

# Inspection report for Sure Start Hyndburn - Accrington South

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Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	384134
Inspection dates	28 - 29 February 2012
Reporting inspector	Qaisra Shahraz

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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	Little Stars @ The Beeches Child and Family Centre EY319606

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.

**Report Published:** March 2012

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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.

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector and an early years inspector.

The inspectors held meetings with the centre co-ordinator and staff, members of the advisory board, representatives from a wide range of partners, local authority members and users of the centre. They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

## Information about the centre

Sure Start Hyndburn - Accrington South is a phase one children's centre, offering all elements of the full core offer. This includes integrated childcare, Early Years Foundation Stage, health, family support, outreach and links to employability programmes and a child-minder network. Children's skills on entry to the early years provision are generally well below those expected for their age in communication, language and literacy, and in their personal and social development.

The centre is based in the four wards of Peel, Springhill, Barnfield and Central in Hyndburn, Lancashire. The population of families is spread across all 4 ward areas. Almost 50% of families in Central ward are from minority ethnic families, with the majority being from Pakistani heritage. Minority ethnic rates in the areas of Peel Springhill and Barnfield are around 20% with the majority being a mix of Asian heritage and a smaller number of families from Eastern European countries including Poland. They face issues of poor housing conditions, high levels of unemployment, social deprivation, drug and alcohol misuse, crime and domestic violence. Out of the families registered with the centre, 1080 are from the reach area. It has 912 children under the age of five in its reach area. Of these children, 70% reside in an area ranked in the top 10% of the most deprived areas in the country and 88% live in households where no one is working or is in receipt of benefits. Of those registered in the previous year, 34 were lone parents and 27% were children from Asian minority ethnic backgrounds.

Sure Start Hyndburn - Accrington South is a company limited by a guarantee and is registered by the Charity Commission as a Charitable Trust. It has a trustee board which has wide representation from many agencies and professionals and is the accountable body. The centre has three sites: The Beeches Child and Family Centre; The Oaks Child and Family Centre; and The Willows Child and Family Centre. It is managed by an interim manager and an extended senior leadership team that includes an Early Years Service Manager, Family Support Service Manager and a Personnel and Business Support Officer. The centre's full day-care provision is delivered by 'Little Stars @ The Beeches Child and Family Centre'.

## 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**

**1**

### Capacity for sustained improvement

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

**1**

## Main findings

Sure Start Hyndburn - Accrington South is extremely successful in both transforming and making a positive difference to the lives of some of the most disadvantaged groups of people in its reach area. It offers outstanding quality of provision and leadership and management. Users appreciate the warm, safe, welcoming environment including the reception areas with very helpful, smiling and efficient staff.

Overall outcomes for children and adults are good. The centre is extremely successful in its mission of raising standards and improving lives. The centre devotes a lot of its energies in promoting healthy lifestyles and improving health outcomes. However, the centre recognises that it needs to continue to further improve its health outcomes, especially those for breastfeeding, smoking cessation and reducing obesity.

Children are making good progress at school and the percentage gap between the lowest achieving 20% and the rest has been reduced by 27%. Similarly, the outcomes for adults are good. The work of the centre is successfully raising the aspirations of adults, providing practical help and support for parents and families towards achieving better futures. For this reason the centre is aware of the need to further widen its provision of learning opportunities available for adults in order to further enhance their language, literacy and numeracy and employability skills.

The centre is highly inclusive. Its current participation rate for the reach area is at 80%, demonstrating the centres success in reaching all of the target groups, including minority ethnic groups and travellers' families. It does this through a wide range of purposeful activities and learning opportunities, which develop their personal and social skills extremely well and lead to excellent positive relationships and a better quality of life. Both adults and children benefit from the excellent level of care, guidance and support provided. The centre excels in the quality and the variety of individual support that it provides to meet users' needs, especially in its outreach provision in users homes.

Leadership and management are outstanding, with excellent teamwork between senior managers. The local authority provides a clear strategic lead for the centre. Highly ambitious and driven to continually improve, the excellent board of trustees, the centre staff and managers bring with them wide ranging skills and experiences which helps to shape and improve the services provided.

