

Inspection report for Butterflies Children's Centre

Local authority	Wakefield Metropolitan District Council
Inspection number	365657
Inspection dates	21-22 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Joan Cawdron

Centre governance	The local authority
Centre leader	Jill Hickman
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Centre address	Wakefield Road Normanton West Yorkshire WF6 1BB
Telephone number	01924 307835
Fax number	01924 307861
Email address	jhickman@newlands.wakefield.sch.uk

Linked school if applicable	Newlands Primary School
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	Early Birds Day care

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.

An inspection of Newlands Primary School and Nursery was carried out at the same time as the inspection of the centre under Section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The report of this inspection is available on our website www.ofsted.gov.uk.

This inspection was carried out by an additional inspector and an early years inspector. The inspectors held meetings with representatives of the local authority, members of the extended services board, the partnership board, and with a broad range of users and a number of partners, including health and social care. They observed sessions at the centre, looked at the centre's work and a range of relevant documentation.

Information about the centre

Butterflies Children's Centre is a phase one children's centre designated in February 2007, based on the site of Newlands Primary School. It serves a former mining community that continues to experience relatively high levels of social and economic disadvantage, with many families in receipt of benefits. It is ranked in the top 30% of the most deprived areas in the country. It is located in the Wakefield Metropolitan District. The centre serves the geographical area of Normanton and provides the full core offer. There is a high concentration of social rented households in the area. Within the reach of the centre there are significant issues surrounding unemployment, and low levels of literacy and numeracy. The population is predominantly of White British heritage although there are a small number of families from Eastern Europe.

The centre has a manager who links with the local authority for monitoring and supervision of the provision. Governance of the centre is provided by the local authority in conjunction with an extended services committee. There is a range of health, social care, family support and education services operating from the centre with associated professionals and centre staff. There are links to other local primary schools as well as the on-site primary school.

Childcare is provided through 'Stay and Play' and regular crèche sessions. Full day-care provision is delivered by the Early Birds Nursery, which is located close to the centre. It was inspected in 2010. The inspection report can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk. Most children enter day-care and early education with skills lower than those 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

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

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

2

Main findings

Butterflies Children's Centre provides a warm, welcoming and safe environment for all its users. Parents and carers value the work it does and recognise the positive impact it has on their lives. One parent described the views of many and said 'The centre staff and the various activities they provide has given me a purpose and led to my children being better behaved and more confident with others. They look forward to coming to the centre'. A key strength of the centre is the multi-agency partnership work which is fully responsive to meeting the needs of the families.

The centre promotes equality and diversity well. Wider aspects of equality and diversity are supported through a range of displays and toys. The centre provides a good range of services that effectively raises the knowledge of parents and carers about healthy lifestyles and keeping their children safe. All appropriate policies and procedures are in place and up-to-date. Safeguarding is good, meets all legal requirements and ensures that all users feel safe at the centre.

Observations by inspectors, data scrutinised, evaluations conducted by the centre and case studies demonstrate that outcomes for users are good. The provision is also good. Parents and carers are developing their confidence, communication and self-esteem through programmes of personal development at the centre. The centre displays current job advertisements in the 'job shop area' in the reception area and a Jobcentre Plus adviser supports the centre well.

The centre is an inclusive setting and engages with all families from the different cultures in its area. Particularly effective actions take place to support many families

and children who are made vulnerable by their circumstances. Those who require support in times of acute need or crisis are helped through close multi-agency working and the highly effective support team. The numbers of families attending the centre are consistently high, and the achievements of children are good.

Users' views are heard through the effective parents' forum and they play an increasingly important role in the development of the centre's activities. Evaluations however are not summarised and do not fully inform development plans for further improvements of the centre's work. The extended services board, local authority and parents' forum support and challenge the centre to provide better outcomes for its users. Changes to the governance arrangements are currently being planned and it is unclear how the new arrangements will provide the support and level of challenge that is needed to continue to support the families in this area.

The centre provides good value for money. Its highly effective leadership and current knowledge of the needs of the area through dialogue with users, its partners and the wider community give it good capacity to improve further.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- Provide greater clarity of the planned governance arrangements to support the children's centre to continue to improve its provision.
- Improve the use of evaluations of the impact of the centre's work to better inform development planning.

How good are outcomes for users?

