

# Inspection report for Huthwaite All Saints Children's Centre

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<b>Local authority</b>	Nottinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	383687
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 September 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alison Veall HMI

<b>Centre Co-ordinator</b>	Libby Mackenzie
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable
<b>Centre address</b>	Churchside Common Road Nottinghamshire NG17 2JT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01623 516592
<b>Fax number</b>	01623 516593
<b>Email address</b>	Libby.mackenzie@nottshc-chp.nhs.uk

<b>Linked school if applicable</b>	Huthwaite All Saint's CofE (Aided) Infant School 122824 Mapplewells Primary and Nursery School 13949 John Davies Primary and Nursery School 122473
<b>Linked early years and childcare, if applicable</b>	Nurseryworld and Friends Nursery and Pre-School 253053

The inspection of this Sure Start children's centre was carried out under Part 3A of the Childcare Act 2006 as inserted by section 199 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009.

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## Introduction

The inspection addresses the centre's contribution to:

- facilitating access to early childhood services by parents, prospective parents and young children
- maximising the benefit of those services to parents, prospective parents and young children
- improving the well-being of young children.

The report is made to the local authority and a copy is sent to the children's centre. The local authority may send the report to such persons it considers appropriate and must arrange for an action plan to be produced in relation to the findings in this report.

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an early years inspector.

The inspectors held meetings with the senior leadership team, representatives from County Health Partnership, the local health authority, partner agencies, frontline workers, parents.

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

## Information about the centre

Huthwaite All Saints Children's Centre is a phase one centre. It was designated in the 2007 and was developed from a Sure Start local programme. The centre is located in the All Saints Centre which is owned by Huthwaite All Saints Church. Provision for funded nursery education is made at the co-located pre-school. Early education and care is provided for children in receipt of the two-year-olds pilot funding at Sutton Children's Centre. Huthwaite is part of the Ashfield ward and falls within the top 30% most disadvantaged wards in the country with part of its reach area falling into the top 20% most disadvantaged wards in the country.

The children's centre co-ordinator who was appointed in 2010 is responsible for the management of Huthwaite and Sutton children's centres. The strategic management of the centre is the responsibility of County Health Partnerships who are commissioned by Nottinghamshire County Council to provide the children's centre services. Support and guidance is provided by local advisory and outcome groups which consist of church trustees, a range of professional partners, community representatives and staff.

There are 24% of children under five years living in households dependent on workless benefits. Most families are of White British heritage. Most children enter childcare and early education with a much narrower range of experiences and skills than that 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 families

2

### Capacity for sustained improvement

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

2

## Main findings

Families using this children's centre benefit from a wide range of cohesive and well-integrated services. They are delivered through outstanding partnership working with a number of agencies and organisations. Many activities are well established as the centre has built on the existing good quality activities provided through All Saints Church, health and statutory and community learning organisations. As a result of the co-ordinated delivery of services, families using the centre benefit from outstanding provision delivered mostly from one site. The centre is attractive and welcoming and has been described as 'the hub of the community' and it is easy to see why. The community café provided by All Saints Church provides an ideal venue for families to meet when accessing the wide range of services. Under the present co-ordinator, the children's centre has made rapid improvement in a short period of time. This has happened in many areas but particularly in the number of families who are accessing and consistently using the centre's services. Staff are committed to inclusion and work relentlessly to improve the life chances of users that are known to them, particularly those most at risk. As a result, outcomes for users are good. Parents take advantage of the wide-ranging opportunities to improve their confidence and to develop knowledge and skills.

'Without the children's centre I would not be the strong confident parent that I am'. 'I know I can ask for help, no question is silly'. 'They guide me with the intention of making things better for my children'. 'The support they give is fantastic'. These comments are typical of the views expressed by parents and reflect the very high standard of care guidance and support that is given. The views of parents and children are gathered at every opportunity and used very effectively to develop provision which meets their needs well. The parent's forum and the 'Chill and Chat' sessions provide good opportunities for this. However there are too few parents involved in key decision making at a strategic level. Safeguarding is given exceptionally high priority. Support and monitoring by the centre co-ordinator and the specialist practitioner (safeguarding children) ensures that children whose circumstances make them more vulnerable than others receive the appropriate early

interventions. Recruitment procedures are robust. A 'team around the child' and protection through prevention approach ensures that all children, including the most vulnerable, are very well-protected.

The centre is led and managed well. The current co-ordinator's vision and drive has been harnessed enthusiastically by the whole staff team. This has been a significant factor in the rate at which improvements have been made. However, leaders are not complacent and are aware that there is still work to do. An effective relationship exists between managers within the local authority and within County Health Partnerships. Together, they provide support and challenge to the centre co-ordinator and partners. Self-evaluation and target setting are effective and there is access to good-quality data and information. A number of changes to the centre management has meant that these systems have not been fully embedded and the centre cannot fully demonstrate the longer-term impact of its work on outcomes for families. However, there is a clear understanding of the centre's strengths and where further improvement is still required. As a result, the centre's overall effectiveness and capacity to improve are good.

