

Inspection report for Burley Park Children's Centre

| | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Local authority | Leeds |
| Inspection number | 362450 |
| Inspection dates | 29-30 September 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | Gillian Bishop HMI |

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Centre governance | Leeds City Council |
| Centre leader | Ms Mandy Quayle |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Centre address | St Matthias Street, Burley, Leeds, LS4 2DZ |
| Telephone number | 0113 2755044 |
| Fax number | No fax at the centre |
| Email address | mandy.quayle@leeds.gov.uk |

| | |
|---|--|
| Linked school if applicable | |
| Linked early years and childcare, if applicable | Burley Street Children's Centre (Full Daycare) |

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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

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

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

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

No. 100024

© Crown copyright 2010



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 one Early Years Inspector.

The inspectors held meetings with the senior leadership team, a representative from the local authority, representatives from the advisory board and health services, frontline workers and parents 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

Burley Park Children's Centre is situated north-west of the city of Leeds, closely located to Leeds Metropolitan University and the University of Leeds. It serves a community that is ranked within the top 30% of the most deprived areas in the country. The proportion of children attending schools in the area who are known to be entitled to free school meals, is above the national average, as is the proportion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The proportion of children aged under-four who are living in households where no one is working is also above the national average. Most children enter childcare and early education with a narrower range of skills and abilities than that expected for their age.

Burley Park Children's Centre developed from a Sure Start Local Programme and gained full designation in 2007. A multi-agency team, which includes health visitors, intensive family support; outreach team and speech and language therapists provide services from the children's centre but most are not co-located on the centre's site. The children's centre provides the full core offer of services. The local authority and an advisory board provide the governance for the centre. The majority of families accessing centre services live in the surrounding areas of Burley, Kirkstall and Headingley. The population is highly transient with students and families frequently

moving in and out of the area. The community around the children’s centre is very culturally diverse and this is reflected in the ethnic mix of children and families accessing the children’s centre. The largest of these groups are of a White British and Asian heritage.

The children’s centre has a satellite site based within Rosebank Primary School from which additional centre services are delivered. These include Burley Tots, adult family learning groups, Burley Lodge Advice Service, and specialist counselling services and support groups. Childcare is provided by the Burley Park Children’s Centre under the governance of Leeds City Council. There is also an out of school care provision provided by Kaleidoscope, a private provider. Both these provisions are subject to separate inspection arrangements. Their most recent inspection reports can be found at www.Ofsted.gov.uk. The centre has three primary schools within its reach area, Burley St Matthias, Rosebank and Brudenell. Their inspection reports can also be found on the Ofsted website.

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

3

Capacity for sustained improvement

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

3

Main findings

Burley Park Children’s Centre provides satisfactory and improving support to children and families. Outcomes for them are at least satisfactory. The centre provides a warm and friendly environment for children and their parents. The centre’s approach to safeguarding is robust and in line with local strategic plans. Centre staff and partners have developed a cohesive approach to reducing the risk of harm and preventing difficulties escalating. This includes the successful implementation of the Common Assessment Framework.

The Early Years Foundation Stage and childcare provision are good across the locality and children are beginning to make good progress given their low starting points. This derives from the good quality care and learning within the centre nursery and the systematic support and guidance from the Early Years Foundation Stage leaders and speech and language therapists. The intensity of this work ensures outcomes for

children with special educational needs and/or disabilities attending the centre are also good. Adult learning programmes such as 'English for Speakers of Other Languages' show some evidence of good outcomes.

Equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination is central to the work of the centre so a range of services successfully work together to support the physical and emotional health and well-being of children and families. The centre is currently working well to address the rising levels of obesity. However, health inequalities lack focus and clarity within improvement plans and so do not demonstrate how the centre intends to tackle them.

Provision is satisfactory overall, although there are some examples of outstanding practice, which very successfully meet the needs of vulnerable adults and children. For example, strong links with health visitors, family support teams, counselling services and the personalised approach to meeting the needs of adults and children in times of crisis, are admirable. The success of this work is particularly evident where families are fleeing or living with domestic violence.

