

# Little Stars Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

EY287543

**Inspection date**

09/02/2011

**Inspector**

Kelly Eyre

**Setting address**

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**Type of setting**

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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## **Description of the setting**

Little Stars Day Nursery was registered in 2004 and is privately owned. It operates from a converted building in Ampthill, Bedfordshire. The setting is accessible to all children and there is a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

The setting provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds. It is open each weekday for 51 weeks of the year and sessions are from 8am to 6pm. Early starts are accommodated on request. Children may attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register to provide 14 places and there are currently 22 children on roll who are within this age group. The setting serves a wide catchment area. A small number of children attend other settings such as local pre-schools. The setting currently supports a small number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The setting is also registered to offer care to children aged over five years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. Children occupying these places share the same facilities as the children in the early years age range. There are currently three children on roll in this age range.

The setting employs four members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at Level 3 or above. One staff member is currently working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The owner, manager and staff demonstrate a good commitment to continuously reviewing their work, enabling them to implement appropriate improvements and thus maintain a service which is responsive to children's needs. The excellent partnerships with parents and carers support the ongoing exchange of information and enables staff to gain a thorough understanding of each child's needs. They use this information to make sure that children's individual needs are consistently met and ensures they are offered appropriate support so that they are meaningfully included. Good assessment and planning procedures mean that staff are aware of children's current developmental needs and can plan activities to promote their development. Key strengths of the setting are the excellent procedures relating to safeguarding children, ensuring that they are cared for in a safe environment and their welfare is promoted at all times.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- provide further opportunities, as part of children's daily play and activities, for them to attempt writing for different purposes and to use their developing mathematical ideas and methods to solve practical problems
- improve the systems for organisation of the setting by developing the use of self-evaluation to support ongoing improvements.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

The setting's highly effective safeguarding procedures ensure that children's well-being is prioritised and their welfare is consistently promoted. For example, staff attend additional training in order to update their knowledge and there are robust procedures to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children. The manager pays meticulous attention to making sure that policies and procedures contain accurate, practical information so that staff can work together to ensure that any concerns about children are prioritised and managed effectively. Comprehensive risk assessments and thorough daily safety checks mean that children's safety is consistently promoted. Children demonstrate an excellent awareness of safety issues. For example, they learn about issues such as road safety and appropriate people to ask for help. Visits from the local police and a visit to the fire station reinforce their understanding.

Staff have attended additional training and demonstrate a good awareness of the relevance of anti-discriminatory practice. They review the setting's policies and procedures to ensure that these are appropriate, supporting them in providing a service which is inclusive for all children and their families. Staff work closely with parents, continuously reviewing children's needs and ensuring that they fully understand these. They then use this information to help inform the planning of appropriate activities. Staff take time to build and maintain excellent relationships with parents and carers. They have established many forms of communication in order to keep parents fully informed of their child's progress and activities. For example, they produce informative monthly newsletters, use daily diaries for all children, offer regular parents' evenings and make use of electronic communication methods. The setting also works well with other professionals involved in the care of the children. For example, they work with local pre-schools to exchange information and ensure children's care is consistent and their development is promoted.

The owner and manager work well with staff and have a clear vision for the future. The ongoing review of their daily practice means that they have a realistic overview of the setting and can prioritise changes that improve the outcomes for children. For example, recent changes include the redecoration and rearrangement of the main play rooms, making the resources and the overall setting more accessible to all children. However, the self-evaluation process is not fully utilised to inform the overall review of daily practice and to evaluate the impact of changes made. Staff make good use of available resources to support the promotion of children's learning and development. For example, children enjoy visiting local facilities, such as parks, shops and the library.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

Children make good progress because staff have a thorough understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They observe children as they play, carefully assessing this information and using it to inform activity planning, thereby ensuring that children are offered appropriate activities that promote their individual development. Staff also keep a clear record of children's current interests, using this to develop themes and topics that capture children's attention and further promote their development. Staff pay close attention to making sure that the environment is safe. Children's behaviour demonstrates that they feel safe and secure as they happily move around the setting and make independent choices about their play and resources. They are therefore supported in playing an active role in their learning.

Good procedures mean that children settle well and develop secure relationships with staff. For example, staff work with parents to make sure they understand children's normal routines, keeping to these as much as possible. Children enjoy talking with staff and the good interaction supports them in developing their communication skills. For example, older children use language confidently to explain the details of their role play scenarios. The good staff interaction also means that children are encouraged to think further. For example, when young children show a staff member the play food they have mixed in a large bowl, they are encouraged to name the different items and to discuss which ones are healthy options.

Children gain a clear understanding of appropriate behaviour and thereby learn valuable skills for future life. Staff act as good role models, remaining calm, polite and modelling good manners. They talk with children about the implications of their behaviour and encourage them to work together and understand each other. Children respond positively to this and demonstrate care and concern for each other. Children's awareness of diversity is promoted as they access relevant resources and participate in discussions and specific activities. For example, they look at pictures of people from around the world, discussing differences and often going on to further research individual countries and their culture and traditions. The excellent procedures for working with parents and carers mean that children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who use English as an additional language are offered appropriate support to enable them to participate meaningfully.

Staff's forward-planning and good organisation mean that children are offered additional opportunities. For example, they explore their community and gain an appreciation of books as they visit the local library. They enjoy accessing books at the setting, often choosing stories to listen to on the compact disc player. However, they are not always encouraged to attempt writing for different purposes and to use their mathematical skills to solve simple problems as part of their daily play. The good planning means that children are offered opportunities to explore history and learn about lives and events. For example, whilst covering a topic on Egypt, children made pyramids and drew their own hieroglyphs.

Children are encouraged to understand the relevance of healthy lifestyles. For example, they discuss oral hygiene, learning how to clean their teeth properly and visiting a dentist to help reinforce their knowledge. Their understanding of healthy eating is promoted through discussions and simple cooking activities, such as making fruit salad. Children find out about living things as they grow salad crops and flowers and feed the garden birds. They explore the uses of information and communication technology and thus gain further skills for the future. For example, they use a computer, remote control cars, telephones and interactive toys.

## Annex A: record of inspection judgements

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met