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

### Recommendations for further improvement

- Improve self-evaluation and planning by using data and other information more effectively to demonstrate the long-term impact on outcomes for families.
- Enhance the involvement of families in the running of the centre by ensuring that more are involved in key decision making.

## How good are outcomes for families?

<b>2</b>
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Through extremely effective partnerships, parents are provided with detailed information and invaluable support in relation to health and well-being. These include breastfeeding and weaning, speech and language, smoking cessation and parenting. As result, users are developing good outcomes in relation to health. Outcomes for families with additional emotional needs, including those most vulnerable, are improving well. Outstanding attention is paid to ensuring that their contribution is valued and they are praised at every opportunity. Consequently, engagement with all groups is extremely high. Breastfeeding rates at initiation and continuation show an upward trend and the numbers of children at risk of obesity in Reception is below county and national levels.

Parents report that they feel safe and consider their children to be safe whilst attending the centre. Uptake of first-aid courses and participation on parenting programmes are high. This, along with the advice and guidance from numerous agencies including Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue and centre staff, builds users' confidence and knowledge. Evidence from case studies demonstrates that they act

appropriately when faced with emergency situations. Excellent support and the facility to refer families who experience or are at risk of domestic violence to the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) ensures that children remain safe and adults receive appropriate support. The number of children with child protection plans in the centre's reach area is low and there is a very strong commitment to preventative work. All children, including those most at risk, are monitored very effectively. Case files are reviewed on a regular basis by the centre co-ordinator, and challenge and support is given by the specialist practitioner for safeguarding children. The needs of children are paramount to all the work that is undertaken. This ensures that families are given the support and help that they need to prevent situations from reaching crisis point.

Well-targeted interventions and monitoring such as that through the 'Every Child a Talker' programme is demonstrating the good progress children who attend the children's centre services are making. Starting points for many children are low. Data held by the centre shows that the achievement gap between the lowest achieving 20% of children and their peers is closing. Parents' understanding of how to support their children's learning is developed through an extensive range of play and development opportunities such as 'Little Chatterboxes', 'Stay and Play' and 'Home Talk'. Parents praise the advice and guidance given regarding play at the parenting course and comment upon how much they enjoy attending and the difference it is making.

Effective arrangements with the three schools within Huthwaite ensure that families are well supported as children make the transition from the centre to school. As a result of attendance at a range of courses provided either by the centre or their partners, the majority of parents are developing confidence and acquiring skills for the future. Participation in the volunteer programme is high and enjoyed immensely by those who take part. As one parent commented: 'Staff are very supportive. I wanted to give something back to the centre so I became a volunteer'. Many parents then move on to gain higher qualifications and paid employment.

Evaluation of individual activities and seeking the views of users has become a strength of the centre. Parents state that their contributions are valued and their opinions really count. One example of this is the delivery of a parenting course on a Saturday so that more fathers could attend. There is a strong sense of community cohesion through the centre's relationship with Huthwaite Community Action group.

These are the grades for the outcomes for families

<b>The extent to which children, including those from target 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 children and parents, including those from target groups, enjoy and achieve educationally and in their personal</b>	<b>2</b>

<b>and social development</b>	
<b>The extent to which children engage in positive behaviour and develop positive relationships and parents, including those from target groups, contribute to decision-making and governance of the centre</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which children are developing skills for the future and parents, including those from target groups, are developing economic stability and independence including access to training and employment</b>	<b>2</b>

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

<b>1</b>
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The centre provides an excellent range of integrated services. Staff know the families, the community and service providers well. This knowledge enables them to plan and deliver services based on individual need. This is particularly effective for those children and families in need of targeted support. The care, guidance and support given to families is exceptional. One parent commented upon the dedication of staff and others talked about how they always manage to find the right person to talk to you. 'I was never told what to do but helped to make good decisions', were the views of another parent.

Excellent relationships exist between key partners including health, social care, education and Jobcentre Plus. The current co-ordinator and the community development worker have developed strong relationships with community action groups. As a result of this relationship, the centre supported summer play activities attended by over 400 children and families. One group describe the children's centre as 'absolutely fantastic'. The good relationship between the centre and All Saints Church provides opportunities for parents to access a wide range of play and learning opportunities. The community café, staffed by church volunteers, acts as a hub and provides good-value healthy meals and food for families accessing services such as the health and play sessions. Health visitors and midwives deliver excellent on-site services in the antenatal and baby weigh sessions. These are all supported by centre staff with the delivery of good-quality play provision.

Centre users access a good range of courses and this is having a positive impact on their parenting skills and personal well-being. Parents seek advice easily and the community development worker supports them in undertaking volunteering roles and working towards developing key skills which assist them in gaining employment. The good-quality childcare and education provision is making a difference to children's learning. The developing integration and partnership working was demonstrated very effectively at the 'Enjoy and Achieve' focus group. Speech and language support provides training and practical advice to staff and targeted support for children with additional needs.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

<b>The extent to which the range of services, activities and opportunities meet the needs of families, including those in target groups</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which the centre promotes purposeful learning, development and enjoyment for all families, including those in target groups</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The quality of care, guidance and support offered to families, including those in target groups</b>	<b>1</b>

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

<b>2</b>
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Governance arrangements are clear and effective. The local authority and Nottinghamshire County Health Partnership provides a clear framework for the centre and has a good strategic overview. Over the last year, there have been significant improvements in the work of the centre. Most notably these are in the engagement with families and the community, the range of activities provided and the challenge to staff on the quality, impact and real cost of activities. Management at the centre is now consistent having previously undergone several changes. This consistency combined with the knowledge, drive and determination of senior leaders and the support and commitment of staff is bringing about significant change, enhancing provision and improving the life chances for users. The vision and sense of purpose of the centre is shared by many partners. As a result, value for money is good, teamwork is improving, staff are forward thinking and reflective and partnerships are excellent.

