

St Michael's Family Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Type of setting

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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

The St Michael's Family Centre is the lead partner for the Nar Children's Centre and is managed by a voluntary committee made up of parents of children at the centre and members of the local community. The centre opened in 2010. It operates from four main rooms and associated facilities in St Michael's Primary school in King's Lynn, Norfolk. The St Michael's Family Centre serves the local area and has strong links with the school. It is accessible to all children and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play. Three family support workers provide outreach work.

The centre is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm for 50 weeks of the year. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. A maximum of 65 children may attend the centre at any one time. There are currently 76 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The centre also offers care to children aged over four years to 11 years. The centre is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The centre provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds. The group supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The centre employs 14 members of staff all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications, including a qualified teacher. Two members of staff are working towards a higher qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff at the setting are very aware of the uniqueness of the children in their care and this supports and enables their individual needs to be met well. They promote an inclusive setting as they celebrate and value each child and family, helping them to feel safe and develop a sense of belonging. Effective policies and procedures are in place and implemented by staff well. Safety is maintained and risk assessments clearly recorded. Children make good progress in learning and development as they enjoy a wide range of activities, play opportunities and experiences. Effective partnerships between staff and parents ensure children's needs are met and managers and staff understand the strengths of their setting and identify realistic areas for development. They have made very good progress to develop the provision since registration and demonstrate a very good capacity to maintain continuous improvement. However, the setting does not have a named deputy to take charge in the manager's absence which is a requirement in the Early Year Foundation Stage Framework.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure there is a named deputy who is able to take charge in the absence of the manager (Suitable People).

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

- ensure parents review their children's progress regularly and are encouraged to contribute, support and extend children's on-going learning and development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Robust steps are taken to safeguard children, including effective recruitment procedures and vetting of all staff who work with children. Regular appraisals, inductions and team meetings further help to ensure the suitability of staff who work with the children. However, the setting does not have a named deputy to take charge if the manager is not present. This is a requirement under the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and needs to be addressed. Currently, this does not have an impact on the setting and care of children as the senior room leaders and qualified teacher take the responsibility to manage the setting in the absence of the manager. The setting has clear practices, policies and procedures which contribute to the safe and efficient management of the setting. These are regularly reviewed and clearly understood and implemented by the staff team. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of safeguarding procedures. They know what to do if they have concerns about a child in their care and have links with other professionals, resulting in children being protected. Children understand how to keep themselves safe and demonstrate care and consideration around the younger, less mobile children. A written risk assessment supported by effective daily checking and monitoring procedures ensure that potential hazards are identified and minimised.

Children play in a safe and secure setting, where staff are deployed throughout the setting effectively to ensure children are well supervised. Their professional development and level of commitment means children receive the care they need to support their learning and development well. The building is clean, bright, airy and well cared for both inside and out and warm and welcoming staff help to create an interesting environment where children learn through play. Well-presented and organised play areas provide children with a good selection of interesting toys and resources, experiences and challenges which they enjoy. The manager is taking steps to ensure the environment is fully sustainable.

Managers communicate high expectations to staff about securing improvement. Regular monitoring and analysis of the settings' action plan and self-evaluation means leaders and staff are aware of strengths and areas for development at the setting. Future action plans are founded on robust evidence and enables the setting to tackle the key areas of development and build on areas of strength.

Target areas are realistic and challenging and outcomes for children are good. The effective system of self-evaluation also incorporates input from other professionals, such as the local authority. This helps the setting to ensure all aspects of the provision are monitored and evaluated realistically and therefore supports ongoing improvement.

Staff have positive relationships with parents, carers and other providers ensuring child's needs are known. Information is gathered from parents at the beginning of the relationship and home visits are undertaken to help settle families and children into the setting. This enables staff to respond well to their needs. Information from parents and early observations about children's starting points for learning is established. However, there are fewer opportunities to share and participate in children's progress records and parents are not actively encouraged to participate in supporting or extending their children's learning and development at home.

Children's individuality is recognised and staff encourage all children to learn to value differences and diversity, through activities and sharing information. Effective systems are in place to support children with special educational needs, through early recognition of their additional needs and support from the local authority. Children with English as an additional language are supported through staff being sensitive towards children's home language and supporting its use through their play resulting in them making good progress. Strong relationships have been established with other providers, particularly the local school to promote consistency and continuity of children's care and learning.

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

Staff members have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and implement it through good practice and as a result children make good progress. Staff have key worker responsibilities and through good partnership with parents get to know the children well. They undertake regular observations of what children can do and evaluate these against the six areas of learning and stages of development. This helps staff to identify where children are at and their next steps. They also observe children's interests and identify what children enjoy doing at the provision. Staff make links between these evaluations and use the planning of activities to ensure that individual children are provided with an appropriate level of support or challenge that enable them to make good progress.

Children are actively engaged in all areas of the provision and have free-flow indoor and outdoor play. They benefit from having a good range of equipment immediately and safely available both inside and out as this ensures children progress in all areas of their learning regardless of where they prefer to play. Children of all ages are encouraged to make decisions about their play, even the youngest children at the provision know where to find toys and resources. Babies and older children help themselves to toys from low-level baskets and trays and choose what they want to use. Babies learn through exploration and using a variety of sensory materials, for example, wooden objects and musical

instruments, materials, liquids and mirrors. Babies play is based on first-hand experiences where they touch, hear and see things and make sense of the world around them. A sensory garden, planting seeds and caring for the pets at the provision help children to extend their knowledge outside of the normal environment and begin to make sense of the world.

Babies and older children are posed questions and the effective use of questioning, while children play, encourages their developing language skills and understanding. Children use a good range of books and story sacks and they enjoy story telling sessions led by staff who encourage interactive and enthusiastic participation. As a result encourages children's enjoyment of books and the written word. Children confidently use the computer and have begun a self-registration system using the computer and interactive white board, supporting their ability in using information technology. Older children are beginning to recognise their names and symbols which make meaning of the written word. Children enjoy twinkly play dough activities, baby shampoo mark making, ribbon threading on large grills and train track design. They learn simple numeric skills through adding and calculating pieces of the train track and counting five little ducks and use positional language in the garden and when threading ribbons. Children learn about sizes and comparisons as they fill tubes in the sand and lentils to pour between different sized cups.

Every child's welfare needs are met well. There is a warm and caring relationship between staff and children that help children to feel safe and secure in their surroundings. They learn about dangers and how to keep themselves safe through routines such as fire evacuation procedures and reminders of strangers when they go on outings and for walks. Good hygiene practices across the provision help to minimise the risk of spreading infection. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene habits, such as washing their hands before meals after engaging in messy and outside play. All staff are first aid trained and have action plans in place to deal with any emergency situations. Meals are freshly cooked on site by the school; they are balanced and encourage children to enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods. Their dietary requirements are respected and the school adapts meals to ensure babies and older children can access the menu. Children behave very well; they receive high levels of attention and are engaged in interesting activities. During group activities, such as board games, they learn to share, take turns and respect the needs of their peers, supporting the development of skills they will need for 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	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
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

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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	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
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