

Little Stars Day Nursery

Buchanan Centre, Capper Road, Waterbeach, Cambridge, CB25 9LY

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

20/03/2014

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

3

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

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 requires improvement

- Partnerships with parents are warm and positive. Parents feel the staff are approachable and keep them well informed about their children's activities and well-being.
- Children have good opportunities to be creative and use all of their senses through open-ended resources, such as, dough, sand, water and soil.
- Support for practitioners' professional development is sound and they are steadily increasing their teaching skills.
- Recruitment procedures are robust and staff have a secure understanding of the safeguarding requirements, enabling all children to play safely.

It is not yet good because

- Teaching skills are variable and not all staff have a consistent understanding of how to effectively support and extend young children's learning. As a result, not all make good progress.
- Staff do not always use their observations and assessments effectively to provide activities that closely match children's individual learning needs. This means that activities sometimes lack challenge, which affects children's enthusiasm for learning.
- The monitoring of staff practice and observation and assessment is not robust enough to fully support staff to strengthen their practice to ensure all children make the best progress possible.

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 had discussions with the owner and staff during the inspection.
- A sample of documentation was examined, including policies and procedures, staff recruitment records, registers and the children's learning records.
- The inspector observed the children at play in both group rooms and outdoors.
- The inspector spoke with a number of parents during the inspection to find out their views on the quality of the provision.

Inspector

Veronica Sharpe

Full report

Information about the setting

Little Stars Day Nursery was registered in 2013 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from purpose built premises in the village of Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire. Children play in three playrooms and there is direct access to two enclosed outdoor areas.

There are currently 25 children on roll, who attend for a variety of sessions. There are seven members of staff who work directly with the children, including the owner/manager. Of these, four hold early years qualifications at level 3 and one at level 2. Two members of staff are currently working towards qualifications. Opening times are Monday to Friday for 51 weeks of the year from 8am until 6pm. The nursery is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance. The nursery offers early years funding to eligible two-, three- and four-year-old children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- improve the consistency of the quality of teaching to ensure all children are challenged in their learning and supported to make the best progress possible
- develop further the use of observation and assessment to improve the educational programme and plan challenging and relevant activities that more closely match children's individual learning needs.

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

- strengthen the monitoring of teaching practice and observation and assessment to develop a more consistent understanding of children's learning needs and their rate of development.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall, activities adequately promote children's learning across all the areas of learning and some children make good progress. Most members of staff demonstrate a secure understanding of how children learn and develop. However, teaching skills are variable and not all staff have the confidence to support children effectively and extend their learning. As a result, opportunities to fully promote children's learning are sometimes

overlooked. For example, while staff sit alongside young children during a painting activity, they do not always effectively engage with them to help children think about colour, texture or size. Older children, by contrast, enjoy a stimulating session planting seeds. A senior member of staff extends their interest through skilful questioning and leads them to think about what seeds might need for successful growth. As a result, children understand that seeds need water to drink and sunshine to grow. Staff carry out observations of children's activities and achievements and formulate their next steps. However, these are not always used effectively to plan tailored activities that closely match children's specific interests. Consequently, children's interest is sometimes not sustained and they are not always engaged in stimulating activities that completely meet their learning needs. This has the potential to affect their readiness for school.

The nursery places an emphasis on developing children's confidence through sensory play. For example, older children explore a mud kitchen in the garden and mix up soil with water; they enjoy making imaginary 'strawberry soup' or 'mud chocolate'. Children's language development is appropriately supported through friendly conversations with staff, storytelling and singing. Young children benefit from some one-to-one contact with their key person, where they explore books or small world toys, which suitably develops their confidence and sense of belonging. Children's interest in the wider world is stimulated by occasional visitors, such as exotic reptiles and insects. Older children benefit from a well-equipped role play area where they dress-up as builders, or find a baby doll to dress. Staff support them well here by joining in wearing the hats and providing water for the pretend baby's bath, talking about the activities. Younger children show an interest in the nursery rabbit. A member of staff teaches them to identify dandelions and they pick them enthusiastically and feed them one-by-one to the rabbit. This helps them to learn to care for other living things. Staff make writing materials available in all areas of the nursery. Younger children benefit from physical activities, such as kneading play dough, or painting with chunky brushes to develop the muscles they need for holding pencils and other tools that make marks. Staff support older children to use writing materials in their play, such as in the role play area. This enables children to adequately improve their understanding of early writing and prepare them for the next stage of their learning, including school.

