

Inspection report for Tinsley Green Children's Centre

Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	362609
Inspection dates	15 –16 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Sheila Ann Boyle

Centre governance	Local Authority
Centre leader	Gwyn Fields
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
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Linked school if applicable	
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	Tinsley Green Nursery and Childcare EY320946

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 an additional inspector and an early years inspector. The inspectors held meetings with the senior leadership team, a representative from the local authority and Primary Care Trust, representatives from the advisory board, health services, frontline workers and parents and carers and other users of the centre's facilities. They observed the centre's work and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

Information about the centre

Tinsley Green Centre is a single site, phase one children's centre that developed from a Sure Start local programme. The centre opened in 2006 in collaboration with Sheffield Primary Care Trust and Sheffield City Council in purpose-built accommodation in the Tinsley area of Sheffield. The centre is surrounded by parkland. It provides the 'full core offer'. This includes registered nursery and day-care provision at Tinsley Green Nursery and Childcare for 60 children from birth to four years, a weekly family community clinic, a rolling programme of community services, including support and outreach to parents and children and family health services. The centre shares some of the accommodation with the community, including a café and a sports hall. The centre has access and facilities for disabled people, including a specialist room known as the 'Changing Space'. The centre is accountable to the local authority and supported by an advisory board. The centre serves Tinsley, a very small residential area of terraced housing located next to the M1 motorway and industrial estates on the border of Sheffield and Rotherham. Socio-economically, the majority of the sub-wards covered by Tinsley are in the top 30% most deprived. However, the area around Tinsley Park is in the top 1% most deprived. Employment rates are below the local and national average with many families claiming a variety of benefits as their main source of income. The number of families in Tinsley claiming housing and council tax benefits is substantially above the Sheffield average. Most children enter childcare and early education with skills and abilities that are below those expected for their age. The majority of the families who

use the centre are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The largest group are of Pakistani heritage although recently there has been a significant increase in migrant workers from Slovakia. A small number of White British families also use the services of 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 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 support and services provided for children and their families at Tinsley Green Children's Centre are good and result in good outcomes. Services are targeted effectively to assist parents and carers in improving their health and that of their children. Health clinics and courses help users recognise the importance of physical activities, healthy eating and play in promoting good physical and emotional health and development. The staff provide a welcoming and safe environment for all users. Parents greatly appreciate the work staff do and value the positive impact this has on their lives. A typical view expressed by a user is, 'I think they are brilliant, they provided me with the support I needed as an older mum feeling alone and isolated'.

The centre is well known as a key community facility and it enhances community cohesion well. Staff work closely with local community groups and use local and national data, feedback from parents and carers, and effective partnerships to provide services that meet the needs of this diverse community effectively. Those who use the centre include a large Asian community, an increasing number of recent migrant workers from Slovakia and more recently, a minority of White British families re-housed from other parts of the city. These users report that they feel very welcome and that their views are heard and valued. Diversity is celebrated and the centre's leader and staff show a strong commitment to equality and inclusion. Therefore, the work of the centre is fully focused on equality of opportunity. The multilingual skills of some staff and parents are used very effectively to support those who speak very little or no English. When needed, the centre provides interpreters and runs courses for those who have English as an additional language. It celebrates festivals of different faiths and often holds joint celebrations, such as the Christmas and Eid celebration held during this inspection. The centre offers suitable services for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and there is good access and

facilities for disabled people.

Partnerships with the health and local authorities and with the Primary Care Trust are strong. This ensures safeguarding arrangements are robust and in line with local requirements. Inter-agency work with urgent referrals is also good, because of the appropriate use of the Common Assessment Framework and the appointment of a key professional to coordinate the support. Links with the nursery and day care provision are strong. Children's learning and development is enhanced by the quality of the support given to parents attending activities, such as 'Cook and Eat' sessions and family learning courses.

The centre has been particularly successful with the potentially hard to reach families. There has been a notable increase recently in the number of Slovakian parents using the centre. The number of young mothers attending the ante-natal classes and the breast feeding peer support groups, on a regular basis has also grown. The concerted effort to promote the centre's services and benefits to local families, particularly through home visits and referrals from partner service providers has paid off. This has rightly resulted in the centre being considered a 'good place' to visit for help as well as a place to socialise and meet friends. However, the centre recognises that it needs to do more to engage male groups, particularly fathers, in courses and other activities. Overall, though, the provision of information and guidance is good.

The strategic and operational management of the centre are good, supported by the clear direction of the centre's strong management team. There is effective communication between the various professions working in the centre and a clear sense of teamwork. Staff at every level work well towards meeting their overall objective of providing services linked closely with the Every Child Matters agenda and the targets set at local and national level. The centre has effective systems for evaluating activities and courses. The data shows that it has made good progress towards improving the percentage of mothers who are breastfeeding their babies at birth, and in increasing the uptake of immunisations.

