

Circles Nursery

Circles Nursery, Outer Circle, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 2BU

Inspection date	30/09/2014
Previous inspection date	26/01/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	4
	Previous inspection:	1
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		4
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		4
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		4

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is inadequate

- Staff have poor safeguarding knowledge and do not understand the policies in place to protect children.
- Educational programmes do not provide activities in enough depth, breath or challenge for children, resulting in a lack of progress and enthusiasm. Resources are not used well enough to engage children and support their learning.
- Progress is particularly poor in children's communication and language.
- Staff have poor knowledge of how to promote children's learning and development, which results in weak teaching and inaccurate assessment. Staff fail to identify when children need additional support where their progress is less than expected.

It has the following strengths

- Children are happy, show close relationships with staff, who know their interests.
- Parents appreciate the care and service provided.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed teaching and interactions inside and in the garden.
- The inspector spoke with staff and held meetings with the manager and local authority advisor.
- The inspector sampled documentation, including action plans, policies, staff qualifications, children's learning files and planning.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to parents and carers to obtain their views.

Inspector

Katherine Lamb

Full report

Information about the setting

Circles Nursery registered in 2008 under the management of Somerset County Council. It has links with the Children's Centre, which has family services that operate from separate premises. The nursery operates from a self-contained unit, which can be accessed by a ramp. It is within the grounds of Halcon primary school in Taunton. It consists of open-plan playrooms, two offices, a staff room and a parents' room. The nursery has a fully enclosed outside play area and occasional use of the school playground. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It serves the local and surrounding area, and many children go on to attend the primary school. The nursery is open each weekday from 8am to 5.30pm all year. There are currently 42 children on roll. The nursery employs eight members of staff. The manager holds a level 5 qualification. All other staff are qualified to level 2 and above. The nursery is in receipt of funding for children aged two, three and four years.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- ensure all staff are trained to understand and implement the setting's safeguarding policies and procedures and have a robust knowledge of safeguarding issues
- improve planned experiences so these are challenging and enjoyable for all children in all areas of learning
- improve the quality of teaching to provide all children with opportunities to develop their communication and language development enabling them to communicate and develop their speech
- ensure ongoing assessment is accurate to enable staff to identify where children are in their development and use this information to identify if early intervention is needed to support their development
- improve staff knowledge of how children learn and develop to ensure they offer quality learning experiences for all children to help them make good progress offer quality learning experiences for all children to help them make good progress

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

The quality of provision is inadequate because staff's knowledge about how to support children's learning is weak. Staff undertake observations to assess children's progress but these are not based on a secure understanding of how children develop. This poor knowledge means that staff do not track children's progress correctly. Consequently, they do not identify gaps in children's development early enough to offer additional support. This means that children are not progressing as well as they should be. Staff do not have sufficient knowledge and understanding of how young children develop to support them in their learning. The monitoring of groups of children that attend is not accurate because staff do not correctly identify where children are in their learning. Staff know children's interests well and plan some activities to engage them in play. However, this is inconsistent, and staff do not always use their interests well to encourage learning. In addition, many activities do not engage or challenge children. This means that children are not enthusiastic about their learning. It also means that they do not make expected progress towards the early learning goals. Some suitable practice is observed but it is not enough to make sure that children are prepared for their eventual move to school. Appropriate arrangements are in place to complete the required progress checks for children aged two years. However, these are based on the weak assessment process.

Staff talk to children clearly, giving them a narrative of what they are doing. However, children do not respond to staff with words or language and staff do not plan activities to promote language or to help children with their communication. Staff are also unaware of when children are not making progress with their language development. Children are not making expected progress with their communication and language development and are not receiving the additional support that they need.

