

Inspection report for Granby Children's Centre

Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	383587
Inspection dates	4 - 5 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Priscilla McGuire

Centre leader	Debi McAndrew
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Centre address	Eversley Street Liverpool Merseyside L8 2TU
Telephone number	0151 233 3200
Fax number	0151 233 3201
Email address	debi.mcandrew@liverpool.gov.uk

Linked school if applicable	131800 Kingsley Community School
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	EY344830 Granby Children's Centre

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.

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'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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.

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector and one early years inspector.

Inspectors held meetings with the head of centre, centre coordinator, parents and carers, members of the advisory board, representatives from the local authority, the health services and other partner agencies. They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

Information about the centre

Granby Children's Centre is a phase one centre in Liverpool that was established in 2006. The centre shares its site with Kingsley Community School. The headteacher of the school acts as head of centre and shares strategic responsibility for the centre with the centre coordinator, who has the main responsibility for operational management. The centre provides a core offer of integrated services that include health, family support, early years provision, advice and guidance and adult learning.

Levels of deprivation are high in the area served by the centre. Ward profile indicates that the percentage of workless households is 42.8% compared to the city percentage of 26.3%. Within the ward, six super output areas are in the top one percent of the most deprived wards in the country. Obesity rates are high, immunisation rates are low but breastfeeding rates are higher than the city average. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make up 97% of the total school population, with some of the children belonging to asylum seeker and refugee families. The reach area is ethnically very diverse with families from Somali and Yemeni heritages being the most significant minority ethnic groups. Children's development levels on entry to early years provision are below what is 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

1

Capacity for sustained improvement

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

1

Main findings

'We think community and we think family.' This phrase is used by centre staff to summarise their approach to delivering the outstanding provision that is offered at Granby Children's Centre. The centre is highly effective, lively, welcoming and serves its community of families exceptionally well. Almost all outcomes are outstanding, as a result of an accurate assessment of needs at an individual and community level coupled with the expert planning of high quality provision to ensure needs are met well.

One of the many strengths of the centre is the excellent knowledge the staff have of their diverse community. The extensive range of provision is impressive and responsive to community needs. Soft skills development in areas such as confidence building and raising motivation are recognised by the centre as being fundamental building blocks that can help parents and carers overcome personal barriers and progress into employment and further education. 'It has been good for my self-esteem and for my children' was the comment of one parent who now participates in a range of activities at the centre after progressing from attending 'Stay and Play' sessions.

Staffing resources are exceptionally well used to ensure maximum use and impact of the skills, interests and expertise of individual members of staff. The ethnic profile of the staff, reflects the ethnic diversity of their community and the ability of some members of staff to speak the languages spoken by key target groups within the community is a huge asset for the centre. For example, a 'healthy eating' session targeted at the Somali community is facilitated by a member of staff who speaks Somali. The promotion of equality and of inclusion for all members of the community is outstanding.

The positive contribution of the centre to the wider community is excellent. The 'added value' the centre brings to its community is exemplary. Centre staff recognise their role in helping to improve outcomes for the entire community and not just those families whose

children are under five years of age. The partnership and links that have been made with a women's hostel, the local hospital, with a Pakistani community centre, a library and with a whole range of other organisations to provide activities and resources are also excellent. The outstanding partnership arrangements have helped to raise participation rates, provide opportunities for families to learn and have fun together and provide early intervention, care, guidance and support when it is most needed.

Lines of accountability are clear and explicit and roles and responsibilities clearly understood. The centre is able to demonstrate its success with reference to hard evidence and data. Use of data is very effective and informs the process of self-evaluation and critical self-analysis however the reviews of safeguarding practice carried out are not fully reflected in self evaluation reports. This together with the inspirational leadership and management of the centre, the constant challenge set by the advisory board to raise performance levels, contributes to the outstanding effectiveness of the centre and its capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- Ensure reviews of safeguarding practice are fully reflected in self-evaluation reports to ensure dissemination of good practice and to reflect the views of users.

How good are outcomes for families?