The management and accountability targets set at local authority level are applied well at the centre. Planning for the centre's development includes priorities based on local and national data, as well as targets based on local consultation. However, systems for monitoring and evaluating the progress towards these targets are not sufficiently clear and precise. As a result, they do not show the centre's impact over time on the community or how it prioritises to further improve services. The centre manager has already identified this as an area for improvement and is in discussion with her team and the local authority on how to sharpen the practice. The advisory board, which has good parental representation, acts as a critical friend and ensures parents' views are heard and the needs of the local community are met. The centre's judgement of its performance is accurate and demonstrates good capacity to improve.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- Simplify and streamline the systems for monitoring and evaluating the centre's work in order to demonstrate more systematically the impact of its work on the community.
- Increase efforts to engage those not currently using the centre's services, particularly fathers.

How good are outcomes for users?

2

Case studies and discussion with key staff and parents indicate the positive impact of the multi-disciplinary approach on children's and families' emotional well-being and physical health. Well-attended sessions, such as baby massage, mother and toddler groups, community clinics and parenting classes create a lively atmosphere where adults and children feel safe and comfortable. All groups attending the centre, from a variety of backgrounds, work and play together harmoniously. The centre effectively addresses many of its users' feelings of isolation and low self-esteem as well as their needs as new parents. One parent said 'I don't know how I would have coped as a new parent without the support of the centre's staff'. Another said 'the parenting classes helped me manage my child's behaviour better and taught me how to speak properly to my children'.

Some users have become volunteers because their confidence and self-esteem have improved through attending activities in the centre. Others, with guidance from the centre, have gained accreditation in child care and now work in the nursery and day care provision. Good quality information and sensitive practical advice from staff for all families improves their prospects and life chances. A number of parents report a better understanding of how to support their children's learning, following the family learning sessions.

The breastfeeding group has seen considerable success in encouraging mums, who have previously not breastfed, to persevere because they recognise the health benefits for their babies. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified early and specialist staff work with their families to ensure positive outcomes for parents and children. The 'Cook and Eat' sessions are popular and parents learn how to prepare healthy family meals with a limited budget. A group of girls, who have been referred by their schools, benefit from weekly sessions in the centre, receiving vocational advice, counselling and support. In some cases, this support has helped them retain a place in school as they modify aspects of their more extreme behaviours and attitudes.

Services offered in the centre ensure users are safe. Fire evacuation practices take place at regular intervals and home safety checks are carried out when outreach workers make home visits. Relationships between centre staff and families are very trusting. This allows staff to identify quickly and sensitively any safety concerns

and intervene appropriately before a crisis occurs.

Children are prepared well for transition to school through the effective provision offered in the nursery and day care provision. They receive good quality learning experiences that impact positively on their learning and development. Suitable educational courses are available for parents who speak little or no English and accredited courses in childcare are on offer for those who wish to enter employment. Although there is no specific counselling at the centre for the unemployed, the centre directs those with enquiries about employment to its community partner where they receive specialist support and advice. The community clinic is popular with mothers and their babies and health staff organise specialist visitors, for example, speech and language therapists, to their sessions, often at the request of parents. Few fathers come to this or other sessions at the centre.

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 governance of the centre	2
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 delivers its core offer well. Provision is of a good quality and, therefore, learning is purposeful and most activities or sessions have clearly identified and recorded outcomes. Reflective practice is encouraged for every planned activity and some, such as the family learning course, have written feedback from users. Users enjoy other sessions too, such as the mother and toddler group, set up in response to a request from a parent. Good links with adult learning services also promote learning to meet users' needs or interests. These include short courses in beading and Arabic art.

Good support is available for mothers who feel particularly isolated or who may have language barriers and do not know where to access services for their children. One parent reported that when her child started the day care centre he was a fussy eater and not gaining weight. As result of the support she received there, he was quickly referred to a specialist where he was diagnosed as having diabetes. The staff were

then trained to administer his insulin and she said, 'I feel much happier now when I leave him in their care'. The needs of children with special educational needs or delayed development are also met well and the service works effectively with other agencies to support these children. Translation services are provided when needed and bilingual support is also available from within the staff team. Leaflets and booklets are also provided in a selection of community languages.

