

# Inspection report for Clubmoor Children's Centre

Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	367132
Inspection dates	20 – 21 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Tim Vaughan HMI

Centre governance	Leamington Community Primary School Governing Body
Centre leader	Joanne Thompson
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
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Linked school if applicable	133333 Leamington Community Primary School
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	EY315907 Clubmoor Nursery

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.

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

The inspectors held meetings with the centre coordinator, headteacher/head of centre, senior leaders, front-line staff and representatives from the local authority. Discussions were also held with members of the advisory board, a wide range of partners, parents and carers, and service users. They observed the centre's work including in the on-site nursery, accompanied some home visits and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

## Information about the centre

Clubmoor Children's Centre developed from a Sure Start Local Programme and was designated as a phase one children's centre in 2006. The centre serves Clubmoor, a suburb of Liverpool. Clubmoor experiences very high levels of social and economic disadvantage and is ranked in the 5% most deprived areas in the country.

The population in the centre's reach area is mainly White British. The rates of worklessness are well above the national and city averages. Incomes are well below the national average and some of the lowest in the city. A higher percentage of families are on benefits, including disability allowances, than in the city and nationally.

The centre provides the full core offer and shares its building with adult education and Connexions. It delivers a range of outreach services from other local premises including schools, local youth club and leisure centre.

Children's skills, knowledge and understanding on entry to nursery are well below the expected levels nationally for three- and four-year-olds. The proportion of children attending schools in the area who are known to be entitled to free school meals is above the national average. The proportion of children with special

educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is above average.

The centre is governed by the nearby Leamington Community Primary School governing body, which includes parents and a range of different professionals. The headteacher is the line manager of the centre coordinator. The school's governing body are the registered body for the Clubmoor Nursery provision at the centre. The nursery provides care and education for children in the early years age group and receives a separate inspection. The report is available at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

## 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

'They've given me my life back. They have faith in me. They believe in me', 'I've not always been that vulnerable person who came through the door. They don't treat me like that.' These comments expressed by parents and echoed by others help to explain why Clubmoor is a good and improving children's centre. Under the present leadership, the centre has come a long way in a short period of time. According to many people, many users seemed reluctant to use its services in the past but now services are more accessible and well used. Partners consistently acknowledge that the centre coordinator has been a catalyst for moving the centre forward and ensuring that it has come to be at the heart of the community.

Both the centre coordinator and the headteacher/head of centre have a vision for the centre. The vision is founded upon an unconditional belief in the potential of all local children and parents to achieve their potential. Inclusion is fundamental to the work of the centre and staff are diligent in promoting equality and diversity. Effective partnerships with other agencies and a good understanding of how children develop means that staff are able to identify when a child or parent may need additional support as early as possible. As one parent commented, 'You can ask them about anything and not feel stupid.'

The centre's policies, procedures and work with other agencies are outstanding in safeguarding children and their parents. The centre is rightly recognised by users

and professionals as a place of safety.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is visibly promoted in the centre and children's learning and progress is effectively recognised and celebrated in displays. This emphasis benefits from having a qualified teacher within the centre team who makes very effective use of her expertise and time to lead practice. This has meant that the quality of learning in groups for children is particularly effective. Childminding support has also led to good practice. The on-site nursery has worked well to improve and this is evident in the high quality assessment and tracking that is in place to recognise children's progress. The centre and local authority do not make full use of national indicator data about outcomes and gaps in children's attainment. As a consequence, the centre does not yet have sufficient information about how it is narrowing the gap in children's attainment.

The governance and oversight of the centre is excellent because of the quality of relationships between all partners. Parents and carers, and a range of partners including community groups say that their voices are listened to. As a result, they feel valued and have very high regard for the centre. As one partner commented, 'This is a centre with local roots for local people and also a centre that works well with others.' Data from health partners indicates high levels of hospital admissions for local children and this does not give a clear picture of the impact that the centre is having.

The centre's self-evaluation is of high quality and gives leaders and managers a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of services. This is complemented by the local authority and centre advisory group who both ask challenging questions about the centre's priorities and improvements. Staff have regular training and additional professional qualifications are valued. As a result, the centre's capacity for further improvement is good.

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

### Recommendations for further improvement

- Work with health partners to identify how to reduce the high level of hospital admissions for children from the centre reach area.
- Work with the local authority to look at outcomes, and gaps in attainment, for children at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage across the reach area by using national indicator data to improve their skills for the future.

