

NAR Sure Start Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

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Inspection date

23/03/2010

Inspector

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Setting address

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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

Nar Sure Start Children's Centre registered in 2009. The setting operates from a former church hall in Kings Lynn. Children have access to the main hall and to outside play facilities. Additional services at the centre include access to family support sessions, health visitors and midwifery services. The setting has a service level agreement with 'childminding matters' which means the centre hold details of registered childminders in the children's centre area. It also offers childminders an opportunity to work in partnership with the Children's Centre to support families. Nar Sure Start Children's Centre is a satellite setting attached to St Michael's family centre, also based in Kings Lynn. There is a ramp/low step access at the front door.

The Children's Centre is registered to care for a maximum of 20 children under eight years at any one time. There are currently 24 children under five years on roll. The setting receives funding for the provision of free early years education to children aged three and four years old. The setting is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

It is open each weekday between 8.30am to 3.30pm term time only. The setting provides additional care for children over an extended lunch period for those families who want this service. The setting also offers funded sessions to be used flexibly during the week. This enables parents to use their funded hours as flexibly as they want to. The Children's Centre supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The Children's Centre manager oversees the running of the setting and a lead practitioner who is degree qualified, runs the childcare component at this site and is based at Nar. There are two other members of staff, one currently qualified to level three in play work and level two in childcare and another who is taking a level two qualification in childcare.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Staff recognise the uniqueness of each child and are establishing systems for children's welfare and learning and development needs to be met more effectively. Children are offered a colourful, warm and secure environment in which to play and learn and children make steady progress. Children's welfare is promoted and safeguarding procedures understood by all staff who understand their duty to protect children in their care. Risk assessments ensure the environment is safe and secure. Partnership between staff and families are building and staff are engaging with parents who use the setting. However, information about policies and procedures and involvement in their children's development is not always consistently offered. There is engagement with partners from the local community and local authority who support children attending the setting. The organisation, staffing and relationships are just beginning and the Children's Centre is a new provision in the community. There are some leadership and management

weaknesses but the setting are currently laying the foundations and building on these for future development and improvements.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure parents are provided with the following information; the procedure to be followed in the event of a child going missing and if a parent fails to collect a child at the appointed time(Safeguarding and welfare) 30/03/2010

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

- develop procedures for incorporating parents comments about their children into children's records
- promote equality of opportunity by providing positive images and activities to challenge children's thinking and help them develop respect for equality and for differences in culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, learning difficulties and religion
- develop recruitment procedures to include information from the Early Years Foundation Stage, Suitable People, when making decisions on suitability
- provide induction training for new staff to help them understand how the provision operates and their role within it and include for example, evacuation procedures, child protection and health and safety issues and make sure that practitioners have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities
- ensure linguistic diversity is valued and provide more opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in their play and learning
- implement a flexible approach to sensitive observational assessment to enable staff to respond quickly to children's learning and development needs
- make sure that records on staff and children are only accessible to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Staff have an understanding about safeguarding issues and aware of their legal responsibility to protect children in their care. Information about the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedure is readily available and displayed on the wall. Staff have suitable training and the responsible member of staff is aware of her regulatory duty. Procedures are in place to liaise with the appropriate childcare agencies. Risk assessments identify dangers and hazards and steps are taken to eliminate risk on and off the premises. Children are helped to be safety conscious. They participate in fire drills and talk

about implications of actions, such as throwing sand on the floor and children slipping.

Recruitment information about staff to verify suitability is adequately maintained, including valid criminal record bureau checks. However, some personnel files omit data, such as, application forms, references and employment history. Some confidential information about staff and children is not maintained in a secure, confidential manner and could be accessed by unauthorised personnel. Staff are supported to further their professional development by undertaking recognised childcare qualifications, this keeps their professional knowledge up to date. They talk about practice issues, such as, behaviour management and safeguarding at staff meeting and they identify their training needs. All staff are first aid trained. Most staff have had inductions, however, the lead practitioner has not yet had a formal induction and appraisals are in the process of being planned. The lead practitioner and the Children's Centre manager have regular communication, but not all responsibilities of these two roles has been clearly defined.

The Children's Centre manager is a very experienced and highly qualified provider. She understands the importance of sustainability for the families who use the service and she and the staff team are highly committed to that. The setting is run by the lead practitioner who is enthusiastic and ensures resources and activities are available to meet the needs of the children. The environment is suitable and learning is taking place, so children are developing steadily as a result of the provision. The lead practitioner and Children's Centre manager are aware of the benefits of self evaluation. As a relatively new staff team they are beginning to reflect on their work and through discussion with staff, some areas for development have been identified as weaknesses through their reflective practice. Some management systems, including roles and responsibility for maintenance of record keeping and storage, induction procedures and recruitment have not been communicated effectively between the management team and consequently weaknesses in these areas have not been identified. The lead practitioner and Children's Centre manager are fully aware of their strengths and are confident about making and sustaining improvements. The staff team communicate ambition and drive and are confident about what the setting needs to do to improve further.

