

**Camrose and Sure Start Children's Centre**  
Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY281304
<b>Inspection date</b>	11 February 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Paula Durrant / Tina Kelly
<b>Setting Address</b>	Tenby Road, Spencer Estate, Northampton, Northamptonshire, NN5 7DF
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<b>Registered person</b>	Northamptonshire County Council
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care, Crèche

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

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

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

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

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Camrose and Sure Start Children's Centre, a Neighbourhood Nursery Initiative, opened in 2004. The centre comprises of a day nursery which is open each weekday for 50 weeks of the year from 08:00 until 18:00; a crèche to support parents and carers attending the centre; a variety of courses and drop-in support groups for parents, carers and their families and is also a central hub for two satellite centres providing further drop-in play and crèche facilities. The centre and its two satellite centres are based in the wards of Spencer, Kings Heath and St James in Northampton South and currently provide services for between 900-1000 families and nearly 1200 children under the age of five years.

All services are housed in a purpose-built building with free-flow outside play areas for the children, including an organic garden. There are currently 66 children aged from three months up to five years on roll in the day nursery; of these, 53 receive free early education. The crèche offers a maximum of 21 places and operates as required to support various adult groups that meet in the centre. Children who attend the crèche are mostly under three years of age. The setting welcomes children with learning difficulties and and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language.

A management board oversees the operations of the centre, including the management of the budget and recruitment of staff. There is an overall centre manager who is supported by eight additional senior practitioners. There are approximately 80 centre staff who work with the children in the day nursery; crèche and support services in addition to a further 20 sessional staff which include designated support roles such as Multi-lingual Support, Social and Health professionals, a Community Participation Co-ordinator; a Black and Minority Ethnic Development Worker and Play and Learn Family Support Workers. A vast majority of the staff hold early years qualifications and eight staff are qualified to degree level. The centre hold accreditation status through the Effective Early Years Project (EPP).

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health care needs are of high importance in this well organised provision. Their individual needs are recorded appropriately and met in full. Staff rigorously adhere to health and safety protocols to maintain the well-being of the children at all times. Environmental Health reports for the kitchen facilities shows they meet all the required standards. Staff hold valid first aid qualifications and records of accidents and incidents are in place. There are plentiful first aid boxes around the setting. These contain an abundance of emergency resources inclusive of specialist equipment such as sterile mouth guards for resuscitation.

Children learn to understand simple good health and hygiene practices through the daily routines. Children's independence is fully promoted as they are taken to wash their hands when they come in from playing outside, after messy activities and before meals and snack. Very young children and babies are encouraged to use individual wipes. They are competent in wiping their hands and faces and receive lots of praise from the staff. The management of the hand washing process for the differing age groups ensures minimal disruption in the cloakroom area for the older children, whilst introducing the babies to a simple activity that they understand. A flexible routine is in place throughout the setting to ensure children are able to rest and to play when they need to. Parents are kept fully informed about their children's daily routines with information sheets at the end of the day outlining feeds, nappy changes and sleep times.

Children benefit from a varied, nutritious and healthy diet. They have a superb healthy menu that complies with all special and dietary requirements to ensure children's well-being is upheld. Children learn about where food comes from as they grow vegetables in the organic garden and crop these to use in the nursery. Staff sit with the children at meal times and talk to them about what is good for them. All children are encouraged to try new tastes and textures. For example, babies enjoy the tangy taste of the oranges provided for them. Their language is extended as they learn about the skin, and peel. Staff provide excellent support in ensuring children have a positive experience at meal and snack times. Older children are able to manage their own snack. Children regularly drink throughout the session, both at planned times and as needed as they play.

