

Inspection report for Wembley Primary Children's Centre

Local authority	Brent
Inspection number	367873
Inspection dates	13–14 July 2011
Reporting inspector	Kath Beck

Centre governance	Local authority
Centre leader	Julie Lewin
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Centre address	East Lane Wembley HA9 7NW
Telephone number	020 8901 9890
Fax number	Not currently available
Email address	juliana.lewin@brent.gov.uk

Linked school if applicable	Wembley Primary School 130095
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	Not applicable

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.

Report published: July 2011



The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/100080.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

No.100080

© Crown copyright 2011



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 co-located primary school 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 the centre leader and senior leaders and managers from the local authority. They also met with the Chair of the Advisory Board, representatives from the range of services offered and parents and carers using the service. Inspectors observed the centre's work and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

Information about the centre

Wembley Primary is a phase two children's centre. It serves communities living in the Wembley and Preston Park locality in the north west of the London Borough of Brent. It is located in the same building as Wembley Primary School. The centre was designated as a Sure Start children's centre in March 2008. It provides childcare, family support, child and family health services and Jobcentre Plus. In April 2011, the local authority restructured the organisation of its children's centres. All are now under the overall leadership of the local authority. The centre is one of four centres in the Wembley and Preston Park locality. The manager and Locality Advisory Board are newly appointed. Some services are provided at Preston Park, a newly opened centre led by the same manager. Users can attend any centre within the local authority. The area has a mix of housing types, including social housing and flats. Unemployment rates and the number of workless families on benefits are above the national average. The area has pockets of deprivation ranging within 30%-70% of the most deprived areas in the country. Families come from White British, Asian, Pakistani, Somali, Sri Lankan Tamil and Black Caribbean backgrounds. A few families come from Gypsy Roma heritage. The population is transient and new groups are moving into the area. Children's development when they first start in the Early Years Foundation Stage is below national expectations.

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

3

Main findings

The overall effectiveness of Wembley Primary Children’s Centre is satisfactory. It offers good care, guidance and support and is successful in helping families to develop healthy lifestyles. Good safeguarding procedures keep families and children safe. Events to promote safety in the home and in the community are well attended and provide families with a clear understanding of how to keep their children safe. Children behave well and families say they feel safe in the centre. The contribution of the family support and community involvement workers is appreciated by parents and carers. Good partnerships with health professionals and the local authority are central to the centre’s current drive for improvement. The partnership with speech and language practitioners is particularly effective in helping children, parents and carers to communicate clearly. One said, ‘My son talks to me now and is using lots of new words, when before he was very quiet.’

The centre places emphasis on celebrating the diversity of the many cultures within the locality. Families say that by attending the centre, they have met and made good friends with members of different communities. Sessions such as ‘Stay and Play’ are very popular and open to those who arrive first. Once the session is full, families are turned away, reducing their ability to access the sessions regularly. These sessions provide interesting activities and parents have the opportunity to play and have fun with their children. However, the large number of families attending and limited availability of staff mean these sessions are not as productive as they could be in helping families to support their children in making good progress in their development.

The centre is undergoing a period of transition. Prior to the transfer of responsibility for the leadership and management of the centre from the school to the local authority as part of the restructuring in April, the post of centre manager was covered by a series of temporary appointments. The new centre manger has carried out a rigorous audit of the centre’s strengths and weaknesses with senior staff in the local authority, staff in the centre, parents and carers and other partners. A new ‘Performance Management Tool’ is strengthening self-evaluation procedures. It enables the centre to look in depth at the quality of each aspect of its provision,

identify areas for development and track their impact in the short, medium and longer terms, but it has yet to be implemented fully.

The centre has access to some data about the borough as a whole. Its analysis of this shows that the key priorities are to reduce the number of families in workless households, to lessen the number of instances of domestic violence, to raise the number of children being immunised and to increase the number of babies being breastfed. As a consequence of the centre manager's audit, new self-evaluation procedures and data analysis, the services of Jobcentre Plus are now available and a midwifery and health visitor practice is to open in the centre shortly. Closer links have been established with professionals who can offer support and advice to those subject to domestic violence. Targets have been set for staff working in the centre in their performance management sessions to bring about a faster rate of improvement. These factors demonstrate the centre's satisfactory capacity to improve.

A new data system that includes more reliable information about individual families from across a range of services, including health, run by the local authority, is almost complete. This is designed to provide each centre with more detailed information about its locality so that sharp targets can be set with key partners and used to measure the impact of the range of services more effectively. Challenging actions for short-term improvements in the centre have been set, but they do not have a sharp enough focus to show the expected impact on outcomes for centre users. This makes it difficult to measure the centre's effectiveness. Through its good partnerships with the local authority and a range of services, the centre has identified vulnerable groups. However, it has not yet engaged fully with those who are also members of the transient population. The majority of services within the centre are universal, although families are encouraged to access services in other centres nearby.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- Build on the good partnerships with health and the local authority in using the new data system to identify more of the harder-to-reach and vulnerable families and enable them to access universal and targeted services.
- Include and use data from all partners to set sharply focused targets for improvement and implement fully the new procedures to evaluate the effectiveness of the centre in the medium and longer term.
- Improve the provision for 'Stay and Play' and its 'first come, first served' basis so that it is high quality and enables families to attend regularly.

