

# Casterton Childcare Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** 260840

**Inspection date** 16 January 2008

**Inspector** Ros Church

**Setting Address** Casterton Business & Enterprise College, Ryhall Road, Great Casterton,  
Stamford, Lincolnshire, PE9 4AT

**Telephone number** 01780 754780

**E-mail**

**Registered person** Casterton Childcare Centre

**Type of inspection** Integrated

**Type of care** Full day care

## 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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Casterton Childcare Centre opened in 1986, it is run by the Governors of Casterton Business and Enterprise College (CBEC). The nursery is based on the college campus and comprises of three rooms, one of which is for the use of children aged under two years. Toilets are located off the main room. The nursery has kitchen facilities and two enclosed outdoor play areas. The provision is open to all families in the surrounding areas. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 until 18.00. It operates for 51 weeks of the year with the exception of bank holidays and one week at Christmas. The provision offers full-time and sessional care.

A maximum of 41 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 44 children from six weeks to four- years- 11 months on roll. Of these, 18 children receive funding for early education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are eight staff who are employed at the nursery. Of these, six staff hold a recognised early years qualification, with two staff working towards a qualification. The nursery receives support from the Rutland Local Authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children are well nourished and have good opportunities to learn about healthy eating. A good variety of healthy meals and snacks are provided which include vegetables and fruit. The staff work well with the parents and have a good knowledge of children's dietary needs and requirements. This includes ensuring that young babies are given food which is of the correct consistency and takes account of individual routines. Children take part in a good range of activities which help them learn about healthy eating, this includes having regular opportunities to be involved in making their own afternoon tea, such as sandwiches. Children are able to choose when to have their snack during a set time. They regularly help themselves to fresh drinking water throughout the day using the water dispenser. Staff ensure babies are offered regular drinks.

Children's health is actively promoted by the staff who follow effective procedures to maintain a healthy environment and encourage them to develop good personal hygiene routines. For example, children are encouraged to wash their hands before meals and snacks. Staff follow good nappy changing procedures, such as wearing disposable gloves and aprons to help prevent the spread of infection. Children stay suitably protected if they become ill or have an accident as all staff have a current first aid qualification and know what to do in the event of an accident. However, not all written consents have been obtained from parents to ensure all the individual needs of children are met in an emergency. A sickness exclusion policy is shared with parents to ensure children only attend the nursery when they are well enough to do so. Clear systems are in place for administering and recording medication which may be required, this ensures children's health.

Children have good opportunities for fresh air and exercise. Whilst using the large play room children two years and over are able to choose when to play outside. Babies have their own outdoor play area enabling them to experience fresh air in safety. A good range of equipment enables children to develop a variety of physical skills. Further opportunities are provided for physical development within the indoor areas, such as using the soft play equipment, ball pool, or joining in with activities which include dancing and action rhymes.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well maintained, safe and secure environment. Two large rooms provide good space for children to be involved in a range of activities, with an additional room for either the two-year-olds or pre-school children to have smaller group activities. Each room has an appropriate range of play resources which are well-maintained and suitable for children's individual needs. Equipment is easily accessible for children to make choices in their play. The environment is welcoming with children's art work displayed on the walls.

Children are protected from the risk of accidental injury because staff supervise children well. Good procedures are in place to check areas are safe, this includes risk assessments and daily tick lists of both indoor and outdoor areas. Good security procedures are in place, which includes two fully enclosed outdoor play areas, and a security code system fitted to the nursery entrance door. Sleeping babies and toddlers are carefully monitored and checked at regular intervals. Children develop an awareness of safety through staff's clear explanations and practical activities,

such as learning to sweep up the sand to prevent themselves and others from slipping. Fire evacuation procedures are practised regularly to ensure that both staff and children are aware of what to do in the event of an emergency. Children are safeguarded from child protection issues as staff fully understand their role and know the procedures to follow should an incident arise. Good induction procedures ensure that new staff are fully informed.

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

The provision is good.

