

Inspection report for Hindley Sure Start Children's Centre

Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	366390
Inspection dates	17-18 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Elaine Clinton HMI

Centre governance	Local Authority
Centre leader	Mrs Rachel Lewis
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Centre address	Mornington Road, Hindley, Wigan, WN2 4LG
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Linked school if applicable	Hindley Surestart Nursery 106397
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	Hindley Surestart Nursery EY 286541

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 one early years inspector.

The inspectors held meetings with volunteers, staff and senior managers from the centre, parents, grandparents, and their children, members of the Building User Group and the collaborative leadership cluster, partners and practitioners including health, social care and Early Years Foundation Stage professionals.

They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

Information about the centre

Hindley Children's Centre opened in 2004. A community nursery is also based at the centre, which provides for 60 children at any one time, including two places for children with complex medical needs. This was last inspected in May 2010. A subsequent monitoring visit was carried out in October 2010. The nursery also provides out-of-school care, including breakfast, lunch and holiday clubs, for nought to eight year olds. The day-to-day management and provision of service delivery is the responsibility of Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council. Overall management of the whole centre is the responsibility of the headteacher, however, operational management of the children's centre is through the long-established children's centre manager. The centre provides the full core offer and has its own parents' forum, known as the Building User Group.

The centre serves a predominantly White British community; a small proportion of families are of minority ethnic heritage. Statistical data for the Hindley district indicate that the reach area is one of high social deprivation and disadvantage. Local authority data indicate that a significant proportion of children in the reach area live in poverty, as defined by the Children in Poverty Indicator. Of the 1313 children aged

five or under in the area, 608 are living within the 30% most deprived areas; of these 73% are registered members of the children’s centre. Many children enter childcare and early education with skills lower than those typically expected for their age.

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

1

Capacity for sustained improvement

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

1

Main findings

Hindley Children’s Centre buzzes with life, excitement and purposeful activity. Laughter is a significant feature. The centre is a place where everyone is welcome. The inclusivity is such that almost all drop-in sessions are full to capacity. The ‘Monaco Project’ which is held in a local, very large, ball-room, is frequently packed with families. Users’ work is proudly displayed throughout the centre. Successes of children, parents, staff and volunteers are celebrated frequently through presentations, special teas and lunches, and trips. Staff morale is high and relationships between staff and users strong. The Building User Group and volunteers are at the heart of programme delivery and development and are highly regarded and valued by staff. This positive, inclusive attitude is having a significant impact on the number of fathers and local residents accessing the centre both as users and as volunteers.

The centre provides an extensive range of services that bring significant benefits to users and their community. Centre leadership and governance are outstanding. The centre manager and the headteacher work with determination and enthusiasm to continually improve the centre provision to ensure that it is the very best for the families and the community that it serves. All staff share this passion, and work tirelessly together to ensure that the centre consistently provides wide-ranging activities and the very highest quality support for children and families. Users’ views are frequently sought and used to ensure the provision meets the needs of the community well. Partnership work is a real strength, and combined with excellent team working and a drive for continuous improvement ensures that the centre has outstanding capacity for further improvement. Communications between the centre and a wide range of professionals are very strong and effective, ensuring that families receive prompt and tailored support to meet their needs. Parents talk

positively about this support. Comments such as 'They really listen to what you say and need', and 'They pick up on the small things that really make a difference,' reflect the views of many parents.

Families and individuals speak highly of the integrated support offered through home visits and other outreach work. Excellent use is made of local schools and community buildings to ensure that all those who want to can readily access a broad range of services. Provision is responsive to local need and parents are actively encouraged to identify programmes that they think would be useful. The centre provides extremely high quality activities and support for families and children. Very effective use of data ensures that priority is given to those who are in most need. Children using the centre are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning because the children's centre staff provide activities that are carefully matched to needs and abilities, helping them to make good progress in all aspects of their development. They play well together, sit quietly during stories and demonstrate good manners when eating snacks and meals.

