

Inspection report for Prospect Kilton Children's Centre

Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	382078
Inspection dates	14–15 July 2011
Reporting inspector	Lynne Selkirk

Centre governance	North Nottinghamshire College
Centre leader	Una Daniel
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
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Linked school if applicable	122607 St Augustine's Nursery and Infant School 122606 St Augustine's Junior School
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	EY342454 Kilton Child 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 the registered childcare provision was carried out at the same time as the inspection of the centre under Section 3 of the Childcare Act 2006. 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 the centre manager, the senior leadership team, staff, a headteacher, and representatives from the local authority, Nottinghamshire College, the local advisory group, the parents' forum and the health service. They also had discussions with users, observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

Information about the centre

Prospect Kilton Children Centre is located on the site of St Augustine's Nursery, Infant and Junior schools in Worksop, Nottinghamshire. The centre serves the communities of Prospect and Kilton. It was designated a phase two centre in 2006 and has delivered the full core offer of services since June 2008. The local authority has commissioned North Nottinghamshire College to manage the centre. The advisory group is made up of representatives from the local community, partners and parents.

Provision is delivered through a cluster partnership with eight other children's centres in the district of Bassetlaw. Most of the population is of White British heritage. However, there is a growing number of Polish families settling in the area. The reach has areas of social and economic disadvantage where some are ranked in the 30% most disadvantaged. The area has predominantly privately owned housing with pockets of supported housing mainly in Prospect. There are 635 children aged under five years in the reach area, of which 93 live in workless households.

Children enter Early Years Foundation Stage provision with skills and abilities that are below those expected for their age.

A range of supporting services, including health and adult training courses, are delivered alongside partner agencies on-site or through using local schools and community venues in the reach area. Parents and carers are signposted to a range of universal and specialist services.

Full day care and crèche facilities operate from within the centre and are managed by the Pre-school Learning Alliance. The centre cares for up to 74 children in the early years' age group of which no more than 50 may be under three years of age. The centre is open from 8.00am until 6.00pm Monday to Friday 50 weeks a year and is also open on occasional evenings and weekends as required to meet service users' needs.

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

Prospect Kilton Children's Centre is a safe, warm and welcoming environment which provides good services for young children and their families. Good learning opportunities and the celebration of achievement permeate the centre; there is a buzz of activity about the place and display is vibrant, engaging and informative. Users are engaged effectively in a broad range of activities, and their views are continually sought and acted upon. The purposeful centre leadership has built a good team of staff who know the families well, inspire trust and are committed to improving professional skills and knowledge.

The centre's leadership team, advisory board and governing body have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the centre, although the advisory board's contribution to strategic planning and challenge of the centre is not fully developed. Although evaluation is accurate and the impact of the centre's work is evident, the systems for measuring this impact are inconsistent and progress in all areas is not always demonstrated clearly and succinctly. Expertise in children's centre leadership is shared throughout the Bassetlaw cluster and a collegiate approach to

challenge and support each other at this level is a strength. As a result, the children's centre demonstrates a good capacity to improve.

Inclusion and equality are firmly placed at the heart of the centre's vision, policies, procedures, practice and activities. All staff involved in working at the centre and in partnerships are very clear of their roles in promoting safe and healthy lifestyles and protecting children. Good communication systems help to ensure that care, guidance and support for children and families are well matched to needs, particularly in times of crisis. Procedures to follow when concerns are raised about children and families are rigorous and effective, and staff are skilled in identifying issues and using the Common Assessment Framework to bring about swift referrals to different agencies when necessary.

Good outcomes generally are underpinned by the effective assessment of users' needs and the provision of a good range of services and opportunities for both children and adults. The 'Keeping Up with the Children' course has created the opportunity for parents and carers to learn together. The centre is very responsive to change, and both child and parent voice influences the provision strongly. There have been successful outcomes in a range of adult education opportunities which have included courses in a range of creative activities. The support for parents and carers through constant encouragement enables them to grow in confidence in caring for their children and develops their ambition in engaging in further learning and contributing to the life of the community.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- Streamline the systems for planning and evaluating the centre's work in order that impact can be demonstrated clearly.
- Develop the advisory board to ensure that all members contribute to decision making and strategic planning in order to challenge the centre and hold it to account for its work.