Children enjoy an extensive range of physical activities within the play rooms, the garden and covered areas. There are separate outside areas for the preschool and younger children with age- appropriate apparatus. Children practise their skills in a well presented and stimulating environment. They are able to climb, balance and to use ride-on-toys with great confidence. In addition to the extensive opportunities outside they take part in more structured sessions

with action rhymes and tapes which encourages them to dance and move confidently in a defined space. Children have a growing understanding of the impact that physical play has on their bodies. They recognise when they are getting hot and 'out of breath' as they seek permission from staff to take off their coats and jackets. Staff respond appropriately and extend the discussion about being healthy and fit.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an exceptionally well managed environment. Highly detailed and comprehensive health and safety procedures are in place. These support staff in providing a safe and secure environment for the children and families who use the centre. Entry to the day nursery is through the centre reception which is vigilantly monitored by reception staff. They verify the identity of people who are unknown to them requesting them to sign the visitors log book before gaining the required centre staff member to accompany the unknown adult through the premises. The main site is secured via a key code system which only staff working within the facility have access to. This ensures children's welfare is upheld. Comprehensive evacuation plans are in place, procedures are displayed around the setting. Records show drills are carried out on a regular basis to ensure children are familiar with the drill.

High adult to child ratios enable the children to move freely between the home rooms, covered play areas and garden with appropriate support at all times. Practitioners help keep children safe as they explain to the children how their behaviour impacts on others playing nearby. They are learning to take the needs of others into account. Rigorous risk assessments and procedures for outings and trips ensure staff and parents are aware of their responsibilities. When staff take the young children out for walks in the community they have identified areas that are accessible with the large triple buggies, this ensures that staff can manoeuvre and manage the outing in a safe manner.

Children access an extensive range of safe, high-quality, developmentally appropriate resources and equipment. Low-level storage throughout the setting ensures children have easy access to toys and resources which promotes their independence.

All children using the setting are exceptionally well protected as the centre staff have their best interests as their primary concern. Thorough recruitment procedures ensure all staff working with the children are suitable to do so. The community services within the centre liaise with the nursery staff to provide comprehensive child protection support in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. Staff are vigilant in their practice and are confident in their knowledge of protecting children. There is a designated lead person for child protection and staff around the centre who take responsibility for key groups in their care. The information is displayed in each room so all staff and families are aware of the processes that are in place to protect their children.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive in this inspirational setting. Significant emphasis is given to promoting personal, social and creative skills. These give the children a firm foundation for future learning. Children actively take part in purposeful activities and clearly enjoy the flexible, calm atmosphere. Staff are positive role models, they listen to the children, answer with open ended questions to prompt the children to explore and extend their play ideas. Plans and activities for children

under three years are based on the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Information about how children learn is displayed around the nursery so parents can find out more about these important aspects of their children's play and learning. Observations and records of the children's individual achievements are maintained to a high standard. The information is evaluated to ensure children are progressing in line with a well planned early years curriculum and the stepping stones format.

Well planned and presented play areas ensure children have access to a wide range of natural materials. Textured baskets and highly decorated boxes are used to store treasured items. Silky fabrics provide soft tactile areas for children to play and explore. Children enjoy taking part in spontaneous singing sessions. For example, when staff begin to sing to an individual, others gather around. They show great delight as they recognise the familiar rhymes. They re-enact simple actions, laugh and repeat the words, prompting staff to repeat the activity. Children have fun as they interact with adults and other children in a stimulating and challenging environment.

### Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff have an exceptionally competent understanding of how children learn. They consistently deliver an inspiring range of practical purposeful activities which promote optimal challenge for each child in line with their age and stage of development. Highly innovative teaching methods and exceptional use of quantitative quality resources, enhances the execution in delivery of the educational programme. Children truly relish their time in this provision. They have an excellent attitude to learning because they are settled, happy and purposefully engaged. Children consistently rise to the challenges set and are confident in voicing their thoughts and ideas. They listen with considerable levels of concentration to stories and can recount favourites, remembering the order sequence of events. Many children use marks readily to represent their ideas and older children are becoming adept at writing their own names. Children are highly imaginative and are able to use this in a range of context such as when playing in the outside sand based home corner. Children re-enact act home life as they bake at the oven and eat at the table. They are beginning to make sense of the world around them as they access resources that reflect diversity and celebrate cultural festivals throughout the year. Children make collages, paint freely and draw pictures many of which are displayed. Exceptional emphasis is given to opportunities to promote physical development. For example, children access a free-flow covered outside play area where they can ride bikes, throw and catch balls, run around developing an awareness of space and scale static climbing apparatus. They also participate in regular movement to music sessions where they prepare their bodies in readiness prior to the activity. For example, stretching their limbs to warm up the different muscle groups. This ensures children are able to develop increased control and coordination of large muscle groups.