The centre's partnership with social services to ensure the safety of children is particularly strong. There is an excellent understanding of how the Common Assessment Framework helps ensure that those most at risk receive well-targeted support at an early stage. The commitment to promoting equality and diversity is similarly clear. Children, including those with disabilities, gain much from the imaginative range of activities on offer. They make good progress when attending classes such as 'Little Picasso' or 'Beetles and Butterflies'. In particular, the centre can show how it is improving children's communication and social and emotional development through exceptionally well-planned play activities where children and their parents learn new skills. Improvements in the quality of provision within the nursery, as recognised in the most recent monitoring visit, are ensuring that when children leave the nursery, increasing proportions have the communication and personal, social and emotional skills typically expected for their age. Currently, the centre does not receive information detailing how successfully schools build upon these achievements, for example, by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The centre is contributing to the long-term goal of reducing child poverty through its strong links with Jobcentre Plus, and the advice it gives on training.

The Building User Group is a very inclusive group and has a very strong voice in decision making and governance of the centre. Its membership reflects the range of social and minority ethnic groups who use the centre. Adults who were initially lacking in confidence and self-esteem are now among its most active members. This group and others contribute strongly to community cohesion in the locality, while initiatives such as the 'Reading Garden' make links between the centre and the community.

Well-considered processes are carefully used to ensure the ongoing improvement and development of the provision. All staff are observed in their roles and provided with useful advice on how to improve. Individual targets provide staff with clear information about their role in ensuring the effectiveness of the centre. Users' views

are consistently sought through the use of suggestions boxes, feedback slips, well-designed questionnaires and wide-ranging consultation events. This feedback is used well by staff to make changes and developments to the provision, such as the development of the 'Reading Garden' as a resource for the whole community. There is a wide representation of partners on the Collaborative Leadership Committee who provide challenge and support to the senior leadership team. A wide range of data is gathered to support self-evaluation and the senior leadership team carefully uses this to monitor outcomes for children; however, this is not yet extended to all aspects of the provision. This is because the centre does not yet collect sufficient local data to measure all of its outcomes, for example, the impact of their work on the reduction in obesity rates.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- Ensure that local data is carefully captured to ensure that the longer-term impact of all aspects of the centre's work can be measured.

How good are outcomes for users?

1

Excellent provision is ensuring that outcomes in all areas are excellent and continuing to improve. A wide range of services, advice and support actively promote healthy lifestyles. Breakfasts and lunches cooked on site are healthy and provide children with nutritious and enjoyable meals. Children's centre and health workers can clearly articulate the sustained impact of sessions to reduce obesity in early childhood, but there is limited data to measure precisely the impact of such activities. Children and parents participate enthusiastically in session such as 'Go Bananas' and 'Baby Rock' and talk enthusiastically about the impact of these classes, many saying that these sessions provide them with good ideas of activities to do at home. Take up in parenting classes such the 'Triple P' is high. Evaluations, case studies and discussions with parents show that these classes very effectively develop the skills necessary to promote healthy lifestyles. Parents talk about the centre and its outreach provision as being 'An absolute life saver' and make comments such as 'Whenever and wherever you go you are met with a smile, a welcome and lots of love and coffee'.

Teachers, together with health and social care professionals value highly the commitment and outstanding expertise among staff to protect the most vulnerable children. There is significant evidence of improved outcomes for children who are subject to a plan; the numbers of children who are on a plan for over two years have reduced significantly in the last three years. The very flexible and imaginative approach to providing additional support for the most needy is ensuring that support is prompt and targeted to the needs of the family. Parents who spoke to inspectors talked highly of the impact that safety sessions such as 'Fireman Fun' had on their

understanding of keeping their home and family safe.

Excellent ideas and activities are shared well with parents, supporting them to help their children to achieve highly. As one parent said, 'The sessions have given me inspiration to do things at home'. Those attending sessions such as 'Beetles and Butterflies,' and those involved in the 'Two Year Olds Funding Entitlement Project', are achieving particularly well. Data for 2009/10 confirm that increasing numbers of children attending the nursery are achieving 78 points or more on the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. An increased emphasis on the 'Every Child A Talker' programme is ensuring that many children are now achieving six or more points in communication, language and literacy, and personal, social and emotional development. The centre is effectively narrowing the achievement gap between children with different start points. Carefully planned individual and targeted support is helping children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to achieve well, and participate in all activities. Monitoring and recording of these children's progress is exceptionally detailed.