Evaluation of services is good and runs throughout all the provision. A range of methods are adopted, which include activity evaluation forms, surveys, and questionnaires. The views of children, parents and partners are gathered and used to shape services. However, the centre is not fully using the data and information that is available and cannot demonstrate the longer-term impact of its work on outcomes for families. The centre co-ordinator has been creative in how she organises the local advisory group. She has recognised that in an area where there are several children's centres the availability of professional partners to support these groups can be limited. As a result of this, with a neighbouring centre that she also manages, she has developed outcome groups and is seeing much more involvement from professionals. However, the centre recognises that not enough parents are involved in key decision making.

Inclusion of all children and families is central to the centre's work. This is evidence by the growth in the number of families who use the centre services consistently. There is a clear commitment to equality of opportunity. For example, staff are willing to deliver a range of services at the weekends and during the evenings to ensure that working parents can have the same access. Effective signposting and a range of equipment is available and is used to support the very small minority of families who speak English as an additional language.

Safeguarding arrangements are excellent. The 'team around the child' approach ensures that a wide range of professionals work together extremely well to safeguard



and protect children and families. Effective quality assurance systems through case file audits and supervision ensure that children are well protected and families are receiving the appropriate support. Parents are very well informed of the centre's policy on protecting children and sharing information with other relevant agencies. Observations of health and family support workers show the open and honest messages that are given to parents. Safe recruitment practices are robust and follow Nottinghamshire County Health procedures.

These are the grades for leadership and management

<b>The extent to which governance, accountability, professional supervision and day-to-day management arrangements are clear and understood</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secure improvement in outcomes</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of families, including those in target groups</b>	<b>2</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>2</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>1</b>
<b>The extent to which partnerships with other agencies ensure the integrated delivery of the range of services provided by the centre to meet its core purpose</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which the centre supports and encourages families in the reach area to engage with services and uses their views to develop the range of provision</b>	<b>1</b>

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

The findings of the recent inspection for Huthwaite Children's Centre Pre-School and the inspection report for Nurseryworld and Friends Nursery and Pre-School provision were used to inform the judgements made. The overall effectiveness of both settings was judged to be good.

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## Summary for centre users

We inspected the HUTHWAITE All Saints Children's Centre (Sutton West) on 21–22 September 2011. We judged the centre as good overall.

Thank you to those who came to speak to us and to those of you who were willing for us to visit you in your own homes. The children's centre was described to us as 'the hub of the community' and we agree. We found it to be very welcoming and we were impressed by the high numbers of families who visit the centre and take part in a wide range of activities on a regular basis. Some of the activities are delivered by the children's centre and others are delivered by All Saints Church and supported by centre staff. This arrangement is typical of some of the outstanding partnership working inspectors were made aware of during their time at the children's centre. Health, education, social care and community agencies work really well together to make things better for you and to help you improve your lives.

The centre places a high priority on encouraging you and your children to learn new skills and this is helping you to develop in confidence. Children clearly enjoy the activities at the centre. They are making good progress in their learning and are well prepared for starting school. We saw that for some of you, your contact with the centre has led you to further training and qualifications, volunteering and employment. We were impressed by how many of you '...wanted to give something back to the centre' and were doing this by taking part in the volunteer scheme. You said the centre was making a real difference to you and how much you appreciate the support and encouragement that you receive. You told us that in times of crisis you could always depend on the staff; they would listen, take your views into account and help you to find solutions. Some of you described the centre as a 'lifeline'. Many of you told us how beneficial it is to have midwives, health visitors and early years staff working from the centre and helping you when you have any concerns about your children's development. We were able to see the very well attended baby clinic. Those of you who we talked to told us how much you enjoyed coming to it at the centre. We could see that you receive good-quality information in relation to your baby's health and well-being.

The current centre co-ordinator has brought enthusiasm, commitment and a good understanding of the needs of families. She has been pivotal in bringing about the improvements and developing very effective relationships within the community. We know from documentation that your views are asked for and that you take part in surveys and discussions. We are also aware that activities have been changed and developed as a result of your feedback. We think there is more that you could do. We have therefore asked the senior leadership team to look at ways in which you could be involved in key decision making. The senior leaders and centre staff work effectively to make the centre as good as it can be. To help them we have suggested they use the information they have more effectively so that they can show accurately whether the activities they provide are making a difference to you.

Thank you very much for your welcome and openness. We thoroughly enjoyed talking to you, sharing your stories and learning alongside you. We wish you every success in the future.

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