

# Inspection report for Holme Wood Children's Centre

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Local authority	Bradford
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Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
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Linked school if applicable	Not applicable
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	EY336949 Pippins Childcare

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.

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## 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 49 of the Childcare Act 2006. The report of this inspection is available on our website [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one early years inspector.

The inspectors held meetings with the centre manager, senior leaders, parents and representatives from partner agencies, the staff team and the board of directors.

They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

## Information about the centre

Holme Wood Children's Centre is a phase one centre located in purpose-built premises on the edge of a large housing estate to the south east of Bradford. There is on-site early years childcare provision that is an integral part of the centre, and after-school and holiday care for children aged five to 12 years. The co-located Knowleswood Primary School delivers a breakfast club from the centre. The centre works with this and nine other primary schools in the area to deliver targeted language and communication support to the school's nursery-age children. The centre serves an area in the top 30% of the most disadvantaged areas in the country. Services, delivered by the centre's team and partners, include health services, family support, employment and training signposting, targeted support for families whose circumstances make them vulnerable, and family learning. These are delivered from the centre and other venues across the area.

The centre is one of a cluster of three operated on behalf of the local authority by SureStart BHT Limited, a registered charity and company limited by guarantee. The Director of Services for SureStart BHT Limited is also the manager directly responsible for service

delivery at Holme Wood Children's Centre. The centre manager is responsible for service delivery across the reach area.

The centre serves a densely populated area in which the housing stock is primarily rental property. There are large pockets of social disadvantage. The vast majority of the population in the reach area is of White British heritage, with small but growing Eastern European and South Asian communities. Within the community served by the children's centre, levels of worklessness are high and many children aged under five years are living in families dependent on workless benefits. Children enter Early Years Foundation Stage provision across the area with skills and abilities that are lower than those typically for their age.

## Inspection judgements

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

### Overall effectiveness

**The effectiveness of the children's centre in meeting the needs of and improving outcomes for families**

**2**

### Capacity for sustained improvement

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

**2**

## Main findings

Holme Wood Children's Centre is held in high esteem by parents. It is a hive of activity and well established within the community it serves. The centre manager and senior staff in the SureStart BHT Limited organisation are passionate leaders whose enthusiasm for their work in the community is passed onto their staff. A strong focus of the centre's work is on enabling families to become independent and not over reliant on the centre.

Overall, the provision is outstanding. Health awareness and protection programmes, such as the oral health fluoride painting programme and ante-natal clinics are provided regularly by partners. The centre's accommodation is used extremely well by the school to deliver training to parents for whom the centre provides a high quality crèche facility. Such use of the centre enables the staff to make and maintain contact with families at different stages in their children's lives and allows families access to centre services. The centre also operates a well-established universal visiting programme at key stages in a child's life. This is a highly effective mechanism which has led to the centre successfully registering most of the families in the area and working with the large majority of them. Staff are committed to inclusion and work tirelessly to improve the life chances of centre users, particularly those whose circumstances mean they may be most at risk.

Procedures for safeguarding are outstanding. The staff are highly trained and are leaders in high quality practice. The number of children who have child protection plans in the area has reduced and the number of families actively engaging with the Common Assessment Framework process has increased. As a result, the welfare and safety of children and families in all target groups are also outstanding and hospital admissions are significantly reduced.

Accurate assessment of families' needs is a key strength of the centre and used extremely well to target services, within the priorities set with the centre by the local authority. The resulting purposeful range of services and programme of activities is outstanding and meets the needs of all families exceptionally well, including those from the target groups. The work undertaken with families is personalised and successful in reducing the number of families who need to return to high-level intervention work. Strong and cohesive partnership working is highly effective in improving the lives of all target groups and ensuring outcomes are good.

Users are confident to raise any concerns they have about service provision with the centre and they regularly give their opinions through evaluations and feedback. These are used well to further develop provision and as a means of checking the quality of services delivered by centre staff and external agencies. Managers use data provided by the local authority very well to plan and prioritise the centre's work. They do not, however, use all information available to them, such as sustained breastfeeding rates following successful initiation, or impact assessments held by partners. Nor do they revisit families who have received support or accessed training to evaluate whether the learning is having continued positive impact upon outcomes.

The centre is well managed and governance arrangements are effective. The centre delivers outstanding value for money. The determination of senior managers to make a difference has led to significant year-on-year improvements to outcomes, although very high levels of mobility in the community make it difficult to produce a complete picture. Senior managers know the centre's strengths well and there is a good capacity to improve further.

## **What does the centre need to do to improve further?**

### **Recommendations for further improvement**

- Make full use of all available information, in particular from partners, to further improve service delivery planning, and monitor the long-term impact of work with families.

## **How good are outcomes for families?**

2
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Children who use the centre make good progress in their language, communication, social and emotional development. This supports their readiness for school well and the number of children achieving a good level of development has risen by 10% in a four-year period.

