

Inspection report for Woking Sure Start Children's Centre

Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	362628
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Wendy Ratcliff HMI

Centre governance	Local Authority
Centre leader	Sandra Scott
Date of previous inspection	N/A
Centre address	Blackmore Crescent Sheerwater Woking GU21 5NZ
Telephone number	01483 730517
Fax number	01483 750553
Email address	Sandra@caringdaycare.co.uk

Linked school if applicable	N/A
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	Caring Daycare Nursery

The inspection of this Sure Start Children's Centre was carried out under Part 3A of the Childcare Act 2006 as inserted by section 199 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009.

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 1231, 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'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

No. 100024

© Crown copyright 2010



Introduction

The inspection addresses the centre's contribution to:

- facilitating access to early childhood services by parents, prospective parents and young children
- maximising the benefit of those services to parents, prospective parents and young children
- improving the well-being of young children.

The report is made to the local authority and a copy is sent to the children's centre. The local authority may send the report to such persons it considers appropriate and must arrange for an action plan to be produced in relation to the findings in this report.

An inspection of the registered early years/childcare provision was carried out at the same time as the inspection of the centre under Section 3 of the Childcare Act 2006. The report of this inspection is available on our website www.ofsted.gov.uk.

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Early Years Inspector. The inspectors held meetings with the director and head of centre, representatives of the advisory board, staff, local authority representatives and partner agencies. They had informal discussions with parents and children, and visited sessions in Maybury.

They observed the centre's work and looked at a range of relevant documentation including key policies, the centre's self-evaluation documents, its development plans, evaluations of services and data about people who use the centre.

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Information about the centre

Woking Sure Start Children's centre was designated in March 2006. It is run on behalf of the local authority by a private organisation Caring Daycare Limited. It is one of eight children's centres serving the Woking area. The centre's catchment is varied in terms of deprivation. The majority of areas have high deprivation levels, although there are some more affluent areas. Overall, the area the centre covers is one of the 30% most deprived areas in the country with approximately 49% of children living in deprivation. The local population is mostly White British, with around 30% from minority ethnic groups, the majority being Asian and smaller percentages of European, including Polish and Spanish.

The centre is open on weekdays from 08.00 to 17.30 and on some Saturdays for 'Daddy Time'. The Caring Daycare Nursery provides the childcare on weekdays from 08.00 to 18.30 and provides crèche facilities on some weekdays for parents attending courses offered by the centre. The nursery is registered on the Early Years and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. Caring Daycare Limited have been awarded Investors in People and were winners of the 'Toast of Surrey Award' in 2010.

Overall effectiveness

The effectiveness of the children's centre in meeting the needs of and improving outcomes for users and the wider community

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

The centre's capacity for sustained improvement, including the quality of its leadership and management

2

Main findings

Overall effectiveness of Woking Sure Start Children's Centre is good with many outstanding aspects. This is because the centre is providing an effective and varied range of services, which are contributing to the strongly improving outcomes for users. The centre knows the local community exceptionally well and uses this information to carefully and sensitively assess the individual needs of its users. This exceptional knowledge enables staff to provide users with outstanding care, guidance and support, in particular those who are most vulnerable and those for whom English is an additional language. All users of the centre value the welcoming, safe environment it offers. Exceptional partnership working with a wide range of providers, particularly health, community development officers and adult education professionals, is making a significant contribution to improving outcomes for users.

The centre is highly successful at promoting healthy lifestyles. Users are responding very well to healthy eating courses, buggy walks, exercise classes and breastfeeding support at the 'baby café'. The take up of preventative health services such as immunisations is good. Families are developing an excellent understanding of keeping safe through activities such as road safety week. Community events such as the Halloween party are skilfully planned in partnership with other agencies. As a result, there were no reported anti-social behaviour incidents related to 'trick or treating' this year.

Children are making outstanding progress from their starting points in developing skills for the future. The 'Every Child a Talker' (ECAT) programme is relatively new but is already having a significant impact for those at risk of speech and language delay. Childminders highly appreciate the 'play and learn' sessions. One childminder reports, 'The sessions have changed my life and helps me implement the Early Years Foundation Stage for the children I care for.' Users are gaining recognised qualifications such as first aid and childcare qualifications, thus building confidence and raising aspirations. For some this leads to further training and/or employment.

