

Little Stars Pre School

St Thomas Church Hall, Rhodes Avenue, Rossendale, BB4 4JS

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

11/09/2014

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision	2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Children's learning is promoted successfully as a result of effective teaching methods. In particular, staff create a vibrant, stimulating and accessible indoor environment, ignite children's natural curiosity as learners and help children to consolidate their learning through well planned and interesting first-hand experiences.
- Staff recognise the value of working closely with parents and/or carers, especially during the settling-in period, knowing it is crucial to foster children's emotional well-being and sense of security. Consequently, there are strong channels of communication, which promotes a shared and consistent approach.
- Effective risk assessments and robust safeguarding arrangements, including thorough recruitment and vetting, ensures that children's welfare is promoted extremely well.
- Children are developing good levels of independence and a sense of responsibility as a result of positive reinforcements from staff and well-organised care routines and activities.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not always consistently monitor the engagement of some new children, in order to provide further levels of support that helps them develop their levels of focus and concentration.
- Outdoor resources are not as successful in facilitating children's creative play and exploration.

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 compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities and care routines in the playroom, bathroom and outside learning environment.
- The inspector spoke with children and staff at appropriate times throughout the inspection and conducted a joint observation with the provider.
- The inspector held a meeting with the provider.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with children, the provider's self-evaluation form and improvement plans.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Rachel Ayo

Full report

Information about the setting

Little Stars Pre School has been a long-standing provision, which was registered again in 2014 under new ownership by a private individual on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It operates from St Thomas Church Hall in the Helmshore area of Rossendale, Lancashire. It serves the children of the local and wider areas and is accessible to all children. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday, from 7.30am to 2.30pm, term time only. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Children are cared for in one main playroom with access to a smaller adjacent room and an enclosed outdoor play area. Access to the pre-school is via a small flight of steps. There are currently 29 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age range. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The pre-school employs six members of childcare staff, including the provider, who is also the manager. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications; four at level 3 and one at level 2. The provider holds Early Years Professional status. The pre-school receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- support all new children more effectively, for example, by monitoring their engagement more closely, in order to help them maintain focus and sustained concentration
- enhance children's imaginative play and exploration outdoors, for example, by providing flexible resources, including natural media and materials, which can be used, moved and combined in many different ways.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have a good understanding the seven areas of learning and how children learn. Consequently, they provide a varied curriculum, based on a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities, which motivate children, including through first-hand experiences. For example, children go on bus journeys during which they match things they observe to a laminated photograph document. Furthermore, staff use local outings to support children's understanding of their own community and other countries by visiting a local travel agent's as part of the role-play area, which they set up. They also invite visitors in, such as a nurse, helping children to learn about different roles within the community. Alongside children's next steps for learning being incorporated into planning, staff note children's interests and reflect these in their provision. For example, following children's

interest in a book about space, an exciting space-themed role-play area is set up. Staff use different resources, media and materials to create the surface of the moon and children delight in imaginary play as they sit in the pop-up rocket while staff countdown to blast off. Staff undertake a formal assessment of what children know and can do once they have settled, then carry out regular observations and assessments, including progress summaries. Records of learning show that children are making good progress and they are working comfortably within the typical range of development expected for their age.

There are effective arrangements for informing parents and carers about their children's learning and for encouraging them to support learning at home, in order for children to make the best progress they can. For example, parents and carers are continually informed about children's progress and next steps for learning, including through progress reports being shared. In addition, parents' meetings take place and provide a more formal forum for discussing children's progress. Home resources, such as the weekend bear, involve parents and carers further in their children's learning. Also, they are invited into the setting to engage in activities with children, such as baking. The indoor environment is particularly stimulating, well-resourced and welcoming. This is reviewed and adapted continually to ensure that areas are well used by children and provide good-quality learning experiences. However, children's outdoor experiences are not always fully maximised. This is because resources are not as successfully used, in order to provide a richer and more varied learning environment.

