

Inspection report for Trospacc Children's Centre

Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	365866
Inspection dates	1–2 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Sheila Browning

Centre governance	The local authority
Centre leader	Sue Turle
Date of previous inspection	N/A
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Linked school if applicable	Trosnant Infant and Junior School
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	Trospacc Children's Centre

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.

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.

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector and one Early Years inspector

The inspectors held meetings with the centre leader, senior leaders, a local authority lead officer, the chair and vice chair of the partnership board, front line staff, family support outreach workers, volunteers and representatives from the health service and Women's Aid. They had formal and informal discussions with parents and carers and children, and observed the centre's work and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

Information about the centre

Trospacc Children's Centre is a phase 2 Children's Centre and achieved its full core offer in March 2010. The centre has developed from a Family Centre. Trospacc Nursery delivers the children's centre core offer of Early Years Foundation Stage provision. The core team at the centre is directly employed by the council. A partnership board, made up of community representatives and users of the centre, helps shape the service. The local population is predominately White British, with smaller percentages of other minority ethnic groups including Bangladeshi, Chinese and Pakistani. Around 29% of children under five in the area are living in unemployed households, which is above the national average. The centre covers the Notional Catchment Area (NCA) of Battins, Barncroft and Bedhampton wards situated on the edge of Leigh Park a suburb of Havant. Leigh Park is one of the largest social housing estates in Europe. The centre's catchment area is one of the most deprived areas in south east England outside of London. According to the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) four of the borough's Super Output Areas fall into the top 10 most deprived nationally. The child poverty index shows a high percentage of children (5,000) living in families with low income which claim means-tested benefits.

Children’s levels on entry to the nursery is below average. Around 35% of children achieve a total of at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile with communication, language and literacy, and personal, social and emotional development being the weaker elements. The centre offers services both on-site and as outreach in the community and these are run by a mix of centre staff and other agencies. The centre has experienced some recent significant staffing changes including at senior level and governance. The current centre leader has been in post since the beginning of February 2010, prior to her appointment the post had been vacant for some 12 months. Some vacancies remain unfilled due to a local authority children’s centre recruitment freeze.

The centre is open on weekdays from 8am to 6pm and on some Saturdays. It is open for 49 weeks of the year. In the summer of 2010 the children’s centre was totally refurbished. It operates from a building within the grounds of Trosnant Infant and Junior School. The building has one main room, a consulting room for service delivery and access to outside play spaces. A nursery and crèche, run by the centre provide childcare facilities at the centre. These provisions were not inspected as part of this visit but were inspected separately.

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 users and the wider community

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

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

2

Main findings

The overall effectiveness of Trospacc Children’s Centre is good. This is because it provides good opportunities and a good range of services for children, their families and other adults. The centre gives the safety and well-being of users and staff a high priority and good procedures are in place to safeguard them. Recruitment procedures are robust and ensure that staff are suitable. Outcomes for users are good. Since its refurbishment the new centre leader, staff, volunteers and members of the partnership board have successfully turned the profile of the centre around so that it is now at the hub of the community. There is structure, a shared sense of purpose and high expectations. All of those who spoke with inspectors confirmed how welcoming the centre is now and many said how much they valued it and how proud they were to be part of it. Partnerships particularly with health professionals and the on-site early learning nursery and childcare providers are outstanding. As one practitioner said, ‘partnerships are seamless’. Those at the centre have regained the trust of the community and rebuilt links and communication with existing groups and

organisations, to identify the needs of families and plan and provide a wide range of services. Given these positive developments and the constant checks to ensure any gaps in provision are met, the centre's capacity to improve further is good. Staff have a good knowledge of the community and are proactive at reaching out to parents and carers who may find it hard to access the centre. Home visits by family outreach workers help those who find access difficult to learn what it can offer. As a result, a high percentage including the most vulnerable access services and attendance rates are rising. Good systems ensure any new parents and carers are signposted to the most appropriate support, advice and courses available; from baby groups, under 18's pregnancy, immunisation, obesity and health checks to Men's talk and Freedom AID women's groups. Good steps are in place to ensure equality of opportunity and any discrimination is not tolerated. The centre is inclusive and users benefit from positive relationships as they and the centre treat each other with respect and consideration. Cultural diversity is promoted well, such as when childminders and children enjoyed tasting different foods using chopsticks as part of their Chinese New Year celebrations. Information leaflets and resources are available in a range of languages.