Parents and children play and learn together in sessions such as 'Dads' Group' and 'Little Talk', which are in place to support the extensive language development programme run by the centre. Attendance by young parents and male carers is high. The take-up rates for adult learning opportunities, such as the accredited numeracy course and parenting development courses, are good as are retention rates. Parents who engage with the centre in this way have a demonstrable commitment to improving the life chances for themselves and their children.

Families who are struggling with finances benefit greatly from the work of the Family Finance Service run by SureStart BHT Limited. This service is highly effective in helping families to understand the benefits available to them and how they can retain a part-time job and not lose out financially. Families who have used the service have received improved benefits payments that have enabled them to move from unsuitable accommodation that may have affected their health, and some families have been helped to avoid eviction from their home. The centre gives parents techniques to use with their children during one-to-one and group sessions and they are noticing improvements in their children's speech and their willingness to share and take turns. Behaviour management strategies, shown to parents by centre staff, are being used very effectively by parents and are instrumental in improving children's behaviour in the home and improving family relationships.

The centre significantly improves parents' understanding of how to keep their children safe from harm. Well-focused work around food hygiene, feeding and weaning has also had a positive impact in other ways such as reducing infant mortality rates. This work is a focus particularly with young parents. Hospital admissions have reduced well, especially those linked to gastro-intestinal infections. Almost all parents demonstrate their high levels of engagement and increasingly developed understanding of protecting their children from high-risk childhood illnesses through using the immunisation programme. The universal visiting programme that starts with antenatal contact, the language development programme and the collaboration between the centre and health partners has led to earlier support for mothers identified as having 'low mood'. Effective early intervention and support for children who may have developmental delay, or for families who are experiencing high levels of pressure, reduce the risk to children. As a result, children's welfare and safety are outstanding.

The emotional health of children and their parents is improving rapidly as a result of secure partnerships that the centre has worked tirelessly to establish and maintain in the immediate and wider communities. The centre's work with families whose circumstances may have made them vulnerable has been highly effective and has resulted in far fewer families needing continued intervention work. Families who may be experiencing domestic violence are very well supported and receive timely advice on how to gain the support they need. In addition, children who are in the care of the local authority are well supported through the centre's work and contact with their carers.

These are the grades for the outcomes for families:

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

## How good is the provision?

1

The quality of provision is outstanding overall. The children's centre building is a bright, attractive and welcoming space full of family friendly advice and good quality play equipment. The building, however, is not the entirety of the children's centre. A highly skilled, enthusiastic and well-deployed staff team takes a wide range of services out into the community to very good effect. The centre also works exceptionally well with a large number of partners from the statutory and voluntary service sectors to provide families with much personalised care, guidance and support.

The universal visiting programme is a significantly useful vehicle for the centre to maintain contact with families who remain in the area from initial antenatal contact, early post-natal contact, at baby's five month and 30 month anniversaries. In addition to maintaining contact, it allows the centre to check on children and families who do not regularly use the centre and to deliver key messages at appropriate times, such as handing out toothbrushes and oral health information at the five month visit and reminding parents about school registration at the 30 month visit.

The centre has developed a highly valued language development programme that is delivered by a well-trained team of workers who work closely with the speech and language therapists. All two-year-olds who are known to the centre receive a language assessment from the team and time is taken to assess any other needs there may be for the family. An excellent range of interventions are available where concerns are identified such as the non-clinical six week programme. The benefits of the programme are seen in how well children settle and engage within the Early Years Foundation Stage learning environment in school in comparison to their peers who have not had the benefit of any language development intervention.

These are the grades for the quality of provision:

<b>The extent to which the range of services, activities and opportunities meet the needs of families, including those in target groups</b>	1
<b>The extent to which the centre promotes purposeful learning, development and enjoyment for all families, including those in target groups</b>	2
<b>The quality of care, guidance and support offered to families, including those in target groups.</b>	1

## **How effective are the leadership and management?**

2

A strong leadership team contributes to the success of the centre and the improving outcomes for children and their families. As a director of SureStart BHT Limited the centre manager is forward-thinking and strives to develop all services in a cohesive and cost-effective way. Shared services, such as the Family Finance Service and the language development programme, mean that families receive support and guidance from staff with expert knowledge in their fields. The centre provides outstanding value for money as a result. The high number of families that engage with the centre is not taken for granted and work is ongoing to increase that number even more. Year-on-year, improvement in key outcome areas is evident, despite very high mobility levels in the area that mean the full impact of the centre's work is not always apparent in centrally held data.

Governance and accountability arrangements are clear and understood by all. The board of directors at SureStart BHT Limited has a broad range of representation, which includes local headteachers and six parents alongside other partners. The board are clear about the centre's priorities and they provide a level of local challenge to the centre manager that complements the work of the local authority's monitoring team. Evaluation takes place in all activities and families freely make comments and give feedback. There is a clear sense of purpose at the centre that is well-grounded in sound analysis of data held by the local authority on a computerised tracking programme and first-hand experience of the community. However, the centre holds a wealth of information gathered at the universal assessment visits that it does not use fully efficiently or as well as it could in its self-evaluation processes.

