

Camrose Early Years Centre for Children & Families

Streatfield Road, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN5 7DE

Inspection dates

23–24 May 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher leads the school well. She and her senior leaders ensure that the quality of teaching is nothing less than good. Leaders help staff to improve their teaching by giving them good advice, support and training.
- Caring staff work well together to ensure that children settle into the nursery quickly, and that they feel secure and safe as they learn.
- Good teaching enables children to make good progress from their starting points. The longer the time that children spend in the nursery, the more their progress accelerates.
- Staff assess children effectively and plan a vibrant, wide curriculum that allows children to make good gains across all areas of learning.
- The grassed and wooded area of the school is used extremely well to teach children about the wonder of nature and to learn new skills.
- Children are very well behaved. They learn and play together happily and are polite and friendly to each other. Children respect other people and are resilient learners.
- Parents hold very positive views about all aspects of the school. They say that they receive good levels of information about how well their children are learning, that their children make good gains during their time at Camrose, and that staff keep their children very safe and happy.
- Although the learning spaces are attractive and exciting, they do not promote children's writing as effectively as they could.
- Sometimes, staff miss opportunities to help children practise speaking at length. Inspectors noted a number of occasions when staff accepted single-word answers from children rather than teaching and encouraging them to respond in greater detail. As a result, children's progress at speaking is not substantial and sustained.
- The most able children do not learn rapidly because staff do not consistently plan activities which really challenge their thinking.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate children's progress in speaking and writing to outstanding by ensuring that all staff:
 - show children how to respond at length to the questions they ask, and consistently check that children are doing so
 - improve the learning environment so that children have access to a range of writing, including their own, that they can use to help them improve.
- Ensure that the most able children consistently receive work across the curriculum that challenges them, so that they can make brisk progress and achieve highly by the time they leave.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and her leadership team ensure that the school is a caring and inclusive one where children are happy and enjoy their learning. Children and their families are warmly welcomed and there is a strong sense of partnership across all aspects of provision.
- Leaders make it clear that, regardless of their abilities, circumstances or needs, all children must make as much progress as possible so that, as the school's website makes clear, 'every child can be the best he or she can be'.
- Leaders ensure that the staff, which include a high proportion of early years practitioners, work closely together and know the children well. Those staff who inspectors met explained how leaders respect and listen to their ideas. They described how they and their colleagues continually share information and ideas to accelerate the gains that children are making. Because of high levels of professional trust and the strong support from each other, staff are enthusiastic to work at Camrose, and want all children to succeed.
- The headteacher and senior leaders visit classrooms regularly to check that teaching is of a quality that is nothing less than good. They provide effective training for staff to develop their skills further. As well as arranging for them to attend external courses for them to, for example, develop children's speech and language, staff visit other local nurseries to see highly effective practice for themselves. In turn, leaders welcome staff from these settings to visit Camrose to improve their own effectiveness.
- In addition, leaders manage the performance of all staff, regardless of their role or seniority, with an effective appraisal system. This also helps to ensure that the skills and abilities of staff improve over time.
- The curriculum is well designed and organised so that children receive exciting activities that make them want to find out more. Leaders ensure that staff plan well across all areas of learning. This is because, while recognising the importance of teaching early reading, writing and mathematics, they want staff to nurture children's skills and talents in all areas, including musically, creatively and physically.
- Leaders ensure that children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children learn to work and play happily alongside each other in a wide range of groups. They develop a growing understanding of right and wrong, and behave very well. They also have good, regular opportunities to stop and think about, for example, the wonder of nature as they search for and observe minibests in the grassed and wooded area.
- The senior leadership team sees that children are given an early understanding of fundamental British values. Consequently, children are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Staff and children celebrate together the diverse ethnic mix of families whose children attend the school, with maps displayed on walls showing the different countries that families come from. Children learn, for example, about the celebration of Eid-al-Fitr and sample food from other lands, as well as learning different dances from

around the world. As a result, children are highly respectful towards others. Children also agree some of the rules for their classroom, and then follow these each day.

- Leaders spend the early years pupil premium funding effectively to ensure that disadvantaged children make good gains in their learning. This includes, for example, paying for children to attend the school for additional sessions, and to purchase reading resources so that children's skills in this area of learning will accelerate from their starting points.
- The headteacher ensures that all funding for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is spent wisely. Leaders employ additional staff so that children's keyworkers are available to provide specific, additional and targeted support for these children. As a result, children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities learn well and, over time, improve their confidence and independence.
- Parents who responded to Ofsted's free-text facility, along with all those who inspectors met during their visit, were unanimously positive about all aspects of the school and its leadership. Parents told inspectors how they were given very good levels of information about the achievement of their child and how they felt included in their education. As one parent explained, 'The staff are extremely experienced and provide the best opportunities and experiences for my children. Both have had the best start by attending Camrose.'

