

Inspection of Little Stars Preschool

Hythe and Dibden Community Centre, Hythe, Southampton, Hampshire SO45 6DU

Inspection date: 18 March 2025

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
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The quality of education	Inadequate
Behaviour and attitudes	Inadequate
Personal development	Inadequate
Leadership and management	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

There are breaches to the safeguarding and welfare requirements that may compromise children's safety and well-being. Leaders and those staff with designated lead responsibilities for safeguarding (DSLs), have not taken sufficient action following a significant event. The quality of education children receive is poor. Leaders do not ensure that staff have sufficient knowledge to plan and implement a broad and ambitious curriculum. As such, staff do not carefully consider the intent of activities to precisely target what children need to learn next.

The support offered for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is not effective. Staff do not always take prompt action to identify and initiate support for children with gaps in their learning and development. This means children do not make the progress they are capable of. Children are not engaged in learning and this impacts on their behaviour. They run around the setting unoccupied and throw resources. When these behaviours occur, staff do not respond to them consistently. Weaknesses in the interactions staff provide mean children often receive limited and poor-quality interactions. Overall, children do not receive the high-quality interactions they require to continually develop their skills and knowledge as they grow. Despite this, children appear content at pre-school and have secure bonds with staff, who are warm and gentle towards children in the setting.

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

- The provider does not ensure that safeguarding procedures are sufficiently effective. Weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements have resulted in delays in reporting safeguarding matters. This compromises children's welfare.
- The provider does not ensure the regular, ongoing support and coaching that staff need to develop their knowledge and improve the quality of their teaching. Staff do not focus on their key children's next steps in learning and plan precisely to support their progress with parents. For instance, leaders have not ensured that the required progress checks at age two are shared with parents and are effective in identifying any areas of additional support required. As such, parents and staff do not know if children are meeting their developmental milestones.
- Staff provide children with opportunities to practise their physical skills. For instance, children enjoy riding on tricycles and negotiate space as they run in the garden and use their balance to climb on the outdoor equipment. These experiences help children to develop their muscles, balance and coordination.
- Leaders have not ensured children receive consistent support and strategies from staff to understand what is expected of them at the setting. Staff, occasionally, tell a child to stop doing something but do not share the reason

why this is important with them when disputes occur or when they engage in dangerous behaviour, such as running around the setting or throwing resources. This does not fully teach children to understand the impact that their actions could have on themselves and others. It also does little to prevent the behaviour recurring. Consequently, children's behaviour is poor and often presents a risk to themselves and others.

- Staff are unsure of the arrangements for initiating and coordinating support for children with emerging gaps in their learning and development. For example, staff do not know who at the setting holds the lead role for SEND. This means that staff are not provided with the information of routes of referral to support early identification, for those children who require additional help to keep up with their peers, and progress ready for their next stage in learning.
- The provider does not ensure there is sufficient oversight of the provision to raise the quality of care and education. Although staff offer a range of activities, these are not based on staff knowledge of what children already know and understand. As such, they do not always capture children's focus and they quickly become disinterested and disengaged. Children do not receive consistent, high-quality interactions, which impacts on the progress they make.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

There is not an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
ensure that all staff, including the DSLs, implement robust, safeguarding policies and procedures that are in line with the local safeguarding partnerships, to be able to undertake their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe	25/04/2025
support staff's understanding of the role of the key person, ensuring that they engage with families to identify where more specialist help and support may be required, including the purpose of the progress check at age two	25/04/2025

ensure the behaviour management policy and strategies are shared, understood and consistently implemented by all staff	25/04/2025
ensure that the arrangement for children with SEND are effective, including supporting staff to understand the systems in place for identifying gaps for children's learning and development	25/04/2025
implement effective arrangements to improve oversight and monitor the quality of the provision, ensuring staff are provided with regular feedback of their practice	25/04/2025
plan and deliver an ambitious curriculum that builds on all children's existing knowledge, skills and capabilities and engages them fully in their learning, indoors and outdoors.	25/04/2025

Setting details

Unique reference number	2752665
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10393067
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	Planet Kids Community Interest Company
Registered person unique reference number	RP903133
Telephone number	07710956989
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Little Stars Preschool registered in September 2023. It is situated in Hythe, Southampton, Hampshire. It is open Monday to Friday from 8.45am to 3.15pm, term time only. The pre-school provides early education funding for children aged two, three and four years. There are currently seven members of staff working with children, all of whom are qualified to level 2 and above.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Leanne Merritt

Inspection activities

- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- Leaders were invited to complete a learning walk with the inspector to discuss their early years curriculum.
- Leaders were invited to complete a joint observation with the inspector.
- The inspector discussed the intent of the activities on offer and observed staff interaction during activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact this had on children's learning.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke with the nominated individual about the leadership and management of the setting.

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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