

Inspection of The Hamlet Centre Children's Service

Johnson Place, Vauxhall Street, Norwich, Norfolk NR2 1SJ

Inspection date: 20 September 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy to arrive at this welcoming setting. They quickly settle and seek out their favourite toys and activities. Children demonstrate curiosity and enjoy exploring both indoors and outdoors. They experiment with sand, scooping and pouring using a variety of containers and tools. Older children fill wheelbarrows with real apples and carrots, which they transport to the play kitchen to serve to other children and adults.

Children move confidently around the garden courtyard. They use scooters and ride-on toys and laugh as they ride the roundabout equipment. They explore different ways to move their bodies, requesting their favourite songs and joining in with the actions. Staff are good role models. They encourage children to share and take turns, in a way that is appropriate for their age and understanding. Children begin to develop friendships with each other and they benefit from positive relationships with staff.

Parents comment on how much their children enjoy their time at the setting. They report how much progress their children have made since attending and how they are 'always learning new things'.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The manager seeks the views of parents and external agencies to help evaluate the pre-school. She also seeks the views of children, particularly when making decisions about new resources to purchase. The manager and senior staff have clear plans for further developing the provision in the future.
- Staff support children's communication and language development skilfully. They carefully adapt the support they provide to meet the needs of children at different stages of development. For example, staff use sign language and pictures alongside their speech to support children's understanding. Younger children respond to simple instructions and older children begin to hold thoughtful conversations and share their ideas.
- Staff know children well. They use observations and assessments effectively to find out what children know and can do. They use this information to plan a range of stimulating activities and provide interesting resources for children to explore. At times, staff's teaching is not highly responsive to children's interests. They do not follow the children's leads well enough to fully enhance their learning.
- The manager monitors and reviews children's progress. She uses this information to help identify areas to focus on and to target further development.
- Partnerships with external agencies are strong. Staff work effectively with other professionals to identify any gaps in children's learning and employ appropriate

interventions to help close them. They also build good links with staff at local schools, to promote children's progression to the next stage of their learning.

- Staff feel valued and talk positively about the support they receive from each other and the management team. However, on occasions, the management of staff absences does not always provide continuity of care and education for children.
- Staff support children's growing independence effectively. For example, children serve themselves fruit with tongs and pour their drink at snack time. They practise self-care skills, such as washing their hands after using the toilet and before eating. Staff praise children purposefully. They recognise children's efforts and achievements. This encourages children to keep trying with difficult tasks.
- Staff read books with enthusiasm. They encourage children to join in with familiar refrains and make comments about the characters and illustrations. This helps to foster a love of reading and promotes children's early literacy skills.
- The registered person failed to notify Ofsted of a change of manager within the required timescale.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and her staff have a good knowledge of child protection. They know what to do if they have a concern about a child's welfare. Staff know the signs that may indicate a child is at risk of abuse, neglect or being drawn into extreme ideas or behaviours. Effective recruitment procedures and regular checks ensure staff's ongoing suitability. The manager ensures that staff regularly attend child protection training and keep their knowledge up to date. Staff carry out daily checks to help ensure that children play in a safe environment. They implement detailed care plans, which are regularly reviewed with parents, to help them meet children's individual needs.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- strengthen arrangements to raise the quality of teaching further, to ensure staff are highly responsive to children's learning interests and needs
- refine contingency plans in the event of staff absences for the organisation of key persons, to provide continuous support for their key children as effectively as possible.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY435182
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10113192
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children	2 to 18
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	302
Name of registered person	The Hamlet Centre Trust
Registered person unique reference number	RP519099
Telephone number	01603 766 566
Date of previous inspection	30 November 2015

Information about this early years setting

The Hamlet Centre Children's Service registered in 2011. The service specialises in supporting children and families with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and complex medical needs. The service operates a pre-school which opens Monday to Friday, during term time only, from 9.15am to 2.30pm. The preschool employs eight members of staff, including the manager, all hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The service also operates stay-and-play sessions and a holiday play scheme during school holidays and some weekends, from 9.30am till 3.30pm.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Kate Oakley

Inspection activities

- The manager took the inspector on a tour of the premises and explained how the early years provision and curriculum are organised.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The manager completed a joint observation and evaluation of an activity with the inspector.
- The inspector held a number of discussions with the manager and staff team. She looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of all persons working on the premises.
- The inspector spoke to children and parents at appropriate times during the inspection.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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