Governance of the school

- The governing body is effective, because its members understand their strategic role to both support leaders and to hold them to account for the achievement of children and for all aspects of the school's provision. Governors ensure that children are kept safe in school and that the school's budget is properly spent. Leaders come into school on a very regular basis to meet with leaders and discuss the gains that children are making. Written documentation shows that leaders give the governing body clear information about the progress of many different groups of children over time, so that they can ask challenging questions to leaders where this is needed.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and all members of staff are determined to keep children safe and very well cared for. All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and everyone is clear about their responsibility to report any concerns they have to the designated leader for safeguarding.
- Leaders work very well with a wide range of external agencies to ensure that children are safeguarded and that any information is shared promptly. Case files seen by inspectors show that leaders keep clear records, and that all is done to ensure that parents are kept fully informed and involved unless doing so would increase the risk of harm to the child.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers and all early years practitioners undertake their roles well. Children settle into the school quickly because staff have high overall expectations and are extremely kind and friendly towards them. Children who are at the early stages of learning English are supported well so that they can join in and make good progress alongside other children. Inspectors also noted instances when children whose first language is English were, without prompting, helping these children to understand new words.
- Staff consistently speak to children and to each other very positively. Because of this effective modelling of good manners, children become very polite themselves. This happens not just during the morning and afternoon sessions, but also at lunchtimes. Inspectors saw children sitting at tables with staff and eating together, using cutlery appropriately and talking together as they ate. Once they had finished, children remained at the table respectfully until others had finished.
- Staff encourage children effectively to try new things and to develop their independence. For example, inspectors saw how staff place a variety of resources in the different learning environments so that children can choose which ones to use for themselves. As a result, children are keen to 'have a go' and show how they can make decisions when they play and work together.
- Children's learning journeys confirm that staff plan and deliver interesting tasks and activities across all areas of the curriculum. As a result, children learn to, for example, paint and draw in different ways, make models and music, and learn to balance and jump using the equipment in the outdoor areas.
- The grassed and wooded area is a strength of Camrose. It is used extremely well so that children can play and explore, learning enthusiastically about the wonder of plants and creatures. Inspectors saw how children were highly excited as staff showed them tiny flowers growing and the smell of different herbs. Children were then putting these on lengths of wood to make 'magic sticks'. Staff use this area of the school particularly well to support the learning of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff include these children fully, as they do in all other activities, and, as a consequence, these children flourish as they are keen to take part and explain what they are seeing and doing.
- The assessments that staff make of children's achievements are regular, and are effective in helping them to plan the next steps of learning that children need to make. Inspectors met with staff in a variety of different roles, who demonstrated a confident understanding of children's attainment. They showed how, when they plan together, they use the frequent notes they make of what children have learned in order to adjust what activities they will give to children next. Leaders check personally that the judgements that staff make are consistently accurate and discuss examples of children's achievements and work with staff in nine other nurseries in Northamptonshire.
- Staff ensure that they promote children's early enjoyment of books. Inspectors saw how staff regularly share storybooks with children and other books that, for example,

help children understand the weather or how animals work together to help each other.

- Although they do not distribute formal homework to children, staff give parents regular ideas, suggestions and resources to help them support their child's learning at home. Staff recognise that all children are unique and that they learn in different ways. Therefore, they are keen to give support that is bespoke for each child. Guidance that staff give includes support materials for early reading and number, and visits for parents to classrooms to see their children learning. Staff also organise an extensive range of family learning activities to support parents in their role. These include, for example, informal drop-in 'stay and play' sessions, behaviour management, the development of children's speech and language skills through music, the importance of healthy eating for children, and how to keep their children safe online. The staff member who coordinates this programme also provides specific support to individual families through early help assessments, in line with Northamptonshire's policies.
- The learning environment is attractive and makes children want to come to school and to try new things. The outdoor areas are particularly effective for this and provide a wide range of opportunities to develop, for example, their motor skills. However, though the environments are exciting, they do not promote children's writing skills as effectively as they could. Staff do not ensure, for instance, that they show sufficient examples of early writing for children to copy and learn from. As a result, children's progress in writing is not yet rapid.
- Although staff check well whether children understand or know something, they do not always question them highly effectively. Inspectors saw a number of occasions when some members of staff accepted single word answers from children, rather than expecting them to give fuller, longer answers that require greater detail. In addition, staff do not consistently model these responses themselves so that children develop the habit of responding at length. This means that children's skills in speaking do not consistently develop at a brisk rate. Leaders had already noted that they want to improve staff's skills in communicating with children and have arranged for imminent training for them in this area.
- Staff do not give the most able children sufficiently challenging tasks to ensure that their progress is rapid. Inspectors saw a number of occasions when these children were not provided with opportunities that made them think deeply and to extend their skills sufficiently.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote children's personal development and welfare is good.
- Children learn about and experience healthy food, including much-enjoyed meals such as mackerel bolognaise, which staff cook and serve. Children also have good opportunities in the extensive outdoor areas to run about and exercise.