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

Children have built secure links with their key person and show affection for other staff. Older children enter the nursery enthusiastically and separate easily from their parent. Younger children happily snuggle into the laps of their key person and show confident attachments to those around them. Parents have opportunities to visit the nursery several times to settle their children and complete an 'all about me' form. This enables staff to follow home routines and understand about children's individual care needs. Staff are kind, attentive and caring, they follow clear procedures regarding respect and appropriate language to children and each other. This gives children good role models and helps them to develop positive behaviour. Not all the activities fully engage the children, which means that they are occasionally aimless. Nonetheless, they play harmoniously together and their behaviour is good. At times, children free-flow around the nursery, which familiarises them with other rooms, adults and children. This helps to prepare them for their move into the

older age groups.

The nursery is well equipped with plentiful, accessible resources to ensure children are suitably occupied. The outdoor areas are available at intervals through the day, enabling children to benefit well from fresh air and exercise. Staff effectively support children to use their senses by providing open-ended resources, such as sand, water and soil. They help children to learn about acceptable risk as they encourage them to clamber on logs and balance on tree stumps. Older children are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions, for example, as they tidy away plates after mealtimes. All of the children participate in regular fire drills to help them know what to do in an emergency. This gives them some of the skills they need for their future learning. The nursery provides a range of nutritious meals and snacks that reflect children's individual dietary needs. Food is sourced locally and organic where possible. Meals are prepared and cooked on site freshly each day. Children sit together in social groups to eat, where they enjoy sociable conversation with staff and each other. Staff plan food related activities to help children learn about the benefits of healthy foods, such as identifying which foods are good for them and why.

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

In the short time since opening the owners of the nursery have focused on ensuring all the safeguarding aspects of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage are securely implemented. Staff have a clear understanding of the procedures that protect children from child abuse. Most have attended at least basic training to build their confidence. All the mandatory training has been completed, such as first aid, special educational needs and behaviour management. Consequently, staff show a solid understanding of their roles and responsibilities to promote children's safety and welfare. Robust recruitment and induction procedures ensure adults who have contact with children are suitable and appropriately qualified. Thorough risk assessments are carried out, so that children play in a safe and secure environment. All required documentation is complete and easily available.

The nursery has been successful and recruitment swift. The new staff team are still building their teamwork and identifying their own strengths and weaknesses. Although, the owner has begun to monitor the quality of teaching, this is at an early stage. Therefore, there are differentials in staffs' confidence and their ability to deliver consistent good teaching, not yet addressed. Additionally, the monitoring of observations and assessments is not thorough enough to ensure a more consistent understanding of children's achievements and learning needs. As a result, not all children make good progress. However, staff are supported well in their professional development and are steadily increasing their skills. For example, some have attended workshops in supporting two-year-old children to provide more effective support for this age range. Several members of staff are currently working towards higher qualifications to increase their skills. The manager has begun supervision meetings with staff and further initiatives, such as peer observations, are planned. This, coupled with an ambitious self-evaluation and action plan, shows the nursery has a secure capacity for improvement.

Good partnerships with parents contribute well to children's well-being. Parents indicate they are very pleased with the nursery and praise the warmth and friendliness of staff. An informative nursery notice board and regular verbal feedback from staff keeps parents well informed about their children's activities and welfare. Partnerships with other providers are developing well, for example, children have attended some joint events at the school and local pre-school groups. The owner is proactive in building links with other early years providers, so good practice can be shared. The nursery has not yet transferred children from the nursery into school. However, staff show they understand the importance of preparing children for this important next step in their learning.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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	EY469586
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	939875
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	62
Number of children on roll	25
Name of provider	Little Stars Day Nursery inc Ltd
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	07877317361

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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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