

# Inspection report for Honeyhill Children's Centre

Local authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	367815
Inspection dates	10–11 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Paul Weston HMI

Centre governance	The local authority
Centre leader	Jason Wilson
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Centre address	Honeyhill Community and Children's Centre
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Linked school if applicable	Not applicable
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	Paston Fundays Pre-School EY404999

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 early years inspector. The inspectors held meetings with the centre manager, senior management team, representatives from the advisory board and local authority, a range of agencies and parents and other users of the centre. They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

## Information about the centre

This phase two centre serves the Paston ward in the city of Peterborough. It is the eight most deprived ward in the city. The area is predominantly White British with a very small percentage of families from minority ethnic groups. There is a large Gypsy Traveller community and an increasing number of families newly arrived to the area. The centre's reach covers two super output areas which contain varying levels of deprivation and unemployment. It has the sixth highest level of income support claimants in the city with low adult educational attainment records. Crime levels are also high. Over a third of the children live in households where no-one is currently in work and many are in receipt of benefits. Children's levels of on entry to early years provision are below those expected for their age.

The centre is located in a former primary school building and shares the accommodation with the Pupil Referral Service, Cross Keys housing association, and Paston Fundays Pre-school. A range of activity is also provided at Paston Health Centre, Brookside Church in Gunthorpe and Caverstede Early Years Centre. The centre is directly governed by Peterborough local authority. An advisory board provides advice and assistance to ensure the effective operation of the children's centre. It is made up of representatives from a wide range of groups and agencies. A parents' forum has been established which helps support the work of the advisory board. The centre is managed and led by the local authority. The wide range of services are provided by staff employed by partnership agencies including voluntary organisations who deliver services and activities for users of the children's 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

'Positive parents, positive children, positive community'. This is how the Chair of the Advisory Board summed up Honeyhill Children's Centre. This good centre provides a welcoming environment for all its users. Staff work hard to ensure equality of access to all. It celebrates diversity well. Relationships with families are strong. They appreciate the work of the centre and recognise the positive impact it has on their lives. A typical view expressed by one user is that, 'My whole life has changed because of the centre'.

Honeyhill has improved significantly over the past two years. This is down to the ambition, drive and high-quality leadership provided by the centre coordinator, coupled with the support of an enthusiastic, hardworking and committed staff. The inclusion of all children and their families is of paramount importance. A programme of interesting and engaging activities, along with concerted action to overcome weaknesses has seen the centre rejuvenated. As a result, the percentage of children living in the reach area seen by centre staff has tripled over the last two years. A very large majority of the most disadvantaged children living in the area now engage with the centres services or activities. Honeyhill has been particularly successful in empowering users to be fully involved in decisions about its work. Strong parental representation on the advisory board means that services are increasingly being shaped to meet the needs of the local community. Good support enables parents to develop confidence and committee skills to be effective board and parents' advisory group members. These improvements demonstrate the centre's good capacity for further improvement.

Highly effective multi-agency partnerships are a major strength. Health visitors, community midwives, representatives from Jobcentre Plus and the voluntary sector all work closely together. This enables the centre to offer high quality services to the whole community. Self evaluation is satisfactory. Evaluations demonstrate, in the main, that the centre is successfully improving the health, safety and economic well-being of those who take advantage of its services. However, targets for what improvements will look like or how they will be measured are not always precise enough on plans or reviews. Also, centre staff do not evaluate the longer term

impact of provision and outcomes for children and adults. Consequently, this makes it difficult for leaders to demonstrate fully the impact of its work.

Children, including those who are vulnerable or with disabilities, gain much from the imaginative range of activities on offer. For instance, a number of practical learning through play sessions have been introduced successfully. These are thoroughly enjoyed by children and their parents and carers. By the time children join Reception classes in their chosen primary school, their skills and experiences remain below those expected for their age. This is particularly the case in speaking and listening and their literacy skills. In addition, their personal, social and emotional development are also below those expected. These aspects are being developed in the centre but leaders have not yet developed a way of comprehensively demonstrating or measuring improvement.

The centre has many good arrangements to ensure safeguarding. Staff training is updated regularly. Outreach workers are vigilant and alert to crises. Correct and timely action is taken when necessary to ensure that children remain safe and common referral forms are suitably used to report issues or concerns.

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

### Recommendations for further improvement

By December 2011:

- Work closely with local settings, providers and schools to raise the attainment of children in communication, language and literacy, and personal, social and emotional development.
- Ensure sharp and measurable targets are included in the centre's delivery plan, and subsequent action plans and the reviews of activities are sufficiently rigorous to demonstrate the impact of its work.
- Improve systems and procedures to evaluate the longer-term impact of the provision and outcomes for children and adults who benefit from the range of the centre's activities.

## How good are outcomes for users?

2
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Honeyhill offers a good range of child and family health services. These include midwifery clinics and participation in 'Carnegie Clubs', which are designed to help families find out more about health and fitness. Parents demonstrate improving knowledge and skills in the preparation of a balanced diet through a wide range of activities such as 'Fun with Food' and healthy snacks provided at the Honeypot Café. Activity evaluations show that these have been of great benefit in helping parents and carers to understand how to improve the health of their children. As a result, the percentage of children in the Reception year who are obese has reduced over the last two years and is now below the Peterborough average.