Children enjoy being able to move between the nursery and garden to play outside. They use a range of equipment, as well as joining for small group time. Staff plan focused learning activities at small group time to promote children's development. However, staff are unclear about the learning intentions of the activities. For example, one group listened to stories and after the story they got up to leave. Staff say that they have to sit and wait for group time to be over and children sit looking out of the window waiting. Although there are adequate resources to support children's learning, staff do not use them effectively. When children showed an interest in certain resources, such as the torches, they are repeatedly told not to use them as they are needed for 'group time'. When group time arrived, staff allowed children to play with the torches for a limited time only before they were put away again. Children develop some skills to support them in future learning. For example, they are encouraged to be independent at mealtimes and they enjoy playing in groups. Staff have daily discussions with parents to keep them informed of their child's day. Parents also have opportunities to look at their children's learning records. These contain photographs and some observations of their children taking part in activities.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Management is not sufficiently vigilant about implementing systems for ensuring children are kept safe. Care practices are inadequate because staff do not know the setting's policies for reporting safeguarding concerns. Staff also have poor safeguarding knowledge. This weakness puts children at risk. A key-person system is in place and parents and carers appreciate the relationships between staff and families. Staff are aware of children's individual routines and interests and usually respond to prompts from children or when they indicate they want something. However, rather than telling staff what they want, children have to show them because they are not able to communicate verbally.

Staff carry out risk assessments and checks to keep children safe. Staff also deploy themselves appropriately to help ensure children's safety. For example, they always ensure there is a member of staff in the garden with the children and call inside if someone else is needed. All rooms are set up to support the areas of learning with different activities. However, staff do not recognise the learning potential of the resources. Children like to explore and investigate the available toys and materials. Staff either do not offer sufficient guidance to show how they work or allow children to use them as they are being saved for group time. This, together with a lack of interesting and challenging planned activities, limits children's learning and development.

Children are generally happy and content. They form sound attachments and relationships with staff. Children separate from their parents with ease and quickly become engaged in play. Children's routines are discussed with parents when their child starts and at regular intervals to help staff to meet their changing needs. This system helps children feel settled and emotionally secure as staff are welcoming and comfort them when they feel unsure or sad. Staff are aware of children's health and dietary requirements to meet some care needs of children. They provide snacks and drinks for children. Children are able to order school dinners from the on-site school or bring a packed lunch. Staff take some positive steps to promote children's good health. All children are encouraged to eat fruit and children are able to independently access drinks throughout the day. Children are taught about healthy lifestyles and soon know they need to wash their hands before having something to eat. Consequently, they learn to take responsibility for some aspects of their care and develop self-help skills.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

A new manager has recently been appointed and she is in the process of making changes to improve the provision. There are action plans in place and she is working closely with the local authority. However, several requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and associated requirements of the Childcare Register are not being met. The systems to ensure staff have a sound safeguarding knowledge are inadequate. Although staff have received training, this has not been successful because they are unsure how to report safeguarding concerns and how this keeps children safe. This puts children at potential risk.

The nursery team does not demonstrate a sufficient understanding of their responsibilities. Consequently, they do not implement the learning and development requirements. Weak teaching and the unchallenging activities means learning is not focused. Staff have taken insufficient steps to improve learning outcomes for children. The new manager has sought help from the local authority and they have worked to improve the planning process. However, staff have a weak knowledge of child development and how children learn and consequently, the quality of teaching is poor. Staff receive regular appraisals and supervisions and have access to regular training; however, these are not being used effectively to improve their practice. Children's progress is being assessed incorrectly. Staff do not identify gaps in children's development, especially their communication and language. They do not provide appropriate support for those children who are not making expected progress. Therefore, not all children progress as well as they should and some children are not prepared well for their eventual move to school.

A range of policies and procedures are in place and documentation and records are implemented to help ensure children's health needs are sufficiently well met. There are appropriate induction programmes in place and staff say that they feel supported in their roles. There are sufficient links with the other settings that children attend to promote continuity of children's care. There are also growing links with the on-site primary school. Partnerships with parents and carers are appropriate. Parents state that their children are happy and like going to this nursery. Parents appreciate the support they are given and are pleased with the care their children receive.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	Not Met (with actions)
The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	Met

To meet the requirements of the Childcare Register the provider must:

- ensure all staff are trained on the written statement of procedures to be followed to safeguard children from abuse or neglect (compulsory part of the Childcare Register).

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY371197
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	987845
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	36
Number of children on roll	42
Name of provider	Somerset County Council
Date of previous inspection	26/01/2009
Telephone number	01823282691

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance '*Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

