

Sparkling Stars Montessori & Daycare

31-33 Farriers Way, BOREHAMWOOD, Hertfordshire, WD6 2TB

Inspection date	24/05/2013
Previous inspection date	19/05/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	3
	Previous inspection:	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is satisfactory

- Children are happy and secure as staff treat them with kindness, leading to the development of trusting relationships.
- Children's activities, observation and assessment have recently been reviewed and these are proving to be effective so that children's interests are used more in planning purposeful activities.
- The manager and her team work well together and are committed to developing the nursery and drive improvement.

It is not yet good because

- Self-evaluation is not rigorous enough to provide careful monitoring, analysis and self-challenge. It does not include the views of children and all the senior management team so that priorities for development are well known
- Children's meals are not always cooked using fresh ingredients. Younger children are not always given the opportunity to choose and select food so that their knowledge about healthy eating and independence is fully promoted at snack and lunch times.
- The organisation of the role play areas in the toddler and pre-school means that children are not able to easily access resources to further develop their play and learning.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities and carried out a joint observation with the manager of the provision.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation, evidence of suitability of staff working within the nursery and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector spoke to the children, the provider, the manager and staff at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke to parents to discuss their views about the nursery.

Inspector

Maura Pigram

Full Report

Information about the setting

Sparkling Stars Montessori and Daycare registered in 2010 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in a converted building in Borehamwood, Hertfordshire. It is one of two nurseries managed by the providers. The nursery serves the local area. It is a two-storey property and operates from four base rooms. The property does not have a lift for access to the pre-school room. There is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 16 members of childcare staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and five staff members have level 2 qualifications. Four staff members are working towards a level 3 qualification in early years. The manager is due to start a Foundation Degree in Early Years in the near future. The nursery also employs a cook. They receive support from an advisor from the Local Authority. There are 73 children on roll.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- ensure meals provided are always healthy, balanced and nutritious
- improve the educational programmes for personal, social and emotional development and expressive arts and design. For example, provide opportunities for children transferring to pre-school to develop self-help skills at meal times, and ensure role play areas are well resourced.

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- develop the self-evaluation process so that it includes the views of the children and the support of the providers so that planned actions to overcome identified priorities for improvement are rigorous and robust.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Overall, staff are developing their understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage, learning and development requirements. They have recently reviewed their observation

and assessment systems so that all staff contribute to children's progress. Topics are generally focused on the time of year and various themes. Staff are beginning to reflect children's learning styles and individual interests and needs into their planning to support children's progress. They observe the children on a regular basis and use both written descriptions and photographs of the children at their activities. These are used to reference the learning taking place, and staff are becoming more familiar with the guidance documents to assess children's progress. They are using this information to plan for the next stage in their learning. Staff working with younger children carry out the 'Progress check at age two' when the need arises. These are shared with parents so that the next steps in their children's learning can be discussed. This contributes to the close partnership with parents. Detailed information is gained from parents when their children start at the nursery. This provides appropriate details of each child's needs, routines and interests for the key person to use in support of them settling in.

Children in the pre-school room love books. They relish taking the role of the 'teacher' and read stories to their friends who sit attentively on chairs or cushions. Children also have opportunities to choose books and bring them home. This promotes an early interest in books and the enjoyment of reading for pleasure. Children are beginning to develop early writing skills, they draw pictures related to topics such as, 'food we eat'. However, opportunities for them to write for a purpose, such as, making shopping lists in the home area or recording telephone messages are not available in the home area. Resources are mostly easily available although the organisation of imaginative play items, such as dressing up materials are not easily seen by children. The Montessori resources are not currently been used as staff are not trained in this field. Children display generally good characteristics of effective learning as they confidently help themselves to the arts and craft materials available to them. They concentrate for long periods of time producing individual pictures of their choice. This means that they develop good levels of self-esteem. They confidently use tools, such as glue and scissors, safely.

Staff generally use impromptu moments to extend children's knowledge. For example, a discussion takes place about electricity following children's questions about a visiting electrician. This introduces new words to their vocabulary and helps them make links in their learning. An appropriate range of resources is available to promote children's mathematical thinking, such as, board games based on shapes, puzzles and construction activities. This is further supported by the staff incorporating counting into the routine of the day. For example, children confidently count how many knives and forks are needed at lunch time. Staff provide worksheets to children on parent's requests. Children who speak English as an additional language are appropriately supported. Staff work closely with parents to introduce familiar words to children at home and in the nursery to help them develop their understanding of English.

Staff take time to be with the babies and younger children. They engage them and join in with their play. Children acquiring new skills, such as, crawling and walking, are well supported. For example, they enjoy freely choosing to use push along toys to develop their new skills. In addition, they enjoy looking at books and cuddle staff members showing that they enjoy rhymes and stories. Children's art work and photographs are displayed showing that they experience a range of experiences, such as, exploring paint and sand. Parents are regularly informed about their children's progress through daily

discussion and the sharing of daily communications books showing care routines and activities children have enjoyed. Children's learning journals are available for them to view at any time. Parents are encouraged to contribute to their children's learning through discussions and the sharing of children's achievements, obtained outside of the nursery. For example, they are informed about the 'sound of the week' so that they can also discuss this at home. Overall, children are appropriately developing a range of skills to aid their readiness for the next stage in their learning, such as, starting nursery or school.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Babies and children are developing close relationships, which are warm and caring with both staff and each other. They show a positive sense of belonging and are at ease to go to staff for comfort, reassurance and support when needed. A key person is assigned to each child. They know their children well and work closely with parents, regarding routines, so that care needs can be effectively met. Transitions within the nursery are sensitively managed so that children feel comfortable and secure in their new surroundings. For example, regular visits between rooms take place and information about each child's needs is exchanged between key workers. This supports children's personal, social and emotional development.