How good are outcomes for users?

3

Families say they feel safe and confident in the centre. They receive advice on different ways to keep their children safe in the home and community. Recently a significant number of families took advice from the fire brigade and had a smoke

alarm fitted. Community police officers visit 'Stay and Play' sessions to promote safety in the community, personal safety and what to do should families be subject to domestic abuse. Health visitors, family support and community involvement workers collaborate effectively with other professionals to assist families subject to the Common Assessment Framework or on a child protection plan. Case studies show that families gain confidence and new skills that reduce the danger of harm to children. Parents and carers say that their confidence and parenting skills have improved as a result of sharing their concerns with the centre and the receipt of good advice. Early intervention is seen as a priority and is one reason why the centre is establishing a midwifery and health visitor service on site, and seeking to engage an increasing number of families within the transient population.

Families develop healthy lifestyles through the 'Little Healthy Eaters Course' that includes preparing foods from different cultures, parenting courses, and trips out. Individual advice from speech therapists and 'Rhyme Time with Speech and Language' sessions enhance communication skills and reduce parental concerns about their child's speech. Attendance at 'Stay and Play', 'Arts and Crafts' and family support sessions reduces parents' senses of isolation and depression and helps children develop appropriate skills for the future. Good links with health visitors result in families with specific needs, including disabilities, attending the specialist services they need within the locality.

Families enjoy attending sessions where they can play with their children. 'Baby Club', 'Baby Massage' and 'drop in' sessions are well attended and add to their knowledge of child development. One mother said, 'I am really grateful to the centre for helping me to overcome difficulties in potty training my son, and helping him to be able to go to nursery without being upset at leaving me. This means I have been able to go to work part-time.' Analysis of data shows that outcomes for children aged five are improving, albeit slowly. Parents and carers are encouraged to take up college courses leading to qualifications in literacy or numeracy or to work in childcare, and to study for a degree. In some cases, this has resulted in employment in local supermarkets and schools. Jobcentre Plus and Citizens Advice Bureau advisors provide one-to-one advice enabling parents and carers to improve the economic stability of their families.

The Locality Advisory Board, which includes parental representation, has yet to play a full part in the decision-making of the centre. Views sought regularly through evaluations, an independent researcher, informal feedback and a Parents' Forum have resulted in changes. For example, 'Rhyme Time with Speech and Language' sessions have been reorganised and the content adapted for different age groups to meet specific needs.

These are the grades for the outcomes for users

<p>The extent to which children, including those from vulnerable groups, are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy and families have healthy lifestyles</p>	<p>2</p>
---	-----------------

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 and employment	3

How good is the provision?

3

The centre manager, together with local authority staff, has recently drawn appropriately on the views of families and on the local authority's data and strategic planning to enhance provision, especially with regard to health services. The centre aims to provide universal and targeted services at an early stage of a child's development and identify more vulnerable families. In order to offer a wider range of learning activities that are matched to needs, staff provide sessions in other centres and commission services so that finances are used efficiently. A recent collaborative venture with other centres to engage more fathers in activities with their children through a visit to Wembley Stadium was very successful. Sessions such as 'Stay and Play' and 'Baby Club' are very popular. Overcrowding at 'Stay and Play' hinders opportunities for staff to interact effectively with families to enhance children's learning. Families are disappointed that some activities are no longer running for financial reasons, limiting the options open to them to improve their skills further. First aid courses have had a beneficial impact on parents' confidence in dealing with emergency situations.

Approachable, helpful staff provide families with beneficial care, guidance and support, especially in times of crisis. Individual families are assessed and signposted to the most appropriate service depending on needs. Partnership meetings, held every six weeks between professional groups and outreach workers, check that assessments carried out under the Common Assessment Framework are having a positive impact. Regular meetings between the centre manager and outreach workers also check that families are acting on advice that is making a difference to their lives. Families are supported effectively in their applications for jobs or funding for free childcare.

This, together with the celebration of achievements, whether academic or personal, is helping to raise aspirations, leading to some parents or carers taking up further education, training and employment. The network and 'Quality Assurance Mark' for childminders have brought about improvements in the quality of care and outcomes for the children, as well as improving the effectiveness of childminding as a whole.

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	3
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?

3

As part of the transition arrangements, new leaders and managers at all levels have ensured that the arrangements for governance and accountability are appropriate. Many procedures are new and not fully understood or implemented to drive improvement at a faster rate. Long-term strategic planning at local authority level with regard to the development of the centre is providing a clear framework for improvement. Detailed work undertaken with key partners in the collection of a wide range of data to identify needs, particularly those of transient or vulnerable groups, is almost complete. As this work is very recent, challenging targets based on the analysis of data have not yet been set for all partners to achieve or to monitor the impact of their work. Provision is rightly under review at local authority level to ensure that there is a balance of targeted and universal services across the locality to meet needs.

