

# Inspection report for Burngreave Children's Centre

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| Local authority     | Sheffield          |
| Inspection number   | 367769             |
| Inspection dates    | 24–25 August 2011  |
| Reporting inspector | Gillian Bishop HMI |

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| Centre governance           | Action for Children  |
| Centre leader               | Amanda Boughton-Brown                                      |
| Date of previous inspection | Not applicable   |
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|---|---|
| Linked school if applicable                     | Not applicable                                      |
| Linked early years and childcare, if applicable | EY319854 Burngreave Children's Centre full 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 the registered early years/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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one early years inspector. The inspectors visited a range of provision across the centre. They also held meetings with senior managers from the centre and the local authority, parents, members of the advisory board and a number of partners including: Early Years Foundation Stage and childcare partners; Action for Children; health; Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB); and the Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST). They observed the centre's work and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

## Information about the centre

Burngreave Children's Centre is a phase one centre, located to the north of the city and within the North East Community Assemble Area of Sheffield. The centre serves a community which is ranked in the top 1% most socially deprived and disadvantaged areas in the country with a 77.9% of children under four years-of-age living in the top 30% most deprived areas. Local authority data indicate that 23.5% of children under five years-of-age are living in households dependant on workless benefits and 42% of children are living in poverty. This is significantly higher than the city average of 25%.

Families in the area experience significant issues relating to long-term unemployment, youth crime, substance misuse and low levels of literacy and numeracy. Most children enter early education with skills and knowledge lower than what is usually expected, particularly in their personal and social development and speech and language skills. The community is very transient and diverse with 91.5% of children aged three to five years from a Black minority-ethnic background. In addition, there is a large asylum seeker and refugee community and a small number of European economic migrant workers, mainly from Slovakia. A significant number of languages are spoken within the community: English; Urdu; Punjabi; Arabic; and

Somali being the most common.

The children’s centre derived from a Sure Start Local Programme and received designation in 2005. The centre provides for the full core offer including a local authority full day-care facility. A maximum of 40 children may attend the nursery at any one time and, of these, 40 may be in the early years age group, and, of these, not more than nine may be under two years-of-age. Separate arrangements are in place to inspect this provision and the report can be found at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

Action for Children delivers the children’s centre services including family support services. The work of the centre is monitored by an established advisory board and the local authority. The centre is supported by a MAST who coordinate services for vulnerable children and families. Commissioned services include the Sheffield Information Link, CAB provided by Community Legal Advice Service Sheffield, Life Long Learning and Skills and Speech and Language support. A community midwifery team are located on site.

## 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

Burngreave Children’s Centre provides satisfactory and improving support to children and families. Outcomes for them are at least satisfactory. The centre provides a warm and friendly environment for centre users. The centre’s approach to safeguarding is robust and statutory requirements are fully met. Centre staff and partners have developed a cohesive approach to reducing the risk of harm and preventing difficulties escalating; this includes the successful implementation of the Common Assessment Framework.

The Early Years Foundation Stage and childcare provision are good and children are beginning to make good progress given their low starting points. This derives from the good quality care and learning within the centre nursery and the systematic support and guidance from Early Years Foundation Stage leaders and speech and language therapists. The intensity of this work ensures outcomes for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities attending the centre are also good. However, the centre is unable to evidence outcomes in relation to most adult learning and training programmes and volunteering

opportunities are too limited. Furthermore, the impact of the centres signposting to Jobcentre Plus is unknown.

Equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination is central to the work of the centre, which is why increased access by hard to reach and vulnerable groups are at the heart of their improvement plans. The reach population is culturally diverse so families are well supported by a team of bilingual staff who readily converse and translate information, allowing their full participation in activities. The engagement of particular groups such as lone parents and Black minority-ethnic groups is recorded; however, their engagement is not systemically evaluated as a means to further analyse and act upon their needs and particular interests. The availability of localised data is inconsistent, which impedes a secure analysis of needs and trends in the area and prevents confirmation that services are correctly targeted, particularly for the most vulnerable.