Activities include 'baby signing' and 'stay and play' sessions at Burley Park. The well-baby clinic is one of the most popular events as parents meet with a health professional, socialise and have fun. Services recently established at Rosebank Primary School provide activities to a wider range of people within the community, as the location is more convenient to their needs. However, as managers know, more people need to benefit from the full range of universal services.

The leadership and management of Burley Park Children's Centre are satisfactory and improving. The senior leadership team, practitioners and centre partners demonstrate a strong commitment to make a real difference to this community. The centre manager leads by example and has high expectations of her team and the people she works with. In turn, this raises aspirations of parents by empowering them to make positive changes to their lives.

The advisory board understand the complex nature of the work of the children's centre and that of the community it serves. The board's local knowledge and use of reach data have enabled a programme of tailored support for families in greatest need. Board members play a valuable role in the evaluation and planning of future activities. However, the lack of parental representation on the advisory board prevents their involvement in governance and decision-making processes.

The advisory board and the local authority provide appropriate support to the centre. Regular consultations take place to assess the work of the centre and they provide guidance in relation to the development of service and improvement plans. However, the quality and accuracy of self-assessment and the evaluation and interrogation of pertinent data is not sharp enough. This prevents the centre from demonstrating the full impact of its work.

Taking into account the satisfactory outcomes overall, the centre's overall

effectiveness is also satisfactory. This, together with the leadership's determined focus on improvement, identifying and meeting needs, indicates the centre has satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- Improve outcomes and provision by:
 - developing the effectiveness of self-evaluation through the regular and rigorous analysis of information and data, by monitoring activities and services and by considering local trends in relation to health priorities
 - increasing access to services by a much wider range of the population within the reach area.

- Ensure the views of parents consistently contribute to the governance of the centre and to determining and shaping services.

- Strengthen the way in which the local authority and the advisory board act as critical friends in challenging and holding the centre to account for its work.

How good are outcomes for users?

| |
|----------|
| 3 |
|----------|

Evidence through case studies, discussion with partners and parents indicate the positive impact of partnership working to promote children's and families' emotional well-being and their physical health. For example, one parent described how she was able to, 'get her life back on track'. Through personal counselling, health programmes and childcare, she was able to seek a safe refuge for her family and tackle the significant difficulties in her life. Partnership working with the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents is helping to raise families' awareness of safety in the home. Those who have engaged in parenting programmes such as the Webster Stratton say they are now able to handle their children's challenging behaviour more successfully.

Parents are well signposted to the local health clinic for breastfeeding support and maternity services. However, the closure of the breastfeeding café has disappointed some parents as they felt this service was conveniently located and enabled them to persevere with breastfeeding when it was likely that, otherwise, they would not. This comes at a time when the prevalence of breastfeeding at six to eight weeks is particularly low citywide. Cooking classes and the food grown in the community garden promote healthy eating. Parents state health, exercise and nutrition for the early years programme (HENRY) are beginning to impact on their attitudes to leading healthier lifestyles.

The extent to which children and young people enjoy and achieve is good. Centre' data confirms that children achieve best in relation to their dispositions and attitudes and some aspects of their speaking and listening skills, largely due to initiatives such as the star language group. As a result the gap between the lowest 20% of children achieving expected levels in key early learning goals is beginning to narrow. The 'Forest School' initiative has successfully engaged children in the outdoors, and improved their physical development and skills. Outcomes for children with disabilities and complex learning needs are also good because professionals and parents of the children work collaboratively to support them and nurture their potential. Parents state the 'packages of care' enable them to have a voice and influence the care and learning for their children.

Parents appreciate the centre's work and recognise the positive impact it has on their lives. One parent who became a volunteer said, 'I feel it's my way to give something back to the community.' Parents contribute to the evaluation processes by sharing their views about activities and events. Although many parents were unaware of the advisory board and the role it plays within the centre, they were enthusiastic about an opportunity to join the group. One parent stated, 'I've been here a long time so I know everything about the centre and I know what parents want.'

