

Inspection report for Bordesley Green East Children's Centre

Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	383369
Inspection dates	22–23 March 2012
Reporting inspector	Mary Dudley

Centre leader	Jane Wilson
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Centre address	358 Bordesley Green East Stechford West Midlands B33 8QB
Telephone number	0121 783 2138
Fax number	0121 785 2703
Email address	j.wilson@bgens.bham.sch.uk

Linked school if applicable	Bordesley Green East Nursery School
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	Not applicable

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



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 reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/100080.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

No.100080

© Crown copyright 2011



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 maintained nursery was carried out at the same time as the inspection of the centre under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The report of this inspection is available on our website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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

The inspectors held meetings with the centre manager, the head teacher of the nursery school, members of staff and professionals from partner agencies. Discussions were held with members of the governing body and advisory board, parents and representatives from the local authority. Inspectors observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

Information about the centre

Bordesley Green East Nursery and Children's Centre is located to the east of Birmingham. The children's centre is based on the same site as the nursery school and in addition, operates from five satellite sites in the reach area. It is a phase two children's centre which began delivering the full core offer in 2009. The centre's core purpose is provided through a range of integrated services that include health, family support and outreach work. The local authority has delegated responsibility for the running of the centre to the governing body of the school. The centre manager has responsibility for a small staff team and the day-to-day running of the centre. She is line managed by the headteacher of the nursery school and supported by an advisory board.

The centre serves an area of significant deprivation. It spans a total of 18 super output areas, with seven in the 10% most deprived nationally. The number of adults claiming out-of-work benefits is higher than the Birmingham average, as is the number of households comprising lone parents with dependent children. There are 43.9% of adults in the area with no qualifications and the majority of children enter the pre-school nursery with skills, knowledge and abilities lower than those expected

for their age. Forty four per cent of families in the area are of White British heritage, 29% are of Pakistani origin and there are a few families from a number of other minority ethnic groups. Of the 1992 children aged under five in the centre's reach area, 1494 (75%) are registered with the 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

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

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

2

Main findings

Bordesley Green East Children's Centre is a good and improving centre. Families using the centre benefit from a wide range of cohesive and well-integrated services that are delivered through good partnership working with a number of agencies and organisations. This popular centre is an integral part of provision for children and families in the locality. The centre has a highly cohesive, enthusiastic and dedicated staff team who work well together to improve the lives of families within the reach area. Users speak very positively about the services provided by the centre and their experiences of the support offered. Users, who had suffered domestic violence, told of the support they had received and how staff were 'Life-savers'.

Skilled practitioners know the local area very well and understand the challenges faced by a significant number of families. Consequently, the centre focuses its resources carefully to support the most disadvantaged families in its community. Health outcomes are improving for most families. New and prospective mothers benefit from a full range of services which effectively promote their health and well-being and promotion of healthy lifestyles for children is an integral part of all provision.

Safeguarding of children and families has a high priority. Staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and all receive training to enable them to provide good levels of protection for families. Policies, procedures and practice are consistent, and robust procedures ensure the suitability of all practitioners and volunteers to work with children. Thorough risk assessments are conducted regularly.

Children who attend the play-development sessions make good progress in all areas of learning. They participate in a range of age-appropriate activities, where they

learn how to play together, make choices, learn new skills and have fun. Most adults accessing learning provision have shown real improvement, however, opportunities for adults to undertake training that leads to improvement in their economic well-being are limited.

The last year has been a challenging one for managers and staff. A re-organisation of services has meant managers have been operating on indicative budgets and staff have had no job security. From April this year the children's centre will be operating as part of locality provision in the area. Planned targets, based on the analysis of need are currently very general. However, self-evaluation is accurate and informed by families and key partners. In addition, some governors are not clear on their roles and responsibilities in relation to the children's centre and do not provide sufficiently rigorous monitoring of its work. The centre's inclusive approach ensures that families from different backgrounds feel welcome and are able to enjoy the wide range of provision on offer. Parental satisfaction surveys show that the vast majority of parents are very satisfied with provision. The completion of the changes to services, the resolution of budgetary and staffing issues and the centre's clear understanding of its own strengths and areas for improvement indicates their good capacity for further improvement.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- Extend the range of opportunities available for adults to access training and learning opportunities that will lead to employment.
- Ensure members of the governing body are clear on their roles and responsibilities in relation to the children's centre.
- Continue to improve recording and analysis of need to inform ambitious targets in the locality plan.