Children are confident, happy and enjoy their time at nursery. Young children and babies enjoy close relationships with their carers and readily seek comfort and contact with them, increasing their well-being. Staff encourage children's language development at an appropriate level throughout the nursery. Children enjoy looking at books with staff, babies point to familiar pictures and learn new words, whilst pre-school children enjoy sharing books with their friends and listening to their favourite stories. All children are very involved in their play and learning. They learn to be independent as they make their own decisions about their play as they choose from the wide range of activities and play equipment.

Through daily discussions staff plan and provide a broad range of activities each day. Activities take account of children's individual needs. However, written plans are not carried out to ensure that activities clearly link with individual developmental assessments. Babies and young children enjoy a good range of sensory experiences. A variety of activities are provided which include water, sand, paint and play dough. Treasure baskets are set up to enable babies and children to explore different equipment and natural materials.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress and their overall development is promoted because staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage. A good range of activities are planned and provided, the staff plan activities around the interests of the children. A good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities ensures children have enough time to consolidate their learning in their own way and at their own pace. Staff undertake regular observations and carry out assessments of children's learning which follow the Foundation Stage stepping stones. However, written plans are not in place to ensure that activities clearly identify learning intentions, link with the assessments of children's learning and ensure all areas of the curriculum are covered. Staff are effective in managing children's behaviour, encouraging them through effective strategies, such as positive reinforcement. Consequently, children are very well behaved. Staff make good use of resources both indoors and outdoors to support children's learning well. The rooms are well organised and used to good effect to provide a wide variety of experiences. Children have open access to the outdoor area whilst using the larger room.

Children's personal and social skills are a particular strength. They are confident within the group and independence skills are developing well through a good range of opportunities. For example, children choose when to have their snack and drink, they serve out their own lunch, access aprons for messy play and learn to put on their coats prior to going outside. Children confidently use information technology equipment, such as the computer, they are able to use equipment, such as the mouse to enable them to follow their chosen programme. Children make good relationships with staff and peers, with many older children having special friends within the nursery. Children's language skills are good, they talk confidently about their interests and experiences. Activities are planned which encourage children's listening skills. For example,

during a sound game children listen for the sound played on the compact disc and match this to the appropriate picture card. Children enjoy stories and contribute enthusiastically to discussions supporting their language skills very well. They have weekly opportunities to participate in French, this increases their knowledge and appreciation of a different language. They learn to recognise their own names through various opportunities, such as finding their name label as they enter the nursery, then attaching their name to the space provided above a coat peg.

Children show an interest in numbers and counting, most children count accurately to nine and recognise some numerals. However, fewer opportunities are provided within routine activities, such as snack and meal times to further develop children's understanding of numbers and problem solving. Children use the wide range of large and small equipment confidently, with increasing control and co-ordination. They display increasing skills when using tools in their play, creative and design work, such as children's scissors, paint brushes and glue sticks. Children respond excitedly to a wide range of creative activities. They sing enthusiastically, love role play and explore paint and other materials. Children in the home corner imitate adult roles. They participate in a wide range of role play situations and experience a variety of different learning opportunities. For example, through pretend play children use the hospital play resources to care for the teddy bears, and learn how to use the various equipment. During role play they have access to paper and pencils giving children opportunities of using writing for different purposes. Children have good opportunities to explore a wide range of musical instruments, they learn the names of each instrument, the sounds they make and how these can be changed to become loud or quiet.

