Inspection report for Broadfield Children and Family Centre

Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	367762
Inspection dates	8–9 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Joanne Caswell HMI

Centre governance	Spurgeons and West Sussex County Council
Centre leader	Sam Colderwood
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
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Linked school if applicable	Not applicable
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	Broadfield Children and Family Centre Nursery EY299617

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.

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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 management, a senior manager from Spurgeons, a representative from the local authority, front line staff, representatives from the centre partnership group, partnership agencies and users of the centre.

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

Information about the centre

Broadfield Children and Family Centre originated from the Sure Start Local Programme. It serves the area of Broadfield, a large residential neighbourhood to the south west of Crawley, West Sussex. The centre operates from two sites. The main site in Creasys Drive is the base for services for children aged under five years. The linked site in Teasel Close accommodates the Family Resource Team. The centre was designated as a children's centre in November 2005. It was tendered out by West Sussex County Council in April 2010 to Spurgeons, a national children's charity. The centre is a phase one type centre and offers the full core offer. Childcare is provided by Broadfield Children and Family Centre Nursery which is managed by West Sussex County Council. Governance is provided by a centre partnership group who are accountable to Spurgeons and West Sussex County Council.

The centre serves a community that experiences high levels of social and economic disadvantage. The under fives population is greater in Broadfield than the West Sussex average. Children in Broadfield perform less well at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage than their peers and the number of families from black and minority ethnic groups is more than three times higher in Broadfield than in West Sussex. Over 10% of the population of Broadfield are in receipt of state benefits.

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**	**2**

Main findings

Broadfield Children and Family Centre is becoming well established in the local community. It has experienced a period of instability over the last year involving several changes in management which resulted in slippages in standards and service delivery. In March 2011 a new centre manager was appointed. Despite only being in post for 14 weeks at the time of the inspection, it is clear the new manager is driving the centre forward. This is leading to significant improvements in outcomes and an increased number of centre users. The new centre manager and Spurgeons demonstrate significant investment and commitment to the centre. As a result, the centre's capacity to improve is good. A detailed analysis of service provision has been completed and a comprehensive action plan for improvement is now in place. Consequently, services are now becoming more focused on improving outcomes for families and strategies for measuring impact are now being developed.

The centre provides a very welcoming, homely environment. Creative use of soft furnishings and colourful resources and equipment make the centre very child-friendly. Centre users told inspectors how safe they feel at the centre. Parents stated 'There's always someone to help you' and 'All staff are friendly and helpful'. The centre offers a secure environment with good attention given towards promoting the safety and well-being of centre users. Safeguarding arrangements are good. All staff are caring and attentive and there is a friendly, relaxed atmosphere throughout the centre. Equality and diversity are promoted well as there is a strong focus on inclusion.

The centre offers a good range of services. Links with partner agencies are beginning to become more established and work is in place to strengthen these at a strategic level. This is particularly evident with the health services. Although agencies regularly evaluate their services, these are not always linked into the centre's action plans. Consequently, services are not yet fully linked and integrated. Senior management use self-evaluation exceptionally robustly and are highly committed towards

reflecting on practice and identifying areas for improvement. Although centre staff are aware of the importance of reviewing their services and activities, this is not systematically implemented. As a result, the centre has had difficulty in some areas of demonstrating impact of its services.

Children benefit from a wide range of play and early learning experiences. Parents told inspectors how they enjoyed undertaking activities with their children and many used the toy library. The importance of play is promoted throughout the centre and most activities within the centre are generally becoming more focused on the six areas of learning of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Focused groups are organised, such as It's OK to Play, which help parents understand the value of purposeful play. However, practice between some centre staff is inconsistent. Some staff miss opportunities to help parents understand how they can extend their children's learning and development through further play experiences home.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- Improve the use of self-evaluation at all levels to ensure staff systematically review services and measure impact on outcomes for families.
- Ensure centre users consistently understand the value of play experiences and recognise how to promote children's learning at home.
- Strengthen partnership working between agencies to fully integrate services at all levels to provide a cohesive provision.