There is an excellent promotion of equality and diversity throughout the centre's work. This includes the highly effective use of bilingual staff to communicate with parents who speak English as an additional language. Similarly, the wide ranging and outstanding partnerships has enabled the centre to provide successful joint services to support and benefit the most vulnerable of families in its reach area. With its rigorous systems and procedures, the different levels of training for its staff and the highly secure buildings, the centre's promotion of safeguarding is excellent.

The centre's excellent self-evaluation systems and development plan is extremely well focused on local and national targets. Users' views are used very well to improve the centre's services, including the views of parent representatives on its advisory board. With its quickly improving outcomes, outstanding quality of provision and leadership and management, robust monitoring of services, the overall effectiveness of the centre and its capacity for improvement is outstanding.

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

### **Recommendations for further improvement**

- Improve further healthy outcomes for users, especially those linked to breastfeeding, smoking cessation and reducing obesity.
- Further develop the current adult learning programmes provided by the centre to include more courses and learning opportunities covering literacy, numeracy, English for speakers of other languages, information and communication technology and employability training to respond more fully to the needs of users.

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

<b>2</b>
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The centre is highly committed to promoting healthy lifestyles and improving health outcomes for all its users. Parents actively take up the good advice and support offered for

breastfeeding, oral health and weaning. In addition, they take part in 'Smoke Free Home pledges' and 'Smile 4 Life'. There are many projects and activities that are designed to promote healthy eating habits. The successful nursery 'Growing your own food' project has helped to increase knowledge and awareness for over 70 children and parents about the importance of the right diet and nutrition.

With the help of the midwifery and the 'Little Angels Breast Feeding Support' team the centre has been very successful in promoting breastfeeding to mothers of all ages. Currently the initiation rates for breastfeeding have been increased to 69% with the national average being at 74.5%. Moreover, the centre actively encourages mothers through its welcoming notices, to breastfeed on its premises in quiet and comfortable designated places. With the high levels of deprivation in its reach area, the centre is dedicated to further improving health outcomes for users. It recognises this as an area which needs further development, particularly in regards to oral hygiene, breastfeeding, smoking cessation and obesity.

Children's achievement of good outcomes in the six areas of learning are exceedingly well celebrated on wall displays and effectively tracked through documentation and child 'Tracker' records. According to the robust data gathered by the centre, all children are either making good or excellent progress in communication, language and literacy development. The exceedingly high confidence level and language competence of some of the children was well demonstrated in their interaction with the inspectors and other children.

The centre's excellent focus on building positive relationships and families' emotional well-being is much appreciated, especially by women experiencing personal difficulties such as domestic abuse or post-natal depression. Having 'healthy bodies and minds', as one user told the inspectors, was of paramount importance for them. Many users stated that receiving excellent guidance, moral support from staff and other peers, as well making new friends, had improved their lives exceedingly. For example, one user stated that not only had she lost some weight through the fitness classes but by also by sharing her experiences with other parents she was better able to tackle personal difficulties.

The centre provides an extremely safe and highly secure environment for its users. The needs of vulnerable children and their parents are assessed quickly and effectively using the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) when necessary. Family support and social care workers work extremely well together 'as a rounded team' as one user described them. They meet regularly to devise coordinated strategies that results in highly integrated actions and individual plans for vulnerable parents and their children, including children subject to a child protection plan.

The economic well-being of many families is greatly improved because of their engagement with the centre services. Many of the users successfully contribute to the centre either as volunteers, supporting other mothers with breastfeeding or becoming active members of the advisory board where they engage with professionals and help to make important decisions. The advisory board and centre leadership recognise that one of the key priorities for the centre is to further widen its development of employability and adult learning programmes

for its users, particularly in literacy, numeracy, English for speakers of other languages and information and communication technology.

