

Caister Infant, Nursery and Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY389042

Inspection date

23/09/2009

Inspector

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Caister Infants, Nursery School and Children's Centre has a day-care facility which is overseen by the head teacher, children's centre manager and school governing body which includes parents. The day-care unit opened in early 2009 and operates from within one purpose built accessible room within the children's centre in the grounds of an Infants and Nursery school in Caister-on-Sea Norfolk. The setting is open Monday to Friday throughout the year from 08.00 am until 18.00 pm.

The day-care facility is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 38 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 57 children aged from two to four years on roll who attend nursery sessions and before and after school sessions throughout the week. The setting is in receipt of government funding for early education. The setting welcomes children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children with English as an additional language. Strong links have been developed with local schools and other early years providers. The inspection does not cover other services offered by the children's centre.

There are six members of staff working in the day-care facility, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Overall the quality of the day-care provision is outstanding. The excellent leadership from the head teacher and management team, alongside a competent and enthusiastic early years teacher and childcare staff group, helps to create an effective team that is pro-active in ensuring children are happy, confident and already thriving in their learning and development at this setting which has been open for a relatively short period. Children are valued and respected and the day-care team work in close partnership with parents, other settings and professional services to ensure children as individuals are actively supported in reaching their full potential. Children's safety is given exceptional priority and the setting shows a clear understanding of their strengths and areas for development as they strive for continuous improvement. The day-care team are asked to consider two minor recommendations to ensure the facilities continue to meet the highest standards for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- further involve all staff in considering how best to embed new practices and make ongoing improvements at the setting, particularly with regard to planning of activities for individual children, outdoor play and supporting

- younger children during after school provision
- look at further ways to maintain a two-way flow of information directly with parents who do not bring or collect their children on a regular basis.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are very safe and secure at this setting. Detailed safety assessments are completed with regard to the indoor, outdoor environment and any outing venues are checked before children attend to ensure they are suitable and risks to children are actively minimised. The day-care facilities are welcoming but security is excellent and children are only allowed to go home with those people included on the registration forms by parents. Everyone working directly in the day-care facilities and in a supporting role are vetted to ensure their suitability to be around children and families. The setting has a clear strategy to actively involve and support children in developing their own awareness regarding safety matters, to ensure they are well prepared for future independence. They know that scissors are sharp and must be used sensibly, visits from the local police help children learn how to cross the road safely and much younger children start to listen to stories such as, 'Red Riding hood', to raise their awareness about stranger danger. The setting have a secure understanding about their safeguarding responsibilities towards young children. Staff have an up to date awareness of the possible signs of child abuse and the clear, accessible written procedures, displayed for parents, can be quickly followed, at any point during the day-care opening hours, to ensure children are protected.

A clear vision from the well qualified school leadership group alongside a strong commitment to reflective practice from the day-care team, combined with rigorous evaluation and monitoring systems, actively supports ongoing improvements within the day-care facilities for the benefit of the children's care and learning. The setting consults with advisors and all parties using the facilities, including the children, to identify areas for ongoing development and clear action plans with robust timescales helps to drive through ongoing improvements. An example includes the purchasing of low-level screens and equipment to create 'child friendly' working spaces for key carer staff to undertake small group activities with children with differing needs and ages. The setting's childcare and teaching staff team are suitably qualified and actively encouraged to undertake ongoing training to ensure they are up-to-date with current thinking in the field of children's learning and care. Recent training about the importance of secure attachments for younger children has lead to the setting strengthening their staff key worker system to ensure that children's personal care is undertaken by the same staff and buddy key carer. The impact for the younger children of this approach is that they settle quickly on arrival and the close bond established with their key carer ensures they have the confidence to actively engage in discovery and learning within the rich, well planned and resourced play environment.

The setting has a flexible, inclusive and sensitive approach to partnerships with parents and others, which fully promotes the care and learning of the children. Parents' views about their children's needs are actively respected with regard to

eating, sleeping and development opportunities. All documentation is accurate and clear, providing reassurance to parents about their children's welfare and demonstrating that the setting has a robust understanding of their responsibilities under the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for the safe management and well-being of the children. Parents, the staff, other professionals working with children with particular needs and other settings that children may attend, use a variety of verbal and written methods to continually exchange information about the children. This alongside staff monitoring children's progress and ensuring early support for those with identified special educational needs ensures that there is continuity of care and active support for children's ongoing progress in learning and development. Children learning English as an additional language are welcomed and actively supported with their communication skills through a diverse range of language and literacy play activities. Parents' speak very positively about their children's experience at the setting including the fact that children are 'very happy', 'cannot wait to come to nursery', 'staff seem to genuinely care' and already they are 'learning lots of new things'. The setting are aware of the need to continue to develop communication systems with parents who do not directly bring or collect their children.

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

Children make rapid progress in their learning and development. This is because the early years teacher and day-care staff team have a secure knowledge about the EYFS and how to implement an appropriate play curriculum for the different ages and abilities that attend. The team work effectively together to assess children and plan for their next steps in learning. They undertake home visits to get to know the children and during the first few weeks when children start to come to the nursery the settings key workers gather detailed information about children's interests and skills helping to build a comprehensive early assessment record. As staff know the children well by this stage they then plan an exciting range of activities utilising children's interests, such as 'super hero's' and a recent fascination with magnifying glasses, to offer a fun range of learning activities well matched to children's differing needs, ages and abilities. As a result of this approach children enthusiastically embrace the play opportunities provided and actively enjoy themselves and achieve. This is well supported by staff who are caring and responsive, sitting alongside children to support their play and asking 'open questions' such as 'I wonder what we could do to fix the railway?' which fosters children's critical thinking skills. Younger children are actively encouraged to make connections in their play by discovering what happens when buttons are pressed and toys move around as a result of their actions.

A very well organised, stimulating learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, actively fosters children's self-reliance and independence as they choose their activities and undertake self-care routines. Messy play activities are enthusiastically enjoyed by the children and provide opportunities for creativity and exploration. Natural resources are examined by toddlers who experiment with water, paint, sand and a range of wooden blocks which stimulates their senses and develops their knowledge about different materials. Older children are keen to use

a range of implements to make marks on paper and show an interest in the written words around the setting, including their names.

Children's basic skills for future learning are well supported. They communicate well in this enabling environment with toddlers being quick to vocalise, alongside those with English as a second language, being well supported in their language development through the use of sounds, puppets and gestures. Older children talk eloquently and literacy is actively fostered for all ages through books and other activities. Children are encouraged to count through songs and everyday events and more capable children respond to the challenge of solving complex maths problems, such as working out how to share fruit amongst the number of children. Computers and the listening station equipment encourages all children to develop confidence and skills with technology.

Children are considerate and developing a rich understanding about others and the wider world to foster their future tolerance of difference. All children, regardless of age, gender or ability, are actively included in events and the setting ensures children are surrounded by positive imagery of wider society and celebrate world festivals. Children learn about keeping healthy as they eat nutritious meals and exercise daily outside, riding trikes and climbing to the top of the slide, building their muscle strength and physical capabilities. Younger children are able to rest in comfort and safety when they need to conserve their energy and promote their bodies growth.

Children are exceptionally well-behaved as the staff are attentive, praise the children frequently and set a clear boundary regarding acceptable behaviour for children who are temporarily unkind or destructive as part of their expected development stage. Children quickly learn right from wrong and even younger children are sociable and caring towards others.

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

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

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