

Little Stars Pre-School

South Borough Primary School, Stagshaw Close, Postley Road, Maidstone, Kent,
ME15 6TL



Inspection date	19 May 2015
Previous inspection date	6 May 2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Good	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Good	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Good	2
The setting meets legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Children form close attachments with their key person and staff. This is because staff quickly get to know the children well and support their individual needs. This effectively supports their emotional well-being.
- Staff provide a range of activities based around precise assessments, children's interests and their next steps in learning. As a result, children make good progress in their learning in relation to their starting points and capabilities.
- Staff develop positive partnerships with parents and work closely with them to support children's learning and development.
- Staff deploy themselves effectively to support children's learning and provide good supervision.
- Management continuously evaluates the pre-school provision. They take the views of staff, children and parents into account to target improvements for the best outcomes for all children.
- Staff work well in partnership with local schools to help children prepare well for their move on to school.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff do not consistently make the most of routines, such as snack time, to encourage children to develop independence. For example, children do not always serve their own food or take part in preparation of their snack.
- Staff sometimes miss opportunities to prompt children to find out more and extend their problem-solving skills to the highest level.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- increase children's ability to be independent, such as during snack time routines
- improve children's experiences to explore their own ideas and develop their problem-solving skills.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities, indoors and outdoors.
- The inspector talked to children, staff, the manager and the chairperson at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector spoke with parents and took account of their views.
- The inspector sampled children's records, planning documentation, evidence of the suitability of staff and policies and procedures.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.

Inspector

Nicola Jones

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is good

The established staff team works very well together and has a good knowledge of how children learn and develop. Staff have a strong understanding of how they use the observation, assessment and planning systems to support children's progress. For example, staff observe key children, identify next steps in learning and include these in the future planning of activities. Staff support children's communication and language development effectively through asking skilful questions and talking to children as they play. Consequently, children are confident communicators and receive good support to learn new words. This prepares them well for their next stage in learning and their move on to school. Children are developing early writing skills as they play vets and begin to write names for the dogs. Older children begin to link letters and sounds in activities to support their early literacy skills. Staff work closely with other agencies where appropriate. This partnership provides effective support for children and their families, such as signposting parents to the services offered by children's centres.

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

Staff are warm and caring and provide a stimulating environment where children play happily and show excitement to learn. Children's secure relationships with staff help them to settle confidently. Staff constantly praise children for their achievements and positive behaviour. Consequently, children behave well and show a good understanding of the need to share and take turns. For example, children happily use the sand timers to take turns. Children spend much of their time outdoors with good access to physical activities. This has a positive impact on their health and well-being. They enjoy nutritious snacks and help themselves to drinking water throughout the session.

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

Staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities to safeguard children. They attend regular child protection training and carry out effective safety checks. This helps staff keep children safe and protected from harm. All staff train in paediatric first aid, so they can provide treatment in the event of an accident. The manager carries out evaluations of staff practice and provides regular supervision meetings. Staff attend training for their professional development and to improve their practices. For example, recent training provided ideas to strengthen children's physical development. The manager closely monitors the progress of individual children. Consequently, she quickly identifies any gaps in children's learning. Parents comment positively on how well staff meet their children's needs and work in partnership to promote children's development.

Setting details

Unique reference number	127343
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	840645
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 8
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	30
Name of provider	Little Stars Pre-School Committee
Date of previous inspection	6 May 2010
Telephone number	01622 203438

Little Stars Pre-School registered in 1997 and operates from a mobile unit in the grounds of Southborough Primary School. It is situated in Maidstone, Kent. The pre-school is open each weekday, from 8.55am until 11.55am, and on a Tuesday from 12.10pm until 3.10pm, for 37 weeks of the year. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The pre-school employs six members of staff, of whom five hold appropriate early years qualifications.

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