

Inspection of Little Stars Early Years

c/o Willington Children's Centre, Chapel Street, Willington, County Durham DL15
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Inspection date: 17 February 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children enter the setting with smiles on their faces. They are clearly happy and enjoy their time at the nursery. Children have fun playing together and with staff, and feel safe and secure. They use their imaginations to play the role of a shopkeeper. Children learn to share and take turns with support. Staff encourage them to use the electronic till and serve fruit and vegetables to their friends. Children behave well and develop positive social skills.

Children remain engaged in activities and enjoy solving problems. For example, children discover that their sandcastles do not stand up with dry sand. Staff use effective questioning techniques to help children work out how to solve the problem. Children add water and cheer with delight when their sandcastles stand alone. Children continue their learning as they add numbered flags to their sandcastles. Staff support children to put their flags in the right order. Children count and recognise numbers to five.

Children enjoy many opportunities to be active and develop their physical skills. They run freely around the garden, holding onto coloured ribbons. Children laugh with excitement as they watch how their ribbons move in the wind. Children and staff work as a group to make music and dance together on the outdoor stage.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Children's literacy skills are developing well. Older children are encouraged to write letters from their name and form letter shapes. Children develop a love of reading. They have free access to a range of books, which they look at with staff and independently. Young children thread hoops onto pipe cleaners. Furthermore, children spend long periods of time exploring paint and creating pictures. This helps to develop children's early writing skills.
- Staff are very caring, sensitive and nurturing. They respond to children's needs. For instance, young children who are unsettled are quickly provided with cuddles and reassurance. This helps to promote children's emotional well-being.
- Partnerships with parents are good. Staff gather children's starting points from parents. This means that they know what children know and can already do, when they start at the setting. Parents know what their child is learning, even though they do not come into the setting. Staff share information through an online system with parents. This helps them to understand how children's learning can be further supported at home.
- Staff teach children about their local community. For instance, children visit local shops and have had a recent visit from a police officer. However, staff provide fewer opportunities for children to extend their understanding of differences of communities and cultures beyond their own.

- Staff teach children about hygiene and how to promote their own good health. Most of the children can independently manage simple tasks for themselves. However, occasionally staff chop children's fruit and wipe their runny noses before encouraging them to try to do these things for themselves.
- Staff know the children they care for very well. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported effectively. Staff liaise with speech and language specialists, and health visitors to put intervention plans in place quickly. As a result, children are making the best possible progress.
- The manager has a good understanding of the strengths of her staff team and where they need further support and mentoring. She ensures that all staff have opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge. Staff attend regular team meetings and one-to-one supervision sessions. The manager places a huge emphasis on staff's well-being. Staff comment they feel very well supported by the manager.
- Staff use their knowledge of children's interests and development to shape a curriculum that is exciting and extends their learning. Activities are linked closely to children's development. Staff adapt their teaching to meet the needs of individual children.
- Staff encourage children to remember the rules in nursery and to be 'kind' towards their friends. Children are beginning to manage their own feelings and behave well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Managers and staff complete regular safeguarding training. They have a good understanding of the signs that indicate a child may be at risk of harm or neglect. Staff know how to share these concerns to help keep children safe. All staff are confident of the procedures to follow, should an allegation be made against a member of staff. Furthermore, staff can recognise signs that a family might be vulnerable to radicalisation. The management team has robust recruitment procedures. Staff complete daily checks and risk assessments to ensure the environment is safe for children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support staff to consistently develop children's independence and self-help skills
- increase the diversity of experiences and resources, to help build on children's understanding of the differences of people and communities beyond their own.

Setting details

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| Unique reference number | EY493098 |
| Local authority | Durham |
| Inspection number | 10216871 |
| Type of provision | Childcare on non-domestic premises |
| Registers | Early Years Register |
| Day care type | Sessional day care |
| Age range of children at time of inspection | 2 to 4 |
| Total number of places | 24 |
| Number of children on roll | 26 |
| Name of registered person | Little Stars Early Years |
| Registered person unique reference number | RP911117 |
| Telephone number | 07582981770 |
| Date of previous inspection | 7 September 2016 |

Information about this early years setting

Little Stars Early Years registered in 2015. It is run by a committee and is situated within Willington Children's Centre, County Durham. The manager is a qualified teacher. There are five other members of staff, four of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, and one at level 5. The setting opens term time only, Monday to Friday. Sessions are from 9am to 3pm. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Julie Campbell

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the nursery managers and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the nursery.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed how they intend to implement the curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- Children spoke to the inspector throughout the inspection.
- The inspector spoke with staff at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the nursery manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery manager. She reviewed relevant documentation and evidence of suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector through written feedback.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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