

Camrose Sure Start Children's Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131151
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	341100
Inspection dates	14–15 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Derek Aitken

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	0–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	128
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Emmeline Morrison
Headteacher	Mrs Joy Hemingway
Date of previous school inspection	January 2007
School address	Streathfield Road Northampton NN5 7DE
Telephone number	01604 585219
Fax number	01604 758662
Email address	head@camrose.northants-ecl.gov.uk

Registered childcare provision	Camrose Sure Start Childrens Centre
Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision	52
Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision	February 2008

The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Age group	0–5
Inspection date(s)	14–15 September 2009
Inspection number	341100

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector visited five lessons, and held meetings with the chair of governors, day care and Nursery staff and talked to the children. He also visited one of the centre's outreach centres to observe its work and met some parents there. He observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including evidence of the children's progress and the centre development plan. He also considered internal evaluations of the range of programmes offered by the centre and a range of written responses from parents, including 11 parental questionnaires, completed prior to the inspection.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the centre's work. He looked in detail at the following:

- whether there was any difference in the achievement of boys and girls and the way children learn and make progress in their communication skills, especially in speaking and listening
- the quality of support for children with speech and language difficulties and children with English as an additional language
- the effectiveness of actions taken to enable parents to support their children's learning
- the quality of the centre's contribution to community cohesion.

Information about the school

Camrose was designated a Children's Centre in September 2004. It offers a large number of services for families and integrated education and day care throughout the year for children until they reach school age. The vast majority of the seventy six children who attend the Nursery are three or four years old. Parents have a wide variety of options when they choose between full-time and part-time attendance for their children. The centre serves an area in which many families face challenging circumstances. About one third of the children have special educational needs and/or other disabilities, originating mainly from speech and language difficulties. A similar proportion of children come from minority ethnic families, mainly Bangladeshi, and most of these children are learning English as an additional language. The centre also provides an after-school club, the Roundabout, which is managed by a private provider and subject to a separate inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Both the day care provision and the Nursery are outstanding. Parents and carers commented that 'the centre is a fantastic environment for children, and has helped my child in every respect'.

Outstanding care, guidance and support underpin children's excellent personal, social and emotional development and the rapid acquisition of communication, language and literacy skills. All groups of children quickly become independent and confident learners, who are able to make healthy choices, behave responsibly and safely and are extremely well prepared for the future. Outstanding safeguarding procedures ensure that children feel safe and secure and settle very quickly. Routines are exceptionally well established and full account is taken of children's interests and preferences. This is a key factor in helping children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and other vulnerable children feel comfortable in the setting and in ensuring that they progress at a similar rate to their friends. From well below average starting points on entry to the Nursery, children attain broadly in line with national expectations by the time they leave the setting. Boys and girls achieve equally well in all areas of learning, but on a few occasions opportunities are missed to extend their questioning skills.

Outstanding teaching and recording systems which are exemplary in their consistency and attention to detail in addressing the needs of each child, help staff plan very effectively for children's learning. Improved systems for analysing and tracking children's achievements, for example, in the Nursery, have enabled leaders to resolve any minor inconsistencies in children's progress. The exciting curriculum, coupled with resources of high quality, accelerates children's learning very well.

Both the Nursery and the day care have maintained the exceptionally high quality of provision, identified at their previous respective inspections. Leaders have strong expectations for children's learning and progress and have forged a skilled and highly trained, energetic staff team. Self-evaluation, undertaken by senior staff, is rigorous, but the monitoring role of governors in checking on the quality of provision is less well developed. Leaders are innovative practitioners and actively pursue opportunities to learn from best practice at home and abroad. There is no sense of complacency at Camrose, where staff constantly ask themselves how things could be done better. This sense of determination, combined with its rigorous systems and child-centred approach ensure that the centre has excellent capacity for continuous improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop children's speaking and listening skills further by:
 - providing more focused opportunities for children to question each other about their experiences.
- Enable governors to play a more pro-active role in monitoring provision by:
 - providing them with more opportunities and training to acquire the expertise and confidence to fulfil this role more effectively.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

