

# St Nicholas Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

EY311395

**Inspection date**

08/06/2009

**Inspector**

Georgina Emily Hobson Matthews

**Setting address**

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**Type of setting**

Childcare on non-domestic premises

## 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.

## Description of the setting

St Nicholas Children's Centre opened in 1999 and changed ownership in 2005. It is run by a registered company and operates from five rooms in a converted building in the town of Great Yarmouth, in Norfolk. The building has a level access and the ground floor is devoted to the care of children under five years. Out of school care for children up to the age of 12 years is provided on the first floor. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The centre is open each weekday from 08.30 until 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year and serves the local community.

The centre is registered to care for a maximum of 62 children. It is registered on the Early Years Register to care for no more than 38 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). There are currently 113 children in this age range on roll, some in part-time places. The centre is in receipt of government funding for nursery education. It currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children with English as an additional language. The centre also offers care to children over five years of age. This provision is registered on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. The centre employs 16 members of childcare staff, most of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to Level 3 or Level 4.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The provision is good. The committed team of management and staff members create an ethos of equality of opportunity for all children. A strong framework for working in partnership with parents/carers and other professionals has been developed. An established system for evaluating and risk assessing the childcare provision is in place and this generally offers robust criteria to target areas for development. Children's welfare is generally promoted well and they make progress across all areas of learning supported by an experienced and enthusiastic team of staff.

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

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

- provide fresh drinking water in the baby room at all times
- use systematic observations and assessments of each child's achievements throughout the nursery to identify learning priorities.

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- take reasonable steps to ensure that hazards to children are kept to a minimum with particular regard to the kitchen on the first floor and maintain a record of identified aspects of the environment that need to

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be checked on a regular basis and when and by whom they have been checked (Suitable premises, environment and equipment) (also complies to the compulsory part of the Childcare Register).

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

The manager and her deputy strive for improvement within the provision. Robust recruitment and induction procedures ensure that adults are suitable to work with children. This also provides staff members and students with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Regular appraisals motivate staff and ongoing training plans are developed in order to keep up-to-date. All staff members working with children hold appropriate childcare qualifications and current paediatric first aid certificates. They have a secure understanding of safeguarding issues in order to protect children from harm or neglect. Staff members have a good understanding of the EYFS. Each child is allocated a key person who gathers information from parents about children's starting points and their ongoing progress. Regular observations of each child's play are recorded by the key person in a personal 'Learning Story' and regular assessments are made in order to identify and plan for the next steps in each child's learning. However, some staff members do not always successfully identify learning priorities in order to challenge children sufficiently. The staff team is skilled in promoting children's confidence and self-esteem. They are caring and affectionate and show a genuine interest in the children. Adults involve themselves in children's play and offer them lots of praise and encouragement for their efforts. As a result, children feel secure and confident and are eager to explore and try new things. The management team encourage a culture of reflective practice. As a result they have targeted most areas required for development. Children's health is well promoted as the premises are clean and hygienic and necessary steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection. Generally, effective procedures are in place for the safe and efficient management of the setting. A detailed risk assessment has been completed and ongoing checks are carried out to sustain this level of safety. However, the centre does not maintain a record of identified aspects that need to be checked on a regular basis in order to ensure that no hazard is overlooked. Although children in the out of school provision are advised not to enter the kitchen on the first floor of the premises and staff members are vigilant, potential hazards in this area have not been identified within the assessment in order to assure children's safety.

Communication with parents/carers and other professionals is highly valued within the centre. It operates an 'open-door' policy and the management team provides families with valuable and sensitive support and advice. A high priority is given to inclusive practice. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified and provided for effectively and the diversity of individuals and families is celebrated. The team is extremely proactive in introducing new procedures and resources in order to enhance the centre's ability to involve parents in their children's learning and development. However, some children do not always receive a healthy, balanced and nutritious packed lunch. Although staff members

discuss concerns and this issue is flagged in newsletters, some parent/carers do not follow the centre's policy. Parent/carers have regular opportunities to chat to their child's key person and to access and to contribute to their child's 'Learning Story'. They are invited to participate in an evaluation of the service and their satisfaction is reflected in their extremely positive feedback.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

Children learn about how to stay healthy. They develop a good understanding of hygiene as they are encouraged to wash their hands after toileting and before eating. They enjoy healthy snacks and the cook offers freshly prepared, nutritious meals for lunch. Generally, fresh drinking water is available throughout sessions. However, this is not available to children from the baby room during outdoor play to encourage them to access water when they are thirsty. Children of all ages are provided with excellent opportunities for large physical outdoor play. They move with control and co-ordination on a range of equipment and learn to balance and to climb. They manipulate small tools during sand and water play. Staff members raise children's awareness of fire and road safety and of how to stay safe in the sun. Children's behaviour is excellent as staff members act as good role models and use positive strategies to help children to manage their behaviour. Young children play happily alongside each other and learn to share resources and to take turns. As they progress through the centre, children interact well with each other, cooperate and negotiate and form close friendships.

Children's communication and language skills are promoted well. Babies interact with each other with hand gestures, smiles and babbled sounds. Staff members respond enthusiastically and introduce new words. Toddlers chat sociably and older children confidently express their ideas and feelings. Children learn words from languages other than English. The centre offers children a print-rich environment and all ages of children are able to select books from attractive displays. They handle these with care as they look at pictures in comfortable areas both indoors and outdoors. Children snuggle up with staff members for stories and older children are able to recall past events and to anticipate what will happen next. Children of all ages have lots of opportunities to mark-make and to practise their emergent writing. Some children can write their names and begin to link sounds to letters. Babies learn to choose, sort and post appropriate shapes and older children recognise and name different shapes. Children recognise numbers during their everyday play and learn to count in games. They think about how many more and how many less. Children observe the growth of tomato plants and bring their pets into the centre to show each other. They learn about the local community on visits to shops to buy cooking ingredients and to recycle items. Children immerse themselves in imaginary play as they dress up and take on roles such as 'mother and baby'. They have further opportunities to use their imagination as they dance and sing and make sounds with musical instruments. Children develop their creativity as they paint and access a stimulating range of craft materials.

## 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*

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	2

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	2
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	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:

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Suitability and Safety of Premises and Equipment).

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