Some steps are taken to promote healthy eating, such as, topics related to food. During this time older children enjoy making fruit kebabs and healthy pizzas. However, opportunities to further promote all children's understanding about healthy eating choices are not fully promoted. Although meals are cooked on the premises, frozen or processed products are mainly used. This is a breach of the statutory requirement to provide meals that are healthy, balanced and nutritious. Children's dietary needs are well known. Positive steps are taken to ensure preferences and allergies are well known. Clear documentation provides visual aids for staff, to ensure no children are offered food that are not able to have. Staff are helpful to the children; they sit with babies and encourage them to develop independent skills, such as, feeding themselves. Older children are helped to master the skills of using knives and forks to eat their food. They help to lay the table at lunch time, choose their snacks and are able to pour their own drinks. However, staff serve younger children's meals and snacks. This means that opportunities to involve all children fully in the preparation of meals and snacks so that knowledge and independent skills regarding food they eat are not fully developed.

Children manage their personal care very well. For example, they independently use the bathroom and know when to wash their hands. Nappy changing procedures fosters good hygiene. Babies are able to sleep according to their needs and are comforted when needed. The routine of the nursery and parents' wishes means that other children are encouraged to have a sleep or rest following lunch. Staff provide an appropriate range of opportunities for babies and children to develop their physical skills. Older children explore the slide, ride wheeled vehicles, balance on beams and take turns on the scooter. All children have regular play in the enclosed garden where they can take safe supervised risks in their play. They are developing an effective understanding about keeping themselves safe. For example, outdoors they are able to negotiate space to ride their

favourite toys. Gentle reminders ensure that the pre-school children know how to use the stairs safely. Physical activity is also promoted through the music and movement sessions which are offered from a visiting provider.

Staff work well together, adopting a consistent approach to children's behaviour. Children know what is expected of them. For example, they make sure they have enough room to put on their coats and shoes, without bumping into each other as they get ready to go outdoors. Staff praise children for their achievements and use effective techniques to resolve issues. This promotes good levels of self-esteem and helps children learn how to treat each other with respect. This contributes effectively to preparing children for the next stage in their learning such as mixing with others when they start nursery or school. Younger children are helped to learn right from wrong through calm interaction and consistent messages.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a clear understanding of safeguarding procedures. They attend training on a regular basis, which keeps them up-to-date with current practice, and enables them to be fully aware of what procedures to follow in the event of a concern. Safe recruitment procedures are followed to ensure all those who work with children are suitable to do so. The recommendations made at the last inspection have been addressed. For example, risk assessment audits on all equipment and resources are carried out. This enables any potential hazards to be identified and minimised. In addition, staff have worked hard to develop the outdoor area so that it is bright and welcoming.

Monitoring of the nursery is carried out by the manager and her staff. They have identified some areas to develop, such as, continuous staff training. The manager has been working closely with a professional from the local authority to assess how well they are meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements and the learning and development requirements. Together they are effectively monitoring the children's educational programme. This is an on-going process and has led to changes being made to the way observations and assessments are completed. These are in their early stages of development; staff are embracing the changes so that they can monitor children's progression more closely. As a result of the local authority support they have introduced 'guided planning' to support children's overall development. This is showing signs of success in the toddlers' room where the changing of the layout of the environment resulted in children exploring areas of learning that were previously unexplored.

Core training for all staff is supported. For example, first-aid and safeguarding training is given priority. In addition, several of the staff are undertaking additional qualifications. This shows that they are committed to developing their knowledge and skills further. The providers give the manager and her team a free hand to manage the day-to-day operations of the nursery. They visit the nursery on a weekly basis to support the manager and are in regular contact during the week by phone or e-mail to discuss issues if they arise. There is a self-evaluation in place and some aspects for development have

been identified such as, continued development of observations, assessment and planning. However, the self-evaluation is in early stages of development. As a result, it does not yet include all aspects or the views of children and the provider so that priorities for development are clearly identified. The manager discusses day to day operations with the providers. However, the manager and staff do not receive sufficient input from the providers to support every aspect of the development of the nursery. The manager's role means that she divides her time between the children's base rooms and administration duties. She is well supported by her deputy and senior staff members. Staff supervision, appraisals, regular team meetings and informal discussions means that staff are supported in their roles. Some staff members are currently working towards further qualifications. New staff complete a detailed induction to ensure they are familiar with the nurseries policies and procedures. All records of children including accidents or incidents are carefully maintained and shared with parents. Written records, such as the daily communication books are overseen by the manager to ensure they consistently contain useful information for parents. Daily safety checks along with security cameras ensure all areas used by children are as safe and secure as possible at all times.

The manager is aware of the need to continually update parents about the expectations of the revised Early Years Foundation Stage. She is reviewing methods on how best to achieve this with parents of the pre-school children. Parents are complimentary of the manager and the staff. Some of the children have been attending since babies and so have built a close and trusting relationship with the staff team. They state that their children are always happy and enjoy coming to the nursery. The manager understands the importance of working in partnership with other agencies to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities when the need arises.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY415259
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	879853
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	53
Number of children on roll	73
Name of provider	Sparklestars Limited
Date of previous inspection	19/05/2011
Telephone number	07884182777

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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