1

Children come eagerly into nursery and settle very quickly. They greatly enjoy playing and working in small groups or pairs but are equally happy following their own individual interests. The high quality of relationships with key workers and other adults promotes children's good achievement and provides an excellent basis for their engagement in learning. Children learn to concentrate and rapidly acquire the confidence to persevere with tasks on their own without direct support from adults. Children move confidently between indoors and outdoors, exploiting to the full the excellent range of resources to develop their skills in all areas of learning. Toddlers enjoy exploring textures with their hands to create patterns and participate enthusiastically in songs with gestures. More able, older children have plenty of scope to test out their ideas. For example, two children decided how to negotiate a train's passage through a narrow tunnel, drew an accurate drawing of the track and explained that two firemen had to be present in case of fire. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are similarly focused and also make outstanding progress. Adults work expertly to build up these children's communication skills to enable them to participate fully in activities. The staff develop children's language skills sensitively, drawing on shared experiences, such as a recent outing, to jog children's memories. On a few occasions, children restrict themselves to talking about their own experiences, rather than asking each other questions, which diminishes slightly the quality of their interactions.

Staff act as excellent role models, establishing stringent safeguarding procedures, clear routines and simple guidelines for children to follow. Children respond appropriately, behaving extremely well and relating well to each other. They have an excellent sense of right and wrong and children of different minority ethnic groups mix exceptionally well with each other. Children have ample opportunities to learn about and celebrate each other's cultures. Children eat from a nutritious menu which is regularly monitored for quality and individual consumption. They make healthy choices, such as eating a good range of fruit, and enjoy the vegetable crop from their own organic garden. They learn very successfully to be independent and self-disciplined, but some opportunities are lost to assign responsibility for minor class duties to older children. Children's good attendance combined with their outstanding progress in their learning, including the acquisition of personal skills, such as

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perseverance and decision making, set them up very well for the future.

These are the grades for children's outcomes

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Children's attainment ¹	3
The quality of children's learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
Children's behaviour	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account:	
Children's attendance ¹	2
The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is outstanding both in the daycare provision and in the Nursery. Much of the teaching is done through staff interacting with small groups, pairs or individual children. The very favourable staffing ratios and the range of expertise demonstrated by the adults are essential ingredients of the children's outstanding progress. The staff relate exceptionally well to the children. Skilful and precise questioning successfully challenges children to think and talk and they are given time to develop their answers. Thinking skills are further extended when children are encouraged to hypothesise and make predictions, as for example, at the water tank, when the children correctly foretold that a ping pong ball would float on water and then what would happen if it was held underneath the surface and suddenly released. Children make excellent use of small or manipulative tools and containers, such as water jugs to develop motor skills. For example, children carefully filled the jugs to the brim and transferred the contents to another container with minimum spillage.

Each child is treated as an individual and their needs are carefully planned for. Staff assess children's progress meticulously. Details of children's achievements are noted from the moment the children enter the setting each day. Parents' comments are also recorded. Weekly planning sheets, meetings and detailed observations are used

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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to map out logically the next steps for children’s learning. The curriculum is rich and stimulating. The excellent accommodation and resources, especially the large covered outdoor area, are exceptionally well used by the staff to plan an exciting range of activities, which are thoroughly enjoyed by the children. A major strength of the provision is the common planning formats for learning activities, which promote a high level of consistency. This ensures that staff have up-to-date information on each child, which greatly assists their transition between rooms.

In addition to excellent personal relationships with the children, the staff leave no stone unturned in their quest to build up a full profile of the skills, needs and preferences of each child. Key workers and other adults acquire a detailed understanding of family circumstances, for example, through regular home visits. Assistance for children with English as an additional language and for the children with speech and language difficulties is well-focused and intensive and this provides these vulnerable children with the skills they need to speed up their progress. In-depth assessments on all children with special educational needs are compiled for reviews by the special educational needs coordinator. Parents are fully involved in setting and reviewing targets for their children. Staff ensure that children in the day-care provision are very well looked after and that they benefit from a wide range of experiences appropriate to their age. The baby room is particularly well organised to provide toddlers with the right mixture of the rest and stimulating activities they need.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets children’s needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Under the expert guidance of the headteacher, senior leaders are extremely successful in creating a highly qualified team of staff who work very effectively across the centre to provide an exceptional quality of experiences for all groups of children. All staff know what is expected of them and rise to the challenge of meeting demanding expectations. They are rightly proud of the centre, its work and success. Self-evaluation is thorough and accurate, based firmly on effective monitoring and rigorous, consistent systems. The monitoring of teaching is exacting. Equality of opportunity is promoted exceptionally well. Decisive action is taken to eliminate any comparative weakness, for example, when it was noted that children lagged behind a little in their reading and writing skills.