How good are outcomes for families?

2

Outcomes for centre users are good with strongly improving outcomes in children's educational achievement. The centre effectively addresses users feelings of insecurity. Many parents spoke of the support they receive from staff, a typical comment from one parent being, 'I feel really comfortable here, and am very grateful for the support. The centre has made such a big difference for my son'.

There are many opportunities for adults and children to play, learn and have fun together. Children are keen and active learners and their strong progress is well documented. Disabled children and those with special educational needs receive high quality support and they too make good progress. There is evidence that the lowest performing children are increasingly closing the gap between them and their peers, in part due to the work of the centre teacher. Good quality learning opportunities enable adults to learn new skills and gain in confidence. One parent said, 'I have

learnt so much, to the extent that I can now help out my children who attend secondary school.'

Effective partnerships with health professionals ensure parents are provided with information and invaluable support in relation to health and well-being. These include breastfeeding and weaning, speech and language and parenting. As a result, users are developing good outcomes in relation to health. Breastfeeding rates at initiation and continuation show an upward trend. The promotion of healthy lifestyles threads through every activity in the centre. For example, healthy snacks are distributed at the end of 'Stay and Play' sessions after children have washed their hands. Other activities are planned to target specific health outcomes such as 'Movers', a programme providing activities to develop speech and language and 'The Baby Café', focusing on infant nutrition and parenting skills.

Relationships between staff and families are very trusting and staff know the children very well. Consequently, early identification and prevention of potential risks play a key role in reducing harm to children. Robust systems for security ensure that parents and children feel safe when attending sessions. Parents have improved their awareness of how to keep their children safe in the home. Good multi-agency working supports improved outcomes for children with child protection plans and staff engage fully in the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process.

The centre's role in the life of the community is good and improving. Parents have lots of opportunities to express their views, they feel they are listened to and their opinions are valued. Parents are involved in the parents forum and are represented on the advisory board and governing body. Children develop positive relationships and behave well towards one another. Some families using the centre enjoy a range of training and learning opportunities and are developing confidence and acquiring skills for the future. English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), information and communication technology (ICT) and mathematics courses are particularly popular amongst adults. However, in an area of high unemployment and where a minority of adults have no qualifications, there are insufficient training opportunities to support adults into further learning and employment.

These are the grades for the outcomes for families

The extent to which children, including those from target groups, are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy and families have healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children are safe and protected, their welfare concerns are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them	2
The extent to which all children and parents, including those from target groups, enjoy and achieve educationally and in their personal and social development	2
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	2

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

3

How good is the provision?

2

The centre provides an effective range of integrated services. Staff use their own expertise and skills and those of their partners to make informed and accurate assessments of the individual needs of users. This knowledge enables them to plan and deliver services based on individual need. This is particularly effective for those children and families in need of targeted support. Outreach work is very good, and vulnerable families feel extremely well supported. Services are diverse, of a high quality, and are reviewed with users on a regular basis. Parents comment positively on the dedication of staff and one said: 'The support never stops. I was at a point where I couldn't even get out of the house, and they came to me. It's so encouraging.' Teenage and lone parents, children in minority ethnic groups, disabled children and male carers are well catered for by the range of provision offered.

Activities are of a good quality. They are designed around planned outcomes and, in 'Stay and Play' sessions, children are happy, relaxed, engaged and learning, while parents improve their skills in group activities by being actively engaged in the sessions. Some parents improve their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills and take up rates for these courses is good. Care, guidance and support are real strengths of the service. There is a strong emphasis on providing effective emotional support to boost users' confidence and raise their self-esteem. This has a significant impact on improving the lives of families, particularly those whose circumstances have made them vulnerable. Sensitive, individualised support is provided to help promote good outcomes. The Common Assessment Framework is used effectively to support families in times of difficulty and crisis, and families feel extremely well supported.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The extent to which the range of services, activities and opportunities meet the needs of families, including those in target groups

2

The extent to which the centre promotes purposeful learning, development and enjoyment for all families, including those in target groups

2

The quality of care, guidance and support offered to families, including those in target groups

2

How effective are the leadership and management?

2

The centre is an integral part of provision in the community and parents, carers and the centre's professional partners speak positively about the difference it makes to children and families. Managers are committed to continuing improvement and have clear priorities, which are currently reflected in the new locality plan in a general

way. Day-to-day management is good and feedback from those families who use the centre reflects good satisfaction with the services. Users and non-users views are routinely sought and used to shape services.