Provision is satisfactory overall. Maternal services are a strength within the centre; antenatal sessions are well attended and they provide a valuable opportunity to register new parents. These sessions are aligned to the 'One Stop Shop' which ensures a high proportion of parents receive a wealth of information alongside their maternal care. However, participation rates are variable across most services and activities and the registration process is fraught with difficulties. Furthermore, transition to new information management processes has hindered the centre from having a clear understanding of the percentages of users registered and participating in services.

The leadership and management of the centre are satisfactory and improving. The senior leadership team, practitioners and centre partners strive to make a real difference to this community. The centre manager leads by example and has high expectations of her team and the people she works with. The advisory board understand the complex nature of the work of the children's centre and that of the community it serves; however, not all key partners play an active role on the board and the lack of parental representation prevents their involvement in governance and decision-making processes.

Action for Children, the advisory board and the local authority provide appropriate support to the centre. Regular consultations take place to assess the work of the centre and they provide guidance in relation to the development of service and improvement plans. However, the quality and accuracy of self-assessment and the availability, evaluation and interrogation of pertinent data is not sharp enough. This prevents the centre from demonstrating the full impact of its work. Various processes and systems are currently being developed and implemented to enable the local authority to monitor and challenge the work of the centre; however, it is too soon to show how effective these are in improving provision and outcomes.

Given satisfactory outcomes overall and the current range of provision, the centre demonstrates satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

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

### Recommendations for further improvement

- Work with the local authority, Action for Children and the advisory board to improve systems and procedures for evaluating the impact of the centre's multi-agency work by:
  - ensuring systematic and accurate management information and self-evaluation that records the full impact of the centre's work and supports the identification of consistently challenging targets for further improvement
  - increasing the availability and analysis of localised information and data to ensure services provided meet the needs of the community, particularly for the most vulnerable
  - improving the systems for the registration of parents, carers, children and new births
  - securing the representation of the health visiting team on the advisory board.
- Improve outcomes and provision by:
  - ensuring the views of parents and carers contribute on a regular basis to the governance of the centre and to determining and shaping services through routine consultation and by engaging them in governance and decision making procedures
  - enabling individual users to improve their educational and/or personal development and progress to further employment, education and training
  - increasing the involvement of Jobcentre Plus in supporting parents into training or employment and improving centre users access to volunteering opportunities.

## How good are outcomes for users?

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The centre has established a successful steer towards educating parents, carers and children about how to lead a healthy lifestyle. The 'Change 4 Life' campaign includes regular health-related activities based on the necessity for good nutrition and the need to be physically active. Parents describe how their children eat a wider range of fruit and vegetables which they now prepare together, and children are beginning to understand which foods are better for them because of the regularity in which it is discussed. Midwives are taking an active role in promoting these initiatives during antenatal classes by encouraging parents and carers to grow their own food. As a result of these interventions, the rising trend in obesity levels is beginning to slow. The take up of immunisation in the reach area is good and the rate of smoking in pregnancy is lower than the city averages. A particular strength of the centre is the breastfeeding promotion and peer support which has

led to a year-on-year improvement in breastfeeding initiation and prevalence rates which continue to exceed city and national averages.

Children are well safeguarded due to the effective targeting of services for the most vulnerable families, such as Asylum seeking families and those experiencing domestic violence. The intensity of the multi-agency work associated with children who are subject to child protection plans has in most cases resulted in greater stability and independence within the family home; which families have been able to sustain. In the same way, the effective implementation of the Common Assessment Framework process underpins the initial assessment of need and the coordination of appropriate services which are successful in getting families back on track. Centre users describe strong feelings of safety and security within the centre as a result of action taken by leaders to improve security following some problems with crime in the area. Comments such as, 'Security is great here, I feel totally safe to leave my child.' and 'Everybody signs in and out and we all wear visitors' badges; that way we know who people are.' exemplify those feelings.

Parents and carers describe how they have adopted safer practices at home and outside the home due to the advice, guidance and training from staff. Comments such as, 'Positive parenting has helped me to set boundaries and not feel guilty.' and 'I didn't know I could get smoke alarms fitted until I was told.' confirm this. Parents welcome information about how to put baby to sleep safely and many stated that they have installed home safety equipment to protect increasingly mobile toddlers. A recent safety campaign has led to increased understanding about the necessity to use car seats routinely and the centres current work to address the high proportion of road traffic accidents across the city is highlighting the necessity for parents and carers to be present when their children are playing in the streets.