Practitioners have an extremely sound and secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Highly detailed plans provide an excellent balance across all six areas of learning. Children access a extensive range of practical activities, which are well-planned and exceptionally well executed. Right from the start, staff find out about children's skills, interests and needs and effectively build on this information to help children achieve as much as they can. A flexible approach to planning and an excellent balance between adult and child-led learning allows children to learn at their own pace. Staff are highly perceptive to children's interests during self-initiated play and use questions very skilfully and successfully to challenge children's thinking and language skills. They plan first-hand experiences that help children take the next step in their learning.

Teaching highly motivates children. They consistently remain intent and focussed in their activities. Children are making rapid progress through the stepping stones due to the rich and inspiring curriculum in place and the consistent enthusiasm and engagement of exceptionally well-trained staff. Assessment is rigorous and the information gained is used very effectively to guide planning. This supports promotion of an exceptionally cohesive planning cycle.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

Children from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and children with special needs are warmly welcomed in the children's centre. Practitioners ensure that the resources positively represent the children who attended as well as individuals in the wider community. This helps children to develop a positive attitude to others. Highly skilled staff implement excellent systems to ensure that children with specific needs receive appropriate support in the setting. This ensures they are able to join in with all the activities and make very good progress given their age and starting points.

Children are extremely well behaved. They are very polite, both to each other and to staff. They are fully aware of the boundaries set for them. Children take turns and show concern for others. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive funded nursery education is outstanding. They receive an extensive range of informative literature about the curriculum and their children's attainments. Promotion of an open door policy, regular parental consultation evenings and periodic written reports ensures continued effectiveness of the communication structures between home and setting.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

The dedicated staff and positive working relationship with parents and the community ensure the children benefit and enjoy their time at the provision. Staff are exceptionally skilled and competent in their childcare practice. They demonstrate a real affinity with the children. They use their wealth of experiences and their childcare training to provide a wide range of practical and stimulating learning opportunities. The nursery has clear self-evaluation procedures and works hard to develop and enhance their practice, continually striving to improve on their already high standards set. They are receptive to continued improvements and to implementing government initiatives within the programmes offered by the centre. Staff have a sound working knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework which is effectively used for the planning and evaluation of the younger children's achievements and to ensure there is a sound basis to their future learning.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is outstanding. The quality of the educational curriculum is significantly enhanced through a unified skilled team who work collaboratively with senior management and the wider children centre community and ethos. This ensures a cohesive approach to learning and progression. The centre manager is highly experienced and committed to promotion of high standards of education. For example, she actively supports and encourages her team to excel and progress their skills. This is evident from the range of centre staff exceeding a Level 3 childcare qualification, a parity of the government initiative to heighten the skill base of early years practitioners and of the settings proactive attitude of already looking at the implementation of the pending Early Years

Foundation Stage Curriculum. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last childcare inspection the group were required to ensure children could not access the cords on the window blinds and to include a written statement on bullying in the behaviour management policy and ensure there is a named staff member within the setting who is responsible for behaviour management issues. The setting has comprehensive risk assessments in place that ensure the children's safety at all times. The nursery has a designated member of staff for behaviour management, the policies contain all relevant information to ensure the well-being of the children.

At the last nursery education inspection the centre were required to ensure that pictures and words are displayed to enhance children's progress in extending their skills in language. Children benefit in developing an awareness that print carries meaning, as the environment is richly labelled with both the written word and pictorial illustration.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

### **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

#### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)