The leaders of the centre are demonstrating a clear vision; they have an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas to improve and some are involved in the self-evaluation process. The centre manager is very much at the heart of the centre's success and is ably supported by an enthusiastic and committed staff team. Users' views are sought from activities and courses in a variety of ways. The parent forum is in the development stage and has yet to fully engage the users in decision making and governance of the centre. The centre collects a wide range of data and information from courses, events, sessions and visitors to the centre. They use this information for the self-evaluation process and to shape services. However, the range of information including data it is not being analysed precisely to fully demonstrate the effectiveness of services on improving outcomes. As a result, the centre has a good capacity to improve and build on its success further.

Users feel highly supported and see the centre as a safe place when feeling

vulnerable and experiencing a crisis. Outreach workers skilfully build trusting relationships with parents. These trusting relationships then enable staff to direct and engage users with those services that will support them. Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and requirements met. Inclusion is central to the centre's vision in engaging the community. Everyone who uses the centre feels welcome. Barriers to services are removed as the centre provides crèche places for courses and transport in order for users to access services.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- Improve the effectiveness of the system of evaluation and analyse the data more precisely in order to monitor the improvement in outcomes for users.
- Continue to develop the parent forum in order to engage users in shaping services and the governance of the centre.

How good are outcomes for users?

1

Outcomes for users are strongly improving and are outstanding overall. Families in times of crisis feel confident to approach staff at the centre for support and guidance. Outreach workers are skilled at developing trusting relationships with users in order to engage families with key agencies, particularly when working with those most vulnerable and subject to child protection plans or with 'common assessment framework' in place. Teenage parents benefit from targeted sessions and are learning how to bond with their babies. Children are developing an excellent understanding of how to behave in ways in which are safe for themselves and others. They enjoy visits from the community police officers who demonstrate via role play how to keep safe when crossing roads. Users behave in ways that ensure the safety of children and themselves in the centre. Safety procedures are clearly displayed in the centre, for sessions held in the community and available in different languages.

A significant majority of parents are becoming increasingly aware of how to keep themselves and their children healthy. The centre openly encourages healthy eating options by supplying locally sourced organic produce, with Halal meat and vegetarian options. Parents report their children are trying different fruits and developing good eating habits such as sitting together at mealtimes. Parents highly value the 'play and learn' sessions and the opportunity to engage in their children's play. They are gaining a greater understanding of how to support their child's learning and development. High levels of enjoyment and excellent behaviour is seen as parents and children engage in music and movement sessions, such as 'Tatty Bumpkins'. The staff provide stimulating and enjoyable play and learning opportunities in which they relate effectively to parents and children. One parent reports, 'I find it extremely useful and it enhances the play at home with my child. She loves coming to sessions and I get lots of ideas too.' Users are effectively supported in a variety of ways to share their views about services.

The centre is highly effective at supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. One parent tells how she has valued the support of the children's centre teacher '100%' in helping her child to make progress and access the services of other professionals. Strong links have been established between the nursery and local schools and evidence is growing to demonstrate how successful this work is in supporting children's smooth transition into school.

Parents are improving their economic stability and independence through well-targeted advice and support. Users are directed to courses to develop their skills and gain qualifications raising confidence and self-esteem. They recognise that taking courses such as basic literacy helps them support their children's learning. After gaining qualifications, some users have gone on to employment.

The extent to which children, including those from vulnerable groups, are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy and families have healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children are safe and protected, their welfare concerns are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them	1
The extent to which all users enjoy and achieve educationally and in their personal and social development	1
The extent to which children engage in positive behaviour and develop positive relationships and users contribute to decision-making and governance of the centre	1
The extent to which children are developing skills for the future and parents are developing economic stability and independence including access to training	2

How good is the provision?

1

The centre is highly effective at sensitively assessing the needs of individual users. Assessments cover a whole range of needs, including the needs of those most vulnerable. Extremely effective relationships exist between centre staff and users. Staff get to know users well and for those in most need, they provide 'unique care and support programmes'. Parents report, 'The children benefit greatly because as a parent, I am more relaxed and they are not subject to rows' and 'The centre has really been my saviour.'

