

Little Stones Pre-School and Out of School Clubs

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Sheila Dawn Flounders
Setting address	15 Jacksons Lane, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, NN8 4LD
Telephone number	01933 276645
Email	
Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 08456 404040
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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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*.

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.

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Description of the setting

Little Stones Pre-school and Out of School Club is run by a voluntary management committee. It opened in 1970 and operates from one room in an accessible building near the centre of Wellingborough, Northamptonshire. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The group provides three types of care facilities at different times. The pre-school is open during term-time only and sessions are daily from 9.00 am to 11.45 am and 12.30 pm to 3.00 pm. The out of school club is open daily during term-time and sessions are from 3.00 pm to 6.00 pm. Little Stones Holiday Club also operates from the same premises during school holidays and sessions are from 8.30 am to 5.30 pm daily.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 36 children aged from two years six months to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The setting serves both the local and wider community.

There are five members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least NVQ Level 3. The setting provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Most requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are in place, although some documentation is not up to date. Well qualified staff provide a broad and balanced curriculum which enables children to progress in all areas of learning. All children are welcomed and a 'voice of the child' sheet is used effectively to ensure staff are aware of their individual needs and preferences. Positive relationships with parents and most other settings children attend ensure that necessary information is exchanged, which contributes to children's welfare needs being well cared for. The setting have begun to reflect on their practice, identifying some areas of weakness and are able to demonstrate that most recommendations from their last inspection have been dealt with. They demonstrate a strong capacity for future improvement, which is particularly evident in the willingness of some staff to improve their knowledge and experience through training.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- notify Ofsted of changes to the individuals who form the management committee (Safeguarding and welfare) 03/12/2009
- ensure the safeguarding policy includes the procedure 03/12/2009

to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff (Safeguarding and welfare).

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

- record staff hours of attendance to evidence the maintenance of correct ratios
- develop the evaluation of planned activities to determine the level of achievement and to focus more on individualised learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded because staff understand the signs and symptoms that would cause them concern and what action to take as a result. They are able to discuss how any incidents involving staff would be handled, although the policy does not include these procedures so parents are unaware. All staff have been vetted, ensuring their suitability to work with children. However, some recent additions to the management committee have not been notified to Ofsted and as a result are not yet vetted, although they have no unsupervised access to children. Suitable measures keep children safe during sessions, with particular vigilance about the main exit at arrival and departure times, and children only access age-appropriate resources and equipment. Risk assessments highlight potential hazards to children, supplemented by a regular check, with resulting remedial action taken when issues are found, such as the outdoor area deemed unsafe currently due to partially collapsed fencing. The deployment of resources is good with staff ensuring that all areas of the room are in use, time is not wasted and that a wide range of resources are available to the children. These include additional indoor physical activities to compensate for the lack of the outdoor area and an appropriate range of resources promoting equality and diversity. Required documentation is mostly in place, but there are inconsistencies between versions of the policies available. Children's attendance is accurately recorded although that of the staff does not include times to evidence the maintenance of ratios. Regular attendance by students provides additional support for children.

Management have a realistic overview of current strengths and weakness and are able to describe their ambitions for the future. They are planning to complete their self-evaluation shortly. The manager is actively involved in daily activities and therefore is in a strong position to review staff effectiveness and evaluate children's progress. The committee provide financial and some administrative support, but leave the daily running of the group to the manager. Parents are provided with a variety of information about the setting, activities children engage in and have regular opportunities to discuss their child's achievements and progress. Information they provide supports staff's observations of their child's abilities, and they are encouraged to view these in their child's assessment files. Daily discussion, access to the planning and invitations to the sessions or onto the committee provide opportunities to be more involved in their child's learning.

Particularly positive relationships are formed with local childminders and schools for continuity of care and learning of those also attending other settings.

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

Children benefit from positive interaction with staff, who effectively support them through discussion during activities to establish their understanding of planned learning. However staff do not use evaluation fully to reflect this, or to highlight aspects that individuals need developing further the next week. Children clearly enjoy their time in the setting, making definite choices about which activities to access and how long to spend at them. They co-operate well to play a game of snakes and ladders, for example, or delight in developing their rhythmic dancing during a music and movement session. Books are enjoyed individually and in small groups, with a member of staff encouraging children to remember what happens in the group story before they read the page. Older children are beginning to link sounds and letters, and use the computer confidently. Many opportunities are provided to practise early mark making skills and creative activities are available each session as staff ensure that all areas of learning are covered in the planning. Regular observations and a variety of examples of evidence show that children are making good progress, with tracking sheets used termly to identify individual areas for development.

Overall outcomes for children are good. They move around the premises with confidence, and are aware of basic routines, showing that they feel safe. Their understanding of safety is developed further through robust routines on outings and opportunities to practise the fire drill. Children are beginning to learn about appropriate lifestyles through the provision of healthy snacks, easy access to drinks and regular opportunities for physical activities. They are encouraged towards independence with their personal hygiene, although using a shared towel for hand drying presents a risk of cross-infection. Children have good access to technology through their use of resources such as the computer, and also model the use of modern appliances during role play. They engage in activities in connection with cultural festivals which help broaden their understanding of the wider world. Children's behaviour is very good, due to high ratios, their engagement in activities and their understanding of what is expected of them at certain times. They are encouraged to develop the habits and behaviour appropriate to good learners and to respect others. As a result they share, take turns and are comfortable with their peers and adults.

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	2

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	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
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	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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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