1

'My life has gone from meaningless to meaningful', is the comment from one parent, which reflects the outstanding impact Granby Children's Centre has on families and the wider community. Across almost all outcomes, the impact of the centre on the lives of family and the local community are excellent. Breastfeeding rates are excellent and the highest in the city. The centre knows from data and local intelligence that some communities within the reach area are traditionally more likely to breastfeed than others and is, therefore, targeting groups, such as British born mothers who have been identified from centre data as less likely to breastfeed. Obesity rates are high in the reach area and higher than the rest of Liverpool. The centre has recognised that cultural influences inform attitudes towards obesity within one of its key target groups and is, therefore, offering very focussed support and guidance to help change attitudes towards the excessive use of salt and sugar in meal preparation. In response to needs within the reach area, a wide and innovative range of activities, such as massage sessions and a 'Feel Good Factor' course, have been organised and are very successful in helping improve the emotional well-being of families.

Although the starting points for children in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage profile are low compared to the rest of Liverpool and the country, children overcome multiple barriers to make a positive transition into school and make excellent progress once they arrive at school. Within the reach area, the gap between the lowest achieving 20% children and the rest is reducing. The centre works very well with private and voluntary

sector early years settings to improve educational outcomes for children. The personal and social development of parents and carers is outstanding. The centre has been instrumental in helping parents and carers overcome significant personal and social barriers. One parent said of the impact of the centre on her life, 'Before, I was too quiet, I was taken advantage of, I used to say yes all the time instead of saying no – now I speak my mind.'

The protection of children is a high priority at the centre and parents and carers talk very positively about feeling safe and welcomed at the centre. They have also benefited from the home safety scheme and learnt how to make their homes a safe environment. All staff have been trained to use the Common Assessment Framework and they work well with other partners to respond appropriately when safeguarding issues arise. Case studies also show that children have been removed from child protection plans as a result of successful interventions facilitated by the centre; also that all looked after children in the reach area are positively engaged with the centre.

The centre is seen as a hub within the community and its promotion of community cohesion is exemplary. One impressive example of how the centre reaches out to the wider community and promotes community cohesion is its 'Unwind with a Book' project. Once a week, a member of staff accompanies parents and carers to a neighbouring residential home for older people (residents), they then form a reading group including residents, centre staff and parents and carers who want to 'read out loud' to other residents for the enjoyment of all. The project has been successful in bridging the 'generation gap' and in adding enrichment and enjoyment to the lives of residents in the home and also for parents and carers. Parents and carers actively contribute to decision making through the Parents Forum, and through its links with the advisory board.

Participation rates in training and adult learning are exceptionally high and most parents and carers are engaged in some form of learning or training held at, or organised by the centre. Although worklessness rates within the reach area remain higher than the rest of the city, the rate is reducing and the centre is making a significant contribution to equipping parents and carers with the skills and attitudes that they will need to be able to progress into employment and education. The centre uses its excellent links with a local adult learning centre to provide learning opportunities for parents and carers and also organises its own courses for adults. High quality advice and guidance about employment benefits entitlement are provided through the centre's good links with Jobcentre Plus, Citizens Advice Bureau and other agencies. Courses, such as 'Motivate Me' as well as English for Speakers of other Language (ESOL) courses, contribute significantly to parents and carers developing the skills and confidence they need to achieve positive outcomes.

These are the grades for the outcomes for families:

The extent to which children, including those from target groups, are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy and families have healthy lifestyles	1
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 children and parents, including those from target groups, enjoy and achieve educationally and in their personal and social development	1
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	1
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.	1

How good is the provision?

1

The assessment of community and individual needs by the centre staff, their partners and the advisory board is outstanding. The needs of individual target groups are very effectively assessed through the exceptionally good use of data by the centre coordinator, through the contribution and expertise of partners, and also through local intelligence gathered by staff. Multi-agency work is excellent and the mechanisms of signposting and referring when needs of families are identified are rigorous, well-informed and highly effective. Staff work strategically and have specific responsibilities which relate to the needs of specific target groups, such as teenage parents, lone parents or parents of children with additional needs. Outreach work is highly effective in engaging non-users and in bringing services to families who are not yet ready or unable to access universal services. For example, the centre works very well with the neo-natal unit within a local women's hospital to offer support and guidance to parents.