Safeguarding arrangements are excellent. Safe recruitment procedures are extremely robust and staff training goes beyond expectations ensuring a team of highly effective staff. Effective interventions, very high quality assurance systems, which include regular case file audits, and individual supervision sessions conducted by the assistant director of SureStart BHT Limited ensure that children are well protected and families are receiving appropriate and timely support. The centre staff are at the forefront of initiatives for preventative work with families. Opportunities to make contact with families are maximised and the Common Assessment Framework and 'team around the child' approach are firmly and very successfully embedded in their working practices.



Every opportunity is taken to reduce risk factors to children and the two- year-old funding criteria reflect this. The needs of families who are in the centre's target groups or who may find themselves isolated are supported well. In addition, the centre manages resources extremely well and uses the early years and childcare provision run by the centre to help families who do not meet the strict criteria for a funded place but who are still identified as in need of support. Partners deliver a broad range of services either in conjunction with or on behalf of the centre. This is a system that works well for all those involved in terms of broadening their reach with limited resources. However, the centre is not always clear what the longer-term impact on individual families has been.

The centre promotes equality and diversity well. Inclusion for all families is central to the centre's work. Work with disabled children and those with special educational needs is a strength of the centre. A worker is dedicated to working with these children and their families and with children who are in the care of the local authority. A small number of specialist groups are offered, such as a dad's groups and there is a group for families who receive 'portage' support for their children's development. However, the main focus of the centre is to support and enable all families to access all the services on offer at the centre by removing as many barriers to access as they can.

These are the grades for leadership and management:

<b>The extent to which governance, accountability, professional supervision and day-to-day management arrangements are clear and understood</b>	2
<b>The effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secures improvement in outcomes</b>	2
<b>The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of families, including those in target groups</b>	1
<b>The extent to which equality is promoted and diversity celebrated, illegal or unlawful discrimination is tackled and the centre fulfils its statutory duties</b>	2
<b>The effectiveness of the centre's policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults</b>	1
<b>The extent to which partnerships with other agencies ensure the integrated delivery of the range of services provided by the centre to meet its core purpose</b>	2
<b>The extent to which the centre supports and encourages families in the reach area to engage with services and uses their views to develop the range of provision.</b>	2

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

The inspectors considered the judgements made for Pippins Childcare.

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## **Summary for centre users**

We inspected the Holme Wood Children's Centre on 8 and 9 February 2012. We judged the centre as good overall.

'If I won the lottery this place would get the money'. This is a comment made during the inspection that reflects the high regard that you hold the centre in. When we were inspecting the centre we spoke to a number of people and visited groups and services offered by the centre. We also looked at a range of documents and read some of the comments you have made about services at the centre. Without exception, you told us how you had benefited from the centre's work.

We were very impressed by the outstanding way that staff at the centre work with you to safeguard and protect your children from harm and we were pleased to see that fewer children now have to receive hospital treatment for injuries or illness. This shows us that you are working well with the centre and using what you learn there to good effect.

The centre provides excellent value for money. The staff work very effectively to meet and work with as many families as possible in the area and they are doing well with this. The way the centre assesses your individual needs alongside the wider needs of the community is excellent. They then work with the board of directors at SureStart BHT Limited to make sure that the services that they deliver meet those needs in a wide range of ways.

The centre works hard to find out how well it is doing to improve outcomes for your families and uses the information it receives to do this well. However, we have asked staff to make better use of data and information available to them so that they can get a more accurate picture of the impact of their work. You can help by keeping the centre informed about how well you are using what you have learned after you have finished a course. We also want the centre to ask other providers who deliver training sessions for them to tell them how well you have been doing.

We heard that you enjoy the opportunities you have to play and learn alongside your children as well as how much you value being able to leave your children in a crèche when

the learning is for adults only. The opportunities your children have to learn, in crèches, Pippins Childcare and through the language development team are having a significant impact on how well they are doing when they reach the end of Reception Year in school. We are pleased that you take advantage of these activities and use them to help your children to enjoy learning and settle into school life.

We know that sometimes families with young children struggle with their finances and balancing raising a family with work. We were pleased to hear that many of you use the Family Finance Service to help you through difficult times and we know this has helped some of you stay in your family home or to move into a better house. We also know that some of you have been able to take on or remain in employment because of the sound financial advice you have been given.

We would like to thank everyone who came to speak with us. It was a privilege to be able to talk with you. Your openness helped us immensely during the inspection. We thoroughly enjoyed spending time in your centre and we wish you and your families the very best for the future.

The full report is available from your centre or on our website [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).