- Staff teach children the importance of listening quietly to music or to spend time looking at books and relaxing. This promotes children’s mental well-being effectively. In addition, staff strongly encourage children to talk about any worries that they have, so that children understand how discussing tricky things with people you trust makes you feel better.
- Children feel increasingly successful and positive, because staff give them ample praise when they work well. They congratulate children for getting things right and never criticise them if they do not understand. Instead, they address any misconceptions they have and show them how to make good choices. As a result, children move between learning spaces well and are confident when they play and learn independently.
- Staff ensure that children are taught, from an early age, how to stay safe. As well as learning about the danger of strangers and of the need to keep safe when walking on pavements, children are taught well about aspects such as sun safety. Inspectors saw children understanding the need to wear hats and put on protective cream before going outdoors because, otherwise, the sun could burn their skin.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of children is good.
- Children are well behaved. Inspectors saw no instances whatsoever of children disrupting the learning of others, nor of children behaving unkindly towards others. This is because staff teach children that they must use ‘kind hands’ at all times, and how their actions might, if they are not careful, upset others.
- Children pay attention to what staff are teaching them and follow instructions. They concentrate well on the things they are doing, and do not waste time or become bored. Older children learn to work consistently well alongside others, and understand why it is important to take turns.
- Children like to come to school. Attendance is good, and leaders work well with the parents of any children who do not attend as regularly as they could so that the absence of these children reduces over time. Leaders promote the importance of attendance, and monitor it continually. This is particularly the case for children whose home circumstances make them vulnerable. Leaders ensure that they use external agencies well where this is needed, so that children can attend regularly.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- At least half of the children enter the provision at two years old with skills that are below, or well below, those typically found in other children of the same age.
- Children make at least the progress expected of them and substantial proportions make considerably more than this. By the time they leave, a large majority are working at, or are close to, the levels expected for their age across different areas of learning. The rate of progress that children make accelerates the longer they are in the nursery.

- Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. This is because staff ensure that their needs are met well and that they are given work which is suitable for their ability.
- Children who are disadvantaged also make good progress overall. Staff ensure that these children learn effectively and catch up well.
- Children are well prepared for the next stage of their education. This is because, as well as their overall attainment, they also have very good attitudes to learning. They listen carefully, work hard and are keen to discover more.
- The most able children do not make the rapid progress of which they are capable. This includes the most able disadvantaged children. As a result, not enough of these children leave the school attaining highly for their age.

School details

Unique reference number	131151
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10003485

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	154
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rebecca Walker
Headteacher	Anette Whitehouse (Head of Centre)
Telephone number	0160 458 5219
Website	camrose.org.uk
Email address	awhitehouse@camrose.northants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14–15 March 2013

Information about this school

- Most children attend on a part-time basis.
- The school also provides day care for children from birth to four years of age, for ten hours per day, all year round. This is subject to a separate inspection.
- Around one-third of the children are of White British heritage. The remainder are from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. A small number of children are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language.
- The number of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all areas of the indoor classrooms, as well as the outdoor areas. Some lesson observations took place with the headteacher. In total, learning was observed in 17 lessons. Inspectors also scrutinised examples of learning journals from children of different ability groups, the assessments that staff make of children's achievements, and the activities they plan for children.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders and early years practitioners, as well as members of the governing body. At the time of the inspection, there were insufficient responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, for statistics to be analysed, but inspectors read the three comments received through its free-text facility, and spoke with parents when they collected their children at the end of sessions. Inspectors also looked at the views of the parents who had responded to the school's most recent questionnaire.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's development plan and self-evaluation, policies and records relating to safeguarding and children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, the school's information about children's achievement and attendance, and records of meetings of the governing body.

Inspection team

Roary Pownall, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Fiona Parr	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Fielding	Ofsted Inspector

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