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

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed into the setting and are valued and respected. Staff have a good knowledge of children's individual needs through effective, up to date documentation and ongoing communication with parents. Effective discussion with parents ensures that babies and young children experience and benefit from familiar home routines for eating and sleeping whilst at the nursery, enabling them to feel safe and secure. The consistency in children's care is extended further within the under two's room through the provision of daily diaries provided for parents, these include details of children's individual care and activities. Positive steps are taken within the nursery to promote children's self-esteem and sense of belonging. For example, children's work is displayed around the nursery and children over two years have their own tray where they store their belongings and art work. Systems are in place to meet the needs of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Children are made aware of the wider society through activities and resources provided. This includes activities around the many festivals and celebrations, books and posters around the setting, dolls and small world play figures that the children use within their imaginative play. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Staff promote children's good behaviour and achievements through praise and encouragement, such as giving stickers. Children's behaviour is good, they make positive relationships with one another and play cooperatively together. They learn to take care of their environment, and older children learn to help those younger than themselves.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for early education is good. Children benefit from the effective information sharing with parents, this includes daily chats and detailed notice boards with information on policies and procedures. Good information

around the Foundation Stage is displayed for parents, this helps them to be involved in children's learning. Children's assessment records are shared with parents as they require, or through the planned open evenings.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are protected due to the robust recruitment and vetting procedures in place. Procedures ensure that all staff have been vetted and are safe and suitable to be in contact with children. Clear induction procedures are in place to ensure that staff are aware of the policies and procedures within the setting. Children benefit because managers and staff have the appropriate qualifications, knowledge and experience to do their jobs. Annual performance and development reviews are in place to ensure staff training needs are met. Staff know the children well and ensure that their individual needs are met. The nursery benefits from being run by the 11 to 16's college, this includes support for the nursery manager and use of the colleges facilities, such as the playing fields and language teachers. Most records are in place, these are available and retained for inspection. Records are suitably organised and kept in a confidential manner.

The leadership and management of nursery education are good. The managers and staff work well together to ensure children's learning needs are met. Training opportunities ensure that children are well-protected and cared for. There are effective systems in place for monitoring and evaluating the nursery education. The manager is well aware of the strengths and weaknesses for children's education and what is required for improvement. Overall children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Since the last care inspection the provider now has clear systems in place for recording times of arrival and departure for staff and visitors. The 'Birth to three matters' framework has been implemented with regards to the activities and assessments for babies and young children. Food preparation procedures now meet Environmental Health requirements and healthy foods are provided throughout the day. Clear procedures to be followed in event of an allegation being made against a member of staff are now in place.

Since the last nursery education inspection the provider has developed the programme of learning for physical development, daily opportunities are provided for physical activities using a good range of equipment for different abilities. More opportunities are provided for children to practise writing for different purposes, such as during role play activities, and children can access a range of tools and materials which help develop their creativity. The organisation of group activities has now been reviewed and the additional room is used for activities and small group sessions, such as story time. The above steps taken help to promote children's safety, welfare and learning.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been two complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

Ofsted received a complaint which raised concerns about the conduct of staff, deployment of staff and child to staff ratios. Concerns were also raised about the recording of accidents and the record of attendance and the child protection procedures. Ofsted made an announced visit

on 24/02/2005 to consider these concerns in relation to National Standards 2: Organisation, 13: Child protection, and 14: Documentation. As a result of the visit actions were made in relation to the National Standards, this ensures the provider must inform Ofsted of all staff employed on the premises and that they have submitted to vetting procedures. Recommendations were also made, these relate to the recruitment and selection procedure to ensure that staff have the appropriate experience, skills and ability to do their jobs, also the child protection statement to clearly set out staff responsibilities. A satisfactory response was received and the provider remains qualified for registration.

Ofsted received a complaint which raised concerns about the number of qualified staff at the provision. Ofsted made an unannounced visit to the provision on 19/07/2005 to consider these concerns in relation to National Standard 2: Organisation. Although there was no evidence to substantiate these concerns two actions were set. These were under National Standard 1: to provide evidence that staff have submitted to a vetting procedure which includes a criminal record check and under National Standard 14: to ensure Ofsted is informed of any changes in members of staff. A satisfactory response was received and the provider remains qualified for registration.

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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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

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

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure written permission is requested, at the time of placement to the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment in the future.

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

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop planning to clearly identify learning intentions, ensuring that they link with children's developmental assessments (also applies to care)
- extend opportunities for children's mathematical development within routine activities.

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)