The extent to which children enjoy and achieve is good. Children accessing centre services make good progress in their learning given their low starting points, particularly in their language, communication and social skills. Effective monitoring and assessment of their needs coupled with the good quality learning experiences across all areas of learning ensures they become confident and ready for the transition to school. Outcomes for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are also good because professionals and their parents work collaboratively to support and nurture their potential. Secure links with the Ryegate Assessment Centre, speech and language support team and portage ensure these children receive well target interventions and support to help them in their ongoing development. Some parents and carers state that family learning courses relating to 'Story Sacks and Fun with Letters and Sounds' have helped them to foster their child's learning at home. However, the take up of these opportunities is variable and many state they are not aware that such opportunities exist.

Parents and carers confirm that they are confident to raise their views when they feel services could be improved. For example, they have requested additional parent and toddler groups, they evaluate their own learning outcomes after most activities and some have completed questionnaires to highlight their good levels of satisfaction. However, many are not aware of governance arrangements and a formal means to influence the development of

services more strategically is not yet available to them. Community cohesion within and around the centre is promoted well and behaviour displayed by adults and children alike is consistently good.

Some parents have provided strong testimonies, which demonstrate how the centres support has enabled them to achieve their lifelong aspirations by completing childcare and social work qualifications; one stated 'I couldn't have done it without the centres help and influence.' However, the centre does not provide sufficient opportunities for centre users to undertake a range of volunteering roles or discuss their personal learning needs as a means to finding a suitable pathway to employment or further education. For those successfully signposted to courses such as English classes and information technology courses the centre does not pursue information and data from training providers to confirm successes or achievements, so outcomes are unknown. Positive interventions from CAB have led to increased economic stability for some. Case studies report increased access to relevant benefits, re-housing and purposeful advice about employment opportunities; however, the impact of centre users' engagement with Jobcentre Plus is also unknown because information is not sought or provided.

*These are the grades for the outcomes for users*

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| <b>The extent to which children, including those from vulnerable groups, are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy and families have healthy lifestyles</b>       | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The extent to which children are safe and protected, their welfare concerns are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them</b>                            | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The extent to which all users enjoy and achieve educationally and in their personal and social development</b>  | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The extent to which children engage in positive behaviour and develop positive relationships and users contribute to decision-making and governance of the centre</b> | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The extent to which children are developing skills for the future and parents are developing economic stability and independence including access to training</b>     | <b>3</b> |

## **How good is the provision?**

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The centre meets the core offer satisfactorily. While all provision is of good quality and helping to improve outcomes for children and parents who come to the centre, the centre has a less secure picture of the percentage of families who are not registered or accessing services. This is partly due to a recent transition to a new information management system. In addition, the current registration system is problematic as it difficult for potential users with language barriers to complete, and it requires a separate registration for newly-born children to families already registered; this delays the centre's contact. Although the centre has a sound understanding of the vulnerable and hard-to-reach groups within the community, they have yet to make contact with a significant number of them. However, this has been identified within current action plans.

On-site community midwives and the availability of a daily midwife triage service ensures that parents and parents-to-be benefit from good levels of support and guidance as they cope with the pressures of becoming a new parent. Comments such as, 'It's such a worry off my mind to know I only have to call in and phone if I have a problem': the significantly high numbers of phone calls logged by midwives confirms how well utilised this service has proven to be. The One Stop Shop is equally popular as it includes antenatal care and a full range of advice from partner agencies such as Sheffield Information Link and CAB, as well as access to health visitors. During school holidays the programme of activities extends to Millhouses Park for a breastfeeding and teddy bear picnic, Burngreave Library for 'Big Cook, Little Cook' and various trips to museums and the fire station. 'I'd never been to a museum before, it was great for all my kids, they loved it.' reports one happy parent. A designated baby-massage group for dads nurtures bonding between fathers and babies and promotes their emotional well-being. In addition, appropriate family support is available to the small number of teen parents within the reach area. However, centre data confirms that participation rates across many activities are relatively low and, in some cases, families specifically invited to activities and trips, fail to attend at all.