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The centre actively promotes the safety and well-being of the children. Staff train children in how to be safe and healthy from the earliest age and consequently children acquire good habits and take responsibility, for example, for their hygiene. All statutory requirements for safeguarding are met. Policies and procedures for safeguarding, including staff recruitment, are rigorous and firmly adhered to. Health and safety practices are equally stringent. The close dialogue maintained with parents regarding accidents and medication and very effective collaboration with other agencies ensure children are extremely safe and well supported in their learning.

The governing body performs its role well. It has very clear procedures and systems for managing the complex range of services provided by the centre. In this respect, governors ensure that senior leaders are fully accountable for decisions. However, governors' involvement in monitoring the quality of provision is less well defined and developed.

The centre has a very good relationship with parents and carers, who all speak very highly of the Nursery and day care provision. This contributes very well to children's great enjoyment, sense of security and excellent progress. The centre makes an excellent contribution to community cohesion. Over time, it has carefully reviewed all parts of its work to build on its strengths and to provide a very successful, wide range of services which are appreciated by parents and the wider community. Numerous parents have used these services not only to develop their personal skills but also as a springboard to further learning and employment. Courses, such as 'It's Child's Play' and 'Rhymetime' have enabled parents to play a more active role in supporting their children's learning. Some of this work, which also includes multi-cultural events, has been initiated by the dynamic and innovative Senior Practitioner for Families and Community. Effective links have been established with centres in the locality and further afield to share and develop expertise. The centre makes excellent use of its resources to produce outstanding outcomes for children.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1

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The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Views of parents and carers

Eleven parents and carers returned the questionnaires. This small number is explained by the fact that the inspection took place when many children were attending the centre's nursery for the first time. Parents' views were extremely positive, expressing strong levels of satisfaction with the centre. These views are represented in the table below. The responses of a much larger number of parents, which were collated by the centre in July 2009, were also reviewed and considered by the inspector in making his judgements. A common feature of these comments referred to children 'coming on in leaps and bounds, both in their language and social skills'.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Camrose Sure Start Children’s Centre to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 12 statements about the school.

The inspector received 11 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 128 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	8	73%	3	27	0	0%	0	0%
The school keeps my child safe	10	91%	1	9%	0	0%	0	0%
The school informs me about my child’s progress	7	70%	3	30%	0	0%	0	0%
My child is making enough progress at this school	8	73%	3	27%	0	0%	0	0%
The teaching is good at this school	8	73%	3	27%	0	0%	0	0%
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	5	45%	6	55%	0	0%	0	0%
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	6	55%	5	45%	0	0%	0	0%
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	6	55%	5	45%	0	0%	0	0%
The school meets my child’s particular needs	9	82%	2	18%	0	0%	0	0%
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	7	64%	4	36%	0	0%	0	0%
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	5	45%	5	45%	1	9%	0	0%
The school is led and managed effectively	8	73%	3	27%	0	0%	0	0%
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	10	91%	1	9%	0	0%	0	0%

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its children's needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its children well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its children.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its children. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a child in their learning and development.
Attainment:	in other phases of school, for example primary schools, attainment is the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. However, there is no national average for three- and four-year-olds. Therefore, in inspections of nursery schools, inspectors take account of expectations in the age-related bands of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well children acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of children.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which children are learning in nursery sessions and over longer periods of time.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



16 September 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Camrose Sure Start Children's Centre, Northampton NN5 7DE

Thank you for making me so welcome. I really enjoyed meeting you. I loved seeing you work and play so well together. Camrose is really excellent. Here are some of the best things:

- Your teachers and key workers are kind and help you learn very well.
- You get on really well with the grown-ups, who know each of you well.
- You have lots of interesting things to do both inside and outside.
- Mealtimes are great because you are so grown up.
- You are friendly and polite to each other.

I have asked the headteacher to :

- ask the staff to give you more chances to practise asking each other questions
- ask the governors to check up more on Camrose's work, including the teaching and your learning.

I hope you carry on having a good time at Camrose.

With very best wishes to you all

Derek Aitken
Lead Inspector

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