

Little Stars Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

Jane Wakelen

Setting address

Kemsley Village Hall, Ridham Avenue, Kemsley,
SITTINGBOURNE, Kent, ME10 2SF

Telephone number

07432145378

Email

littlestarsenquiries@hotmail.co.uk

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

Little Stars Nursery opened in 2012 and operates from two rooms in a community hall. It is situated in the village of Kemsley, Sittingbourne, Kent. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. It is open each weekday from 9am to 3pm, term time only. Children may attend from 9am to 12pm or 12pm to 3pm.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 40 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 17 children in the early years age range on roll. The nursery provides funded early education for three and four year old children.

There are four members of staff including the manager, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children settle well and feel safe and secure because staff treat each child with equal consideration. The environment is welcoming although displays do not fully reflect children's backgrounds and interests. Staff have a sound understanding of the learning and development requirements and plan a range of activities that cover most of the six areas of learning. However, planning is not fully established and therefore does not reflect plans for individual children's learning needs. There are fewer opportunities for children to use information and communication technology (ICT) to support their learning. Parents feel comfortable and well informed at the nursery, sharing information, both verbally and through written communication. The manager is enthusiastic and is developing an evaluation of the service she offers with her committed team of staff. She has identified some strengths and areas to develop, such as information technology, to promote outcomes for children and provide continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the planning to focus on children's individual and present learning needs, or interests and achievements
- plan an environment that is rich in signs, symbols, notices, numbers, words, rhymes, pictures, music and songs that take into account children's different interests, understandings, home backgrounds and cultures
- develop opportunities for children to find out about and learn how to use appropriate information technology such as computers and programmable toys that support their learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff give high importance to safeguarding to provide a safe place for children to play. Staff have all attended training and implement the well-written policy effectively. Information is in place together with all the relevant phone numbers and contact information therefore staff are able to follow procedures to protect children. All staff have had the relevant suitability checks carried out and have regular appraisals to help ensure their continuing suitability. Staff carry out thorough risk assessments and these help them provide a safe environment for children to play and highlight and minimise any hazards. Children are further protected in the event of an accident because staff hold first aid certificates and obtain permission for emergency medical treatment from the parents.

Children play with a good range of resources both indoors and outdoors. The resources are easily accessible and well maintained, providing interesting activities and opportunities for children to explore. The staff divide the room up into the six areas of learning, enabling children to make informed choices. Some resources reflect diversity, such as books, jigsaws and books. There are fewer signs, symbols, notices and words displayed to reflect the children's backgrounds and interests. The staff know their key children well and obtain thorough information from the parents through the booklet 'all about me'. Staff are aware of those children who speak English as an additional language and work with the parents to support their understanding of English.

Staff work well in partnerships with parents and carers. The good settling-in process provides support for children and parents in separating. This process is further enhanced by good, personal information obtained from the parents about their child's individual needs. Parents receive effective information about the nursery, including the policies and procedures. They use a daily contact book which provides a useful method for two-way communication. This ensures good sharing of information to keep both the key person and the parent informed about the child's progress. Learning journeys are being developed for each child offering the opportunity for parents to contribute to this process to further support children's development. Partnerships with other providers are gradually being established as the nursery develops and becomes fully established.

The manager is competent and committed to providing an environment which is conducive to children's learning. She works well with her motivated team of staff to establish a place where children feel valued and respected. Regular team meetings provided a good forum for the staff and manager to discuss improvements and ways to further develop the practice. A system of self-evaluation is being developed, to identify strengths and areas to improve, promoting continuous improvement.

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

Children are settled and move around the nursery environment making choices of activities from the appropriate range. Children have opportunities to make marks with different mediums and paint using brushes or their hands. Books are displayed in a cosy book area, encouraging children to use books to share with each other and the staff. However, signs and labels are limited around the setting, preventing further continuation of promoting sounds and letters. Children are able to develop their imagination in the well-resourced role play area, which is connected to the nursery theme. They are able to learn about the world they live in, in addition to acting out familiar roles from home. Children further develop their knowledge of the world through exploration, building and designing using construction toys and small world resources. Children have good opportunities to develop their large and small physical skills because of access to a large hall and good outdoor space. They have fun painting with water, riding their hobby-horses or digging in the sand. Opportunities to plant seeds for lettuces and carrots and grow strawberries, offer children the opportunity to learn about food using their senses. They also help care for the nursery's African snail and water the nursery flowers, further developing their understanding about living things.

Staff all act as key people to the children and carry out regular observations of their learning. They are developing a good knowledge of their key children and designing learning journeys to reflect children's learning and development. However, planning at present does not fully reflect the needs of individual children, resulting in some children not being able to fully extend their learning in all six areas. There are some weaknesses in numeracy and information technology. For example, numbers are not displayed and used around the room or used in practical activities to promote number recognition and counting. Children have less access to resources to promote their knowledge of information and communication technology. Staff recognise the importance of communication and talk to the children all the time, asking appropriate questions to extend children's language skills. Children therefore, develop suitable skills for their future learning.

Children have good opportunities to gain a positive understanding about the importance of living a healthy lifestyle. They eat a good range of healthy snacks and staff fully promote this time as a social occasion. Children have access to drinking water at all times and show their independence helping themselves to drinks throughout the day. Good hygiene routines are in place, with children understanding why they must wash their hands and when, explaining 'they wash away germs'. Large physical play is offered on a daily basis, both indoors and outdoors. Children have access to a wide range of resources, developing their physical awareness and benefitting from the fresh air and exercise.

Children learn about keeping themselves safe. They learn good spatial awareness when running around the hall, taking care to avoid each other when galloping on the hobby horses. Children learn the importance of washing hands after digging in the sand outside and planting the vegetables in the soil. Fire drills are implemented and children have to be accompanied to the toilet, due to the location of these in

the building. This further enhances children's understanding of safety and how to keep themselves safe.

Children play well together, learning to share the toys and take turns using the equipment and resources. They are treated with respect and valued as individuals by the staff, promoting children's confidence and self-esteem. Children are encouraged to be independent, making choices of activities and changing their shoes on arrival. They self-register and have their own named trays on arrival providing a sense of belonging to the setting. However, activities and opportunities to learn about different cultures and religions, together with displays around the room to reflect children's interests and backgrounds, are still being developed.

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	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
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	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
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	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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