



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY219888

DfES Number: 547026

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	08/11/2004
Inspector Name	Christina Downey

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Little Stars Kindergarten
Setting Address	Newton Bromswold and Court Memorial Hall Rushden Road Newton Bromswold, Rushden Northamptonshire NN10 0SP

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Sally Cotter & Hayley Southwood
Address	Newton Bromswold and Court Memorial Hall Rushden Road Newton Bromswold, Rushden Northamptonshire NN10 0SP

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and 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 Kindergarten first opened in 2001. It operates from Newton Bromswold and Court Memorial Hall in the rural village of Newton Bromswold in East Northamptonshire. A maximum of 12 children may attend at any one time. Sessions operate from 09:15 to 12:30 each weekday during term-time. Optional extended sessions, for which children bring a packed lunch are offered until 13:15. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

At present there are 19 children on roll; of these 12 are in receipt of nursery education funding. Children come from a wide catchment area and travel in from several surrounding villages as well as local towns. There are currently no children attending who have special needs or who are learning to speak English as an additional language.

There are two full-time members of staff, both of whom hold appropriate childcare qualifications. The kindergarten receives support from Northamptonshire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

The quality and standard of the day care provided by Little Stars Kindergarten is good. The two members of staff both hold appropriate qualifications and attend regular short courses to keep their knowledge up to date. Ratios are good and children receive a good amount of individual attention. Supply staff receive good induction and fit into the group well. The attractive premises are well maintained and welcoming to children and their parents. The recently added outdoor area is used well. There is a variety of interesting and good quality resources and all records are very well organised, although the operational plan does not yet cover all aspects of the provision.

High priority is given to ensuring children are cared for safely. Regular risk assessments successfully minimise any hazards and any accidents are carefully recorded. Staff hold first aid qualifications and successfully maintain high standards

of hygiene. Children's dietary needs are met well and they have good access to fresh drinking water. Careful attention is also given to meeting other special needs and both staff have a secure understanding of procedures to protect children from abuse.

A wide range of interesting activities is provided daily and all children are included equally. Relationships in this small and friendly group are particularly good. The promotion of good behaviour is also a strength; staff demonstrate a sound understanding of the value of praise and encouragement and employ a consistent and age-appropriate approach.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Sufficient information is regularly exchanged to ensure children are cared for in accordance with parents wishes and involve them in activities. Parents are very supportive of the group and value highly the service it offers.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable

What is being done well?

- The promotion of children's feelings of security and the development of trusting relationships in this small and friendly group are pivotal to all aspects of its work. Children are welcomed and valued as individuals by the two consistent members of staff, and this gives them a secure base for exploring the varied opportunities that the group offers them.
- A good amount of information is shared with parents. This not only enables appropriate, safe care to be provided for each child, but also helps to ensure parents are involved in the group, for example, by bringing in items for display and sharing books with their child.
- The interesting and good quality resources are attractively presented and clearly organised. This enables children to approach new activities more confidently as they can see what is happening and understand what is expected.

What needs to be improved?

- the amount of detail in the operational plan.

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

There are no complaints to report.

Outcome of the inspection
Good

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION
<i>All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.</i>
<i>As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.</i>

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection	
Std	Recommendation
2	Continue to develop the operational plan and share it with parents.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Little Stars Kindergarten offers a good quality education programme and children make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The quality of teaching is generally good, with many strengths. Staff build warm relationships with the children, maintain their confidence and foster a positive attitude to learning. They provide good role models for the children, set clear and consistent boundaries and manage children's behaviour very well. The staff are gaining a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage which results in some well-planned activities which engage children's interest and support their progress. However, role play is not always planned in detail and availability of resources can limit children's free choice. All children are included equally and although there are currently no children with special educational needs attending the setting staff have a sound understanding of how to provide adequate support. They observe and assess aspects of children's learning and development regularly. This information is used when planning what children need to learn next and is discussed with parents.

The partnership with parents and carers is generally good, with many strong elements. It makes a very positive contribution to children's progress. Parents receive useful information about the education provision. This enables them to contribute ideas and objects and to talk with their children at home. Parents are involved successfully in the observation and assessment process. They share what they know about their child, and are well informed about their progress.

Leadership and management is generally good. Staff work well as a team to provide a caring and stimulating environment. They both attend local training events and continue to develop their skills. They are embarking on a recognised quality assurance scheme and this will continue to improve their ability to monitor the effectiveness of the education provision.

What is being done well?

- Children's confidence and self-esteem are promoted well. The small size of the kindergarten enables new children to face the wide variety of new experiences without feeling intimidated at any stage. The staff gently introduce them to the group, making sure they feel valued and respected. This places children in a strong position to benefit from the wide range of education opportunities on offer.
- There is a strong partnership with parents and carers. Much useful information is shared about children's progress and the group's activities. Parents are made to feel involved in their children's early education experiences and to support their learning at home.
- The quality of many aspects of the teaching is good. The well organised room layout and deployment of resources enables children to persist with activities,

either individually or in small groups and also encourages them to approach new activities confidently.

- Staff successfully encourage the children to extend their thinking by effective use of questions and place emphasis on promoting learning through talk.

What needs to be improved?

- access to large equipment
- depth and quality of children's role-play and opportunities for children to experiment with the different purposes of writing through play
- opportunities for children to choose from a wider range of tools and resources to make models, and represent their own ideas.

What has improved since the last inspection?

n/a

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Relationships within the group are very strong. Children have a positive attitude to new experiences and learn to play happily together. They are confident and secure, and their behaviour is good. Children take part in the varied range of activities with interest and successfully learn to persevere and take turns. They have useful scope to choose between activities but fewer opportunities to select their own resources. They have a growing awareness of the cultural diversity of modern society.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children communicate skilfully, speaking confidently in groups and listening carefully to both discussions and stories. They are introduced to rhyming words and develop an awareness of letter shapes and sounds. Many children learn to copy-write their names competently but generally spend too little time consolidating early skills through play first or finding out about the purpose of writing for themselves. They draw and paint using large arm movements and develop sound manipulative skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children have many worthwhile opportunities to develop their counting skills, and they use number names accurately. Children name different shapes and use simple computer programs to consolidate their learning. They use construction sets confidently and begin to describe and compare length, weight, shape and size. They explore capacity with the sand and water resources but some practical activities lack challenge for older children

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
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During outside play children observe changes in the weather and discover features of the countryside around them as they walk across the field to visit the local church. They explore the properties of various objects and materials such as sand, compost, mini-beasts, leaves and conkers, but have more limited scope to select their own resources for model making. Children begin to use the computer confidently and talk about past events whilst looking at photographs.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children handle a wide variety of small equipment and their manipulative skills are good. They learn to use knives and scissors safely. However, their access to large equipment is more limited. Children move with increasing control and assurance, both indoors and outside. They negotiate obstacles successfully as they run and ride bikes at speed, and move in a controlled manner in response to music. They learn to throw and catch, and have a sound awareness of healthy eating and hygiene practices.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children listen to a variety of music and musical instruments and learn to respond through singing and dance. They explore and describe some interesting textures, and are introduced to a varied range of useful painting techniques. Children work imaginatively with small world resources such as the dolls house and train track but their role play often lacks depth. They are not always able to choose resources to express their own ideas and feelings about their first hand experiences of the world.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- Improve the provision for children's role-play and ensure they have more opportunities to experiment with the different purposes of writing through play.
- Continue to increase opportunities for children to choose from a wider range of tools and resources to make models, and represent their own ideas with a variety of media.

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.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.