## How good are outcomes for users?

2
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Outcomes for parents and carers are good and improving. Children and their families are provided with effective support and a wide range of information to promote their health. This includes messages aimed at particular groups such as teenage parents and local fathers. The centre is also working hard to improve local perceptions about

the value of breastfeeding through involvement with the UNICEF Baby Friendly Award. This has already increased the breastfeeding initiation rate over the last year. Parents and carers report that they are benefiting from the wide range of opportunities that the centre provides to promote their health and well-being. These include groups such as baby massage, smoking cessation and access to a physiotherapist where appropriate. Through the centre providing health events in the local community, parents have been able to have their blood pressure, weight and blood sugar levels checked. Some commented how this helped them to seek further support from their doctor to address specific needs. The centre also places a strong emphasis on promoting the emotional health of all users and staff are proactive in providing individual support to families in times of crisis and to those suffering from social isolation or depression. The work of the centre to address this is reflected in parent comments such as, 'I gained my smile again' and 'this centre contributed to my sanity.'

Much thought has been given by centre leaders to ensuring that the whole centre, including the on-site nursery, is a safe and secure environment. Children behave in ways that are safe for themselves and others. All staff and partners see the safety and well-being of users and their families as a key priority. As a result, parents and carers feel safe at the centre and are confident to approach staff and to confide in them. Child safety, including reducing infant mortality, is well promoted throughout the centre environment, on home visits and in group activities. Reducing the level of hospital admissions is a priority for the centre and its partners.

Staff across the centre know the local community and are well informed about the range of multiagency support services available. As a result, the most vulnerable children are quickly recognised and effective packages of support are put in place for the whole family. The Common Assessment Framework is used effectively when specialist intervention is required and children benefit from the centre's close working links with other professionals. Children who are subject to a child protection plan are well supported because staff share information effectively and treat all families with dignity and respect.

A particular strength of the centre is the high quality of opportunities for parents and children to play, have fun and learn together. The impact of this is evident in the Little Crawlers 'stay and play' session, and in the parent and toddler group where staff skilfully encourage parents to interact with their children. Led by the centre teacher, good use is being made of the Early Years Foundation Stage to improve the quality of children's learning across the centre. Activities are well chosen and stimulating and are matched well to children's interests and stages of development. Outcome data for children at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage from each local primary school is used effectively to improve the work of the centre. Senior leaders are not complacent and recognise that the next step is to use national indicator data about outcomes and gaps in attainment for the reach area.

Over the past two years the centre has worked hard to become more engaged with local people. The building has been made more physically accessible, attractive and

welcoming to children and parents. Services are becoming more responsive to need. This has led to the centre increasing the number and range of families with whom it works and including more support for families from minority ethnic groups. The centre is now highly regarded by the local community. Voluntary work and contributions to centre development are actively encouraged and this reinforces the perception that this is a centre for all who wish to be involved. The centre also provides good opportunities for children to make a positive contribution through such events as 'international children's day'.

Support provided by the centre is helping to promote economic stability. For example, children are encouraged to be to be active, inquisitive and independent learners in the range of activities provided. Through training and advice available at the centre some parents are improving their economic stability and independence. Due to their self-evaluation senior leaders are aware that local people face continued high levels of worklessness. Working with the local authority and partners the centre is undertaking further work to support parents to improve their skills and find suitable employment. As a result action is already beginning to show improvements.

*These are the grades for the outcomes for users*

<b>The extent to which children, including those from vulnerable 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>2</b>
<b>The extent to which all users 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 users contribute to decision-making and governance of the centre</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which children are developing skills for the future and parents are developing economic stability and independence including access to training</b>	<b>3</b>

## How good is the provision?

**2**

All centre staff, partner agencies and the local authority have a good understanding of the issues facing the families who live in the Clubmoor area. One of the centre partners commented, 'One of the main strengths of this centre is that they know their community and they get people in the right places.' The needs of families are assessed sensitively and appropriately to ensure tailored services are provided to suit their individual needs. Effective partnership with other agencies means that further assessments, such as those carried out under the Common Assessment Framework, and assessments of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are robust and well informed. Home visits are frequently shared between professionals thus reducing burdens on parents. The recently improved approach to assessing

children's needs in the nursery is excellent. As a result, children's learning and development is being carefully tracked and staff are more aware of what children need next. Staff evaluation across centre activities is strongly linked to how children and parents make improvements across the five outcomes of Every Child Matters.

Most local children under the age of five are registered with the centre and a majority of these access at least one service. Centre leaders are working successfully to continue to increase the numbers of children who use more of what the centre provides. This includes providing services from a range of outreach sites and reach figures are steadily improving. Good information from the local authority has enabled the centre to link with most of the disabled young children in the area and provide a range of appropriate support.

Learning is a strong theme throughout the centre. It influences how staff evaluate their own effectiveness, as well as how they celebrate the achievements of parents and carers and their families. As a result, many parents find that accessing the centre brings many benefits, not least new skills and knowledge but also improved well-being and confidence. One striking example was a mentoring scheme for young fathers-to-be which led to a local father starring in a DVD production which is being used to help others locally.