Governance and accountability arrangements are satisfactory because not all governors fully understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to the centre, and they provide insufficient monitoring and challenge of its work. Professional supervision of staff and regular one-to-one meetings with managers promote a culture of shared values and enable staff to meet organisational expectations. Teamwork amongst staff is excellent and they are to be congratulated in not allowing the uncertainty they have experienced over their employment to be reflected in their work with the community.

Strong partnerships exist with a range of statutory, voluntary and faith based organisations. The partnership with health is particularly strong and is having a real impact on health improvements for families. Partnerships with social care, childminders, schools and local venues enhance the contribution made to meeting the wide range of needs in the local area. Partners provide a broader skills base which allows opportunities for a more targeted response to need and the ability to offer a more diverse range of provision. There is good uptake of provision, particularly from those families whose circumstances have made them vulnerable. The centre provides good value for money as outcomes for the majority of families living in the reach area are good and improving.

The inclusion of all children and their families is central to the work of the centre. It has devised effective strategies to engage with high proportions of users from its priority groups. For example, satellite venues are used to deliver services in the areas of greatest deprivation. Staff are keen to promote their centre by giving out leaflets and timetables, and talking to families about its services. As a result, participation rates are high and reflect the centre's successful inclusion strategies. Adults and children with disabilities have gained much from contact with the centre, further demonstrating the centre's successful promotion of equality of opportunity and diversity.

Good safeguarding arrangements ensure that children are protected effectively. The staff have a strong commitment to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. Checks are made with the Criminal Records Bureau to make sure that all staff are suitable to work with children, and training and qualifications in relation to safeguarding are kept up to date through refresher training courses. Children's safety and well-being are enhanced by the rigorous and consistent implementation of policies, procedures and practice. Regular meetings and effective communication between centre staff and partner agencies mean that families who may be at risk of harm, and children assessed under the Common Assessment Framework, are closely monitored. Security procedures and the attentiveness of staff mean that children and adults are kept very safe on site.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The extent to which governance, accountability, professional supervision and day-to-day management arrangements are clear and understood	3
The effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secure improvement in outcomes	3
The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of families, including those in target groups	2
The extent to which equality is promoted and diversity celebrated, illegal or unlawful discrimination is tackled and the centre fulfils its statutory duties	2
The effectiveness of the centre's policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults	2
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	2
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	2

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

Findings from the concurrent inspection of the nursery school have contributed to the centre report and judgements.

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 Bordesley Green East Children's Centre on 22–23 March 2012. We judged the centre as good overall.

We would like to thank those of you who met with us during the inspection, agreed to let us sit in on your groups, or spoke to us about the centre. We were pleased to hear how much you value the services the centre provides. You told us that the centre is a very important part of your community and plays an important role in helping you as parents. We found out that it is improving family life in many ways, particularly for those of you who face difficult challenges.

We judge that the extent to which the centre keeps you and your children safe is good. It is very effective in supporting you, especially at times of crisis. We know that you are asked frequently for your views on the activities and that many of you have already made suggestions about what you would like. Some of you have taken part in the training that the centre has run and you were able to tell us about the English and IT skills you have learnt. A few of you felt you would like more opportunities to learn and we have asked the centre to put on more training that could help you to get a job or go on to college.

The services and activities the centre offers are helping you to keep yourselves and your children healthy and preparing your children well for school. Sessions such as 'Stay and Play' and the 'Size Down' programme are helping you to keep your families happy by promoting healthy eating and emphasising the importance of being physically active. The staff at the centre encourage you to engage in play with your children from a very early age at the 'Baby Cafe'. We could see how much you and your children enjoy these activities and the positive effect they are having on you and your families.

Some of you take part in the parent forum; a few of you are on the advisory board and the governing body. We have asked that governors are given more information so that they know what their responsibilities are for the centre and its work. There will be some changes for the children's centre this year; the centre will be working more closely with other centres to provide a service across a much larger area. We have asked the centre leaders to make sure they know what you need in order to ensure the services they provide in the new locality will be what you want.

Staff at the centre take great care to ensure that you feel at home and are able to talk freely about things that matter to you or are causing you concern. As a result, you value the centre, which means that you have no hesitation in using the services regularly.

Thank you very much for your welcome and willingness to speak to the inspectors. We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you and sampling the centre's work. We wish you every success in the future.

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