How good are outcomes for users?

2

The centre is successful in promoting healthy lifestyles among the children and families through a range of services. Crèche facilities are provided so that adults can focus on their own learning. There are clear routines and policies relating to providing healthy snacks and modelling healthy eating during activities at the centre. Users have benefited from an 'Eat Smart' Level 2 nutrition course, and a group of parents has taken part in a successful 12-week 'ZEST' programme focusing on diet and exercise. Parents say they are more informed than they were before about the salt content in food and serving healthier sized portions. Healthy lifestyles underpin the antenatal and postnatal programmes coordinated at the centre. There is active engagement in the centre's 'Health Walks' and an increase in the numbers of families engaging in a healthy food cooperative. Although the number of mothers breastfeeding their babies is below the national average, the health visitor works in

partnership with the centre midwife to promote this extensively; the uptake of breastfeeding remains a priority for the centre. The centre has no statistics on the impact of a smoking cessation project. This service is signposted to another centre in the cluster and the health visitor provided anecdotal evidence regarding its success.

Children’s behaviour was observed to be good; children relate well to each other. Young children are encouraged to express their feelings through the use of signs and symbols and this contributes to the planning of activities. The care, play and learning workers provide good role models and promote children’s independence well. There is good emphasis on helping children and their families to keep safe. Activities to raise safety awareness have been well subscribed. Families value the home-safety advice they receive and there are waiting lists for the paediatric first-aid course. Case studies relating to postnatal depression and domestic violence evidence the success of the centre in giving parents and carers the confidence to manage their personal situations more effectively. A few young parents have been successfully empowered to gain employment.

The centre has contributed significantly to the improvements in attainment in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are assessed early on entry and ‘All about Me’ records are regularly updated. Weaknesses highlighted in both the creativity and the communication and literacy areas of learning and development are being addressed through joint planning and the effective deployment of the children’s centre teacher in training the centre care, play and learning workers so that the needs of all children are met. Transition is a key strength of centre activity. The ‘Mighty Creative’ project and the ‘Bear Hunt’ theme have created memorable experiences of partnership learning.

The use of the Common Assessment Framework and ‘Team around the Child’ processes are firmly embedded through the centre and partner agencies. Children on child protection plans receive high-quality support and monitoring.

Economic well-being of users has been greatly improved because of the centre’s work and the constant encouragement and praise that users are afforded. The number of volunteers at the centre is increasing steadily. The parents’ forum continues to develop and influence the centre’s activities, although not all members are fully aware of the priorities of the centre’s work. Feedback from the ‘Family Munday’ group, where fathers, grandfathers and stepfathers are encouraged to take part in creative learning and play activities, is very positive. Comments highlight how their self-confidence has improved and how they appreciate the opportunity to meet other parents and carers.

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

Good-quality services, activities and learning opportunities are helping to improve the outcomes for families attending the centre and those who receive targeted support in their own homes. A system to identify the location of all families in the area and target support is in place.

Staff are well informed about children's and families' needs; family support workers ensure that the communication of information between relevant agencies is swift and responsive. Due to an increase in Polish families in the communities of Prospect and Kilton, a satellite support group has been set up to encourage these families to attend the centre. The centre celebrates cultural differences at the 'Stay and Play' workshops where families learn keywords in Polish together. Jobcentre Plus sessions on site are well attended and they provide good-quality support and guidance.

A team of community workers plans the provision of meaningful adult education courses, encourages participation and routinely tracks progress. Intervention with extra support and encouragement takes place regularly so that good gains are made in learning and achievement. Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are strengthened through the inclusion of these skills in a range of practical and creative courses and the opportunity for parents to learn alongside their children. One parent said, 'It has given me a little bit more confidence with literacy.' Another said, 'It has given me more ideas to help teach my daughter about numbers and money.'

As a result of attending the fathers' group, one young parent reported that his self-confidence had increased and he is now a volunteer for St John Ambulance. Another father, now pursuing a career in childcare through the encouragement afforded at the centre, has recently won an adult learner's award for achievement.