The proactive centre leader has quickly built a team of dedicated staff determined to provide a high quality service. One staff member said, 'In every area we are looking to develop.' The centre runs smoothly, staff are well trained, and they and the good quality resources are used effectively. Self-evaluation is effective and accurate and the many excellent and positive evaluations from individual users show the positive impact of services on their personal, social, emotional and physical development and enjoyment. However, the centre lacks sufficient specific data to measure quantifiably its impact over time and any emerging trends. The local authority's and the partnership board's strategic targets set to bring about improving outcomes for users are largely met. The partnership board is very supportive but does not yet provide sufficient challenge and hold leaders to account. Several members have attended training to help them to develop their evaluative skills. Users are responding well to activities and the number of volunteers has increased substantially. They help to prepare young parents' lunches, advise and support activities and at the same time are gaining valuable skills, qualifications and self-confidence, helping them to become independent so they can access training and employment. Parents and volunteers play an active role in the Family Forum, in decision-making processes and in the development of the centre's programme and events, such as the Christmas party organised off site for over 400 families across the area.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- Secure data specific to the centre and use this to measure the impact made to children and families that have used the centre.
- Strengthen the partnership board by building on its skills to challenge the centre's performance and evaluate its impact and plan improvement.

How good are outcomes for users?

Results from the centre's surveys and inspectors discussions with users and practitioners show that parents and carers are benefiting from and enjoy the wide range of services on offer. This is having a positive impact on improving their outcomes which are good. There is some limited centre specific data, but this is at the early stages of being used to reflect the outcomes in a more measurable way. Discussions indicate that the emotional well-being of new mothers suffering depression or having difficulties with breastfeeding or those experiencing domestic abuse has improved because worries or concerns have been shared and support and advice offered. Users including lone parents report that they feel less isolated, more confident, are making new friends and gaining new skills. Health checks and courses such as 'Cook and eat' have introduced healthier food for their children and obesity levels are dropping. Groups such as 'Buggy blast boot' and 'Infant massage' also encourage better health through exercise. Fathers have enjoyed the 'Men's talk' sessions which have helped them to develop a range of skills as lone parents. As one parent said, 'The centre has given me a lifeline.'

Through home visits and access to the safety equipment loan scheme and first-aid training, parents and carers feel that they have an increased understanding of accident prevention in the home. Children in the centre move around the centre safely and parents and carers have increased their understanding of how to keep their children safe. Case studies show that those children most vulnerable, those subject to Common Assessment Framework processes and children with child protection plans are well supported through good multi-agency working on-site and through outreach services. Children develop their physical, social and emotional skills well because of the good quality stimulating resources available and free flow outdoor provision. 'Baby group' and 'Play with a purpose' activities are well attended. Users make a positive contribution through the parent's forum in the decision making and governance of the centre. They support activities such as summer fun day's and the Leigh Park Carnival. Many have become volunteers, and help, for example, in the 'Crawlers and explorers' and 'Young Parents' groups, cooking healthy meals and preparing menus. Numbers of parents gaining additional qualifications in literacy and numeracy and in childcare are growing, though this is an area the centre rightly wants to develop. Users are encouraged to develop their skills, and completion of courses is celebrated. The close partnerships with Jobcentre Plus and personalised training in the centre are leading to a minority securing employment.

These are the grades for the outcomes for users

The extent to which children, including those from vulnerable 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 users 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 users contribute to decision-making and	2

governance of the centre	
The extent to which children are developing skills for the future and parents are developing economic stability and independence including access to training	2

How good is the provision?

2

The centre offers group support, activities and home visiting to vulnerable families at times that suit parents' needs as well as maintaining universal services. A good range of well-integrated services are effectively matched to users' needs. Robust systems are in place for referrals to the centre, including self-referrals, and good assessment processes and information sharing between key partners are evident. These include health, social care, outreach work, and other agencies to ensure families have a coordinated and cohesive approach. As a result, the engagement with teenage and lone parents and families has increased. Activities are advertised at the centre and via mail drops and text messages. The centre leader has formed very good relationships with partner organisations and has their trust. This has been crucial in establishing excellent partnerships beneficial to all concerned. User needs are identified through E-start data, evaluations of groups, annual surveys and local authority data, but data specific to the centre is limited: this is being collated but is in its infancy.

Early intervention work with those children and families who need it most is having a positive impact on their development. The midwifery clinic has a dedicated room in response to demand. A main focus has been to promote breast feeding, especially among young mothers who are then also signposted to other services. The centre is actively involved in the development of the childminders group and weekly professional support group meetings are held at the centre. The on-site nursery provides wrap-around childcare for local families. Health visitors run a clinic and the centre offers healthy start vitamins, condoms, pregnancy and Chlamydia tests, health checks for vulnerable two year olds, tiny teeth checks and advice, a Quit4Life smoking cessation service and parenting skills. The centre has worked closely with the on-site nursery and local schools to provide information and support in preparation for transition to school through home visits and a 'Peep' course. As one parent said, 'Peep made me more aware of the way and type of activities to play with my child.'

The centre leader has successfully secured funding to work jointly with other children's centres and has invited all families with children under five who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and their siblings to drumming/face painting workshops and to receive a free family photographic portrait. Plans are in hand to consult and find out what barriers they face and how the centre can help through different activities and or workshops. Basic literacy and numeracy courses are offered and links with the local adult education college are also developing to provide further training opportunities. The centre has endeavoured to attract hard-to-reach families in the Bedhampton area and this is developing. Centre staff deliver training to volunteers which include time for parents to look at their own learning development needs. Support from Jobcentre Plus has also included work-focused

interviews and preparation for work. The centre offers guidance and support through speech therapists, help with financial and social matters and support for the on-site nursery.

