

# The Camrose Centre Surestart for Children and Families

Streathfield Road, Northampton, NN5 7DE

## Inspection dates

14–15 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Children achieve exceptionally well because teaching is outstanding and they get much individual attention.
- All groups of children, including those with disabilities and special educational needs and those who are in the early stages of learning English, make outstanding progress.
- All adults make sure that children benefit equally and fully from the wide range of high quality equipment available.
- Adults are exceptionally good at taking every opportunity to develop children's essential skills in communicating and counting.
- All adults are highly effective in making sure that children behave extremely well and are happy and safe.
- All adults keep a close check on children's progress. In most instances, their notes about children's achievements are very clear and identify the skills that individual children need to develop next.
- The head of centre and staff with leadership responsibilities support their colleagues extremely well.
- Leaders at all levels, including the members of the governing body, provide very clear direction for the continuing development of the centre. They are exceptionally effective in sustaining consistently high quality teaching and learning through training for staff.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed four extended learning sessions indoors and outside over a total period of three-and-a-quarter hours. These were joint observations with the head of centre and the deputy head of centre.
- The inspector held meetings with two representatives of the governing body, members of staff and a representative of the local authority.
- Since there was only one response to the online questionnaire (Parent View), the inspector looked at the results of a survey of parents' and carers' views carried out by the centre. He also held informal discussions with individuals and groups of parents and carers at the start and end of sessions.
- The inspector examined records of children's progress and sampled the files kept to record the achievements of individual children.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documents. These included the centre's evaluation of its effectiveness, its development plan, a local authority report about the centre, the record showing the checks carried out on staff and a sample of minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- Questionnaires completed by 11 members of staff were taken into account.

## Inspection team

Mike Thompson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is an average-sized Nursery within the Camrose Surestart Centre. The centre, which shares a site with Earl Spencer Primary School, provides a wide variety of services for children and families. The centre as a whole, and the registered childcare, are inspected and reported separately.
- The Nursery provides places for up to 49 children in each of the morning and afternoon sessions. Almost two-thirds attend on a flexible, part-time basis and just under a third receive full day-care.
- Children in the Nursery are allocated to 'family' groups with key workers who take responsibility for them.
- About a third of the children are of White British heritage, and the remainder are from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. A small number of children speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled children and those with special educational needs supported through Early Years action is broadly average. However, the proportion supported at Early Years action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. Many of the children identified for support have speech and language difficulties.
- There are no children for whom the Nursery is receiving additional government funding (known as the pupil premium) because they are all below statutory school age.

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

- Fine tune the way in which staff record their assessments of children's achievements so that comments always:
  - focus very sharply on how well children learn as they tackle their tasks
  - identify very clearly the next steps that children need to take to improve their skills.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- When most children join the Nursery their skills and knowledge in all areas of learning are very low. At this point, fewer than one in three are at the level expected for their age in communication and language and fewer than one in five are at this level in mathematics. In almost all instances, children's understanding of the world about them is extremely limited.
- Within a year, the proportion of children working at nationally expected levels in communication and language more than doubles. In mathematics, the proportion is more than three times greater. Similar gains are found in all other areas of learning. These improvements represent outstanding progress.
- Outstanding progress results from a number of key factors:
  - the ratio of adults to children is significantly better than is normally found and this means that children benefit greatly from a lot of individual attention
  - all adults are highly skilled at developing children's learning because of the effective professional development provided by the centre, good mentoring, and sharing of skills
  - planning focuses strongly on improving children's learning and leaders make sure that children make full use of extensive and high quality space and equipment available
  - children's progress is closely monitored and regularly checked so that adjustments can be made to best meet the needs of each individual
  - children who need extra help are quickly identified, for example those who need to improve their communication skills are targeted for regular individual tuition to help them to speak more clearly and broaden their vocabulary.
- Underpinning all activities is the high priority given to children's personal, social and emotional development. As a result, children rapidly develop skills in making decisions for themselves and collaborating with others.
- Disabled children and those who have special educational needs are fully integrated in all activities and make progress that is just as good as their classmates. This is because all adults know the children extremely well and are skilled in sensitively adjusting the support that they give to make sure that these children are suitably challenged.
- Children who speak English as an additional language make extremely good progress. Where possible, this is underpinned by support in their home language to help improve their understanding.
- Children make excellent progress in acquiring early skills in literacy and numeracy. This is because the activities planned give reading, writing and counting real purpose.
- Books have a high profile within the Nursery. Children enjoy looking at books and freely choose them to look at or share with an adult. They handle them carefully, enjoy being read to, and mimic characters from books in their imaginative play.
- Children benefit greatly from regular opportunities to develop emerging skills as writers through play activities in mark-making, when taking 'notes', and through learning phonics (how letters are used to represent sounds), for example in their own names. Their emerging skills in counting are effectively developed through, for example, using tally charts to collect information about their favourite colours.

