

St James Childcare Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY398995
Inspection date 03/03/2010
Inspector Sheila Dawn Flounders

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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*.

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.

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Description of the setting

St. James Childcare Centre was re-registered in 2009, originally opening in 2006, and is managed by the Pre-school Learning Alliance. The Childcare Centre is located in the Dallington Green area of Northampton and operates from the old church rooms. The premises are accessed by two steps and a ramp is provided. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The Childcare Centre is open each weekday from 9.00am to 12.00pm and 1.00 pm to 4.00 pm, currently during term time only, although they can open for 50 weeks of the year.

The childcare centre is registered to care for a maximum of 26 children from two years to under five years on the Early Years Register. There are currently 49 children on roll, all in part-time places. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language. They provide funded early education for three and four year olds. There are 11 members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from a local authority advisory teacher, and has recently achieved Level 2 in the Pre-school Learning Alliance 'Aiming for Quality' accreditation scheme.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The unique needs of each child are clearly recognised, with staff striving to meet them through ongoing contact with parents and close liaison with other professionals when necessary. Particular care is taken to obtain accurate information, for example, about dietary needs and children's home language. The staff are proactive in ensuring that all children access activities and play an active role and as a result they make at least good progress in their learning and development. The groups capacity to maintain continuous improvement is very strong. They take on board constructive criticism, from various sources, and constantly look at how to make the best of their current situation and also plan for future improvement to the provision for the benefit of all the children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop evaluation, to include consideration of whether desired learning has been achieved
- develop hand washing routines before snack to better protect children from the risk of cross-infection.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are well safeguarded as the setting have secure systems to vet and induct new staff and students. There is a detailed policy in place and staff are confident in their practice. They demonstrate that they understand the broader issues and their role and responsibility to protect children, for example, parents are also subject to checks if they volunteer to help during sessions. Safety within the premises was addressed during the recent move and staff remain vigilant of ongoing issues such as keeping the main door locked, the kitchen gate closed and securing the outdoor space when children are outside. Risk assessments are reviewed at least annually, and also regularly in light of accidents, with additional entries made before different outings are undertaken.

Inclusion is an obvious strength of the setting as staff really consider the needs of the individual, and their families. Many attending speak English as an additional language and the group are proactive at making information available in a variety of languages for parents to share with their child. Visual prompts are used in every session so all children can communicate their needs to staff, about care routines and also activities that they want to access. Activities are fully inclusive, with strong support provided for those needing it, for example, individual support is provided for children with special educational needs for at least part of the session. Staff accentuate the premises' positives, such as the ramp for access, and work very hard to overcome its limitations, ensuring that resources which children can access independently are regularly rotated as full access is not possible. Staff work well together as a team, deploying themselves smoothly between tasks whilst remaining flexible to support children in other areas when necessary. Changes have been made to routines for the afternoon session to ensure that children have the same opportunities for group time as those in the morning.

Management have a very clear idea of their current strengths and most weaknesses, due to their ongoing self-evaluation and daily involvement; and also have an ambitious, but achievable, vision of where they want the setting to be. Strong systems in place through regular meetings, staff supervision and annual appraisals enable the manager to constantly monitor and evaluate the provision and staff willingly change things to bring about improvement. Their self-evaluation process involves input from parents, for example, through the parents forum, where issues arising previously are discussed. New parents are provided with detailed information about the provision, including the educational content, with leaflets available in several languages. This information is supported visually, for example, children's developmental records contain photographs and examples of their creative work, as well as written observations. Parents are involved, through discussion with key staff, in deciding what their child's next steps in learning will be and encouraged to pass on their detailed knowledge of their child, particularly when they first attend. They have opportunities to add information about learning at home to records also. The setting have considerable experience of liaison with others, such as interpreters, the area special needs co-ordinator and the local school, although currently none of the children attend other settings.

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

Children benefit from interaction with a well-qualified and experienced staff group who ensure they have opportunities to access all areas of the curriculum with a balance of indoor and outdoor activities offered, including adult-led and child-initiated learning. As a result all children are provided with individual challenges and they make at least good progress towards the early learning goals in relation to their known starting points, capabilities and interests. During role play, currently around shops, they use realistic props developing their understanding of handling money or operating the till, choose their items and dress up to take on different characters. Staff support encourages them to consider prices and children suggest the need for an open or closed sign. A small group activity involves making dough together, when children consider resources needed, help to count out the ingredients and take turns to mix them. They discuss what they are doing, and demonstrate they understand safety aspects, such as not to eat what they make in their pretend 'cooking' at the end of the activity. Staff record children's achievements daily, using these to help establish individual next steps to include in future planning. Activities are regularly evaluated, and information included about unplanned learning following children's interests, although staff do not currently routinely record if the intended learning has been achieved or needs to be revisited. Regular additions are made to children's developmental records and termly tracking ensures that all areas of learning are progressing.

Children are confident with adults and each other, showing they feel safe and secure. They learn about keeping themselves safe during activities, such as the recent topic on road safety, which is currently being reinforced during outdoor play, and by taking part in regular fire drills. Some opportunities for taking risk are also developed, for example, using the slope outside with wheeled toys. Most aspects of children's health are well promoted. They are provided with healthy snacks, with consideration given to religious and other dietary requirements, and drinks are easily accessed. Children serve themselves as part of a rolling snack provision and benefit from the independence and social skills developed as a result. Physical activities and outdoor play are available each session, with free flow encouraged. Outside space is limited, although staff plan diverse activities and also compensate with other appropriate physical activities inside. Children understand the need to wash their hands and have suitable facilities for doing so after toileting. Robust routines are in place to clean the tables, including encouraging children to help, although current practice of a shared bowl of water for hand washing before snack does not fully protect children from the risk of cross-infection. All children have opportunities to make a positive contribution to the setting, for example, they are encouraged to put their own coats on, are responsible for their cup and plate after snack and readily use the 'What do you want to do today' prompts to choose their activities. Children are generally very involved in their play and have ample opportunities to expend their physical energy and as a result behaviour incidents are infrequent. Staff ensure children are aware of the simple boundaries, such as not to run inside, always reinforcing the safety reasons if reminders are necessary, with most incidents handled through distraction to another activity. Children have good access to the computer, are

developing their understanding of how to behave positively and are forming robust friendships, all skills they will need in the future.

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?	2
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?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met