Provision is carefully planned to meet the needs of target groups and those identified as most in need of intervention and support. The range of provision and its impact is outstanding. Families using the centre participate in accredited courses, an extensive range of health activities and clinics, massage sessions, curriculum vitae (CV) writing and interview skills training. Activities are planned with clearly identified aims and outcomes and the courses offered relate very well to the needs of the community. Home visits are used very well to bring the provision to those parents, carers and families in need of individual, targeted intervention. Aspiration raising and a 'can do' mentality are actively promoted and parents can articulate well what they have learned about how they can improve their lives. One parent shared a 'mantra' that she learnt from attending a course at the centre. She said: 'I've learnt how to move from my comfort zone to the stretch zone but not the panic zone.' Achievement is celebrated very well at the centre. On completion of a course, parents and carers receive certificates to record their achievement. In addition, a 'What's Your Dream' board in the reception area is used to celebrate the achievement of those who have progressed into education and training and to encourage the self-belief and confidence of other parents and carers.

Care, guidance and support for families are outstanding and reflected by the comments made by both parents and partners about the impact of the centre on their lives. One parent said 'When I first had my baby, I didn't know what to do because I'd never had a baby before. I needed a lot of advice and the centre helped me so much'. The specialist expertise

and experience of both partners and staff are used exceptionally well to meet the needs of families. Case studies demonstrate how well centre staff liaise with other agencies to provide a highly effective and well integrated package of support and care for families. Partners also comment on the practical care and support centre staff provide when crises arise. Parents and carers feel cared for and valued by the staff and for those whose self-esteem and confidence are at a low point, feeling valued acts as a catalyst for their further development. The reception area in the centre has an abundant range of leaflets and posters to signpost parents and carers towards both internal and external sources of help.

These are the grades for the quality of provision:

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

How effective are the leadership and management?

1

'We want to be the best' was the comment of an advisory board member, which reflects the common pursuit of excellence that the board shares with the head of centre, centre coordinator and partners. This vision is reflected in both the strategic and operational management of the centre and as a result, leadership and management of the centre are outstanding. The head of centre and centre coordinator provide strong and inspirational leadership. They, their staff and partner organisations, are passionate about their roles and the significance of these roles in improving outcomes for families and the wider community. The centre coordinator constantly researches good practice from around the world that can contribute to the development of the centre and its role within the community.

The advisory board is very ambitious, highly effective and offers both support and challenge for the centre. The local authority has set ambitious targets for participation rates, however, the advisory board has set even higher targets. For example, in spite of the centre's significant success in achieving a 96% registration rate, the advisory board want either an increase in the registration rate or an account from the centre as to why the 'missing' four per cent are not registered with the centre.

There are strong links between strategic plans outlined by the local authority and the strategic and development planning that occurs at centre level. The centre coordinator is exceptionally skilled at using data to self-evaluate and analyse the performance of the centre in engaging its key target groups. Data is also used very effectively to identify trends in participation rates and as the basis for conducting further research into, for example, the reasons why certain target groups have a preference for some types of centre activities but not others. Performance management is excellent and self-evaluation is a rigorous process. The advisory board and managers within the local authority and the centre have an accurate knowledge of the provision, which is well informed by both qualitative and quantitative information. Staff make excellent use of tools such as the SOUL (Soft Outcomes Universal

Learning) record to evaluate the impact of provision and to measure the progress parents and carers make on courses designed to develop their soft skills.

Value for money is excellent and resources are particularly well managed. The centre invests very well in its staff and has so far supported and part-funded three members of staff to gain degrees. Other staff frequently participate in training that is relevant to their roles. Managers and leaders plan well for the future and in spite of funding cuts and uncertainty about future funding, they have been able to maintain the same level of provision by training staff to deliver some activities that were previously provided by external agencies.