The centre knows the community extremely well and works in partnership with other agencies to reach out to the community. For example, outreach workers work with the community engagement officer on a weekly basis and go 'door knocking' in the community. Workers who speak other languages such as Urdu are skilfully engaging with the Asian community and providing information about the services of the centre. Excellent relationships are in place with a range of key agencies. The centre manager is working tirelessly to ensure partnerships are strong in order that a wide range of services is available at the centre and in the community. One partner

reports, 'Parents and children benefit greatly from the links because all the different agencies can work together to provide services and very individual packages for families and children. The children's centre is the essential hub of the community and children and families thrive'

Adults enjoy their learning, with some courses being very popular, for example the computer course that has now been running for three years. Staff encourage users to build on their achievements and access further activities and opportunities. For many this leads to recognised qualifications such as gaining an NVQ Level 2 in childcare. The centre celebrates achievements and users value this, as receiving a certificate of qualification is a first for some. The quality and range of services offered are good, well integrated and cohesive. The toy library is used effectively to support the needs of users accessing services at the centre and those in the wider community. One parent reports, 'The toy library has saved my family money because you can try before you buy.' Services are adapted to meet the needs of the community. Spanish speaking families value 'Mamas y Papas Play and Learn' and the excellent support they receive from staff to enable them to fully engage in centre activities. For example, the centre administrator used a computer program to translate the inspection poster for parents. Informative sessions run with both nursery and children centre parents such as 'Starting School' ensure users are accessing the most appropriate school places for their children. Staff often successfully support parents through the appeals process. Parents confidently approach staff for help in filling in school preference forms. However, there is some variation in participation rates for some sessions held in the centre and out in the community and for some courses, such as literacy for young parents. The childcare provision for children across the centre and nursery is outstanding.

The effectiveness of the assessment of the needs of children, parents and other users	1
The extent to which the centre promotes purposeful learning, development and enjoyment for all users	2
The extent to which the range of services, activities and opportunities meet the needs of users and the wider community	2
The quality of care, guidance and support offered to users within the centre and the wider community	1

How effective are the leadership and management?

2

The whole staff team show enthusiasm, motivation and a commitment to improving outcomes for users and striving towards high quality services. Leaders and managers use a wide range of techniques to evaluate services. The information is not always rigorously analysed to demonstrate the impact services have on improving outcomes for users, including particular groups.

Line management arrangements are clear and understood for most staff. They value

the supervision and professional development they receive. The advisory board provides challenge and support in decision making and the centre works well with the local authority to monitor the effectiveness of the centre. There is a clear cycle of monitoring in place which includes monthly reports to the company director and then to the advisory board. The self-evaluation process involves some others and links into the centre's service development plan, which shows detailed targets.

The centre has built excellent and effective links with other agencies and providers in order to provide good quality services. Effective partnerships exist with key partners for example, housing, Citizens Advice, Job Centre Plus, Women's Aid and the Asian business partnership. There are many examples of how this is working well for the community, such as Halloween events to prevent related 'incidents', Eid parties, and community fun days which include activities such as 'Boogie Mites' and African drumming. As a result, community cohesion is strong. The centre has a strong commitment to providing an inclusive environment and removing barriers for those who are harder to reach, enabling them to access services. The centre is highly efficient in using its resources to support inclusion and provides exceptional value for money. A free crèche is provided to enable parents to access courses and subsidised childcare places are available for the community. The work of outreach workers is carefully planned to reach out to the community. Documentation is available in the different languages used in the wider community, such as Urdu and Punjabi. The centre is narrowing the gap for children, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The centre has achieved this by implementing programmes such as healthy eating and ECAT. The centre building is fully utilised by users, the wider community and partners. A stair lift has been fitted to enable all users to access the centre's high quality environment.

Safeguarding arrangements are outstanding and all staff are highly aware of the procedures to follow if they have concerns. They actively promote the safety and welfare of its users and work proactively with other key agencies. Safer recruitment practices are followed rigorously and the centre has effective systems in place to ensure all visitors to the centre follow safe practices.

Users' views are sought from sessions and activities in a variety of ways. Children use smiley faces to express their views on their level of enjoyment. The centre has consistent and productive partnerships with users, and users share their strong levels of satisfaction of the centres work. They feel extremely well supported and welcomed. However, the parent forum is in a development stage and users are yet to be fully engaged in shaping services and the governance of the centre.