Children are eager to join in and are interested and engaged. They have ample opportunities to initiate their own play and consequently, they develop a positive approach to learning and develop skills that prepare them for moving onto school. This is supported through teaching, which is of good quality. For example, as children show great imagination while engaging in creative activities, staff model being a thinker and encourage them to test things out. They provide ample time for children to consider possible answers and respond, for instance, they ask them how a particular colour has been made. Staff encourage children to solve problems, identify solutions and overcome challenges. As they accidentally tear their paper while removing this from the painting easel to dry, staff ask them how they might fix this. Children use their initiative well as they suggest using sticky tape. Furthermore, staff encourage children to apply more pressure to the foam shape, in order to create a more successful pattern when printing. Staff encourage children to test out their ideas and make predictions as they play in the water using different utensils for filling and pouring. Children's self-esteem and confidence is fostered well as staff observe them as they play and intervene to support and extend their learning where necessary. For example, where children struggle to cut certain material, staff offer suggestions and encourage them to try new ways of doing things. Consequently, children are prevented from becoming frustrated as they persist and achieve what they set out to do. However, staff do not always monitor newer children's engagement in activities, in order to provide greater levels of support that helps them maintain focus and develop concentration. Children's intrigue with nature is evident as they play outdoors. For example, they squeal with excitement as they find a wiggly worm or a snail, observing the miniscule patterns on the worm's body or the snail's shell.

Children are confident communicators because staff model good language and value their

questioning, conversations and suggestions. They effectively support children's early literacy and mathematics. For example, children's interest in print is extremely well fostered. Staff enthusiastically enact favourite stories, such as one about a bear hunt, with children through songs and imaginary play; children add their own contributions, such as finding sticks to 'move the mud out of the way'. There is a wide array of labelling in the environment, including that which creates stimulating role-play areas, such as the construction site. This is further supported through the self-registration system as children arrive and have snack. Children's love of favourite stories is also reflected in the models they create and which they describe in great detail. They spontaneously use mathematical language as they play and show skills in counting and calculating. For example, they readily point and count how many shapes they have printed and talk about the 'huge' paint brush. Children's understanding of quantity and volume is reinforced during water play as they use a variety of filling and pouring utensils.

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

An effective key-person system and close consultation with parents and carers, results in well-organised settling-in arrangements. Consequently, children are confident and happy and develop secure attachments to staff due to a smooth transition from home to the new environment. As part of this, parents and carers are provided with information about who their child's key person will be and are asked to complete a number of documents detailing specific personal information about each child and home routines. Consequently, staff build up a picture of each child's background and uniqueness. Furthermore, a meeting takes place with parents and carers approximately four weeks after children are settled. As part of this, children's personal, emotional and social development is discussed, as are their starting points for learning. As children leave for school, their continued sense of security is fostered well. For example, teachers are invited to visit children at the pre-school, progress reports are completed and school routines, such as getting changed for physical education sessions, are introduced. Where there is shared care, children are effectively supported as they move between settings.

Staff act as positive role models and value children's achievements, such as arts and craft creation or helping to tidy up, through praise and encouragement. As a result, children are polite, well-behaved and cooperative, readily sharing and take turns. For example, they patiently wait to paint at the easel and link up and share simple ideas as they engage in activities, such as imaginative space play. In addition, they are very helpful to one another. For instance, while using the mobile sink to wash their hands before eating, children take turns to pump the water tap, while their peer rubs their hands underneath. Friendships are clearly evident between older, more able children as they are overheard saying, 'We can be best friends everyday', while playing on the indoor rocking toy together. Staff help children to learn to value and appreciate the similarities and differences between themselves and others as they celebrate festivals related to their own or others' cultures and beliefs. Children make decisions about what they want to play with as a result of a very accessible environment. They manage developmentally appropriate tasks within the daily routine and are very independent. For example, they help themselves to eating and drinking utensils and even wash these up afterwards. Where new children are observed dropping their painting apron on the floor, staff sensitively

show them where this belongs, helping them to hang it on a peg.