The overall quality of care for children and their families is good. The on-site nursery has much improved since the last inspection in 2006 due to work in addressing each of the key issues identified at that time. The linked early years provision at Leamington Community Primary School was inspected in 2007 and strongly influences the improvements in the centre. Local childminders also benefit from support from the centre and the proportion of good and outstanding providers is higher than similar areas nationally. In times of crisis families feel well supported by the centre. 'They genuinely care,' was a frequent comment from parents. In addition, high quality information and sign-posting is provided on a range of topics including parenting, domestic violence, sexual health, adult training and breastfeeding which parents find supportive to their needs.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are the leadership and management?

2

The centre is strongly integrated with a local primary school which means that the centre coordinator is line managed by the headteacher/head of centre. Their work is supported by an advisory board that includes parents, community representatives and professionals. The board has delegated powers from the school's governing body. These arrangements are outstanding because they are very well established; they work well and are understood by all involved. Effective links with the local authority support strategic planning, centre plans and provision. The integrated centre leadership team includes the coordinator, headteacher and chair of the advisory board. Further support is provided by an active group of partners, including statutory, private and voluntary sector organisations from across the local community. 'I can turn up with my lunch in the staffroom and immediately feel part of the centre team,' was a typical comment from a partner.

The centre coordinator is committed to improving outcomes for local children and families and this vision permeates the whole of the centre. Teamwork is strong at all levels, value for money is good and staff are committed to learning and improvement. Trust and communication are very much at the heart of how staff work and staff have a clear understanding of their roles. As one member of staff commented, 'there is good communication; we all know the children and we can share anything with each other.'

Staff have a good understanding of the strengths of the centre and where further improvements can be made. For example, senior leaders are well aware that peer support for breastfeeding may enhance breastfeeding initiation further. The centre's development plan is good because it brings together a range of data, parent feedback, needs analysis, evaluation of impact and then has clear actions for improvement. This work is supported by an effective annual conversation with the local authority.

Safeguarding is outstanding. It has a high profile within the centre and is a priority of all staff. All required policies and procedures are in place to safeguard users and are reviewed annually. All staff employed at the centre are subject to an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check. The centre also carefully checks CRB checks undertaken by partner agencies for staff working at the centre. Clear procedures are in place for recruitment. All staff including the receptionist/administrators have a good knowledge of how to keep children and parents safe. This approach is consistent across the centre and the on-site nursery. Clear and detailed risk assessments ensure the centre provides a very safe environment that is appreciated by all users and partner agencies. All staff have attended child protection training and most recently, all staff were trained in safeguarding disabled children.

The inclusion of children, parents and carers is central to the centre's work. Imagery used in display throughout the centre reflects this and helps a wide range of people to feel valued and respected. Community languages are also promoted whilst leaders



acknowledge that more bilingual children's books and labels will further enhance provision. Much work has been done to help men to feel included in the centre and the dads club is popular and successful in engaging fathers with their children. Polish families are increasingly engaging with the centre because staff are looking to specifically support their needs. Services for disabled children are well coordinated and the centre has a clear understanding of how to improve disabled children's life chances.

*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 extent to which ambitious targets drive improvement, provision is integrated and there are high expectations for users and the wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of users and the wider community</b>	<b>2</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>2</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 evaluation is used to shape and improve services and activities</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which partnerships with other agencies ensure the integrated delivery of the range of services the centre has been commissioned to provide</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>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</b>	<b>2</b>

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

The linked Early Years Foundation Stage provision at Leamington Community Primary School 133333 was judged good during an inspection in November 2007. Clubmoor Nursery EY315907 (managed by the school governing body) was last inspected in January 2006 so inspectors spent some time in the provision in order to help form judgements about the centre.

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**

Thank you for your help when we inspected Clubmoor Children's Centre recently. We spoke with many of you about the centre's work. We really enjoyed chatting with you during your activities and around the centre. You expressed your opinions very clearly and they were very helpful to us. We were delighted to hear your positive views and how approachable and understanding you find the staff. I am writing to say what we found out about the centre.

First and most importantly, we are pleased to tell you that we judged the centre as good overall. You told us how much you value activities on offer and that coming to the centre has given you more confidence and has helped you make new friends. As a result, we were pleased to hear that many of you feel less isolated in the community and feel more confident as parents.

The centre works extremely effectively with Leamington Community Primary School and with partners to make sure that services are well managed. We were pleased to find that the way that the centre keeps children, families and staff safe is excellent.

We were encouraged to see how hard the centre is working to make the centre a place for all of the local community. We know how much you appreciate the fact that staff go out of their way to get to know you and your families and visit you in your homes. We can see how the centre is making a positive difference to your lives.

The staff work really hard to make the centre as good as it can be. We particularly liked the comment from a parent who said: 'I can honestly say they've changed my life'.

To help the centre continue to develop, we have suggested that they work with local partners to look at helping reduce accidents and illnesses amongst local children at home. We have also asked them to look more closely at what all local children are achieving by the age of five years old.

Thank you once again for your help.

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