How good are outcomes for users? 3

The outcomes for users of the centre are improving. A systematic approach to recording data and measuring impact is now being developed. Parents who use the centre are appreciative of the opportunities the centre provides. One parent told inspectors the centre 'changed my life.' Another parent stated: 'They've made such a difference to my family.' Parents develop increased awareness of the importance of health provision for their family and benefit from regular contact with the health visitor and the weekly drop-in clinics. As a result, breastfeeding rates are improving as parents understand they can access relevant specialist support. A range of activities enables parents to understand the importance of nutrition, diet and exercise. The cookery classes provide opportunities for parents and children to cook and enjoy meals together. Parents report the baby massage classes have improved the emotional well-being of their babies and strengthened the bond between baby and parent. Centre users told inspectors they find information provided by health professionals useful, although they would like to be able to access ante-natal services from the centre as these are currently not provided.

All services keep children safe. Staff develop very positive, caring relationships with parents and children and are committed to supporting their welfare. This ensures any families experiencing difficulty or crisis quickly seek help and know they will be supported. Effective signposting between services ensures parents access information on most services when they need it. Case study evidence shows there is good support for children on child protection plans and the centre makes full use of the Common Assessment Framework. Good systems are in place for information sharing between all agencies involved. This has resulted in a decrease in the number of children requiring a child protection plan. A wide range of parenting courses help parents manage children's behaviour, improve relationships and ensure children's safety in the home. For example, one parent told inspectors she felt more confident in her parenting following the completion of a paediatric first-aid course.

Children who attend the day-care provision are very well prepared for school. However, the outstanding early years provision in the nursery is not yet fully replicated in the early years provision in the centre. As a result, children's experiences between the nursery and children's centre are variable. Children are very happy within the centre and are keen to take part in activities. There are many opportunities for children to play, both inside and outside, and participate in activities which help to promote their language development. Parents told inspectors how much they enjoy taking part in the courses available to them. Targeted support is in place for young parents, such as the Parents with Prospects course and this is beginning to help parents return to education and undertake training. Some parents are beginning to gain qualifications through accredited courses. The Family Learning programme is currently being developed and will offer an additional range of courses. Weekly sessions with professionals from Jobcentre Plus enable parents to access information about training and employment. The internet café offers a safe environment for parents to access information and prepare for job interviews.

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	**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	**3**
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 provides a good range of services and is making improved links with external agencies to support provision. Partnerships between all agencies are developing and the family outreach team, information assistants and centre staff help to signpost parents to different services. Families are assessed on an individual basis and the centre generally meets their needs effectively. Home visits and outreach work ensure the most vulnerable families in the community are accessing the centre. The centre staff know the local community well and are working hard to address their needs. For example, groups are provided to support families who speak English as an additional language. Teenage parents are supported through the 'Huggees' programme and the local childminders use the centre for weekly drop-in groups. Engagement with all known vulnerable groups within the centre's area is good and attendance levels are increasing each month.

The centre provides a range of information and advice to parents. One parent told inspectors, 'I feel totally supported, not judged.' Some services are more accessible to parents than others. For example, there are shortfalls in health provision preventing parents from accessing the full range of health services. Information sharing between all services is not yet fully embedded as, currently, not all partner agencies are integrated.

Learning and development for adults is beginning to develop throughout the centre. The volunteer programme is becoming established and a wider range of courses is being introduced. Learning tailored towards individual need is starting to be addressed. One parent has been supported through the centre to become a volunteer and is now working towards an early years qualification. A wide range of parenting courses have made a positive impact on improving outcomes for children and families and the centre manager has established provision to develop this further. Children enjoy activities and begin to develop positive attitudes towards learning. The centre manager has forged stronger links with the nursery manager and an early years advisory teacher. This is leading to improvements beginning to be made in the Early Years Foundation Stage provision within the children's centre.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The effectiveness of the assessment of the needs of children, parents and other users	**3**
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	2

The quality of care, guidance and support offered to users within the centre and the wider community	3

How effective are the leadership and management? 2

Leadership and management are good. The new centre manager has a very clear understanding of the role of children's centres and is working extremely hard to develop the team and increase accountability. She is an inspiring leader and is working hard to quickly raise standards. Improvements are being made at a very good rate. Priorities for development have been quickly identified and targeted support programmes are in place leading to notable improvements. Attendance levels are significantly improving and resources are now being deployed more effectively. The centre makes full use of its resources in addressing the needs of local families. This is leading to improvements in all outcomes. As a result, the centre now provides good value for money.

