

Little Stars

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date

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Inspector

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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*.

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 Stars (Workington) Limited is run by a board of directors. It opened in 2007 and operates from a building on the main street in Harrington, near to Workington, Cumbria. The children have use of a main play room for children aged from two to eight years, and a baby play room for children aged under two years. Children also have use of a sleep room. A maximum of 21 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The setting is open each weekday from 7am to 6pm throughout the year, apart from one week over the Christmas period and bank holidays. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area. The ground floor premises have ramped access at the back and front entrances.

There are currently 70 children aged from six months to eight years on roll. The setting does not provide places for children receiving funding for early education. Children come from the local and surrounding area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with additional needs.

The setting employs six staff. All of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are well cared for and are progressing well in relation to their starting points. However, systems for recording complaints and analysing children's progress have some weak areas. There are effective anti-discriminatory policies in place to make the setting inclusive to all. Parents receive good information about the setting, although policies are not all readily accessible to them. Liaison with other agencies involved in children's development are well in place to help children overcome any obstacles to their progress. Although there have been some problems in establishing links with some of the other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the nursery is working hard to overcome them. Self-evaluation tools are well used to analyse the performance of the nursery, using information from staff, parents and children to set action plans to improve the nursery. The setting takes account of local authority advice and support as well as parent's suggestions, showing a good attitude and commitment to continual improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review and consolidate assessment arrangements to promote children's progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning
- improve parents access to the setting's policies and procedures

- review systems to keep complaint records to ensure information meets confidentiality standards.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff are well aware of the possible indicators of abuse and understand the clear written procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a child, so protecting the children. All staff have had training in this area. Recruitment procedures are very robust, to ensure children are looked after by suitable persons. The setting carries out regular risk assessments and daily checks, to ensure any safety issues are quickly identified and addressed. Procedures and records ensure that the children's well-being is promoted at all times.

The manager has a clear, challenging vision for the nursery and has made significant improvements, developing the play space for children both inside the building and in the outdoor area. The staff group have been involved in self-evaluation and improvement plans and show a good motivation to work well as a team and improve the setting. They are working with local authority advisors and take account of their views, as well as those of parents and children, when self-evaluating their performance and making plans for the future. They are introducing open evenings for parents to exchange information about the setting and the children in response to parents' suggestions. Children have been able to contribute to how the outdoor play space was developed and the purchase of toys. Staff are well deployed throughout the nursery, sitting with the children at their level and interacting with them well. Resources are very accessible to the children and children enjoy exploring the inviting, interesting environment.

The nursery welcomes the parents and parents express a good level of satisfaction with the service received. Generally there is a very good level of information exchange with parents, however not all policies are readily accessible to parents at present. The nursery telephone parents to let them know about 'wow moments', to keep them well involved in their children's development and learning; diaries are kept to inform parents of the children's progress and welfare information. Partnerships with agencies and other providers of the EYFS are in place, although some other settings providing the EYFS have not responded to invitations to share information and to support the children's learning; children with additional learning needs receive good support.

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

Children are relaxed, well settled and making good progress. They purposefully explore their interesting environment, making good relationships with their peers and the staff. They are well behaved as staff remind them of good manners and provide good role models for them. They are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves and are developing skills of independence, for example, when using the bathroom or putting on their coats to go outside. Children benefit from having

warm relationships with staff. Staff use their skills well to promote children's learning and independence, and are on hand to offer support and encouragement. The key worker system helps ensure each child feels secure and able to develop a sense of belonging. There are good systems in place for staff to obtain information about children's starting points in learning. They use observation and assessment well to identify the children's next steps and incorporate this into plans for activities at the setting. However, the overall assessment of learning and development does not always take account of children's general developmental milestones, to identify any delays in their development. Children's individual interests are encouraged and planning is flexible, to allow interests to develop within their play. For example, staff notice babies' interest in bags in the role play area and provide more bags to stimulate and extend this interest.

The children are developing their independence, as they effectively attend to their own personal care needs and select resources. For example, older children happily go to the toilet themselves and wash their hands. Children feel safe and develop a sense of belonging, as they form close relationships with staff and other children in the setting. Staff remind children to be careful during play and involve them in practising fire evacuations, helping the children learn about keeping themselves safe. They learn about healthy eating through reading books with staff and learning about different foods in activities. Children are encouraged to try new tastes as they learn about foods from around the world. They have healthy balanced diets and ready access to water to meet their health needs. Children enjoy playing outside using slides and bikes. They enjoy the challenge of learning, and with support, negotiate the steps to the slide and enjoy experiencing rolling and riding bikes down a small slope. They show good spatial awareness, as they skilfully manoeuvre wheeled toys around the outdoor play area. They learn about forming letters as staff show them writing on a wet paint surface and children copy using their fingers to make marks. Children enjoy joining in with rhymes and the 'jolly phonics' programme, so learning to link sounds to letters. The children begin to gain knowledge about the world as they play with equipment that promotes a positive image of diversity, and as they take part in community events, such as fundraising for local charities. Young children and babies are encouraged to experiment and be creative, as they explore sand and water, and sensory equipment in treasure baskets. The children begin to learn skills that will help them to be successful in later life, such as, numeracy and literacy. Regular opportunities to count and use numbers within practical experiences and develop ideas about shape and size, encourage their mathematical awareness and problem solving skills. Electronic toys are available to the children to help them understand technology.

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?	2
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?	2
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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
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

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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	2
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