

Rising Stars

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Susan Scott

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Type of setting Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Rising Stars nursery was registered by its current owners in 2011 and was previously run by Kent County Council. The nursery operates from the ground floor of a purpose-built children's centre building. It is situated in the Milton Regis area of Sittingbourne, Kent. This group is owned and managed by a private company. The nursery is open from Mondays to Fridays from 8am until 6pm for 51 weeks of the year. All children have access to a secure, outdoor play area.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and may care for 26 children at any one time; six children may be under two years old. There are currently 66 children in the early years age group on roll. The group is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs 10 staff and nine staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications; one member of staff holds a degree in early years.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children show they feel safe because there are generally good systems implemented to safeguard their health and welfare and to ensure they feel secure and happy at the nursery. Frequent observations and assessments promote a good understanding of children's needs and preferences enabling staff to help children to make good progress in their development overall. Children enjoy exploring a variety of activities in an environment where staff are exceptionally sensitive to their individual needs. They benefit from interesting activities and experiences inside and outside and from shared planning for their next steps. Children's experiences are very positive and these are supported through comprehensive partnerships with other agencies and excellent relationships with parents and carers. Staff effectively evaluate the provision which enables them to continuously improve.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- help children further to learn to keep themselves and others safe
- extend risk assessment to cover anything with which a child may come into contact

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Leadership is good overall, and aspects of practice are outstanding. Staff have a very good understanding of safeguarding matters and have clear procedures for dealing with a variety of concerns. There are clear policies, procedures and records used, such as accident and medication records and written parental consents to provide further safeguards for children's welfare. The nursery staff complete daily checks to make sure the environment is safe and suitable for the children to use, and the building and facilities are well maintained, overall. The procedures to assess risks and systems to minimise identified hazards are generally effective. However, full consideration has not been given to all things children may come into contact with, for example how frequently resources should be cleaned. The play resources are appealing, plentiful, age-appropriate, and checked regularly to ensure they are in good condition, and staff are vigilant in their supervision of children.

Children are cared for in a secure and interesting environment. They freely access resources reflecting diversity, and staff provide written information in parents' home languages. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are extremely well supported by extra staff members, who give highly effective support and prioritise their individual needs. The manager is revising the self-evaluation using suggestions from staff to identify improvements to benefit the children and parents. For example, the setting has prioritised the transition to school for children who are leaving soon. Staff have used the information to plan visits to the main feeder schools and offer support to parents and children in accessing information from these schools. Play experiences successfully enhance children's learning. For example, activities using school uniforms and lunch boxes during the last term of the year help prepare children for school. Staff adapt the play environment to suit the children's individual interests and ages and stages of development. The continual review of provision allows staff to keep building upon the quality of the provision. A good awareness of the needs of children and constant participation in a variety of training invigorate the practice and enthusiasm of the strong staff team.

An excellent two-way flow of information between staff and parents takes place. Information is shared when staff complete home visits, and children first begin at the nursery. Staff ensure they regularly make parents aware of children's ongoing achievements and any concerns they may have. The use of frequent, shared assessments, contact books and children's unique story records enable continuing parental contributions. The staff have exceptionally positive relationships with parents, and together they meet the individual needs of the children. Inclusion is promoted impressively. All parents spoken to at the inspection expressed their extreme appreciation of the service they receive and described how the excellent efforts of staff enable their children to settle extremely well and make progress. The staff welcome a wide range of other professionals into the setting, including health visitors and teachers from local schools, which further supports children's

development. There is frequent contact with the adjoining children's centre, and staff work in cooperation with a range of professionals to secure the highest levels of welfare possible for the children.

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

Children settle well and are happy here. They feel very secure in the setting because staff create a welcoming and nurturing atmosphere, which promotes their feelings of trust. Staff frequently record what children achieve, noting their observational assessments against each area of learning. The staff construct good opportunities for children to develop their skills and understanding by identifying activities and resources that can be used to support individuals. These are incorporated into plans by key workers, and all children's development is tracked to ensure they make progress in every area of learning. Staff accurately identify children's additional needs and special educational needs or disabilities. Plans are flexible and are adapted to take account of these needs, and children benefit from the one-to-one sensitive support which promotes their progress.

Staff successfully support children's independence and promote opportunities for them to make their own choices. All children can freely choose from a good selection of toys and resources inside and outside. Those who like to spend time playing with water use small watering cans to pour from, while others like to role play or use the slides and climbing apparatus. Children can access a variety of paper, pencils, glue and stamps to use. They use paintbrushes with water to make marks if they are reluctant to engage in drawing and writing.

Children learn how to respond to emergencies as they frequently practise evacuations, and staff plan these well, varying the route out of the building so that children build upon their understanding of different situations. Children develop an awareness of their own health by enjoying opportunities to discuss the foods they eat, and they learn the benefits of a healthy diet. Their dietary needs and preferences are noted, and are used by staff serving the food to ensure their health and safety.

The interesting activities and routines promote children's confidence and enable them to feel valued as staff are always ready to respond positively to their needs. Children's behaviour is very positive as they are sensitively reminded to be kind to each other if the need arises. Staff employ very positive strategies to manage children's behaviour, using clear and calm reminders so the children recognise right from wrong. Children's relationships with each other reflect the good role models of the staff, who are attentive, kind, but clear in their expectations. Children are able to safely participate and enjoy their play, while also taking some risks. However, children have not been taught how to use the low metal climbing frame in the safest way, and some are unsure about how to climb down the rungs when they do not have staff help.

Children enjoy their play and learning as staff recognise their interests and extend their play by encouraging further contributions. For example, when sitting and sharing a book with staff, a small group of children were challenged to learn new vocabulary and to discuss their own ideas and experiences. Children freely help themselves to a variety of books, confident in the expectation that staff will sit and share these with them. This makes them feel valued because staff are interested in them. Children are developing good communication skills as staff skilfully ask questions and prompt children to talk about their ideas and choices.

Children enjoy their mealtimes, when they serve themselves from large bowls and pour their own drinks from a small jug. This fosters their independence successfully. Children have healthy appetites and learn how to care for plants which they grow and harvest. They have grown tomatoes and beans which they ate. They benefit from an adventurous menu of multicultural dishes such as Caribbean chicken and Singapore noodles, and are stimulated to discuss various foods and cultures from this. The children also learn how to keep themselves healthy through such discussions, and staff extend their understanding by talking about their bodies and what is good for them. Children learn when and why they should wash their hands and most do so independently.

Children are encouraged to clap and count the number of bounces they make on the trampoline, which provides them with an understanding of numbers. Staff acknowledge their achievements, which enables children to feel a sense of pride when they do this. They also develop their understanding of time through the way routines are used, and they enjoy learning about their community from visitors to the nursery. For example, the local fire service visits so that children learn about safety. This promotes their social confidence and understanding of the roles of the adults in the community. Children explore wildlife by examining the 'bug hotel' to see which insects take up residence there so they learn about features of the natural world. Children confidently use the computer and independently select the programmes they like, building upon their understanding of language, colours, and shapes.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	1
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	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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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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