The percentage of families from the black and minority ethnic groups who use the centre exceeds the number represented within the community. This reflects the centre's strong focus on inclusion and equality and the fact that families from outside the reach area are attracted to the centre. The social inequalities that are associated with social deprivation are challenged exceptionally well by centre staff who do their utmost to create what they see as a 'ladder of opportunity' for all families. The centre has been successful in narrowing the achievement gap between different target groups. Case study evidence and testimonies from parents and carers also demonstrate the centre's success in providing support to enable those with disabilities and those with children who have disabilities or additional needs to access services and achieve positive outcomes.

Safeguarding practice is very effective and recruitment and vetting checks are rigorous. Early intervention and effective multi-agency work ensures that families are safeguarded and that appropriate action is taken to prevent problems escalating. Although safeguarding issues are discussed at advisory board and staff meetings, these are not reflected in the self-evaluation report.

Partners hold the centre with very high regard and are highly committed to working with the centre to provide improved outcomes for families. The centre works in an exemplary way with an extensive range of partners from the private, statutory and voluntary sectors. The mutual commitment of partners and the centre to sharing and providing staffing and other resources has resulted in an excellent range of provision that extends beyond the walls of the centre. 'It feels like a community, that's beyond this building' was the view of one parent that reflects the success of the centre in forging links with partners to provide an integrated service. The centre values the voice of its families and they are involved at various levels in decision making and evaluating provision. Parents and carers are consulted through the 'Parents Forum' and also through questionnaires, surveys and discussions with staff. Families are highly satisfied with the centre and comment in a very positive way about the impact the centre has had on their lives.

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	1
The effectiveness of evaluation and its use of ambitious targets which secure improvement in outcomes	1

The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of families, including those in target groups	1
The extent to which equality is promoted and diversity celebrated, illegal or unlawful discrimination is tackled and the centre fulfils its statutory duties	1
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 partnerships with other agencies ensure the integrated delivery of the range of services provided by the centre to meet its core purpose	1
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.	1

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

None

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance *Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted* 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 Granby Children's Centre on 4-5 October 2011. We judged the centre as outstanding overall.

We found your centre to be a vibrant, warm and welcoming place. It was a pleasure to meet all of you, the staff and staff from the partner organisations that work with the centre. Thank you so much for taking the time to talk with us. We really appreciate the excellent contribution you made to the inspection process.

'If I didn't come here I would stay at home and do nothing' was the view of one parent, which we know reflects the views of many of you. Looking at the statistics, we can see that activities organised by the centre are very well attended. We were impressed with the number of families that use the centre. We like the diversity of your community and the way families from all backgrounds within the community use the centre and feel welcomed by staff. The range of opportunities the centre organises for you and your children is excellent. We believe that a real strength of the centre is the range of exceptional opportunities that are organised to help you develop your knowledge and skills, have fun and enjoyment with your own children and other families and gain qualifications. There seems to be an activity, session or group activity at the centre to suit everyone within the community. We know from your comments and your evaluations, that you enjoy attending sessions, such as

aromatherapy, the 'Feel Good Factor', 'Stay and Play', 'Baby Massage' and many other sessions.

Your centre is exceptionally well managed and staff are passionate about their roles and about doing their very best for all families and for the entire community. One of your centre's many strengths is the way staff contribute to the local community, not just by activities organised for families at the centre, but by links made with people and organisations, outside the centre. We particularly like the 'Unwind with a Book' project and the way it brings people of different ages together. We also like the numerous opportunities you have to improve your health and that of your children.

'I was struggling and had no family support, no one to talk to but the centre has changed my life' was the view of one parent and we agree that the centre is having a significantly positive impact on the lives of many families. Another one of your centre's many strengths is the support that is available when you most need it. Some of you talked to us about times in your life when you felt distressed and needed help and then received excellent support and care from the staff at the centre. We think that the staff at the centre have an exceptional ability to make the right judgements about the type of support that is needed for individual parents, carers, and their families. Centre staff also have an outstanding ability to look at the needs of your community and to the barriers that exist and then find a way to reduce those barriers. We know that staff take safeguarding very seriously and that you all feel very safe at the centre but we have asked staff to make sure that when they review safeguarding practice, they include their findings in their self-evaluation report.

Once again, many thanks for taking the time to talk with us and we wish you and your families the very best for the future.

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