**The quality of teaching is outstanding**

- The leadership of the centre is strongly committed to strengthening its teaching continuously. As a result, the Nursery has built on the outstanding practice reported at the last inspection. Among the improvements made is the particularly strong focus on improving children's skills in speaking and listening.
- The Nursery provides an inspiring environment for children's learning. A particular strength is the way in which all adults are highly effective in developing children's skills as independent learners. They do this by constantly encouraging children to investigate and learn through direct experience.
- Adults show great expertise in developing children's understanding of language. They ask excellent, challenging questions as they join in with children's play and help them to explore the possibilities presented by the activities provided for them. For instance, when joining a child who was playing with moist sand, an adult used questions extremely well to coax the child into explaining how the sand felt, and how, by patting it, the sand would become stiff.
- All adults have an excellent understanding of how best to develop children's learning. They are highly adept at observing children's play and in judging when and how to intervene to improve children's skills. Adults invariably make the most of every opportunity to develop children's skills in speaking and counting. For example, during a 'family group' celebration of a child's birthday the adult leading the activity made sure that children counted the number present so that the right number of slices of the birthday cake could be cut.
- There is an excellent balance between activities led by adults and those initiated by the children. Adults make excellent use of their knowledge about children's learning to help plan activities that they know will capture children's imaginations. Through their enthusiasm, adults generate great enjoyment in learning and high levels of concentration from the children.
- The card system used for recording observations of children's learning is very well organised, and enables staff to build up a detailed picture of children's learning. However, in some instances the records of these observations are mostly descriptive. They do not provide clear information about how well the children learn or what they need to do next to improve further.
- Adults are highly effective in generating a strong sense of 'family' and this results in children making rapid progress in their personal development. They make sure that children feel secure through well-established routines. As a result, children know precisely what they have to do. For example, when children arrive they confidently register themselves by finding the card with their name on it and placing it on the registration board.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- Behaviour is outstanding because of the high quality relationships between adults and children. Adults manage the children extremely well and have high expectations of children's behaviour. Children conform to these expectations extremely well because the adults are highly consistent in applying them and act as excellent role models for the children.
- All of the staff who responded to the inspection questionnaire felt that the Nursery is highly effective in securing children's safety. Almost all consider children's behaviour to be good. Instances of unacceptable behaviour are extremely rare. There are no reported instances of

bullying of any type, and no children have been excluded because of unacceptable behaviour.

- Children rapidly gain an excellent understanding for their age of taking turns, sharing equipment and playing happily together. Children from a wide range of backgrounds get on very well with one another.
- The success of the Nursery's work to develop children's confidence and self-esteem as learners is clearly evident in children's enthusiasm for learning and their enjoyment of the wide range of learning opportunities available to them.
- All of the parents and carers spoken to greatly appreciate the Nursery and the difference the centre makes to their lives and the lives of their children. Typical of the many positive comments made is, 'I have no complaints whatsoever. The school helps me and is brilliant for my child'.

### **The leadership and management are outstanding**

- Systems for checking on children's achievements are thorough. The school's leaders are both reflective and self-critical in making sure that provision is consistently effective in securing children's excellent progress. Improvement plans are very clear, and staff say that they fully understand what the school is trying to achieve.
- Excellent leadership has maintained outstanding learning and achievement. Leaders make sure that the Nursery meets the needs of children and their families exceptionally well.
- The senior member of staff responsible for family and community support is highly effective in her critically important role, and sees that 'hard to reach' families are helped and advised as effectively as possible.
- The school's success in promoting equality of opportunity and in eliminating discrimination of any type is shown by the fact that children whose circumstances make them vulnerable achieve just as well as their classmates.
- Robust systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and managing the performance of staff make training highly relevant and effective. This is evident, for example, in the staff training carried out to improve children's skills in speaking.
- Leaders and managers make sure that the topics are extremely well structured. They provide an excellent range of activities and are highly effective in helping children to learn and in broadening their horizons. For instance, the 'mini strings' sessions led by the Northamptonshire music and performing arts service, give opportunities every two weeks for all children to develop basic skills in playing stringed instruments.
- The local authority provides appropriate support through scheduled meetings to discuss the impact of teaching on children's learning. It recognises the high quality of the Nursery's work and is promoting it as an example of excellent practice for other schools to adopt.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body supports and checks the work of the school effectively. It is well informed about the impact of teaching on children's learning and initiatives designed to improve achievement. It carries out its statutory duties thoroughly. For example, it makes sure that safeguarding requirements are fully implemented and regularly reviewed and that the management of staff performance is securely in place. It knows what the Nursery does to

reward good teaching and to tackle any underperformance.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	131151
<b>Local authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	402445

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–4
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	78
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Pascaline Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Anette Whitehouse (Head of Centre)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 September 2009
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