<p>The extent to which governance, accountability, professional supervision and day to day management arrangements are clear and understood</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>The extent to which ambitious targets drive improvement, provision is integrated and there are high expectations for users and the wider community</p>	<p>2</p>

The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of users and the wider community	1
The extent to which equality is promoted and diversity celebrated, illegal or unlawful discrimination is tackled and the centre fulfils its statutory duties	1
The effectiveness of the centre's policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults	1
The extent to which evaluation is used to shape and improve services and activities	2
The extent to which partnerships with other agencies ensure the integrated delivery of the range of services the centre has been commissioned to provide	1
The extent to which the centre supports and encourages the wider community to engage with services and uses their views to develop the range of provision	2

Any other information used to inform the judgements made during this inspection

The inspection judgements from the early years inspection carried during the same week as the children's centre inspection were used to inform judgements. The overall outcome for the inspection at the Caring Daycare Nursery was judged as outstanding. This inspection shows improvement has been made since the last inspection.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from our website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like us to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Summary for centre users

We inspected the Woking Sure Start Children's Centre on 8 and 9 December 2010. We judged the centre as good overall with outstanding aspects.

Your children's centre provides parents and their children with a warm and welcoming environment where they feel safe and secure. It is a safe place for parents and carers to bring their children. The staff know the community exceptionally well and carefully assess individual needs of users in order to match appropriate services. Staff and centre users have built trusting relationships and show mutual respect for each other. The centre has established some excellent partnerships with other professionals and organisations to ensure users have access to a range of guidance and support. They are providing excellent guidance to parents on how to keep their families healthy and safe. Children are learning how to

keep themselves safe when crossing roads through role play activities provided by the community police officers. Healthy eating courses are popular and help parents to provide healthy diets for their families. Extra efforts have been made on increasing children's speech development through the 'Every Child a Talker' programme.

Parents and children enjoy a range of activities on offer, from drop-ins to courses such as 'play and learn', 'Tatty Bumpkins', trips to the seaside, basic computer courses and 'parenting puzzle'. Parents value the opportunities to develop their literacy skills in order to support their children. Users are gaining recognised qualifications such as first aid and childcare qualifications, building confidence and raising aspirations. For some this leads to further training and/or employment.

The centre is helping to strongly improve the outcome for positive contribution. Children behave exceptionally well, are building strong relationships with adults, and are developing an understanding of others' needs. The centre actively engages in community events such as Halloween and Eid parties. The Halloween party was a huge success, with 80 families attending and no reports of 'trick or treat' related incidents this year. The childminders who use the centre highly value their 'play and learn sessions' and report 'The sessions have changed my life and helps me implement the Early Years Foundation Stage for the children I care for.'

Those in charge manage the centre well and have an accurate understanding of the strengths and where to improve, and some are involved in the self-evaluation process. The centre manager works extremely hard to maintain links with partnership agencies and is supported by an enthusiastic and committed staff team. Users' views are sought from activities and courses in a variety of ways. The parent forum is in development stage and has yet to fully engage the users in decision making and governance of the centre. Users told us how much they value the children's centre, and shared comments such as, 'I find it extremely useful and it enhances the play at home with my child. She loves coming to sessions and I get lots of ideas too' and 'the toy library has saved my family money because you can try before you buy.' The parents we meet with were keen to offer suggestions on how services can improve, such as signing a 'contract' when committing to popular sessions such as swimming in order to increase participation rates. The centre collects a wide range of data and information from courses, events, sessions and visitors to the centre. They use this information to see how effective services are and to shape services further. However, it is not yet being analysed precisely to fully demonstrate the effectiveness of services on improving outcomes.

Outreach workers skilfully build trusting relationships with parents. These trusting relationships then enable staff to direct and engage users with those services that will support them. Inclusion is central to the centre's vision in engaging the community. Everyone who uses the centre feels welcome. Barriers to services are removed as the centre provides crèche places for courses and transport in order for users to access services.

We would like to thank the centre users for speaking with us and contributing to the inspection at Woking Sure Start Children's Centre.

The full report is available from your centre or on our website www.ofsted.gov.uk.