Governance arrangements are secure and developing. The newly-formed centre partnership group is beginning to hold the centre to account and understands its role in challenging the centre. Data are being used more scrupulously to assess need and measure impact, although the links with all partner agencies are not yet fully secure. Therefore, action planning for the centre is slightly fragmented between services. Spurgeons adopts a full range of evaluation processes and is highly committed towards reviewing practice. These processes are not yet fully embedded between staff at all levels. Consequently, not all staff across all agencies work collaboratively to complete self-evaluation and measure impact. User engagement is satisfactory. There are many opportunities available to parents to share their views and the centre actively encourages feedback. The new manager recently organised a parents' consultation day and is keen to develop the opportunities for parents to regularly contribute ideas. However, the centre has found it difficult to recruit parents onto a Parent Forum. Parents are keen to share their views and offer informal feedback, although they are not yet fully engaged in making decisions about the centre and shaping future services.

Safeguarding arrangements are good. The centre is fully committed towards supporting the health and safety of all centre users. All staff regularly undertake appropriate training. Recruitment procedures are robust. Comprehensive risk assessments ensure all areas of the premises and activities are consistently safe. Good networking arrangements between safeguarding agencies ensure the sharing of relevant information to support families. The family outreach teams and agencies, such as Home Start, undertake their role effectively in early intervention and preventative care. The Family Resource Team plays a vital role in assessing the needs of vulnerable families and offering targeted support.

Equality and diversity are respected throughout the centre. Every family is valued and data show that families using the centre are representative of the cultural diversity of the local area. Vulnerable groups are targeted appropriately and case study evidence shows the most vulnerable and harder to reach families are now accessing services. This is through effective outreach work and through the positive relationships staff form with all families. Data show all children achieve and the gap between the most disadvantaged and the rest is closing. Targeted support is in place for adults and children with disabilities and all families have access to the very well-equipped sensory room. Agencies use the centre to support families with children with autism and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

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	**3**
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	**3**
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

The linked early years provision – Broadfield Children and Family Centre Nursery, was last inspected by Ofsted in September 2010. It was not inspected as part of this inspection, although inspectors did visit the nursery and the provision for day care was considered as part of this inspection.

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 Broadfield Children and Family Centre on 8 and 9 June 2011. We judged the centre as satisfactory overall. We talked with parents, staff, partners and members of the local authority linked to the centre. We observed the centre's work and looked at a range of documents. Those of you who spoke to us told us how much you enjoyed visiting the centre and how it was beginning to help you in developing new skills. We were impressed at how quickly the new centre manager has made changes which are leading to some real improvements. We noted how well the centre manager and senior managers look at the services provided and identify further ways to improve through evaluation. However, we noted that not all staff were doing this. We have asked the centre manager to ensure all staff review the activities and measure their impact.

We thought there was a good range of services available to you and your families, although we found that not all agencies are working closely together to identify improvements. We have asked the centre manager to address this.

We considered there was a wide range of activities for you to undertake with your children. The children who attend the nursery benefit from excellent early years provision, although the activities provided by the centre are sometimes not quite as good as this. Occasionally, centre staff miss opportunities to help you understand how your children learn and give you ideas to promote this at home. We have asked the centre to address this.

We thought the centre provided a very homely and safe environment. Many of you told us how safe and secure you feel in the centre and about the positive relationships you develop with staff. We observed how caring and friendly the staff are towards you and your children and the very happy atmosphere. We noted how well the centre supports your safety and welfare. Safeguarding arrangements are good and families experiencing difficulty and crisis are very well supported.

During the inspection we met with some members of the centre partnership group which provides the governance of the centre. We talked with them about the important role they have in making sure the centre continually makes improvements and listens to your needs to deliver services which will benefit you and your families. The group is still quite new, but has a secure understanding of how it is going to do this.

We would like to thank all of you who took the time to meet with us and to talk to us about the activities you enjoy at the centre. We wish you and your families the very best for the future.

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