2

Evidence through case studies and discussions with partners and parents and carers all reflect the very positive impact of partnership working to promote children's and families' emotional well-being and physical health across the centre's reach area. Parents and carers notice the improvement in bonding and relationships with their babies through the baby massage group. The numbers of mothers initiating and maintaining breastfeeding are improving, supported effectively by the centre. One young mother commented that she could not have continued breastfeeding without this support. A number of these mothers are now participating in the peer training programme to enable them to help other mothers. Healthy eating sessions promote greater awareness of the impact of portion control and reducing the numbers of snacks on their children. Healthy snacks are provided in some sessions. Specialist services, such as speech and language development sessions and support for children with special educational needs, is providing parents with skills to support their children more effectively. Oral health support has been provided through the provision of dental checks and a significant number of children have received fluoride

coating. All groups from a variety of backgrounds attend the centre and work harmoniously together. The centre effectively addresses users' feelings of isolation and provides good opportunities for families to engage in a range of services and develop strong friendships. A typical view is that, 'I have met so many people here and I now have a circle of friends'. Users report that their confidence and self-esteem has improved since attending the centre.

All services offered in the centre keep users safe. The centre's good quality relationships with families and their children allow staff to identify any safety concerns within families and to intervene appropriately. The mental health outcomes for potentially vulnerable families, including those with children with additional needs and those whose children are on child protection plans or who are in the care of the local authority, are particularly good. Staff are knowledgeable on the centre's procedures and where required the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is used successfully to ensure teams can be assembled quickly to support children and families when needs are identified. Case studies and discussions with parents and carers provide strong evidence that having access to programmes on strengthening families helps parents and carers form relationships and to trust others. This enables them to improve their children's communication skills, learning and behaviour. Injuries to children requiring attendance at accident and emergency are higher than the area average and the centre has improved families' awareness of safety in the home through activities provided by the Fire Service and first aid programmes.

Children are better prepared for nursery and mainstream school due to effective delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage at the centre. Children are becoming inquisitive learners through well planned play and learning experiences. Observations and recording of progress are used effectively to monitor progression through the Early Years Foundation Stage. Adults are offered educational courses that help them develop their English language and numeracy skills, as well as the social and emotional aspects of learning very well. The centre has positive relationships with Jobcentre Plus who support families not only with job search, but also with benefits advice, family tax credits and in accessing job related training to increase their life chances and employment prospects.

Children's behaviour throughout the centre is good. The centre staff successfully promote a sense of belonging and respect for different cultures. As a result, users and staff fully enjoy their time spent in the centre. 'Time out' sessions supported by the crèche provide opportunities for adults to relax in the centre, to talk to each other and to be provided with information on such topics as safety in the home, behaviour management and parenting skills.

These are the grades for the outcomes for users

The extent to which children, including those from vulnerable groups, are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy and families have healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children are safe and protected, their welfare	2

concerns are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them	
The extent to which all users enjoy and achieve educationally and in their personal and social development	2
The extent to which children engage in positive behaviour and develop positive relationships and users contribute to decision-making and governance of the centre	2
The extent to which children are developing skills for the future and parents are developing economic stability and independence including access to training	2

How good is the provision?

2

Staff thoroughly understand users' needs due to sensitive personal contact and good use of data. The assessment of individual cases is good. Users are confident that the staff will help them to find the right advice and support. Parent support workers play a key role in helping families with children with special educational needs, those whose safety is at risk as a result of domestic violence and those who are isolated because they speak little or no English. Excellent partnerships with different agencies and providers help to secure swift identification and meeting of needs. CAF processes are used well.

The centre's crèche room and service provides a very good example for parents, carers and childminders of ways to promote the learning and development of very young children. Those who are in the areas of highest deprivation are prioritised where possible. Planning is shared with users so they can see how the activities on offer ensure progress across the areas of learning. This helps to ensure a strong and consistent approach to preparing children for nursery and school. It is also having a very positive impact on outcomes, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Staff are good role models in creating a climate where everyone is included and has fun. These enjoyable activities offer many opportunities for support to be provided to help parents understand the importance of play and how to plan this. Childminders attend the centre regularly and can access development of their skills through observation and participation with crèche workers. Achievements are recorded and celebrated very well, whether this is a small step in a very young child's development, or an adults' progress in developing their language, literacy and numeracy or ideas to use with their children.

Feedback from local schools include comments on the higher levels of confidence and abilities of children who have accessed learning and development activities through the centre. Transition arrangements for children moving into nursery are managed effectively through visits by the teacher to the centre and for children and parents to visit the nursery. A number of sessions for fathers have been held with low attendance, however, there are increasing numbers of fathers and grandfathers

now attending the centre and strategies to engage more of them are being developed.