Health visitors are very skilled at advising mothers about the services that are

available within the children's centre and the neighbouring health centre. Good advice is given about issues such as breastfeeding, smoking cessation, dental services and immunisation in the drop-in clinics or at the 'Stay and Play' times. Despite this, the percentage of mothers' breastfeeding at six to eight weeks is lower than the local average. Also, the percentage of mothers who smoke during pregnancy is significantly higher than the national average. The centre recognises that these are areas upon which to focus.

Honeyhill, in collaboration with partner agencies, is effective in identifying and responding to the needs of children and their families. The use of the Common Assessment Framework for recording and coordinating support programmes is consistent. Case studies featuring family support workers illustrate how effective their work is in helping parents and carers to become more confident and successful in managing their family lives. Support for those children with child protection plans and who are looked after is good. The centre provides a safe haven for many families who are made vulnerable by their circumstances. Well-trained administration staff act as a good first point of contact. They deal sensitively and effectively with the varied needs of many users. Observations of various activities and discussions with users indicate that they feel safe when attending the many activities and services provided by the centre. The centre works hard to help parents and carers keep their homes safe through schemes such as 'Pay to Keep'. Effective programmes provide helpful strategies to develop and improve parenting skills. Good help and support is provided for those suffering from domestic violence. In response to increased demand, the centre proposes to introduce the 'Freedom' programme shortly to provide additional support for domestic violence sufferers.

Centre staff are taking greater account of Early Years Foundation Stage guidance when planning play and learning sessions. Excellent partnerships with Caverstede Early Years Centre have led to the implementation of a number of jointly-led programmes. For instance, the joint support provided for childminder's living in the neighbourhood is beginning to have a good impact on improving children's learning outcomes. Children thoroughly enjoy their learning at the centre by participating in sessions such as 'Rhythm and Rhyme' and 'Never Mind The Mess'. The recently introduced 'Story Bugs Club' stimulates children's interest in reading by providing opportunities for them to share books and story sacks. These recent initiatives are beginning to have an impact, but children's skills on entry to school remains well below the local and national average. In addition, children's personal, social and emotional development skills are below average. Children identified at risk of poor outcomes have been allocated places on the two-year-old nursery education grant pilot scheme. However, the centre is unaware of what impact this initiative is having on improving child development.

Users are making a positive contribution to the community in a variety of ways because of the encouragement by centre staff. For instance, increasing numbers are volunteering regularly to help with centre activities. A particular strength is the innovative drama club. The recent pantomime has developed the skills and confidence of adults and their children of all ages in a variety of ways, from working

behind the scenes to performing on stage. The recent high quality production was thoroughly enjoyed by performers and the audience. This helps the community engage in positive behaviour and develop positive relationships. Staff and volunteers have attended events in the neighbourhood to promote the centre's services and also offer the community an opportunity to feed back their views. Users contribute well to the decision making and governance of the centre. There are five parent representatives on the advisory board. In addition, monthly Parent Action Group meetings influence the work of the centre by offering ideas and suggestions on behalf of the community.

A staged programme of courses is provided to an increasing number of users who are preparing for employment or further education by improving skills such as in literacy and numeracy. Many have made good progress from their starting points, with a number achieving Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications. The Jobcentre Plus outreach worker, based at the centre every four weeks, has conducted over 100 interviews over the past 12 months. Support has been provided for lone parents by making them aware of job vacancies and helping them apply for, and take up, offers of employment.

*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>3</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>2</b>

## How good is the provision?

**2**

The provision is good because it is based on good assessment of the needs of children and their families. An interesting range of enjoyable and engaging activities is provided by the centre which promotes purposeful learning. Every effort is made by centre staff to work with families in need, including those who are hard to reach. Outreach services meet the needs of the wider community well. Good support is provided to those who feel isolated. For example, the centre staff have gained the trust of the local Gypsy Traveller community by engaging them in activities and providing specific guidance through the Citizen's Advice Bureau. Partnership with childminders is strong and they regularly access the services provided by the centre.

Productive links with local settings and neighbouring primary schools have also been established.

Assessment of individual cases is robust, especially for children and families referred to the centre by external agencies or for those who self-refer. Families are then provided with timely, high-quality multi-agency support that meets their needs well. The use of the Common Assessment Framework is well embedded and strong partnerships with other agencies ensure that assessments of all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are accurate. There are clear programmes in place to promote the health and social well-being of users, including a strong emphasis on providing emotional support to boost their confidence and raise their self-esteem.

Good care, guidance and support, together with effective multi-agency working, ensure that families access personalised support. This includes parenting groups, one-to-one guidance and advice in the centre or at home, family support and specialist health services. Just having fun at events such as the play-and-learn sessions or the regular family parties attracts users to the centre and opens their eyes to other aspects of its provision. The 'Saturdays' group is particularly successful because it enables male role models to establish productive relationships with the children. It also helps fathers learn more about how to support their children's learning and development. Work on developing the garden area is also engaging interested adults in improving the children's learning environment at the centre. This is also proving to be a good opportunity to make new friends.

