

# Inspection report for Camrose Sure Start Children's Centre

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<b>Local authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	383645
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 July 2012
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sarah Quinn

<b>Centre leader</b>	Joy Hemingway
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable
<b>Centre address</b>	Tenby Road Spencer Northamptonshire NN5 7DF
<b>Telephone number</b>	01604 585219
<b>Fax number</b>	01604 758662
<b>Email address</b>	head@camrose.northants-ecl.gov.uk

<b>Linked school if applicable</b>	Not applicable
<b>Linked early years and childcare, if applicable</b>	Camrose Sure Start Children's Centre Nursery School and Childcare 131151

The inspection of this Sure Start children's centre was carried out under Part 3A of the Childcare Act 2006 as inserted by section 199 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009.

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Piccadilly Gate  
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Manchester  
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## Introduction

The inspection addresses the centre's contribution to:

- facilitating access to early childhood services by parents, prospective parents and young children
- maximising the benefit of those services to parents, prospective parents and young children
- improving the well-being of young children.

The report is made to the local authority and a copy is sent to the children's centre. The local authority may send the report to such persons it considers appropriate and must arrange for an action plan to be produced in relation to the findings in this report.

This inspection was carried out by an additional inspector and an early years inspector.

The inspectors held meetings with parents, children's centre leaders, staff, and representatives from the local authority and the advisory board. They also spoke to partner agencies, such as health services and adult learning. They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation including the centre's action plan, evaluations and tracking systems.

## Information about the centre

The Camrose Sure Start Children's Centre was designated in 2004 as a phase one centre. The centre meets the full core offer by providing a range of health, outreach, family support, return to work and childcare services. Camrose at Kings Heath Centre is a satellite outreach centre situated on Kings Heath estate about one mile away. The head of the children's centre is also headteacher of the nursery school and its integrated childcare, which is located in the same building. The advisory board supports the headteacher and this is a sub committee of the school governing body, which reports to the local authority. The nursery school and childcare are subject to their own separate inspection.

The centre's reach area covers six super output areas covering the estates and communities of Spencer, Dallington, Kings Heath, Ryehill and a small part of Duston. Out of the six super output areas, five have high levels of poverty and are ranked as in the 20% most deprived areas in the country.

The area is an area of deprivation where housing is often poor and household incomes are low. Within the reach area, there are a high percentage of children in households dependent on workless benefits. Current data show that the size of the minority ethnic community and the number of lone parents are increasing. Most children enter early years provision with skills, knowledge and abilities that are below

those expected for their age, especially in language and communication and personal, social and emotional development. There are a rising number of disabled children and those with special educational needs, and of those with English as an additional language.

## Inspection judgements

**Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

### Overall effectiveness

**The effectiveness of the children’s centre in meeting the needs of and improving outcomes for families**

**2**

### Capacity for sustained improvement

**The centre’s capacity for sustained improvement, including the quality of its leadership and management**

**2**

## Main findings

Camrose Sure Start Children’s Centre is a good centre providing an effective service, which is having a positive impact on the lives of families and children in the area. The well-targeted and coordinated support and guidance families receive has resulted in a year-on-year increase in the percentage of families from the reach area accessing the centre and maintaining their levels of engagement. The centre leaders have devised methods to collect essential information and feedback to help them to develop suitable services for their families.

Staff, senior leaders, the advisory board and members of the centre’s user groups share the headteacher’s clear vision and focus on improvement. Strong leadership and management ensure concerted, effective action to overcome any weaknesses and gaps in provision. The centre has good systems and procedures in place to monitor and evaluate its work. These ensure that the centre has an accurate understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement. Most parents contribute to the evaluation of each project and make useful suggestions that are used to improve services. The centre has good capacity to sustain improvement.

The centre has devised its own methods of collecting and analysing data, and the good use of this information ensures that it promotes services that are matched to the changing needs of the families in the area. However, monitoring of the long-term impact on families’ outcomes, particularly in relation to services provided by the centre’s partners, is not as well developed.

An undoubted strength of the centre is the work carried out by well-trained family and early years workers who have a significant impact on outcomes for families and their children. Staff know their families well and understand the importance of developing trusting and genuine relationships. Help with breastfeeding encourages

mothers to persevere, and benefits and housing advice ensures families access essential support. Parents say that the centre will always take any of their concerns seriously and will work with them to resolve issues. One parent said, 'Without the staff at the children's centre, I would have become more depressed and would never have taken my child any where.

The centre works well with key partners to deliver effective, cohesive services, which lead to good outcomes for the very large majority of families. It makes sure that those who are in most need of intervention and support are given the advice and guidance that enables them to take charge of their own lives and make life-enhancing decisions. Integrated working with the nursery school and childcare ensures early identification of disabled children and those with special educational needs and necessary intervention is swift and effective before they enter school. This, together with the expertise of the speech and language therapist and childcare judged as outstanding at its last inspection (2009), has had a positive impact on the improving trend in the proportion of children who reach expected levels of development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This has risen from 40% in 2010 to 48% in 2011 and, while this is not yet in line with national figures, the progress that children make from their starting points is significant.