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>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which children are safe and protected, their welfare concerns are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them</b>	<b>1</b>
<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>	<b>2</b>
<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>	<b>1</b>
<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>	<b>2</b>

## How good is the provision?

**1**

The centre currently engages 912 families in its reach area, including users from minority ethnic groups, in its centres, outreach provision and in families' homes. Both children and adults benefit from a wide range of services, learning opportunities and sessions that are both enjoyable and which develop their skills. Users benefit extensively from the informal interaction with other parents and gain new skills from the activities, especially in parenting and developing their personal and social confidence. Many parents appreciate groups like 'Ready, Steady Go!' which prepare their child to settle well in school. Similarly, the 'Rise and Shine' and 'Nurturing' courses are highly effective in developing users' parenting skills, including in learning about coping with their children's behaviour. For instance, one parent told inspectors how this course had helped her in 'getting enjoyment out of my children, instead of tearing my hair out.'

The extensive range of enjoyable children's activities makes a strong and effective contribution to improving the communication skills of children who attend the centre and other early years' settings. This is helping to increase the proportion of children achieving 78+ points in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. The activities in the space centre for fathers and children have proved very popular, as have the baby massage sessions and the use of the excellent calming environment of the sensory room.

The engagement of isolated families, supported by the centre's outreach services is excellent. Users' views and case studies highlight the tremendous difference made to their lives and the excellent level of support they had received, whether it was taking a child out for a walk to give them a break, finding a nursery place or helping them with financial issues

and children's behavioural problems. Most women who were victims of domestic abuse or who had suffered with post-natal depression, benefited extensively from the 'hand holding' caring sessions, the opportunity to engage with a programme designed to raise awareness and understanding of domestic violence issues, and the one-to-one tailored support and guidance provided by the family outreach and social services team. Similarly, the provision for disabled children and those with special educational needs is targeted very effectively and this ensures that a high proportion of families who have specialist needs receive the support they require. In addition, with two members of staff with Special Educational Needs qualifications the centre is well able to monitor and support the progress of these children. The use of the sensory room, 'Space centre' and 'play zone area' are ideal for providing stimulating activities and generating high levels of enjoyment. 'Similarly, a member of staff in one of the nurseries effectively supports children with a hearing impairment by communicating using British sign language. She is now cascading her knowledge to other nursery staff.'

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

## How effective are the leadership and management?

<b>1</b>
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The centre manager, the senior leadership and centre partners make an outstanding team. They demonstrate a clear vision and very strong commitment to supporting and making a real difference to their local community. Morale is high despite the recent changes the centre has undergone. Performance management systems and staff supervision are robust. There is a strong focus on developing the skills of all staff and volunteers through ongoing training.

The advisory board and the local authority are highly proactive and provide outstanding support and an excellent level of skills, knowledge and guidance in relation to the development of the service and improvement plans. The representation of three parents on the advisory board and the extent to which their voices shape provision is a considerable strength.

Safeguarding is extremely well embedded in all aspects of the centre's services, including in its work in users' homes. Improvement in safety at home is a priority for the centre and for users. Rigorous risk assessments undertaken by the designated safeguarding team member ensure the ongoing safety of staff and families. Also, the higher level training taken by the family support team successfully enhances their knowledge so that they are better able to



support families with circumstances that make them vulnerable, including disabled parents and children, those with special educational needs or who have undergone some form of abuse in their lives.

Users benefit from excellent resources and accessible accommodation and are expertly guided by caring and skilled staff. Users appreciate the centre's outstanding range of suitable resources for children in the nurseries, the excellent sensory room and the play zone area. The two main buildings are spacious, modern and exceptionally well equipped to provide family learning courses and activities for parents as well as for children. Excellent wall displays on many topics including health, safeguarding, trips and children's activities both educate and enliven the environment.

The centre demonstrates an excellent commitment to removing barriers, celebrating diversity and making its services accessible to all users. This includes those with limited literacy skills and those who speak English as an additional language through the effective use of wide ranging dual language notices on all its sites and bilingual staff. Users from the minority ethnic groups, for instance, benefit from the bilingual skills of two Asian members of staff. 'Speaking in Urdu has helped me tremendously,' are the words of one grateful Asian Urdu speaking mother.

