

Inspection of Clayton Little Stars Childcare

Clayton Library, Dartmouth Avenue, Newcastle-Under-Lyme, Staffordshire ST5 3NR

Inspection date: 18 November 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	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children arrive eager and ready for their day at nursery. They are happy to leave parents and seek out their key person for reassurance. Children are confident to explore the nursery space with sensitive support from caring and attentive staff. They are involved in enticing and motivating activities and are immersed in their play. For example, older children squeeze the large plastic tweezers together to move sorting items into a pot. Younger children and babies squeal with excitement as they pat and splash the water in a large tray. Older children notice patterns as they shine torches onto the ceiling and say, 'It's a little shadow.'

Children have lots of time to play, investigate and explore in the routine of the day. They choose to play with favourite, familiar activities and are keen to have a go at new experiences. Staff follow a well-planned curriculum which is focused on play. They know about children's current interests and revisit and adapt learning opportunities to offer challenge. This helps children to make good progress across all areas of learning. Staff use familiar stories, songs and rhymes throughout the day. This helps to support children's communication and language development. For example, older children retell 'The Three Little Pigs' as they play with the small-world figures. They say, 'I'll huff and I'll puff,' as they put the wolf figure near the toy house. Younger children and babies enjoy cuddles with staff as they sing a favourite nursery rhyme.

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

- Staff's knowledge of child development is secure. Experienced staff encourage apprentices as they model excellent practice and positive interactions with children. This means that children's learning and development are seamlessly supported. Any gaps in learning are noted and activities are adapted to ensure good development.
- Leaders have a clear and focused vision for their nursery. The varied curriculum reflects how children learn and supports a wealth of quality play opportunities. Staff are very good at adapting activities to enhance and embed children's learning.
- Staff enjoy a wide range of professional development opportunities. This helps them to reflect on their provision for children. For example, training in phonics means that children learn about phonetic sounds as they play. New staff complete a thorough induction, and all staff have regular supervision sessions. This means that staff are confident about their role and know about their responsibilities.
- Parents comment that they are very happy with the nursery. They are reassured as children excitedly enter the nursery. They describe strong partnerships with their children's key person and know about their child's development through

daily discussions and an online communication platform.

- Partnerships with other agencies are effective in supporting children's needs. Leaders and staff know where to access more support, as required, so that they can support children's progress. They work with other professionals and parents and adapt the provision and routine to support all children very well.
- Children develop an understanding of their world because staff plan a wide range of activities and outings in the community. Children visit the adjacent library to choose books to read in nursery. They explore their local area as they walk to the play park or visit the local shop to buy ingredients to make biscuits. This helps to promote children's understanding of where they live.
- Children and staff talk together during activities and play. Staff offer familiar words and help children retell stories during a sand-play activity. For example, they comment 'tap' and 'pat' as children fill up the red and blue buckets. Children notice that 'the bucket is full' like the dinosaurs' bucket in the book 'Harry and the Bucketful of Dinosaurs'. However, staff do not consistently use a broad range of words or introduce new words enough during play.
- Staff take every opportunity to help children develop independence over time. They help younger children to hold lidded cups and pour their own drinks from small jugs. Older children pour themselves a drink and hand out snacks for their friends.
- Children develop their physical skills. For example, they scoop and press sand into small buckets and reach for balls in the ball pit. Babies crawl across the space to reach the cosy book corner. Younger children toddle or begin to run as they hold hands with staff outdoors. Older children manoeuvre a small wheeled toy through an obstacle course of small traffic cones. However, staff do not always provide enough challenge in physical activities, or energetic play, to enhance children's large-muscle skills and help them understand the importance of developing healthy bodies.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff show a strong commitment to safeguarding the children in their care. They access training to make sure their knowledge of signs and symptoms of abuse is secure. They know about broader safeguarding issues, including radicalisation and extremism. Staff describe what they would do if there was a concern about children or if there were concerns about a colleague's behaviour. This helps to ensure that children are safe. Thorough safety checks on the areas used by children are undertaken throughout the day. Staff offer clear boundaries and reinforce simple rules to help keep children safe. For example, they encourage children to walk indoors and ride wheeled toys with care outside.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- develop staff's understanding of how to support communication and language development, to enable them to broaden the range of words used and introduce new words to children
- support staff to increase the opportunities for more challenge in children's physical development, specifically for large-muscle skills such as climbing and balancing.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2602586
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10251599
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	1 to 3
Total number of places	38
Number of children on roll	34
Name of registered person	Little Stars (Westlands) Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP535349
Telephone number	07894018645
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Clayton Little Stars Childcare registered in 2020 and is in Newcastle-under-Lyme. The nursery employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above. The nursery operates all year round, except for a week at Christmas. Sessions are available Monday to Friday, from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Juliette Freeman

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received 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 carried out a learning walk with the manager and discussed how the curriculum is delivered.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children during the inspection.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery leaders and checked the suitability of staff working with the children.
- The inspector spoke to children, staff and parents at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.

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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