

# Inspection report for Temple Sutton Children's Centre

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<b>Local authority</b>	Southend-on-Sea
<b>Inspection number</b>	383729
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 March 2012
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Andrew Clark

<b>Centre leader</b>	Jan Down
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable
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<b>Linked school if applicable</b>	114793 Temple Sutton Primary School
<b>Linked early years and childcare, if applicable</b>	Temple Sutton Children's Centre (EY338028)

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.

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

The inspectors held meetings with representatives of the local authority, members of the advisory board and parents' forum, a broad range of users and a number of partners, including health and social care. They observed sessions at the centre, looked at the centre's work, and a range of documentation.

## Information about the centre

Temple Sutton Children's Centre is a phase one centre and provides the full core offer to the Temple Sutton area of Southend-on-Sea. It is located in the grounds of Temple Sutton Primary School and opened in 2006.

The centre manager is responsible for the day-to-day running of the centre. The governing body of the school oversees the centre's work and the steering group acts as an advisory board. The steering group consists of representatives from partner organisations and key stakeholders that work with the children's centre, the local authority and parents.

The Children's centre has 736 children aged from birth to five in its reach area. The majority of families are of White British heritage. A number of families are from Black African and Asian backgrounds and an increasing minority are from Eastern Europe. The proportion of children from families in receipt of benefits and in homes where no one works is above average and in some parts of the reach area is much higher. There is a higher than average number of lone parents. When they start early years provision, the majority of children have skills, knowledge and abilities that are below those expected for their age.

The centre provides on-site childcare with a registered provider which is subject to a separate inspection. It also provides a wide range of on-site services such as baby weighing, baby massage, parenting and adult learning courses and outreach support

in partnership with health, adult education services and Jobcentre Plus. The centre operates weekdays from 8.00am to 6.00pm 48 weeks a year.

## 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
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### Capacity for sustained improvement

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

1
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## Main findings

Temple Sutton Children’s Centre is at the heart of its community and provides an outstanding service. The clarity of vision and commitment of the centre manager and all those involved with its governance and leadership are driving the centre forwards. This sense of purpose is successfully translated into a wide range of activities, which very effectively meets the needs of all, including those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. A high, and constantly increasing, proportion of families make excellent use of the centre’s facilities to improve their lives. As a result, the centre has shown an outstanding capacity for sustained improvement.

Leaders listen to the voice of the local community and make excellent use of available information to ensure the centre provides what is most needed. The effective parents’ forum and very strong steering committee, contribute extremely well to successful management. Consequently, outcomes for users are outstanding overall. In particular, the centre’s impact on children’s learning and development has significantly contributed to a very strong improvement in narrowing the gap between the lowest achievers and the rest by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Although the centre’s impact on the health of families is at least good, the local data available to show its full impact on some aspects, such as smoking cessation and breastfeeding, is limited.

The centre provides a bright, warm and welcoming environment and this encourages parents to seek out support for many aspects of their lives. The excellent provision of high quality crèche and other childcare facilities enables parents to take advantage of the wide range of courses on offer. This has a very positive impact on the economic well-being of many groups of users helping them into employment or volunteering activities.

Through excellent family support and outreach work, families who are considered most at risk receive timely intervention and support. The early years team are highly

skilled and play a pivotal role in helping adults understand how they can assist with their child's learning and development. For example, timely intervention has ensured a high percentage of teenage parents in the area have been very well supported and guided to enrich their children's and their own lives.

Outstanding commitment to safeguarding by all staff ensures children and their families are extremely safe. Parents using the centre have an excellent understanding of how to ensure the safety of their families and this has a very positive impact on admissions to accident and emergency, for example.

Leaders and managers successfully promote equality and opportunity for all users. They bring enthusiasm and commitment to bear in all their work and this inspires others. As a result, several parents, including those in circumstances which are likely to make them vulnerable, have gone on to take similar caring roles such as childminders and foster carers.

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

### Recommendations for further improvement

- Build on the work with key health partners to ensure reliable, accessible and current data are available to the centre in order to further improve the targeting and effectiveness of its services, with particular regard to breastfeeding and smoking cessation rates.

