

Inspection of North Star Nursery Ltd

Polaris House, North Star Avenue, SWINDON SN2 1FL

Inspection date: 19 August 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 thrive in this warm and welcoming nursery. They build strong relationships with their key persons. Staff offer all children lots of praise and reassurance. This helps them to feel safe and secure to freely explore the environment around them. For example, the babies explore the garden. They move away from staff and discover a water tray. They make sounds and point to the tray to gain the staff's attention and to engage them in their play. The older children help choose the pre-school rules and boundaries. This supports the children to feel empowered to uphold these rules. For example, older children remind each other of the rule to not touch the flowers on the table or they might die. They tell staff when these rules are not being followed.

Children benefit from the large outside garden, which gives them space to be physically active. Younger children climb up small play slides and crawl through tunnels. They roll balls back and forth to each other. Older children run between the trees. They race around on 'stomper stilts' and create obstacle courses. The children extend their play by seeing if they can make it more challenging, while discussing the risks. For example, the children discuss racing on stilts. They discuss how it might be dangerous to run on the playground. They decide to race, walking down the hill on grass as, 'it will be safer'.

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

- The curriculum is a blend of child-led and adult-initiated activities that aim to cover all seven areas of learning. Staff use their knowledge of child development to plan activities based on the children's interests and next steps. They use open-ended questions to find out what children already know and extend that knowledge through meaningful interactions. For example, during an activity, staff asked the children what colours they could see. The children struggle to identify one of the colours. Staff extend children's knowledge by telling them the colour was 'white'. Later, while picking paint, the children identified the white paint.
- Parents are very happy with the care the nursery provides. They report that their children love attending the setting and make good progress. Staff communicate well with parents. They get regular updates on their child's development and next steps, along with activities to support learning at home. Staff offer parents lots of guidance and information on key issues, such as potty training, dummies and irregular sleep patterns. During the pandemic, parents received regular updates on guidance and policy changes. The staff kept in contact with the families, which supported the children when it became time to settle back into the nursery.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well.

Staff work consistently with families and other agencies to ensure that support is put in place. They ensure all staff have an awareness of the support plans in place to ensure children make good progress. The manager ensures the relevant funding is claimed and that staff receive specialist training to fully support the individual needs of the children in their care.

- Staff praise the management team and feel fully supported in their roles. The manager supports staff effectively through regular supervision meetings and observations of their practice. Staff have access to online training and are encouraged to reflect on their practice, which enhances their knowledge and supports children's learning.
- Children enjoy a range of creative and sensory activities. For example, they mix powder to paint with water and notice the change in the consistency and colour. They place their hands in the paint, giggling as they make marks on the paper. However, at times, staff do not give children the opportunity to represent their own artistic ideas and creativity. For example, during a planned creative activity, staff draw the outline of a fire engine for the children.
- Staff promote children's independence. They prompt young children to use their cutlery and encourage them to pour their own water. Older children love to help clean and set the tables for lunchtime. However, staff do not adequately plan mealtimes. This means children are made to wait for long periods of time, which causes them to become restless and disruptive.
- Children's health and well-being is promoted. The staff offer children plenty of opportunities for children to run around and be active. Children receive healthy meals and snacks. During mealtimes, they discuss the difference between health and unhealthy foods. For example, during lunch, the children discuss what is healthy and unhealthy, such as 'the crumble is healthy' but the ice cream is not because 'it has sugar in it'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and her team have a good knowledge of all safeguarding policies and procedures. Staff show they can identify the different signs and symptoms of abuse, including female genital mutilation and child exploitation. They understand the whistleblowing policy and how to report any concerns about children or staff to the relevant agencies. The manager follows safer recruitment procedures and all staff attend first-aid training.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- consider reviewing the organisation of mealtimes to ensure children are not waiting for too long

- further extend opportunities for children to express and represent their own ideas and creativity in planned activities.

Setting details

Unique reference number	109123
Local authority	Swindon
Inspection number	10234066
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	53
Name of registered person	North Star Nursery
Registered person unique reference number	RP522146
Telephone number	01793 411994
Date of previous inspection	19 September 2016

Information about this early years setting

North Star Nursery and Holiday Club registered in 1999. It is run by a voluntary management committee. It primarily serves the employees of the Research Councils and is situated on their campus in Swindon. The nursery opens on weekdays throughout the year, except for one week at Christmas. Sessions are from 8am until 5.45pm for the children who attend the nursery and from 8.30am to 5.30pm for the children who attend the holiday club. The nursery receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two-, three- and four-years. The holiday club cares for children of primary school age. The nursery employs 13 staff who work directly with the children. Of these, 11 hold relevant qualifications at level 2 or above. These include 8 staff at level 3, one at level 4, and the manager, who holds Early Years Professional Status.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Louise Phillips

Inspection activities

- This was the provider's first routine inspection since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The inspector and the manager completed a learning walk where they discussed the provision and the curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during both indoor and outdoor play and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke with staff at appropriate times throughout the inspection and completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and her third in charge to discuss how they self-evaluate the provision.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation, such as evidence of the suitability of staff working in the setting.
- The inspector spoke to a small number of parents during the inspection and took account of written testimonials.
- Children spoke and engaged with the inspector during the inspection.

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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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 and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, 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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022