



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 251594

DfES Number: 548084

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	08/07/2004
Inspector Name	Mary Gilbert

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Little Stars Pre School
Setting Address	Kirkley Sports & Social Club Recreation Ground, Walmer Road Lowestoft Suffolk NR33 7LE

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Miss Allison Jane Bayfield
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ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

Little Stars is a privately run pre-school group. It opened under its present management in January 2001. It operates from a large hall in a community centre in Kirkley, Lowestoft. The pre-school serves the local area.

There are currently 52 children on roll. This includes 8 funded three year olds and 3 funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports a small number of children who have special needs and will support children who have English as an additional language.

The group opens 5 days a week during term time. Sessions are from 09:15 until 12:15.

Five part-time staff work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3.

The setting receives support from the early years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision of Nursery education at Little Stars Pre-school is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals in Communication, Language and Literacy, Mathematical Development, Knowledge and Understanding of the World and Physical Development are limited by some significant weaknesses in the provision. Children are making generally good progress in Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Creative Development.

The quality of teaching has some significant weaknesses. Staff are limited in their understanding of the Early Learning Goals and do not effectively plan for all areas of learning. Staff observe children and record their progress, but this is not linked to the Early Learning Goals. Staff work well as a team, and there is a keyworker system in place. Staff praise children's achievement, however there are some problems with behaviour in whole group sessions, partially due to the impact of the large group of two year olds in the group. Challenges are insufficiently focused to extend the older and more able children. SEN procedures are in place.

The management is generally good. The manager identifies the areas which need to be improved and is committed to providing good quality care and education. However as yet there is no system for appraisal or to monitor the quality of teaching.

The partnership with parents has some significant weaknesses. Parents are provided with written information about the setting, and regular update letters outlining what is happening in the setting. However there is no clear information regarding the Foundation Stage. Children's records are available to share with parents, however these are not linked to the Foundation Stage of learning.

What is being done well?

- The management is firmly committed to provide good quality care and education for all children.
- Staff work well as a team to provide a warm and welcoming learning environment.
- Children are encouraged to take turns and are given opportunities to work together in small and large groupings.
- The procedures for SEN are in place and staff work with parents and other professional to meet any individual special needs.

What needs to be improved?

- Planning to ensure all aspects of learning are identified and clearly linked to

the Early Learning Goals and the stepping stones to reach them.

- Assessment to ensure children's progress is monitored and recorded linked to the Early Learning Goals and the stepping stones to reach them.
- The outdoor provision to ensure children's safety and provide planned opportunities to use the outdoor environment for all areas of learning.
- Implement a system to monitor the quality of teaching.
- Implement an effective appraisal system.
- Develop written information for parents to enable them to understand and be involved in children's learning.

What has improved since the last inspection?
Not applicable

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children separate well from carers and interact with staff. They are learning to work together as a group and take turns. Children ask staff to help them see to their personal needs. Children are encouraged to think about why they should behave well, although there is some disruptive behaviour in large group activities. Children are encouraged to help in tidying up, but there are missed opportunities for them to develop their independence skills through the sessions e.g. using their name cards.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children develop ideas through role play. Staff intervene appropriately to extend their thinking. Children have access to their name cards, but this needs further development to encourage them to recognise their names and write them. There is a mark making area, and children access this freely. There are opportunities for children to share books and listen to stories. However there are no specific plans to develop children's understanding of linking sounds and letters or handwriting skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children have opportunities to extend their mathematical thinking through the use of games, puzzles and singing number rhymes. However there are few opportunities for children to recognise numbers or use for practical calculation or in problem solving. There are limited planned opportunities for children to extend their mathematical vocabulary or understanding of shape, space and measures.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children are given some opportunities to design and make using a range of materials. Community links are being developed by welcoming visitors from the police and fire service. However there are few opportunities provided for children to develop their skills of exploration and investigation in the environment. There is a computer available in the setting, but access to this is limited. Children celebrate their birthdays and other special events such as Christmas.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children use space well inside the setting, but there is a lack of resources to support all areas of physical development, such as climbing and balancing. Staff encourage children to develop appropriate hygiene routines through planned and unplanned activities. There is a limited range of equipment available to effectively develop children's gross and fine motor skills. Planning does not identify opportunities for the development of children's physical skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children are involved in a range of creative activities. They work in 2D and 3D. However the range of resources provided for children is limited. Music is a daily activity. Children sing a range of songs from memory and use actions and instruments to support their musical development. Children are involved in a range of imaginary play activities. Staff interact appropriately to develop their imagination.	
Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.	

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The next inspection will take place in one to two years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- Review planning to ensure it is linked to the Early Learning Goals and the stepping stones to reach them, all aspects of each area of learning is included and resources provided.
- Implement an effective assessment system linked to the Early Learning Goals and the stepping stones.
- Provide written information to parents with regard to the Foundation Stage of learning and implement systems to ensure that assessment records are shared regularly with parents.
- Implement a system to monitor the quality of teaching and develop an appraisal system for staff.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.