Care, guidance and support are good. Sensitive individualised and tailored support is provided to all families and children who access the centre. There is evidence of outstanding multi-agency working, which ensures that families can access the right kind of support from a range of health professionals, the youth development team and local schools in providing holiday activities for all age ranges that have an outdoor physical activity focus. Most outreach services are effective in meeting the needs of the community. Particularly effective are the reciprocal arrangements with social care, where core meetings agree what actions will be taken and by whom. Regular contact between social care staff and the centre provides continuity of support for families with preventative actions taken quickly where child protection issues may arise.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The effectiveness of the assessment of the needs of children, parents and other users	2
The extent to which the centre promotes purposeful learning, development and enjoyment for all users	2
The extent to which the range of services, activities and opportunities meet the needs of users and the wider community	2
The quality of care, guidance and support offered to users within the centre and the wider community	2

How effective are the leadership and management?

2

The centre manager is a positive leader who manages the multi-disciplinary staff team well, leading by example, and establishes highly effective relationships with all those who can provide a service. Senior leaders set the tone, communicate high expectations and are determined to ensure that the centre is effective in improving the lives of all users. Partnership working is outstanding and all partners contribute to the provision through a clear understanding of how each provider will support meeting the needs of the users. Through the partnership board they are working together to provide support to each other in order to maximise funding to meet the needs of the community. All expressed the rewarding nature and confidence about working with this centre.

Leaders set an ethos within the centre where safeguarding is a high priority. All legal requirements are met and Criminal Records Bureau checks have been carried out for

all staff and volunteers. Guidance is provided to staff through a good range of policies and procedures, which is accessed through the local authority's computer system. These provide clear information on the steps to be taken where child protection issues might be identified. The centre ensures that staff training is regularly updated to ensure the safety of all users. Self-evaluation is effective and staff use reflective processes to improve the delivery of the many activities provided for users. Analysis of users' views has made the centre more aware of those areas that are effective and those requiring further development. Targets are set and the local authority works with the centre to review their progress towards their goals quarterly. Performance management of staff is rigorous and arrangements for supervision meetings and appraisals are thorough.

The centre provides an inclusive setting and engages with children with learning difficulties and families from the increasing numbers of families moving into the area from Poland. The number of families attending the centre is consistently high, and the achievements of children are good. Resources are used very effectively to encourage learning and development. Staff are well utilised and provide a good range of activities. A wide range of high quality play equipment, toys and books provide inspirational learning opportunities for children.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The extent to which governance, accountability, professional supervision and day to day management arrangements are clear and understood	2
The extent to which ambitious targets drive improvement, provision is integrated and there are high expectations for users and the wider community	2
The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of users and the wider community	2
The extent to which equality is promoted and diversity celebrated, illegal or unlawful discrimination is tackled and the centre fulfils its statutory duties	2
The effectiveness of the centre's policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults	2
The extent to which evaluation is used to shape and improve services and activities	2
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	2

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

None.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from our website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like us to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Summary for centre users

We inspected Butterflies Children's Centre on 21-22 June 2011. We judged the centre as good overall.

Thank you for making us feel welcome and for taking the time to talk to us about your children's centre. Your views were very helpful to the inspection. Many of you told us that the staff are friendly, welcoming and very supportive. We agree.

The main job of a children's centre is to bring together all the services for children and families to work together in your best interests. Butterflies Children's Centre does this brilliantly. By working together with partners, such as health professionals, safety advisers and Jobcentre Plus, you are provided with a good range of support and access to learning and development. These ensure there are good opportunities for you to learn how to lead a healthy life and to be more confident.

Some of you told us that taking part in the centre's activities has given you the opportunity to make new friends, learn new skills and not feel so alone. Particularly helpful has been the support provided through programmes on developing your parenting skills and understanding how to better ensure the safety of your children. Many of you have valued the support provided by health professionals and the centre staff in helping you develop a healthy lifestyle. Children who use the centre make good progress in their learning and development.

We saw how much you and your children enjoy the activities in the centre, including the opportunities to play, learn and have fun together. We found that the work of the centre in supporting children to develop their communication and language skills is good, especially in their knowledge of letters and sounds.

The people in charge of running the centre are doing a good job. The centre manager works extremely hard to make sure that everything the centre does for you

will make a difference to the area in which you live. She makes sure that everyone who works at the centre share this strong commitment. We heard many examples from you about how the staff are all making a real difference to your lives. The whole family is at the heart of what everyone is doing and this is seen in the good quality of the individual support that is provided and the range of activities that can be accessed either in the centre or in other local provision.

The extended services board and senior leaders are committed to making a difference to your lives and the families in the local area. The centre uses a variety of information on the impact of the wide range of its services, to review how well particular programmes meet your needs. We have asked the centre to further develop the structure of the governing body to ensure the quality of the services it provides continues to be of a high standard and to improve its use of programme reviews to plan for future developments.

We would like to wish you, your children and the families in Normanton the best for the future.

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