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

How effective are the leadership and management?

2

Underpinning the rapid improvement at the centre is the leader's determination to get the centre 'back on track'. In a short time she has motivated staff, users and practitioners to set about raising the quality of provision and the profile of the centre in the community, all taking place while a major refurbishment was ongoing. Senior leaders, including the on-site nursery staff, work very well together and have built excellent partnerships with users, other agencies and providers. Planning is reflective with clear aims and objectives set for each activity provided whether it is for 'Dad's Saturday breakfast club' or 'Play with a purpose'. The resources, toys and equipment reflect the local community. The centre offers a story sack loan service for children and families who speak English as an additional language to help with making 'treasure baskets' from household items. This and the extensive use of the centre ensure that the most vulnerable are reached and universal services are maintained resulting in good value for money and effective and good quality provision matched well to users' needs. There is a great deal of passion and care among staff. Expectations are high and the drive and ambition for improvement are embedded. This ensures the determination to promote inclusion, equality and diversity especially for children with disabilities and the centre fulfils its statutory duties well.

The local authority has overall responsibility for governance and accountability, the partnership board provides good oversight. The local authority sets challenging targets to re-establish the centre within the community, rebuild communication and trust among its users and partners and to raise attendance rates. The centre leader has successfully met these with the good support of the partnership board which is still growing into its role. Members of the partnership board are undergoing training to help it to be more accountable and challenge the centre more robustly. They are keen to develop their skills and have been involved in the delivery plan and are consulted about the self-evaluation which is accurate. The on-site nursery and childcare's self-evaluation is also improving with the help of the centre. It is clear from the centre's documents and procedures that any suggestions or ideas are discussed and shared where necessary. All are clear about the centre's priorities and

receive feedback from the Practitioners Forum. Good safeguarding and thorough child protection processes meet all requirements. Staff and volunteers have a good induction and undertake relevant safeguarding training. Policies and procedures reflect the wider safeguarding processes such as early intervention, multi-agency cooperation, emotional health and well-being, and dealing with domestic violence. Leaders and managers at all levels are very focused on the centre's impact on the community and because they are constantly reviewing the services being delivered and understand local needs so well the centre has become the focus for the community it serves.

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	2
The extent to which ambitious targets drive improvement, provision is integrated and there are high expectations for users and the wider community	2
The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of users and the wider community	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 evaluation is used to shape and improve services and activities	2
The extent to which partnerships with other agencies ensure the integrated delivery of the range of services the centre has been commissioned to provide	1
The extent to which the centre supports and encourages the wider community to engage with services and uses their views to develop the range of provision	2

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

NA

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 Trospacc Early Years and Family Centre on 1 and 2 February 2011. We judged the centre as good overall.

May I first thank all of you for helping us with the inspection; we found your views very useful and have used some of them when writing this report. The centre is an attractive and safe place to be for parents and carers and their children. You told us how you are made to feel so welcome, feel well cared for and how much you value the good resources, information, services and activities that are offered. The centre leader's drive and shared ambition to improve the centre along with the good support of staff, the local authority, partnership board and family forum have secured significant improvements to the centre over the last year.

The centre staff know the community well and are passionate about supporting both your children's development and your skills. There are good opportunities to learn new skills and gain some qualifications, for example in literacy, numeracy, childcare and first aid. More of you are becoming volunteers and in some cases this has led to employment and further training so that your confidence has grown and you feel more able to support your families.

Your views are valued and these are used to improve the services and activities offered and to help the centre to better meet your needs and to find out how they can help you more.

The centre leader and staff have worked hard to build good relationships with you. You benefit from a range of courses and services and information about what is on offer and advice and support sheets are displayed at the centre, and are sent by email and some of you get helpful reminders of activities by text. Good advice and support are available at the centre and in the outreach areas.

Excellent partnerships with a wide range of different organisations and specialists ensure good quality support is given to families either in their homes or at the centre; these range from home safety checks, midwifery and child health clinics, under-18's proud parents, cook and eat activities, parenting skills and many more.

The centre is looking at how it can extend its work and staff work hard to make sure everything runs smoothly and is well-organised.

The group responsible for advising the centre about how it can improve is made up of people with a wide range of expertise; they are keen to help and support the centre well. However, they are not yet challenging leaders about how effectively the centre is making a difference in the community and for its users and checking what else it could do to be even better. Although the centre is very good about seeking your views on its work and uses this information to make sure the activities and services are the ones you enjoy and benefit from, it does not yet have enough data specifically about the centre's performance. We have asked the centre leader, with the help of the local authority, to collect such data so that it can measure and demonstrate how well it is performing and is making a difference to all the families

who use its service and help to identify any trends so that it may make further improvements.

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