Assessment of individual cases is robust, especially for children and families referred to the centre through MAST; and the subsequent allocation of timely support through the multi-agency allocation meeting. Family support includes a thorough assessment of need, which ultimately leads to increased social independence and improved safety and well-being for children. However, the centre has yet to conduct a thorough needs analysis of the wider community; as a result, they cannot confirm if the current range of services match needs. With current restraints within budgets and staffing, the centre is well aware that it must demonstrate that services provided reach the most vulnerable groups, such as asylum seekers, refugees and lone parents; however, systems to demonstrate this are not yet embedded.

The effective Early Years Foundation Stage provision makes good use of children's prior learning to plan for their next steps. They engage in a range of challenging and interesting activities, which enables them to make good progress in their learning, for example, 'Talking Toddlers' provided by the speech and language service. The transition to school is appropriately planned and involves parents and key workers; however, links with local schools are still being developed. The achievements of adult learners are celebrated, which places value on their success and raises their aspirations. Access to English speaking classes has been difficult for centre users so the centre has responded by providing a 'Conversation Club' run by a volunteer and which allows participants to practice their English through general discussion. However, the availability of crèche provision to support adult learning is limited and evidence shows that adult training is not sufficiently individualised and success and progression rates are not readily known.

Care, guidance and support are good and a strength of the centre. Parents report, 'I'm made to feel so welcome.' and 'Staff provide such positive support... its life changing.' A parent sceptical about engaging with services reported, 'Initially I didn't want to know... but



I'm so glad I did, my family support worker is brilliant.' The range of literature promoting good health, safety and well-being is extensive and readily available, including sensitively placed information and signposting to domestic violence projects and agencies. Growing links with local mother-and-baby assessment units have proved successful in reaching out to younger parents, who with sensitive support have proceeded to access the centre.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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| <b>The effectiveness of the assessment of the needs of children, parents and other users</b>                                   | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The extent to which the centre promotes purposeful learning, development and enjoyment for all users</b>                    | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The extent to which the range of services, activities and opportunities meet the needs of users and the wider community</b> | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The quality of care, guidance and support offered to users within the centre and the wider community</b>                    | <b>2</b> |

## **How effective are the leadership and management?**

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Effective performance management arrangements are in place across the centre and all staff are supported through a coordinated approach to training and development. Regular supervision ensures staff and volunteers carry out their work effectively. Action plans outline priorities for improvement, but it is less clear how some of these have been arrived at, due to the lack of related information within the centres self-evaluation. Furthermore, not all staff and partners have contributed to these plans. Plans demonstrate sound links with wider strategic priorities and some challenging targets exist in relation to increasing registrations; however, smart targets are not embedded throughout. New quarterly progress reports are enabling the local authority, Action for Children and the advisory board to monitor the centres progress more carefully. However, this system is very much in its infancy and the centres progress towards identified plans is yet to be measured. Currently, the centre provides satisfactory value for money

The centre has established some secure partnerships, most notably those with community midwives. Providers of commissioned services such as those providing family learning, CAB and speech and language provide evaluations of their service so the centre can assess their effectiveness and the outcomes for families. However, this is not consistent across partner agencies such as Jobcentre Plus, preventing the centre demonstrating the full impact of its work. Furthermore, the engagement of key partners such as health visitors on the advisory board remains unsuccessful, although this is currently being addressed at a strategic level.

The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Services are designed to engage users from a range of cultural backgrounds and the harmony within the centre confirms it is a positive place to be. There are various well attended activities which promote arts, culture and educational events such as the 'Celebration of Culture' and 'Refugee Week' during the Abbeyfield and Weston Park festivals. In addition, the centre provides well integrated and coordinated provision for children with complex needs. However, the lack of pertinent

information and data and some unmet needs in the wider community prevents the centre confirming that services are correctly targeted.