Users make a significant contribution to the centre and the local community. A particularly strong inclusive ethos promotes community cohesion extremely well amongst users and the wider community. The Building User Group is central to this aspect of the centre's work, through its very welcoming approach and the many projects it has developed, such as 'Family Fun Days' to ensure that all of the community is engaged with the centre. Fathers play a key role in the many family days and events that the Building User Group holds. Parental involvement in the governance and development of the centre is strong through their involvement in the collaborative leadership committee. Involvement in these activities, combined with excellent support from the centre, is ensuring that increasing numbers of parents are gaining qualifications and experience that are helping them to gain employment.

The extent to which children, including those from vulnerable groups, are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy and families have healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children are safe and protected, their welfare concerns are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them	1
The extent to which all users enjoy and achieve educationally and in their personal and social development	1
The extent to which children engage in positive behaviour and develop positive relationships and users contribute to decision-making and governance of the centre	1
The extent to which children are developing skills for the future and parents are developing economic stability and independence including access to training	1

How good is the provision?

1

The centre provides an excellent range of services that are well-matched to the needs of families. Excellent use of local data ensures that hard-to-reach families are identified and supported. Close links with the centre's link health visitor and midwife enable prompt responses to crises in individual's lives. Careful and detailed assessments ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of the needs of users, particularly the most vulnerable. Central to assessment is a detailed conversation with the parent to identify what it is they most need. Link workers play a key role in these assessments; they use their excellent relationships with the statutory, private and voluntary sectors to ensure that the support given is carefully matched to the parents needs. As a result of this very careful assessment many parents are supported to move on in their lives. One of the parents spoken to during the inspection said that 'Without the help and support of the link worker I would have lost my children; that would have finished me'.

All staff are using the Common Assessment Framework very effectively to ensure assessment of the difficulties faced by families are detailed and well informed. As a result of this careful use, support is personalised to meet each family's specific needs. Well-established partnerships with multi-agency teams are ensuring that children and vulnerable adults are particularly well safeguarded. Feedback to the centre from both families and partners is unanimous in providing strong evidence on the difference that provision is making to the lives of the centre's users.

Learning, development and enjoyment are strongly promoted. Inspectors saw many celebrations of success during their time at the centre, from simple 'well done' to celebratory cakes and singing, and more formal awards ceremonies. All centre staff very effectively integrate the Early Years Foundation Stage into all aspects of their work to ensure that children are well prepared when they start school. This was clearly seen at the breakfast club where excellent communication provided children with information about being safe as well as extending numeracy skills whilst eating a healthy breakfast. Children's centre workers make excellent use of sign language to ensure that all children can participate fully. Parents, including young parents, speak highly of the impact that the opportunities provided by the centre have had on them and their child, and detailed evaluations from parents about the individual interventions demonstrate the difference their experiences have made to their own and their children's development and well-being. Comments such as 'I love coming here, it is such fun' and 'I could never have looked after my child without their help' were some of the views expressed to inspectors.

The centre staff provide excellent levels of support and training to childminders who are actively encouraged to access the centre's activities. Importantly they are a key partner on the collaborative leadership committee. Parents are provided with high quality support and guidance to access the right help at the right time for their child. The 'dads' worker regularly visits the local young offenders institution to help fathers develop the skills to play with their children. Well-established partnerships with

Jobcentre Plus and the local further education college are providing excellent levels of support to adult users looking for employment and greater economic stability for their families.

The effectiveness of the assessment of the needs of children, parents and other users	1
The extent to which the centre promotes purposeful learning, development and enjoyment for all users	1
The extent to which the range of services, activities and opportunities meet the needs of users and the wider community	1
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?

1

Excellent leadership and management of the centre are ensuring the provision of high-quality services and continuous improvement. Well-established links between the local authority, the collaborative leadership committee, the Building User Group and senior leaders mean that ambitions for the development of the centre are very high. Development planning is closely linked to the local authority's Children and Young People's Plan, local priorities and national indicators for children and families. The new headteacher is very effectively building strong partnerships within the local community. She is well respected and her input and impact on the wider work of the centre highly valued. As one parent said, 'She really heard what we said and now there are coffee mornings and children's activities really close to home'. Astute financial management, the central role of the Building User Group and the use of many funding routes is ensuring capacity building and the long term sustainability of the centre. As a consequence the centre provides outstanding value for money.

The centre leader and headteacher are highly experienced, skilled and knowledgeable. They care about their team and make excellent arrangements to ensure that staff feel valued through 'after work teas' and 'pamper events'. They lead an outstanding team of motivated staff who are passionate about their work. Staff development is frequent and planned to meet work and personal development goals; all volunteers attend extensive training, which they report is 'empowering and life changing'. Safeguarding procedures are robust. Local authority procedures and guidance for safe recruitment are followed rigorously. All staff have been subject to an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check. They work in partnership effectively to protect children and vulnerable adults.