The Local Advisory Board met for the first time recently when it was informed about its responsibilities and terms of reference. It has yet to have all the information it requires to challenge and support the centre. This is because systems to set and track the centre's progress towards ambitious targets for improvement are still being embedded. That said, the Parents' Forum and surveys contribute to self-evaluation and the development of the centre. Good day-to-day organisational and performance management systems are supporting the implementation of new ways of working in the short term to bring about better outcomes.

Good safeguarding procedures are adopted to keep families safe. All staff and professionals working in the centre are subject to Criminal Records Bureau and other checks for their suitability to work with children. Training to inform staff about what to do should they suspect a child is at risk of harm is up to date. Staff make clear to everyone the centre's responsibilities should there be concerns about a child's safety. Meetings between professionals and the outreach workers and centre manager promote early intervention, especially if there are issues of domestic abuse, to protect children's safety. Effective risk assessments keep families and staff safe in the centre.

A wide range of partnerships ensure that provision is coherent and leads to better outcomes for families in times of difficulty. All groups, including those with disabilities, are welcome in the centre. Understanding of different faiths and cultures is promoted actively. Activities reflect good relationships between those from different backgrounds. However, the centre is not yet monitoring rigorously enough the access to activities and outcomes for key groups. The centre offers satisfactory value for money. Resources and services are used appropriately and result in satisfactory outcomes.

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	3
The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of users and the wider community	3
The extent to which equality is promoted and diversity celebrated, illegal or unlawful discrimination is tackled and the centre fulfils its statutory duties	3
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	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	3

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

The inspection of Wembley Primary School was used to inform the judgements made during this inspection. The Primary School was inspected on 12–13 June 2011. Its overall effectiveness was judged good, while the Early Years Foundation Stage was judged satisfactory.

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 Wembley Primary centre on 13–14 July 2011. We judged the centre as satisfactory overall.

Thank you for coming to talk to us about your experiences and the support you have been given by the centre. This made an important contribution to the inspection. You told us that you are well cared for, you feel safe and that cookery courses have helped you and your families to live healthy lifestyles. Good care, guidance, support and safeguarding procedures keep you and your children safe. You told us that events to promote safety in the home and in the community are well attended. A significant number of you took advice from the fire brigade and had smoke alarms fitted in your homes. Family support and community involvement workers work effectively with you to reduce the risk of harm to your children. Good partnerships, especially with speech and language practitioners, are helping you to communicate clearly with your children. One of you said, 'My son talks to me now and is using lots of new words, when before he was very quiet.'

The centre places good emphasis on celebrating the diversity of the many cultures within the locality. Those of you we met said that by attending the centre, you have met and made good friends with members of different communities. You mentioned, and we noticed, that sessions such as 'Stay and Play' are very popular. Once the session is full, some families are turned away and this means some of you are unable to access the sessions regularly. You enjoy having the opportunity to play and have fun with your children. However, the large number of families attending and limited availability of staff means these sessions are not always as useful as they could be in helping you to support your children's learning and development.

The centre is going through a period of transition. Responsibility for the leadership and management of the centre was transferred from the school to the local authority as part of the reorganisation of all the children's centres in the borough in April. The new centre manager has carried out a rigorous review of the centre's strengths and weaknesses, along with senior staff in the local authority, staff in the centre, and other partners. Some of you have also contributed to this. New procedures are enabling the centre to look in depth at the quality of each aspect of its provision, identify areas for development and check how well it is doing in bringing about improvements. However, this is fairly new and has not yet been fully implemented.

The centre has access to some information about the nature of the different groups in the borough as a whole. This has shown that it needs to help to reduce both the number of families who are out of work and the number of incidents of domestic violence, to ensure that more children are immunised and to increase the number of babies being breastfed. As a result of recent reviews of the centre's effectiveness, Jobcentre Plus now provides advice and guidance for you and you are soon to benefit from a midwifery and health visitor practice which is due to open shortly in the centre. Closer links have been established with professionals who can offer

support and advice to families in crisis. All of this shows that the centre has a satisfactory capacity to continue to improve in the future.

A new data system that includes more reliable information about individual families from across a range of services, including health, is almost complete. This is designed to provide each centre with detailed information about its locality and vulnerable groups so that the centre and its key partners can set clear targets against which to measure the impact of its work more effectively. The centre has identified important actions to improve provision in the short term, but it is not clear how leaders will check what impact these are having. Through its good partnerships with the local authority and a range of services, the centre has identified key groups in the community that it needs to engage with its services. However, it has not yet engaged fully with those who only stay in the area for a short time. While the majority of services within the centre are aimed at the community as a whole, a few families are guided to access services in other centres nearby which can meet their specific needs.

We have asked the leaders and managers of the centre to:

- Work with the local authority and representatives of health services to use the new data system to identify more people who need to use the services that the centre offers, especially those who stay in the area for a short time,.
- Set clear targets for improvement and check the success of the centre's work in making a difference to the lives of families in the locality.
- Improve the arrangements for 'Stay and Play' so that families are not turned away. Also improve the quality of the session so that it is more helpful to you in understanding how your child is learning and developing.

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