regarding a child in their care. Risk assessments are undertaken at the premises and for occasional outings. These are now held on computer. The displayed kitchen assessment is not current. An appraisal system has been started but has not been used for all staff, so the provider cannot demonstrate how individual professional development needs are to be met.

Parents are encouraged to establish open and constructive relationships with staff. They receive regular information via notices, displays, progress reports and daily feedback via contact books from the key person working with their child. However, most daily contact records simply show the structure of the day and do not record the individual experience of the child. Parents have recently been invited to provide information about their child's interests and abilities prior to their start at the nursery. Initial questionnaires received indicate they are happy with the care their child receives. Parents' contributions are used as part of the informal self-evaluation process. Parents describe their children as eager to attend and more talkative because they are provided with plenty of stimulation and learning activities by warm, kindly staff.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are absorbed as they play with the small cars or use the slide in the garden. Staff demonstrate a basic understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Boys and girls' progress is recorded in a unique record covering all areas of learning. Daily observations act as a foundation to children's variable and steady learning. Staff know children well and respond to their interests and ideas discussing the birds in the tree when one child pretends to be a bird or handing a cloth to children when they offer to clean the table. An open door policy and regular progress meetings provide a base for the exchange of information so that parents are confident to extend their child's learning at home.

Children enter the premises eagerly. They seek out their friends, explore directly accessible resources and develop independence as they play. Staff encourage children to use their imaginations with dressing up and role play items such as buggies or cars. Several soft cushions are provided in a distinct area where children can look at books. Children show they enjoy being read to as they gather together to listen attentively to story books they have chosen. Even the youngest maintains concentration following the story and mimicking the sounds with the other children. Children join in a spontaneous rhyme and song session and count up to nine with a member of staff.

All children enjoy warm, close interaction with adults. They climb onto a lap when they require a cuddle and a rest from play. Children develop an awareness of technology through the use of equipment such as keyboard items, a camera and a computer. They learn about the world around them via posters, books and games. However, words and scripts of a variety of languages are not displayed so children do not learn to value diversity and difference ways of communicating.

Children demonstrate social skills and respect for others as they join each other at the snack and lunch tables. There is no choice at morning snack time when pieces of fruit are offered. Children choose from drinks provided by parents and milk or water although this is presented in large jugs which are difficult for them to pour when full. Children have regular opportunities to access fresh air and exercise as the nursery now implements a free-flow play policy so that the patio doors are open throughout the day.

Children play safely and show they understand how to keep themselves safe. There is sufficient space for them to move about the rooms and garden. They negotiate amongst themselves for resources, learn to care for others and take turns with wheeled toys. An effective evacuation procedure is displayed and practised which means children know what is expected from them in an emergency.

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?	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	3
How well are children safeguarded?	3

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	3
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	3
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	3
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met