Staff know their communities well; in turn, the communities know staff well and trust them implicitly. Relationships with statutory and voluntary sector organisations are

excellent. Centre staff have secured the trust of the whole community, including those in need, who depend on the staff for support and advice when they are at their most vulnerable. Users' views, including the views of children, supported by robust evaluation, data analysis and rigorous challenge by the collaborative leadership committee, are used well to influence provision. The centre's leadership recognises that collecting more specific data relating to a few aspects of the provision has the potential to further support development planning.

The inclusion of all children and their families is promoted very effectively and discrimination tackled rigorously. An excellent range of outreach services, including coffee mornings in local primary schools, enables the centre to engage with the majority of the community. These events are effectively bringing this widely spread community together. The use of sign language and picture cues, support to develop literacy skills and good use of the local translation service enable all users to communicate effectively. In the words of a member of the Building User Group, 'We want everyone to come here'.

The extent to which governance, accountability, professional supervision and day to day management arrangements are clear and understood	1
The extent to which ambitious targets drive improvement, provision is integrated and there are high expectations for users and the wider community	1
The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of users and the wider community	1
The extent to which equality is promoted and diversity celebrated, illegal or unlawful discrimination is tackled and the centre fulfils its statutory duties	1
The effectiveness of the centre's policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults	1
The extent to which evaluation is used to shape and improve services and activities	1
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	1

Any other information used to inform the judgements made

during this inspection

The report for Hindley Surestart Nursery (106397). The setting was inspected in May 2010 and put into special measures. A subsequent monitoring inspection took place in October when the nursery was judged to be making satisfactory progress in all aspects except in eliminating unsatisfactory teaching. The inspection also noted improvements in behaviour, and the impact of many initiatives introduced by the headteacher.

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 Hindley Children's Centre on 17-8 February 2011. We judged the centre as outstanding in all aspects.

Thank you for your help and contribution to the inspection. We really enjoyed talking to you about all the things you are involved in. You told us that you could not praise the centre enough for the support they have given you and the difference it has made to your lives. We visited many of the sessions that are offered at the centre, and read the case studies, comments and feedback about the courses you have attended and the services that you use. In particular we were extremely impressed with the number of you who are involved in organising many events at the centre and how successful you have been in raising £45,000 for the reading garden.

The sessions we saw at the centre, and the excellent work that you produce, are of an exceptionally high quality. You told us that you particularly value the time that link workers spend with you, and that they give you very helpful information on healthy eating, budgeting and keeping your children safe. You also told us that you enjoy the many activities that the centre provides such as 'Baby Picasso' and 'Go Bananas'. You said that the staff delivering these sessions make them really enjoyable. You also said how much you appreciated the time that staff spent with you and the fact that they always respond to your requests about new courses. We know that some of you have recently started a numeracy course as a result of your requests. We agree with you that Hindley Children's Centre provides you with excellent care, guidance and support because the needs of every parent and child are of the highest importance.

The centre provides excellent opportunities for new mothers and fathers to receive very helpful information and advice about how to manage children's behaviour through the 'Triple P' parenting programme. The centre supports those of you who want to move into employment through its links with Jobcentre Plus and the local

college, as well as providing many of you with good opportunities to work as a volunteer at the centre.

Senior staff, together with the collaborative leadership committee, lead and manage the centre exceptionally well. All staff and volunteers are very well trained. They ensure that you and your children are safe both at the centre and in your own home. Arrangements for child protection and safeguarding, including safe recruitment and use of staff are exemplary. Staff model safe practices in all the work that they do. Everyone is welcomed at the centre and all staff and volunteers go out of their way to ensure that you feel included and that your culture and beliefs are respected and celebrated. Senior staff are always wanting to improve things further. They listen carefully to your views to ensure that the provision meets your needs. They make changes quickly when things do not work. They know what the centre needs to do to improve even more, and know that they need to make sure that the work that they are doing with you and your children is carefully evaluated, so that the effect can be reported and used to develop more provision. The Building User Group is successfully engaging parents in its work, and challenges the centre to ensure that it continues to deliver work of a high quality.

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