## What does the centre need to do to improve further?

### Recommendations for further improvement

- Leaders and managers should work with the local authority to further improve provision and outcomes for families by:
  - accessing more up-to-date and relevant data and information in relation to services provided by its partners, like health and job seeking services, and analyse the impact of these services upon families in the reach area
  - developing ways to track the long-term impact of its own work with families.

## How good are outcomes for families?

<b>2</b>
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The centre analyses the data that it has collected itself on rates of improvement in health outcomes for both breastfeeding and obesity, despite difficulties in obtaining local data from some partners. Breastfeeding is very well supported and initiation rates have improved and are now slightly better than the national figure at 76%. Data show that 45% of mothers are still breastfeeding at six to eight weeks. Obesity rates for Reception-aged children are reducing gradually. Healthy food served at the centre during sessions and at the popular lunch club, and the opportunity for parents to discuss weaning, ensure that families are developing a good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy. Partnership with health workers like the health visitor, midwife and oral health professional has improved breastfeeding rates, immunisation rates and dental hygiene.

Staff use the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) well. They focus on improving

parenting skills and reducing domestic violence, and are skilled in early identification of need. This helps to prioritise services and secure the well-being of looked after children and those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Children who are subject to child protection plans are very carefully monitored and supported and the centre focuses on engaging the right agencies quickly to support families in improving their circumstances. Parents say that they are happy that their children are safe and well cared for in the centre. Help and advice on safety have helped parents, including those from target groups like lone or teenage parents, to gain a good understanding of how to keep themselves and their families safe.

The centre helps children to make good progress educationally, given their starting points. Over the last three years, levels of attainment on exit from the Early Years Foundation Stage have risen and the gap between the lowest 20% and the rest is showing some improvement. Parents learn from the speech and language therapist who gives them examples to practise at home and children have an enjoyable time developing their speech, language and communication skills. Parents say that sessions like 'Mini Strings' support a wide range of skills including creative development. Behaviour is good and there is a strong ethos of respect, which is promoted well by staff who are effective role models.

Staff support and empower parents to secure work and improve their prospects. They are gently supported in accessing the centre through sessions like 'Let's Chat,' which offers activities like jewellery making and hair and makeup sessions. They can access accredited courses like language and numeracy, and the staff have developed strong links with the local college and the local authorities adult learning services to support more parents with English as an additional language to access level 1 and 2 courses. Their success rate is impressive, with all attendees gaining a qualification. Parents also shape these services by asking for courses that they would like and this has led to four parents gaining a catering qualification, two of whom went on to employment in this area. The creative design courses are popular and parents gain qualifications and go on, for example, to make impressive wall-hangings for the centre, bunting for celebrations and clothes for their children. One group is looking to develop enterprise opportunities using these new skills. Volunteers are well supported at the centre, receive training and induction and many go on to gain qualifications and employment.

These are the grades for the outcomes for families

<b>The extent to which children, including those from target groups, are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy and families have healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which children are safe and protected, their welfare concerns are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which all children and parents, including those from target groups, enjoy and achieve educationally and in their personal and social development</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which children engage in positive behaviour and develop</b>	<b>2</b>

<b>positive relationships and parents, including those from target groups, contribute to decision-making and governance of the centre</b>	
<b>The extent to which children are developing skills for the future and parents, including those from target groups, are developing economic stability and independence including access to training and employment</b>	<b>2</b>

## **How good is the provision?**

<b>2</b>
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The staff provide effective, personalised support for all families, including those who have most need. Families know that the centre is somewhere to turn to in times of crisis and that it will help them to turn their lives around. The staff know their families well and use this knowledge to shape the centre's provision so that outcomes for target groups and most families are good. Careful assessment of families on a one-to-one basis ensures tailor-made support and accurate signposting to the most appropriate agencies.

Outreach services meet the needs of the wider community and staff understand the changing demographic in the area well. For example, the rise in domestic abuse cases has led to targeted training for staff and the rise in parents with English as an additional language has led to better partnership working with the college to offer appropriate courses.

Partners are used well to support families and many joint visits occur with centre staff and social services, health representatives and school staff. This better enables all involved to engage with the families and for them to build trusting relationships. Parents say, 'Staff are so nice, I do not mind them coming to visit me. I always feel relaxed and important.

Provision to help children learn is good. The centre is a vibrant learning environment both inside and outdoors. Children enjoy engaging in activities based on their own interests such as playing in the water. Well-trained staff ensure that parents learn alongside their children, for example during 'Baby Massage' and 'Stay and Play' sessions. The staff provide good support for all parents, including those who have disabilities or who have disabled children, and they appreciate the opportunities for their children to socialise in a safe, friendly environment.

