

# Little Stars Playgroup

Howling Lane, Alnwick, Northumberland, NE66 1DJ



<b>Inspection date</b>	13 July 2018
Previous inspection date	10 July 2015

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents

### This provision is good

- Leaders and staff regularly update their safeguarding and child protection knowledge. They know the correct reporting procedures to take, should they have any concerns about a child's welfare.
- Regular observations, assessment and tracking of children's learning help staff to plan the next steps in children's development. They regularly share this information with parents.
- Children understand and follow good hygiene practices. They know to wash their hands before eating and after messy play activities.
- Children enjoy snack time. For instance, they independently select their chosen fresh fruit and carefully pierce their small milk cartons with straws. Older children kindly and eagerly help the younger children with this task.
- Children make good progress in their learning and development and display a positive attitude to learning. They enjoy looking at books and are developing good mathematical skills during activities, such as confidently counting in sequence.

### It is not yet outstanding because:

- Occasionally, staff do not always consider ways for children to use technology equipment more frequently during activities.
- Leaders have not yet fully embedded performance management procedures to help develop staff's knowledge, practice, and teaching 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 opportunities for children to select, explore and operate technological equipment independently during their play
- strengthen and sharpen the performance management procedures, to help raise the quality of teaching, knowledge and practice to a higher level.

### Inspection activities

- The inspector sampled a range of documentation, including the children's learning folders, safeguarding policies and procedures, and risk assessments.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents spoken to on the day of the inspection and viewed written feedback.
- The inspector observed staff's interactions with the children, and spoke with staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager and evaluated this with her.
- The inspector conducted a tour of the premises with the playgroup leader.

### Inspector

Amanda Hartigan

## Inspection findings

### Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

Safeguarding is effective. Robust recruitment procedures ensure all staff are suitable to work with children. Good induction processes help new staff feel supported and valued, and also ensure that they have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. These procedures help keep children safe and secure. Partnerships with parents are a particular strength. Parents are quite emotional as they comment about how they appreciate the care and support given to their children. They say that all staff are brilliant and that they go 'above and beyond' what is expected of them. Leaders seek the views of staff, parents and children to help them identify areas for improvement. This positively enhances the learning environment.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Children enjoy exploring the play environment, which is inviting, bright and well resourced. Staff demonstrate a secure knowledge and understanding of the learning and development requirements and they know how children like to learn. They plan activities that children will enjoy, such as mixing cornflour and water. This is illustrated when the children have great fun and thoroughly enjoy getting messy. Staff are effectively deployed and children are positively supported during activities. Furthermore, good teaching systems are in place to ensure all children, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good or better progress in their learning.

### Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children are greeted warmly by staff when they arrive, and they settle quickly. Children form close attachments with their key person, snuggling into their arms for cuddles. This helps children to feel safe and secure, and positively supports their personal, social and emotional development. Children enjoy a good range of physical outdoor play activities. For instance, they enjoy playing in the café area, making pretend drinks to serve to their pretend customers. All ages of children display good imagination skills as they interact with each other. Staff frequently praise the children's efforts, which positively boosts their self-esteem. Staff support children's developing independence well.

### Outcomes for children are good

Staff effectively support children's emerging literacy skills. For example, children independently self-register their names on arrival, and know the initial sounds of their names and of some words. This helps them to acquire some of the skills to be ready for the next stage of their learning, such as school. Leaders and staff have good procedures in place to prepare children for school. For instance, positive relationships have been forged with the host nursery and school. This contributes to children settling well in their new learning environment.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY435776
<b>Local authority</b>	Northumberland
<b>Inspection number</b>	1131617
<b>Type of provision</b>	Sessional provision
<b>Day care type</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	16
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	14
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Northumberland County Council
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP905983
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10 July 2015
<b>Telephone number</b>	01670 620430

Little Stars playgroup registered in 2011. It is situated within the children's centre in the grounds of St. Michael's First School, Alnwick. There are four members of staff. Of those, one holds a relevant qualification at level 5, two hold a relevant qualification at level 3 and one holds a relevant qualification level 2. The playgroup is open Tuesday and Thursday from 9am to 3pm, and Friday from 9am to midday, term time only. The playgroup provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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