## How good are outcomes for families?

<b>1</b>
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The centre works in very close partnership with many health services and promotes many outcomes extremely well. For instance, carefully targeted information through fliers delivered to individual families and well publicised drop-in sessions make a significant contribution to well above average immunisation rates for children. The many activities aimed at good eating and exercise habits have a very positive effect. Levels of obesity for children aged five in the centre's reach area have consequently fallen significantly over the last three years and are below the national averages. The centre effectively signposts mothers to classes on breastfeeding and has an excellent programme of weaning courses, which are very well attended. However, it is inhibited in ensuring that it is having a maximum impact because up to date, local comparative data through the health services are limited, as are data for smoking cessation. However, from the centre's own evaluations and support systems the manager can pinpoint success in these areas with many individuals. As a result, health outcomes are good overall.

The many courses to support children's early learning and development make an excellent contribution to children's enjoyment and achievement. 'Tiny Toddlers', 'Stay and Play' and many other parent and child activities give adults high levels of skills and understanding of the value of play as a tool for learning. This equips the children

to take full advantage of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Through the very good use of the Common Assessment Framework and high quality interventions for disabled children and those with special educational needs or who may otherwise be vulnerable, they successfully achieve beyond normally expected levels. Very close working partnerships with the linked school, particularly the early years' staff, means that the gap between the lowest achieving children and others is reducing much faster than it is nationally. Consequently, children are very well prepared for their future learning.

The outcomes for lone mothers and fathers are significant strengths of the centre. The 'Mothers on their Own' group has helped parents in very difficult situations, such as those in a refuge centre for domestic abuse, to make considerable improvements to their families' lives. 'I don't know where I would be without this. The centre has saved my life. There are unbelievable opportunities and they always do as much as they can to help,' typifies the views of many. Courses aimed specifically at fathers are well attended and a very good proportion takes advantage of adult training courses. Many of those who received this support have gone on to achieve qualifications and work as a direct result of contact with the centre. This has made an excellent contribution to their family's economic well-being.

Children's behaviour and safety is excellently promoted. Very well received frequent visits from the police and fire services to children and adult activities support the very low levels of road safety incidents. The effectiveness of the centre's training for all staff means children on a child protection plan, looked after children and the families who care for them, are kept safe and helped to move forwards. The centre has taken very successful initiatives, through its holiday clubs for example, to support children who may be at risk through circumstances of domestic abuse and relieve pressure for the whole family.

Many parents take roles on the parents' forum and the steering committee. Their views are routinely and rigorously gathered at all points of their contact with the centre. They are listened to and their views acted upon, which they respect. For example, parents suggested that even more users would attend courses if they were termed 'Family Opportunities' rather than 'Parenting Courses' and this subsequently turned out to be the case. There are very good opportunities for parents to contribute to the displays and information boards around the centre's welcoming entrance way.

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</b>	<b>1</b>

<b>and social development</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>1</b>

## **How good is the provision?**

<b>1</b>
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The quality and use of assessment to support all aspects of its work are key features of the centre's excellent provision. The procedures for registering and monitoring all users contact with the centre are very effective and lead to careful targeting. This has been particularly effective, for example, in engaging with and supporting families who have little or no English and providing high quality language training which has gone on to employment in a high percentage of cases. The centre analyses all its activities by its impact on all aspects of its core aims. Consequently, staff are better able to decide which courses would improve an adults' self confidence, for example, or which are more likely to ensure they forge new friendships. This leads to more prolonged engagement with the centre and greater success.

The support for childminding services is also of a notable high quality and has led to high outcomes in their own inspections and assessments. As a result, the centre's outreach services made very good use of its childminding network to support families with children on a child protection plan or through the Common Assessment Framework process. The flexibility of all its childcare provision is a strong feature, highly appreciated by many users. This has proved helpful in ensuring the centre engages with disabled children and adults, for example, who may have disrupted attendance patterns. The needs of all target groups are met very well by the centre. The views of a lone parent reflect those of many: 'I am new to the area. The children's centre staff are very welcoming. My child feels very independent, free and safe to discover all the fabulous activities.'