Parents have satisfactory opportunities to develop skills and improve their economic stability. The Jobcentre Plus adviser offers monthly appointments, providing advice about finances, employment and training. 'English for Speakers of Other Languages' classes are well attended with some good outcomes, for example, one parent persevered with three terms of classes before achieving her qualification.

| | |
|--|----------|
| The extent to which children, including those from vulnerable groups, are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy and families have healthy lifestyles | 3 |
| 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 | 3 |
| The extent to which children are developing skills for the future and parents are developing economic stability and independence including access to training | 3 |

How good is the provision?

| |
|----------|
| 3 |
|----------|

The centre has firmly established procedures for assessing the needs of children, parents and families. Regular referral meetings, which all relevant partners attend,

provide a coordinated and swift approach to supporting families in immediate crisis. The inclusive approach and welcoming environment ensures that, once users register with the centre, they go on to engage with a full range of activities. Nevertheless, the centre accepts that over 60% of families in the reach area are yet to engage and access services.

The quality of care, guidance and support for families experiencing great challenges and difficulties in their lives is outstanding. For example, the targeted work with women and children living in and around local refuge provision has significantly improved their ability to live safer lives, socialise without fear and take advantage of services from which both they and their children can benefit. The intensive family support programme and sensitive outreach work result in many of these parents confidently engaging in activities out of the home after a period of home visiting. As a result, a growing number are now engaged in activities and training programmes within the centre’s provision. The use of intensive support, review meetings and parents involvement in children’s learning programmes place great value on the role of parents as children’s first educators.

Personal testimonies from parents indicate that well coordinated multi-agency support has brought about positive outcomes for them. Parents state that Jobcentre Plus and the Burley Advice Service have enabled them to, ‘take a look at their problems and do something about them’. Tailored support, effective signposting to services and the ‘personal approach’, which parents describe, ensure individual needs are at the forefront of service delivery. Parents who have engaged in the Common Assessment Framework state it helped them to, ‘work out their problems and difficulties and look for ways to make them better’.

The effective Early Years Foundation Stage provision makes good use of children’s prior learning to plan for their next steps. They engage in a range of challenging and interesting activities, which enables them to make good progress in their learning. The transition to school is carefully planned and involves parents, key workers and school as equal partners. As a result children are well prepared for this challenging stage.

A volunteer training programme has provided some opportunities for parents to play a more active role in the delivery of activities, for example, by running the toy library. Training is currently on hold pending the recruitment of new volunteers. Adult learning opportunities vary with a sufficient range of courses run over time such as parenting courses, information and communication technology and childcare. However, evidence shows that, with the exception of ‘English for Speakers of Other Languages’ courses, adult training is not clearly focused on a firm needs analysis, and success and progression rates are not readily known.

| | |
|--|----------|
| 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 | 3 |
| The extent to which the range of services, activities and opportunities meet the needs of users and the wider community | 3 |
| The quality of care, guidance and support offered to users within the centre and the wider community | 1 |

How effective are the leadership and management?

3

Leadership and management within the centre are secure and there is clear focus held by managers, the local authority and the advisory board on improvement. The children's centre team work well together and management performance targets give clear direction and expectations within roles. Discussions with a wide range of people confirm the centre manager is highly respected by professionals and parents. The priority placed on continuous professional development is evident by the arrangements put in place for the centre manager to commence the National Professional Qualification for Integrated Centre Leadership and by other managers accessing and achieving higher-level qualifications. All staff and advisory board members engage fully with professional development opportunities.

Equality and diversity are promoted successfully and this is demonstrated firmly through the Stephen Lawrence Award and the Social Inclusion Charter. Services are designed to engage users from a range of backgrounds and the harmony within the centre confirms it is a positive place to be. The sensitive work with children with complex needs is one of the centre's key strengths.

Resources are used effectively to provide a welcoming and productive environment that is fit for purpose. The building is well used and the development of the satellite site at Rosebank Primary School has extended the range of activities and resources available to the wider community. Managers receive good levels of support from local authority finance officers, which ensure they receive guidance in their monitoring of management arrangements. This ensures satisfactory value for money.