The extensive support and sharing of expertise from its partnerships has helped the centre to significantly widen the level of support offered. For instance, the ante-natal clinics and the post-natal drop-in clinics on the premises have increased the participation of hard-to-engage groups and have resulted in raising positive and healthy outcomes for users. 'Effective and efficient' and 'smooth operations' are the words of one user to describe the seamless nature of the joint partnership that the centre enjoys with some of these partnerships, in particular, those with social services, voluntary sector, domestic abuse team and the health team.

Self-evaluation is outstanding. The centre's effectiveness in monitoring its services is well demonstrated by the robust evaluation practices and systems it has in place. The use of evidence drawn from a variety of sources, including comprehensive service, activity and course reviews, the 'annual conversation records', data and users 'impact stories', ensures that the centre knows its strengths and areas for improvement exceeding well and can thus accurately plan its future services whilst keeping an eye on excellent value for money.

Users' views are actively sought and used by the centre to shape its provision and services. Many case studies, questionnaires and end of course reviews completed by users demonstrate a very high level of satisfaction. Users state that they are extremely happy with the services, the rapport with the staff, activities provided by the centre, the level of care and the quality of the environment within the centres.

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>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secures improvement in outcomes</b>	<b>1</b>
<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>	<b>1</b>
<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>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the centre's policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults</b>	<b>1</b>
<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>	<b>1</b>
<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>	<b>1</b>

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

The most recent inspection report of Little Stars @ The Beeches Child and Family Centre was considered during the inspection.

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## Summary for centre users

We inspected the Sure Start Hyndburn - Accrington South centre on 28 - 29 February 2012. We judged the centre as outstanding overall.

We were very pleased to speak to so many of you confident adults who took pride in speaking about your centre, its services and staff. You told us how the centre has transformed your lives, helping you to gain more self-esteem and to develop closer relationships with your children.

All of you, to whom we spoke said that you have gained new knowledge and developed new skills, including about parenting and healthy lifestyles. Several of you have become volunteers, helping with different activities at the centre and have greatly benefited from the training offered to you, including on keeping yourself and others safe. Similarly, we are delighted to note that your children too have developed good communication and social skills as well as being encouraged to read books. Your children, as a result of using the centre and its childcare facilities, are well prepared for entry into school. There is good monitoring of progress by the crèche and nursery staff so that you can see how your children are developing new skills.

The centre's provision is outstanding. The activities the centre offers are very well matched to your needs, including the ante-natal clinics and post-natal drop-in clinics. They are run by highly skilled and dedicated staff, including those who visit you at home. We could see how much you enjoy coming to the centre and appreciate the varied learning opportunities and services that the centre provides particularly for your children and which help to develop your parenting skills. The centre provides you with wonderful opportunities to form new friendships and this helps reduce feelings of isolation.

As well as offering you advice on courses, the centre gives excellent advice on how you can prevent accidents in and around your home which helps you to keep your children safe. Some of you told us how the staff provide you with outstanding support both in the centre and at home. This includes support with childcare information, buying of safety equipment or help for you in times of crisis.

Your centre is led by an excellent team of managers. They are supported by other excellent teams, including the board of trustees and the centre's many partners. All are keen to support you. The board of trustees are very proactive in effectively monitoring the services to ensure that they meet your needs.

You regard the centre as a very safe, warm and welcoming environment with staff 'who are great' as one of you told us. We are really pleased that you and your families benefit from the outstanding resources and accommodation that the centre provides, especially on two of the main sites. You appreciate the wonderful 'space centre', the cafe and the nursery provision. The centre is very keen to make information accessible to you, including to those of you who speak English as an additional language. There are, for instance, translations in Urdu.

We think the centre offers outstanding value for money in the way it supports you in so many ways. We have asked the centre to continue to improve healthy lifestyle outcomes for you and your families, especially those linked to breastfeeding, oral health, smoking cessation and reducing obesity. Similarly, we have requested, and are happy to learn, that the centre is planning new adult learning programmes in literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) for you to improve your skills and become more successful in finding work.

We would like to thank everyone who contributed their ideas, and wish you all 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).