Alongside the many learning and development activities that routinely enrich children's lives, such as the nature trails and forest school, children with additional needs are engaged through the music group, SMILE, and the use of sign and multi-sensory languages. The excellent outreach provision contributes very well to the high quality of care, guidance and support. The staff's well-established local knowledge, combined with very effective use of data, means they can quickly identify and support those in its target groups and very effectively meet individual needs.

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>1</b>
<b>The extent to which the centre promotes purposeful learning, development and enjoyment for all families, including those in target</b>	<b>1</b>

<b>groups</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, who is also manager of the registered childcare, is relentless in her pursuit of excellence. She is extremely well-supported by her deputy and all staff. There is a very strong commitment to high quality training and professional development at all levels. The steering committee, which is very representative of the partners and centre community, provides a wide range of support and guidance. This is evident in the sharply focused and ambitious operation plan. The governing body, supported by the equally driven school headteacher, provides a very good balance of challenge and support. Consequently, the centre provides excellent value for money.

Safeguarding procedures are exceedingly robust and include the vetting of staff and others who have unsupervised contact with children and vulnerable adults. All legal requirements are met in full. Child protection procedures are very thorough and the centre's records reflect best practice. Early intervention arrangements are excellent, exemplifying the very good partnerships with a wide range of agencies and services. All staff are well trained in all aspects of safeguarding, including the use of the Common Assessment Framework.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. All members of staff demonstrate a very strong commitment to inclusion and to tackling any discrimination. Careful consideration is given to the design of the centre so that all users can gain full access. The promotion of a positive view of diversity is very well established in the life of the centre and evident in its many displays. A high proportion of families from all nationalities access the centre.

User engagement is exceptional. The centre consistently seeks the voice of parents and children through regular questionnaires and surveys. A very high percentage of all target groups within the reach area, including disabled adults and children and those with special educational needs, engage with the centre's services thanks to the skill, enthusiasm and commitment of staff and managers.

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 secure 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</b>	<b>1</b>



<b>groups</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**

None

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](http://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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

## **Summary for centre users**

We inspected the Temple Sutton Children's Centre on 28–29 March 2012. We judged the centre as outstanding overall.

We enjoyed speaking to you, and to hearing of the difference the centre has made to you and your families. We heard how very welcoming the centre is, and how excellently all staff respond to your needs. We heard of the wide range of ways that the centre uses to help you and your family be healthy, such as outdoor play, forest school, nature trails, cookery sessions, and ideas for healthy food and snacks. You told us you feel very safe when using the centre, and we judged the centre to have excellent procedures to keep you and your children safe at all times. You told us how useful the meetings with the fire and police services have been.

The centre provides outstanding support for new families, such as the baby massage sessions and baby weighing, and has many excellent ways to help you develop your skills as a parent. We heard of the outreach support many families receive if they are in a crisis, and of the consistently high standard of help and advice for families including lone and teenage parents. It was extremely clear that the centre staff and the partner organisations are trusted and provide highly valuable support that makes a very big difference to many families' lives.

Many of you told us how much you and your children enjoyed play sessions and music groups. These activities are of excellent quality and support your children's learning and development, especially in helping them be more ready for nursery and school. We heard how the centre helps with speaking and listening and with children's ability to mix and get on with others. There are very good links with experts that can help in a wide range of issues, and the centre has been extremely successful in getting them involved when families need additional support or advice. As one young parent said, reflecting the views of many of you, 'I have been made to feel very valued and welcomed. The staff very quickly identified my needs and gave me invaluable help and support with money, housing and many other services. They make the effort to provide amazing activities for my child inside and out.'

We found that the centre staff and managers are highly committed to improving the work they do and welcome the ideas and feedback from people using the centre. Many of you have made extremely good suggestions, and have let the manager, the parents' forum or the governors of the centre know your ideas and opinions. This is very important and your views often lead to further improvements. Very many of you have also been able to give time as volunteers and learned new skills in the process. We judged the centre to be exceptionally well led and managed and we judged that it is in an excellent position to continue to build on its many strengths. We have made a recommendation to help this. We have asked the centre and its partners in the health services to build on their work in providing information to help the centre ensure it is meeting all your health needs fully, particularly for breastfeeding and help with stopping smoking.

Thank you for telling us about your experiences of the centre, and may we wish you and your families every success in the future.

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