Activities to support learning through play are well received and well attended. Children observed in the 'Stay and Play' sessions were seen to be inquisitive active learners, interacting well with one another. Celebration of achievement is a core theme threading through the provision. One parent reported that 'Surebabies' and 'Suretots' activities were 'brilliant'; children with special educational needs and/or disabilities taking part in these activities are very well supported.

An effective volunteers' programme has enabled some parents and carers to further

their training and contribute to a range of facilitator roles in the centre; participation is actively promoted. The childminding group is now being re-launched and is a priority for development.

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's safeguarding arrangements are given a high priority and are reviewed frequently. Vetting is rigorous and robust. Site security is good, and displays around the centre inform users what to do should they have concerns. Staff are suitably trained and case studies show staff work well with partners to safeguard families in crisis.

Partnerships between the centre, the Bassetlaw cluster of children's centres and external agencies are good and there are effective channels to communicate, share and build upon good practice. These have a good impact on improving outcomes for children and families in Prospect and Kilton. The partnership between the schools on site at Kilton is particularly strong and is a good example of a seamless transition between learning phases. Diversity is explicitly valued and promoted. Every effort is made by centre staff to work with families in need and those who feel isolated.

The centre coordinator has been in post since the setting first opened as a Sure Start programme and she has built a team of enthusiastic, caring and supportive colleagues. Her relentless approach to improving provision through a response to users' needs and wishes, and her ability to seek alternative sources of funding are having a positive impact on outcomes for users. Effective monitoring ensures financial oversight of the centre to ensure it gives good value for money.

The centre coordinator recognises that measurable impact is not always clearly demonstrated and the planning and evaluation systems in place are not the most efficient. Governance and accountability arrangements are clearly understood. A parents' forum, which is well established and reflects the reach area, actively fundraises and contributes to the centre's information leaflets. It is accepted that the challenge provided by all levels of governance needs to be more balanced.

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	2
The extent to which the centre supports and encourages the wider community to engage with services and uses their views to develop the range of provision	2

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

The children's centre inspection findings were informed by a parallel inspection of Kilton Child Care day care provision which was judged to be good on 14 July 2011.

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 Prospect Kilton Children's Centre on 14–15 July 2011. We judged the centre as good overall.

Thank you to those of you who contributed to this inspection. We are grateful to you for sharing with us your experiences of the centre. One of you said that it was a shame he could not shout from the rooftops what a positive impact the centre's support has had on his life. Families who use the facilities regularly say that they enjoy the activities and that they appreciate the opportunities to meet with other parents and see their children interact with each other. Activities such as 'Stay and Play', 'Surebabies' and 'Suretots' are popular, and you told us how you enjoy celebrating your children's learning and have fun together. Some of you also told us about the encouragement you receive from the centre staff and the opportunities you have to contribute to the life of the centre through the parents' forum. The opportunity to study a range of adult education courses has raised your awareness about safety through the courses in paediatric first aid and food hygiene. Some of you have been encouraged to develop your skills in literacy and numeracy which has supported you in a route back into work.

We are pleased to hear that many of you are now well informed about the benefits of healthy eating and lifestyles. The centre is well aware that there is still much to do to encourage more mothers to breastfeed their babies. Many of you told us about how your engagement with activities at the centre had improved your self-esteem and confidence and that you felt valued contributing to the fundraising activities. You also appreciate the benefits of having a nursery school located on site. We saw the impact of this strong partnership on your children's learning. As a consequence, the centre is satisfying its core purpose well in helping you improve your families' life chances and well-being.

The centre takes your views seriously and regularly seeks your ideas about what it should provide. This is good practice. The centre coordinator and staff know what they do well and what they need to improve. We have asked them to look at their systems more closely because they do not measure what they do as efficiently as they might. We have also asked them to ensure that the advisory board develops its skills so that it can check on how well the work of the centre is leading to improvements for all of you.

You told us how much you really appreciate and value the work of this centre and how supportive you find the staff. We found the leadership and management of the centre to be good because leaders work together to plan and set targets well. This centre works closely with the other centres in Bassetlaw to ensure that there is a wide range of services that have a positive impact on the quality of your lives in today's society.

We wish you all the best for the future.

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