Children's good health is promoted well, with the pre-school's involvement in an initiative about teeth, contributing positively to this. Children are provided with and help to choose healthy snacks from the local greengrocer's, which they are then involved in preparing. Consequently, they learn to make positive choices about what they eat and learn about practices that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. Other interesting activities, such as growing mint, reinforces children's understanding of where food comes from in a meaningful way, as does staff linking activities to a favourite story about a caterpillar, who is very hungry. Where children bring packed lunches, parents are encouraged to promote the pre-school's healthy eating ethos. Children show an awareness of good hygiene practices as they readily wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. They clearly enjoy playing outside, where they benefit from lots of fresh air and exercise, which further contributes to their all-round good health. Children learn about managing risk as they climb on apparatus, such as the plastic caterpillar, developing physical strength as they use their large motor skills to pull themselves onto this. Staff further support children's understanding about keeping themselves safe, for example, through explanations about the safe use of scissors. In addition, they provide road safety role play following a visit from those, who undertake the school crossing patrol.

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

The provider has a good understanding of the safeguarding and welfare and the learning and development requirements, therefore, she fulfils her responsibilities in meeting these. The fact that she holds Early Years Professional status clearly contributes to this. As the provider is also the day-to-day manager of the pre-school, she provides effective leadership and sets high aspirations for quality. There is a strong commitment to meeting the needs of all children and monitoring their learning through tracking documents. These ensure that all children are fully supported in their learning and development and early intervention is sought if additional support is necessary, ensuring no child is disadvantaged. There are robust safeguarding arrangements in place to promote children's welfare. For example, although, the provider has not yet had to employ any new staff up to present, there are stringent recruitment, vetting and induction processes. Effective risk assessments support staff in keeping children safe and these are regularly reviewed, including continually monitoring accidents. These are, however, minimal due to staff closely supervising children. Access to the premises is closely monitored by a designated staff member as children arrive and depart and the door is secured during the pre-school sessions. Staff have a secure knowledge of possible signs or symptoms of child abuse or neglect and of both internal and external reporting procedures, should concerns of this nature arise. Consequently, children are protected. The provider tests staff's knowledge further through discussions relating to a variety of scenarios within staff meetings.

Since becoming the new owner of the pre-school, the provider has undertaken a full review of the quality of the provision and identified key areas for development. This demonstrates her strong commitment to the improvement of children's care and

achievements over time. Many new initiatives are in place and a key focus has been to develop the consistency of the quality of teaching. For example, peer-on-peer observations take place as well as formal termly supervisions. There is an emphasis on the professional development of all staff, resulting in individual training plans. Furthermore, the provider delivers in-house training courses, such as how to promote the characteristics of effective learning, in order to further develop the staff team's teaching techniques. Staff's extended knowledge of early years practice is effectively used to improve and guide their practice. The provider does, however, acknowledge that some initiatives continue to be embedded to ensure that consistently high-quality teaching is observed amongst less confident practitioners. Staff are able to review and reflect on their practice and contribute their ideas to improve the pre-school, for example, through planning meetings and staff meetings.

Parents and carers receive good quality information about the pre-school on their child's enrolment and during their child's placement. For example, they are provided with a welcome pack and given information about the Early Years Foundation Stage in the form of a document and photograph display. There is a designated notice board and regular newsletters keep parents and carers updated on what is happening at the pre-school, to ensure they feel informed about all aspects of their child's care and education and can contribute to this. Furthermore, they are invited to attend events, such as the leavers' party. Parents and carers are actively encouraged to their views, including through meetings held with their child's key person. Very complimentary comments are shared at the inspection by parents and carers. Close partnerships are fostered with providers, such as childminders, where there is shared care. Consequently, staff can gain a full picture of all of a child's achievements, in order to complement their learning fully and from balancing their experiences with those in other settings.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory 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	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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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	EY476703
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	966229
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	29
Name of provider	Louise O'Sullivan
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	07977694996

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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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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