

Inspection of Little Stars Childcare

Unit 4, Martinet Road, Thornaby, Stockon on Tees TS17 0AS

Inspection date: 2 March 2023

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

Staff use effective ways to help new children become comfortable in the new environment. They work closely with parents to tailor settling-in visits to meet the different emotional needs of children. Staff find out information about children as soon as possible, including what they like and dislike.

Children arrive happily at the nursery and are greeted warmly by the staff. They show good levels of curiosity, concentration and enjoyment. Children are encouraged to choose what they would like to do. When staff ask them, they choose to play with dinosaurs. Children help to find the resources and set them up in the sand. Staff play with children down at their level and ask them questions that encourage them to think. For example, they ask children what the sand feels like. However, not all children have been assigned a key person. This means that there is not a designated member of staff to build a settled relationship with the child and their parent. Despite this, the staff know all the children well and what the individual child needs to be learning next. Relationships are positive.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the provider and staff identified that more information was needed from parents, such as where they lived, if they had a garden and if they visited a library. This helped staff to provide experiences that children may have missed out on during this time.

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

- The provider has recently appointed a new manager who is eager to develop the nursery. In the short space of time that she has worked there, she has evaluated what works well and what could be done better. She has clear intentions for the nursery. For example, she plans to develop the outdoor area so that it is more accessible and meets the needs of the youngest children.
- The provider and the manager are very supportive of the staff team. The manager works alongside the staff, modelling good practice. This helps her to get to know the staff and to identify any areas of practice that are weak, and can be addressed. Staff are enthusiastic and hardworking. They work well together and demonstrate a genuine passion for working with children.
- The provider, manager and staff understand what it is that children need to learn next and how to support and encourage them. They carry out assessments of children's progress, including the progress check at age two. This helps them to identify if there are any delays or gaps in children's development that they can work on.
- Staff focus on children's communication and language skills. They appreciate that looking at books and singing rhymes helps children learn to speak. Children develop a deep appreciation for books. They snuggle up to staff to share a book

and ask visitors to read to them. However, some of the books are in a poor state of repair. Children are disappointed when they press a button and nothing happens, or when a flap has been torn from a book.

- Staff use everyday activities to develop children's understanding of mathematics. They sing rhymes using finger puppets so that children can see how many they have got. Children count how many they have, such as two, and line them up on the floor and count together up to seven. Staff help children understand how many there are if they add one more.
- Children learn in a relaxed, calm environment. They respond well to directions when staff speak to them. For example they put a book away when asked. Overall, children behave well. They receive praise and encouragement for their efforts. However, staff are not consistent in giving children guidelines. They do not always help children to understand why they should not take a toy from another child.
- Children have access to good nutrition while at the nursery. Staff talk about the food they eat at mealtimes to help them understand what is healthy for them. Staff help children learn about oral health. They have had a dentist come and talk to children about caring for their teeth. Information packs are shared with parents that cover top tips for teeth. They make sure each child has a dentist, when they first start.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff have a good understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. They know how to identify signs that could indicate that a child is in danger of harm. They know what to do to report any concerns. They understand what to do should they have a concern about another member of staff. The nursery and outdoor area are safe and secure for children. The provider and manager have robust recruitment procedures. They follow up with additional checks if they have any concerns about possible new members of staff. This means that children are cared for by suitable people.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- refine how the key-person system is organised so all children are supported and relationships are built with parents
- provide a range of well-presented books to further support children's language development
- extend staff's understanding of how to help children behave well and to understand the impact their behaviour has on others.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2646979
Local authority	Stockton-on-Tees
Inspection number	10281269
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 3
Total number of places	48
Number of children on roll	35
Name of registered person	Rascals Playtime Childcare Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP909968
Telephone number	01642133630
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Little Stars Childcare registered in 2021 and is situated in Thornaby, Stockton on Tees. The nursery employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, for 51 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 7am until 6.30pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lynne Pope

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting 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 manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together to understand how the early years provision and curriculum are organised.
- The inspector observed the quality of the education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector talked to staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The provider and the manager had a meeting with the inspector and talked about the leadership and management of the nursery.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents.

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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