Safeguarding procedures are robust and meet with statutory requirements; this includes a system for completing and updating Criminal Record Bureau checks. Good quality risk-assessment procedures are replicated across all activities and centre users benefit from good levels of security and a clean and well maintained building. Staff and partners are knowledgeable about safeguarding procedures and they all receive appropriate levels of training. Good multi-agency support to families referred to the centre in times of crisis is helping parents and carers to improve their circumstances and make sustainable changes in their lives. Service plans between families and family support services ensure parents and carers are well informed about the centre's legal duties to protect children and refer potential concerns to children's social care. This creates an open and transparent way of working.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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| <b>The extent to which governance, accountability, professional supervision and day to day management arrangements are clear and understood</b>                     | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The extent to which ambitious targets drive improvement, provision is integrated and there are high expectations for users and the wider community</b>           | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of users and the wider community</b>                            | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The extent to which equality is promoted and diversity celebrated, illegal or unlawful discrimination is tackled and the centre fulfils its statutory duties</b> | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of the centre's policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults</b>            | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The extent to which evaluation is used to shape and improve services and activities</b>  | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The extent to which partnerships with other agencies ensure the integrated delivery of the range of services the centre has been commissioned to provide</b>     | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The extent to which the centre supports and encourages the wider community to engage with services and uses their views to develop the range of provision</b>    | <b>3</b> |

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

Information from the most recent Ofsted inspection of Burngreave Children's Centre full-day care has been taken into account when writing about early years' provision and outcomes for children in the report.

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

## Summary for centre users

We inspected the Burngreave Children's Centre on 24- and 25 August 2011. As part of our investigations we visited a number of activities, looked at the centre's plans and documents and talked with a number of you, staff and volunteers who work with you. We have judged that the children's centre provides satisfactory and improving support to you and your families. We found that the centre provides a safe and welcoming place for you and your children and those of you we spoke to said that the centre had helped you to improve safety in your homes and given you lots of information about how to lead healthy lives. For example, some of you have installed safety equipment at home to keep your little ones safe as they begin to get more active. Others stated their children are eating more fruit and vegetables because they have learnt to try new foods and they enjoy preparing the food with you. We found that the centre is particularly good at providing support for breastfeeding mothers. As a result breastfeeding rates are higher than in Sheffield and most other areas of England. The centre is very proud of this work and so they should be!

We also found that children who use the centre are making good progress in their learning and development as a result of the good work and the range activities that are available in the centre. Parents and carers told us their children really enjoy what they do at the centre, which is why they continue to come. We found that parents and carers are able to attend some courses to help them with their children's learning at home, these include 'Fun with Letters and Sounds and Story Sacks'. We also found that the 'Positive Parenting' course has helped parents to improve their children's behaviour and it has helped some parents to be more confident in their skills as parents. However, quite a lot of parents do not know about these courses and so they miss out. Furthermore, we were not able to find out how many parents take up adult learning courses such as English, computer and other courses because the centre does not keep this information or they do not find out from the training providers. However, there were some really positive learning journeys for a few parents who were able to tell us about their successes in gaining childcare and social-work qualifications. We have asked the centre to improve how they keep records about adult learning and training and to find out about progress users have made when they have received help and guidance from agencies such as Jobcentre Plus.

Although most parents and carers we spoke to stated they have their needs met by the range of services and activities they attend, the centre is rightly concerned that some people are yet to benefit from the centre's work. Although they are careful to make sure that services meet the needs of everybody attending they know they must do more to ensure that people such as lone parents, families from different ethnic groups and asylum seeking families, are able to access everything too. So, we have asked the centre to improve the way in which they complete their registrations and we have asked them to consult with all centre users more, to make sure the centre is providing what they want and what they need. We have also asked them to involve you more in the way the centre is governed, so that you can have your say about the types of services the community needs for the future.

We found that leaders manage the centre in a satisfactory manner and staff understand their roles and responsibilities well. We were particularly pleased to see how safe and secure the centre is and that the right safeguarding procedures are followed, particularly where children and families may be at greatest risk. Parents we spoke to agreed with this. Leaders have developed some useful systems to monitor the work of the centre and to make sure it continues to improve, but it is too early to see how well they work. Leaders have also set up action plans so they can make services better in the future. However, we have asked them to consider the services centre users want and then set firm targets to make sure they are achieved over time.

We would like to thank everyone who came to speak to us, we are very grateful for your help and we wish you well for the future.

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