Staff are skilled at supporting parents back to work and into training. They provide learning opportunities during most sessions and parents experience activities such as car maintenance and baking. Staff find other effective ways to encourage parents to consider employment when they do not want to attend the Jobcentre. Staff support parents in accessing adult learning courses leading to qualifications and employment. One-to-one interviews and personalised plans for return to work and support with filling in application forms and writing curriculum vitae help parents in this process. Those from target groups, such as teenage parents and lone parents, are given priority and crèche childcare is provided to help them access training.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

<b>The extent to which the range of services, activities and opportunities meet the needs of families, including those in target groups</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which the centre promotes purposeful learning, development and enjoyment for all families, including those in target groups</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The quality of care, guidance and support offered to families, including those in target groups</b>	<b>2</b>

## **How effective are the leadership and management?**

<b>2</b>
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Leaders and managers provide strong strategic direction. Staff have clear roles and lines of responsibility following a recent restructuring. The centre is led and managed well on a day-to-day basis. Morale is high and staff show total commitment to making improvements for families. Senior leaders provide regular and effective supervision and maintain the personal and professional development of staff, who say they feel valued and supported in their roles. Opportunities for training are carefully focused not only on meeting the development needs of the centre, but also on improving the qualifications and expertise of staff. Parents play an important role in the work of the centre through their contributions, informal discussions and 'Post Code View' meetings. There is a clear a flow of information and focus on improvement between the leaders and managers. Governance and accountability arrangements are well defined.

The centre's leaders and managers are fully involved in the developments and improvements in the community through initiatives like the Local Operational Team (LOT) meeting. The meeting includes representatives from statutory agencies, many community organisations and local schools. The group is a formal local authority area based operational meeting to discuss concerns and raise issues about any referred children aged from birth to 19 years and their families. For example, much discussion about potential anti-social behaviour in the community during the summer resulted in some solutions for finding activities for older children to do, thus leading to a safer community environment during this period.

Leaders and managers monitor and evaluate all that they do although some partner information, which the local authority holds centrally in relation to health and the work of the Jobcentre, is hard to gain and this hinders the centre's ability to track the long-term outcomes for all families and potentially shape services more effectively. Children's achievements are effectively tracked and used for forward planning. Outcomes are good for most families because the staff are committed to ensuring that all provision is of at least good quality. Families are united in their view that the centre has an unblemished track record, which meets their needs successfully and provides good value for money. Resources are used very well to ensure sustainability and staff have a range of skills that are shared and developed. Staff use their skills and resources to maximum effect to ensure parents and children get the best out of every activity. Effective partnerships enhance opportunities for families in the area and have a positive impact in securing good outcomes.



The centre is an inclusive, welcoming setting where relationships are positive and productive. Staff promote inclusive practices for all families including those with disabled children or those who have special educational needs. Resources are managed well and meet the needs of parents and children. All staff understand, value and promote equality and diversity in all its forms, and recognise the need to reach out to all groups. Staff are effective in removing barriers like low self-esteem, gaps in knowledge and understanding, low levels of education and poor parenting skills. One parent said, 'I would not be where I am today without the centre. They have made me realise what I can achieve.'

Procedures for safeguarding are good and, together with the centre's effective early intervention and multi-agency cooperation, ensure that families feel safe and that their emotional and social needs are effectively met. Checks on the suitability of adults to work with children are thorough and child protection arrangements are secure and updated regularly. Robust risk assessments are undertaken regularly and good records are kept. Staff training is regularly updated.

These are the grades for leadership and management

<b>The extent to which governance, accountability, professional supervision and day-to-day management arrangements are clear and understood</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secure improvement in outcomes</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of families, including those in target groups</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which equality is promoted and diversity celebrated, illegal or unlawful discrimination is tackled and the centre fulfils its statutory duties</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the centre's policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which partnerships with other agencies ensure the integrated delivery of the range of services provided by the centre to meet its core purpose</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which the centre supports and encourages families in the reach area to engage with services and uses their views to develop the range of provision</b>	<b>2</b>

### **Any other information used to inform the judgements made during this inspection**

Inspectors considered the previous inspection report from 2009 for The Camrose Sure Start Children's Centre Nursery School and Childcare, which are located in the

same building as the centre and are managed by the same headteacher. The setting received an outstanding judgement at the 2009 inspection.

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## Summary for centre users

We inspected the Camrose SureStart Children's Centre on 17–18 July 2012. We judged the centre as good overall.

Thank you for your participation in the inspection of your children's centre. Those of you we spoke to were unanimous in your praise for all the centre staff have done for you and your children. Several spoke of the dedication of the staff, who go beyond what is expected of them to ensure help for specific problems is offered. Many of you told us directly how the centre has given you confidence in various aspects of your life and in some instances has been a 'lifesaver' and changed your lives considerably for the better. The support the centre has given in helping your children to learn and develop has also been positive because you are more confident in the ways that you can help your children. The care, guidance and support provided for you are good because the staff know everyone well and, therefore, can target support and call upon effective partners to give you specialist help. As a result, relationships are very positive and this helps towards the good outcomes that are achieved by the centre. The staff listen to your views carefully and you are well represented on the committees, advisory board and more informal meetings.

The centre is well run and managed and the staff work hard in shaping what goes on in the centre. Leaders and managers are good at monitoring and evaluating but have yet to develop the way they use data to provide more evidence of the impact of the centre's work. We have asked them to make sure that this is done and to find ways to collect information also from partner organisations like health agencies.

Thank you once again for your time and we hope that in future even more families will benefit from the services that the centre provides.

The full report is available from your centre or on our website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).