Safeguarding procedures are robust and meet with statutory requirements. Risk assessment procedures are sound and safety procedures are reviewed quickly where necessary. Staff and partners are knowledgeable about key procedures and they all receive appropriate levels of training. Good multi-agency support to families referred to the centre in times of acute crisis is helping to minimise the number of children entering care or with a child protection plan. A large number of families offering kinship care receive good support, enabling stability for children when they need it most. Staff and family support workers are well supervised in their work to protect children through safeguarding meetings and frequent supervisions. This ensures staff are well supported and children remain well protected.

As part of the planning cycle, the centre manager works with staff and partners to identify future priorities. These are currently based on a generally accurate

evaluation of the strengths and areas for improvement. Although this process involves key partners, systems to collate the views of parents and users are not robust. For example, evaluations of individual activities, training and interventions are undertaken but they are not sufficiently analysed to check the quality or success of services, or the way in which they support improvement.

Impact of the work with individual families takes place within referral meetings, case studies, and through the collation of some data such as attendance and usefulness. However, this information is not yet collated into manageable data to measure impact at a more strategic, centre level. Whilst the centre's service plan has some success criteria, it lacks qualitative and measurable targets, which makes evaluation of the impact of the plan difficult. Procedures for holding the centre to account are improving by means of annual conversations and support and challenge meetings with the local authority. However, a more critical view of the centre's work is needed to strengthen and develop processes already in place.

| | |
|---|----------|
| The extent to which governance, accountability, professional supervision and day to day management arrangements are clear and understood | 3 |
| The extent to which ambitious targets drive improvement, provision is integrated and there are high expectations for users and the wider community | 3 |
| The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of users and the wider community | 3 |
| 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 | 3 |

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

Childcare is provided on site by Burley Children's Centre; Kaleidoscope, a private provider, offers out of school care. As both settings were not inspected at the time of the children's centre inspection, previous inspection reports were taken into account. There are three primary schools within the centre's reach area: St Matthias, Brudenell and Rosebank. Information from their most recent regulatory and section 5 inspections, and information relating to the quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage has been taken into account when writing about early years provision and outcomes for children in the report.

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 Burley Children's Centre on 29 and 30 September 2010. We visited activities, looked at the centre's plans and documents and talked with you and professionals. Following this work, we have judged that the centre provides satisfactory support to you and your families, and that this continues to improve.

The children's centre provides a wide range of services, which helps families to improve their lives. You confirm this by telling us that you are happy with the activities you use because they have helped you in lots of different ways. For example, some of you have received help to overcome mental health problems and others have completed training and now work as volunteers. You tell us that Jobcentre Plus has helped you to manage your money better and we can see that many parents have taken up adult learning courses to help with their English. However, the centre knows they must do more to encourage other families to use its services and activities.

Most importantly, you tell us that you feel, 'unbelievably safe' because you and your children are in safe hands. We found the support for parents unable to come to the centre is good, because they can have home visits until they feel more confident. You told us staff have a, 'personal touch' and their approach to supporting families in crisis confirms what you say. We found outstanding care, guidance and support for parents and families, particularly those coping with immense personal difficulties such as domestic violence.

We found the centre is working very well with other partners such as health visitors and family support workers. You tell us that it is good to be able to see the health visitor, have your baby weighed and then stay for a family play session. You also tell us that the centre has made you feel happier because you have made many friends and there is always another group to go to when your child is ready to move on. There is a satisfactory range of programmes and activities aimed at improving your health. However, staff need to know more about the health issues in your area so they can plan activities to help.

The centre works hard to make sure children get off to a good start in their learning and they involve you by giving you suggestions about how to help their learning at home. As a result you tell us that your children come on in, 'leaps and bounds'. There is good support for children with disabilities and their parents are encouraged to be involved in important meetings with speech and language therapists and other professionals, which makes sure they can help to set new targets for their child's learning.

People in charge of the children's centre are doing a satisfactory and improving job. We know that you are asked about your views but you are not involved in a management group, which prevents you from helping to assess how good services really are. Managers know they need to improve how they monitor and evaluate all the courses, services and activities, to make sure they are successful and meet your needs. However, they cannot do this on their own. They need the local authority's

help to improve systems for gathering information so they can clearly show the difference it is making to your lives.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to come and speak to us. We are very grateful and we wish you every success for the future.

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