Parents' and carers' successful engagement in employment or training is assured by access to the Jobcentre Plus services. This ongoing monthly support offered by the centre enables parents and carers to be proactive in improving outcomes for their children. Family support workers are highly successful and crucial to the rapid improvement in services for users. They expertly assess the complicated needs of families who are vulnerable due to their circumstances. They work with families directly or engage the appropriate service to meet a specific need, acting as advocates for users.

*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

Strong leadership and management at all levels ensure good quality provision and the positive impact on children and adult users alike. Senior leaders set the tone. They communicate high expectations and are determined to ensure that the centre is effective in improving the lives of all users. Clear roles and responsibilities, smooth day-to-day management and good relationships mean that staff work well together to improve outcomes for users. Staff are passionate about the centre and its community. They are effective in ensuring that all children, parents and carers, regardless of differences or disability achieve and have the same equal access to a range of experiences.

The centre has strong partnerships with area health visitors, nursery nurses and midwives. Links with Caverstede Early Years Centre and Paston Ridings Primary School are well established. Good partnerships also exist with local housing associations, Jobcentre Plus and the Citizen's Advice Bureau. Governance is good and systems to ensure accountability are secure. Minutes and records of meetings are kept efficiently. The advisory board has been involved in constructing the centre's delivery plan which takes regard of data, including local and national comparisons provided by the local authority and other sources. The centre's range of users does not include more from hard-to-reach groups, such as pregnant teenagers. Professional supervision is strong, with clear performance management structures and target setting with staff, helping to ensure that their work is effective. Centre leaders ensure good use is made of skills of staff and resources of the centre. Value for money is good.

Self-evaluation is satisfactory. This means that, based on case studies, users' response to provision and input from staff and the parents' forum and focus groups the centre's priorities for improvement are fitting. The centre's delivery plan sets out the main priorities for action, reflecting leaders' clear understanding of aspects which require improvement. However, the targets for improvement are too vague. They do not specify precisely what the centre is seeking to achieve, which prevents it from making accurate evaluations of the impact of work. Some case studies are too descriptive and do not focus sufficiently on impact. Also, the long term benefit for those who have participated in extended courses such as the jointly led parenting course with Caverstede is not evaluated. Nevertheless, staff have a good understanding of the strengths in provision and where further improvements can be made and they respond well to the changing requirements of the area.

Safeguarding arrangements are good overall. There are some strong features. For instance, child protection arrangements are good and records are kept meticulously. The centre ensures that all criminal record bureau checks have been carried out, all staff have been fully trained and that procedures are known to all. Policies are clear and implemented fully. However, one or two minor omissions were noted in documents. These were swiftly rectified. Also, some health and safety information was not displayed clearly enough for users of the centre. This was addressed before



the end of the inspection.

*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>2</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>2</b>
<b>The extent to which evaluation is used to shape and improve services and activities</b>	<b>3</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

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](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

We inspected the Honeyhill Children's Centre on 10–11 May 2011. We judged the centre to be good.

Under the careful guidance of the coordinator, staff provide good care, guidance, and support for all of you who use the centre. Those of you who spoke to us said that you feel the centre is 'a lifeline'. Most importantly, you said it helps improve your lives, particularly for those of you who are facing difficult challenges. The centre staff have drive and ambition; they meet regularly to discuss the centre's work and plan for improvement. All staff place the upmost importance on you and your families and always provide a listening ear for you. They are passionate about creating an friendly and welcoming environment where you feel at home and able to talk freely about things that matter to you or are causing you concern. As a result, you told us that you value the centre, which means you have no hesitation in using the services regularly.

The centre offers a good range of services and activities for all families in the area, which are led by skilled and dedicated professionals. They are helping you to keep yourselves and your children healthy and safe. The children's behaviour at the centre is good and you and your children are safe there. Staff are helping you to keep yourselves and your children healthy by encouraging new mothers to breastfeed and by promoting healthy eating through cookery courses.

The staff at the centre encourage you to engage in play with your children from a very early age at sessions such as 'Stay and Play', 'Saturdays' and the 'Rhythm and Rhyme' workshops. We could see how much you and your children enjoy the activities you access at the centre and the positive effect these are having on you and your families. Having watched the video of the recent pantomime we can see how much you enjoyed the work of the drama group.

To develop further the work of the centre we have asked staff and the local authority to help children develop their speaking, listening and literacy skills and the way they play and get on with each other. We have also asked them to make sure the targets in the centre's plans are clear so that you know what it is trying to achieve. The centre then can use this information to let you know if it has been successful. Finally, we want the advisory board to check that the centre is on track to achieve all the things it is setting out to do. You can help with this last point by meeting with the Parents' Advisory Group, if you are interested, to help manage the centre.

We would like to thank everyone who came to speak with us. It was a privilege to be able to talk with you. Your honest and open discussions with us helped us immensely during the inspection. We thoroughly enjoyed spending time at your centre and we wish you and your families the best for the future.

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