NAR Children's Centre uses corporate policies and procedures from their link family centre, however, those held on site do not include all the information that is required to be given to parents. For example, procedures to be followed if children are lost and if there is a failure to collect children at the appointed time. Information given to parents in the prospectus is basic and does not inform them of the policies and procedures they should be aware of. This means parents, although, happy with the care their children receive, are not fully aware of the centres responsibilities in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage Welfare requirements.

Partnerships are developing and parents and carers have positive views about the setting and staff. Staff work hard to gain the respect and trust of the parents, they try and involve them in events and activities. Their ethos to work with families in an holistic way, and to involve parents, especially fathers more actively, is an ongoing project as part of their future development. The staff exchange

information with parents on a regular basis, providing them with adequate information about how well their children are achieving. Some staff record parent comments on children's learning journey's and use these in future planning, which means some parents are very involved in their children's learning and development. The setting communicates with other agencies and partners supporting children. This ensures relevant and important information is shared to promote children's welfare.

The setting is promoting equality and diversity and soundly tackles discrimination. They are looking at ways of working with minority groups within the local community and amongst their centre users. For example, a recent questionnaire highlighted a desire for some of the children's fathers to be more involved at the setting. Children use the local community as they go shopping, have their snacks in the restaurants and walk around the port and all children have access to a small range of resources and images that promote their understanding of differences. However, images and understanding of disability and help for children who speak English as an addition language use their home language in play, is more limited.

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

Staff demonstrate a sound knowledge and understanding of the learning and development requirements and use different teaching styles and methods to support children's learning. They provide a range of experiences and resources that interest and engage children. For example, a live egg project, caring for unhatched eggs and seeing a live chicken, helps children understand about living things, life cycles and changes. Children handle malleable materials, use writing and painting equipment, confidently handle computer programmes, have use of role play equipment and a selection of books.

Children have free flow inside and outdoor play. They use their environment and practise and use different learning styles to learn in their individual way. Children enjoy the outdoors using chalks and designing their own hop-sotch games on the matting. They practise hopping and throwing and use simple mathematical language as they have fun and play together. They push prams and dollies around the garden and look at the flowers growing in the boxes. There are opportunities for children to stay for the extended session, socialise and eat with other children and the staff. Children's personal social and emotional development is being supported and children are confident making their own decisions and carrying out their own personal hygiene tasks. Children are generally asked open ended questions and given time to consolidate their thinking. Allowing children to explore their own language and communication skills and think critically.

Children go out into the local community, they visit shops and buy their snacks. They use the local cafes and restaurants to have snacks and become aware of those people who live around them. However, children have more limited resources and images within the setting about the world around them and few displays and opportunities to recall their experiences. Children who speak English as an additional language are supported through gestures and actions and have

some books in different languages freely available. However, images and resources depicting children and adults with disabilities are limited.

Children are progressing steadily because the experiences and environment engage children and focus on their interests. However, it is difficult to assess how well children progress because there is an inconsistent approach to gathering starting points and the use of early observations. Staff may ask parents their views but not all this information is available to use at a later stage. But staff do have knowledge about the children in their care and share a warm and calm relationship and there is respect and consideration to children's needs and individuality.

Observation, assessment and planning systems and children's learning journeys are not used consistently between staff. Although, a formal observations is done monthly, the recording system is not understood fully by all staff. Children's spontaneous achievements are not always recorded and evaluations on what staff have seen are not identified to use at a later stage. The observations undertaken mainly focus on children's personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy. This means profiles do not cover all aspects of the children's learning and development and gaps in children's knowledge for these areas are at risk of being overlooked. Consequently, planning may not always be specific enough to consistently meet children's individual learning needs in all areas. However, this is an aspect that has been identified by staff as needing some development.

Children's welfare is met by all staff. Children are safe and secure in their environment and enjoy the time spent playing with their peers. Children behave well, co-operate and take turns while playing in groups or alone. Children are showing an understanding about being healthy as they follow appropriate hygiene routines, although, sometime needing staff prompts before snacks. Children engage in regular physical activities and are offered healthy snacks served by staff. Children's medical and dietary requirements are being met. Although, not all emergency medical treatment permissions were in place, this was rectified immediately by the lead practitioner to prevent putting children at any risk of not receiving the most appropriate medical care. Children have positive healthy relationships and receive praise and encouragement, they play independently and make decisions about what they do, showing a positive sense of pride and self esteem.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

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	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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