Assessment of the needs of children, parents and other users is systematic and effective. Case studies demonstrate children's progress in behaviour, personal and social development. One mother reported that, since her child started attending sessions at the centre, his behaviour, confidence, independence and language skills had all improved. Multi-agency allocation meetings (MAAM) are the most common referral route for individual users. Regular interagency meetings are used effectively to monitor and track the progress of users. Data provided by the local authority is used appropriately to identify priorities for the centre and to ensure provision is matched to needs of the wider community.

Parents are consulted and their views valued highly. Parents and carers feel their opinions are respected and that they can make a difference to the way the centre operates. Suggestions for improvement are encouraged and acted upon. Through the community forum, parents discuss issues, make suggestions and plan events. They are well represented on the advisory board and play an active role in collecting views from parents and ensuring parents' views are heard.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

The centre is well managed by the centre leader and her team. The centre manager is responsible for the day-to-day running of the centre and has a full role in strategic planning. Communication is good and staff within the centre, the locality and the local authority meet at frequent and scheduled intervals to share information and good practice and to review performance. Through effective performance management, staff have a good understanding of how their role contributes to the overarching local authority strategy to provide support and early intervention to users and the wider community. The recently restructured advisory board, with good representation from parents and partner agencies, contributes satisfactorily to decision making. Its role as an independent body in challenging decisions and reviewing targets is still developing. Leadership at local authority level is effective in setting direction for the centre and in providing quality data and targets to measure performance. The centre uses this data well to shape its services and to target those most in need in the community.

The centre manager has a very good knowledge of the centre's strengths and areas for development. The action plan's targets reflect local and national data as well as the more immediate priorities identified at community level. Continuous monitoring at every level of service delivery is evident, but it is not sufficiently clear how this information is used to measure the impact of services on the community or to drive further improvements.

Good use is also made of the centre's accommodation, for example, the community café is used to promote healthy eating and community cohesion. The sports hall is also used well to provide exercise and fitness programmes for Asian women who wish to exercise in single-sex groups. The centre provides good value for money. The inclusion of parents who have children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also promoted effectively through the 'Ready Steady Go' sessions.

Staff are well trained in safeguarding and training is up to date. Vetting is rigorous and robust and the appropriate checks on external agencies are carried out. Staff follow policies and procedures well and have a good understanding of the Common Assessment Framework processes. Family support teams offer personalised and targeted support to vulnerable families and children. There is good multi-agency working to promote safeguarding and staff are proactive in implementing safeguarding procedures. Parents and carers say they feel safe and that the centre is safe for their children. Training has been provided for a number of prospective child minders and support systems are in place should a provider become registered. This is a fully inclusive centre and the manager is rightly proud of the ease with which staff and parents from different ethnic and cultural background engage and support one another.

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	3
The extent to which partnerships with other agencies ensure the integrated delivery of the range of services the centre has been commissioned to provide	2
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

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. 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 Tinsley Green Children's Centre on 15- 16 December 2010 and found it to be good. Thanks to all of you who spoke with the inspectors. As well as talking with you we looked at the comments some of you have made about the service and sessions you have attended. These were all very positive and reflect your high opinion and support for this centre. For example you said, 'I don't know how I would have coped as a new parent without the support of the centre's staff' and 'the parenting classes helped me manage my child's behaviour better and taught me how to speak properly to my children'. We found the staff have great respect for you and your children, give you a warm welcome at the centre and do all they can to support you when you need help with problems. They are particularly good at identifying services that will be most useful to you and if you cannot come to the centre, the outreach and family support worker will come to you. It is good to know that most children in your area are now being immunised and more women in your area are breastfeeding their babies for the first two months.

We know that you enjoy bringing your children to the activities and services such as, the baby massage, mother and toddler sessions and some of you have come to a taster session on yoga for families. We know from your feedback that you greatly appreciate the opportunities they give you to meet other mums and dads like you and the chance to speak to the health visitor or other professionals whilst staff look after your children. We are pleased that you feel so safe in the centre and are making sure your children are safe at home too. We know that those of you who have attended parenting sessions are now more confident in dealing with your children's behaviour. This means that both you and your children get on better and have less stressful lives. It is also good that some of you have taken advantage of the classes to improve your English. Others have attended accredited courses in child care and are now providing valuable help as volunteers or employees of the centre.

The staff seek your views regularly on how to improve the service and it is good to know that a number of you have joined the advisory board where you ensure the views of other parents are heard. The numbers of people who use the centre are going up and the lovely nursery and day care provision attract more parents to the centre when they come to register their children there.

One of our responsibilities is to recommend to the centre how it may improve. We have asked the leaders to:

- make sure there are regular but simple checks to see how well the centre's work is making a difference for you and your community
- increase their efforts to get those who are not yet using the centre, especially dads, to be more involved in centre activities.

We wish you well in the future.

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