

Inspection report for Chobham and West End Children's Centre

Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	383486
Inspection dates	13–14 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Priscilla McGuire

Centre leader	Janet Parker
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Centre address	Chobham and West End Children's Centre St Lawrence Church of England Primary School Bagshot Road Chobham Surrey GU24 8AB
Telephone number	01276 855675
Fax number	N/A
Email address	ccentre@stlawrenceprimary.co.uk

Linked school if applicable	St Lawrence Church of England Primary School
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	N/A

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: October 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'.

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.

An inspection of the co-located/partner 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 centre staff, advisory board members, representatives of the school's governing body, headteachers, and representatives from the local authority, prison service and health services as well as parents and carers.

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

Information about the centre

Chobham and West End Children's Centre is a phase two centre in Surrey that was designated in 2009. The centre serves families who live in the Cobham, West End and Bisley areas and shares its site with St Lawrence Church of England Primary School. Governance of the centre is the responsibility of the school governors and they are commissioned by the local authority to provide children's centre services. The core purpose of the centre is to provide health services, early learning, information and guidance, outreach work and family support. The reach area is socially diverse with pockets of deprivation alongside areas of affluence. Worklessness rates are low and the number of families claiming benefits is also low. Most houses are privately owned but social housing is offered in some parts of the reach area. Few families are in workless homes overall and as such few receive benefits.

There is a permanent Traveller site within the reach area and a male prison. The majority of families are of White British heritage but some families are from minority

ethnic backgrounds. Health data show that obesity rates are low. Most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage at a level above what is expected of their age. Most services for families are offered at venues within the reach area but the local school is used for some summer activities.

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

3

Capacity for sustained improvement

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

3

Main findings

Chobham and West End Children’s Centre offers satisfactory provision overall and in some aspects is good. The centre is recognised as a catalyst for promoting community cohesion and breaking down barriers between different groups within the community. Outreach work with key target groups within the reach area, such as families from the Traveller community, has been very successful in engaging families that previously had little involvement not only with the centre but with statutory services.

One of the key strengths of the centre is its ability to help children and their parents and carers improve their skills and knowledge. The centre works well with local schools to monitor the achievement of children during the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children in the reach area perform at a level higher than that expected for their age across all points of the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, centre staff, in conjunction with schools and childminders, use feedback from headteachers and data about any dips in Early Years Foundation Stage scores to inform their planning of activities for children. Safeguarding is satisfactory but the process of assessing risk, identifying and recording control measures for activities and venues is not always as detailed as it should be.

The personal and social development of many parents and carers is also good. Parents and carers value greatly the opportunity they have to meet other families at the centre or at other venues where activities are organised. Parents and carers and their children benefit from the opportunities they have to participate in good quality activities and to learn and have fun together.

The centre highly values the voice of parents and carers; successfully working with them to improve the quality of provision. Centre staff listen to the views of parents

and carers as expressed through their evaluations, through the parents' forum and through their representation on the advisory board. Centre staff and their partners are passionate about improving the life chances of families in the reach area. This commitment is reflected in the comment of one parent who said about the staff, 'They take an interest in the whole family.'

The centre is in a period of transition with a newly appointed centre manager and other staff who are new to their posts. However, the changes in staffing have been effectively managed. At all levels, leaders and managers know the local community well and are also aware of what actions need to be taken to improve outcomes for families.

The quality of data provided by the local authority for centres is improving. An area board partnership meeting, which provides data for children's centres in the borough, is held on an annual basis. The meetings are used to disseminate data from key partners such as the health services. Qualitative evidence is used effectively to inform self-evaluation but the systematic use of data to inform improvement planning and the process of self-evaluation are still developing. Leaders and managers at all levels recognise the use and analysis of data as an area for improvement and are committed to strengthening this aspect of the centre's work. This strong commitment and the satisfactory leadership and management mean that the centre has a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- Review risk assessment processes to ensure effective recording for all venues and activities.
- Incorporate the use of data in the systems for planning and evaluating provision.
- Review the cycle of self-evaluation and development planning to ensure the centre can demonstrate more precisely the impact of provision.

How good are outcomes for families?

3

Outcomes for families are satisfactory overall and good in some aspects. Effective links with partners representing the health services help to promote healthy living for families. Health visitors work satisfactorily with centre staff to assess and meet the needs of families. Obesity rates in the reach area are lower than the national average for children in the Reception Year. Breastfeeding is also well promoted and breastfeeding rates are slightly higher than national rates. The centre has organised healthy eating sessions and other activities to promote healthy lifestyles satisfactorily. Centre staff and their partners also provide appropriate support to

improve the emotional health of parents and carers. Parents and carers are developing a satisfactory understanding of how to keep themselves and their family healthy although the collection of data on participation rates in health-related activities is still developing.

Arrangements to keep children and vulnerable adults safe when using the centre and other venues are satisfactory. Parents and carers report that they feel safe at the centre. Many have benefited from attending first-aid training. Activities, such as a theatre production of the 'Ugly Duckling', have been used effectively to help families develop their understanding of how to stay safe in relation to bullying. Other courses develop users' parenting skills. The centre uses the Common Assessment Framework satisfactorily to assess the needs of families and to provide the most appropriate support and intervention. However, data on the number of children on child protection plans are limited.

Children in the reach area are well prepared for the transition to school as a result of their participation in centre activities. Data show that throughout the reach area, children achieve well across the Early Years Foundation Stage profile and those who have attended the centre are helped to do well in the long term. Activities for children, such as 'play and learn', are well planned to help children develop their listening, communication and other skills. The achievement of children from key target groups, such as those from the Traveller community, is also good. 'The centre enables children to interact well with other children, and this has helped them to be ready for school and make friends', was the comment of one parent which reflects the views of many. For those parents and carers who feel socially and emotionally isolated, the centre has provided an opportunity for them to meet other parents, carers and children and to socialise. 'I was very alone, now I know lots of people. Because I do not drive, I would have no other opportunity to meet people', was the comment of one parent who feels her life has been enriched by her contact with centre.

The centre has been instrumental in promoting community cohesion, particularly with its work to engage families from the Traveller community. Children from this and other target groups such as those who live in the more deprived parts of the community make good progress in developing positive relationships. Parents and carers, partners and staff comment much on the way children develop good social skills and 'achieve a sense of their community' as a result of participating in centre activities. The centre's role in the life of fathers who are serving sentences in the local male prison is also good and highly valued. The views of parents and carers are actively sought and used to inform the development of provision. For example, a successful 'Picnic in the Park' event was organised in response to the suggestion of parents and carers who felt it would be a good way of promoting the centre to other parents and carers. As a result, there is an increasing rate of participation in centre activities by target groups. Parents and carers are also involved in volunteering and act as strong advocates for the centre. This is well-illustrated by the comment of one parent who said, 'I would like to give back to the community what I have gained

from the centre.'

Because worklessness rates are low within the area, Jobcentre Plus has not identified the area as a priority and does not allocate staff to visit the centre. However, along with other agencies, it provides satisfactory information and guidance about employment opportunities and job searching. Evidence shows that some parents and carers are improving their economic stability and independence as a result of training opportunities that have been facilitated by the centre satisfactorily. For example, a small group of users attended training in floristry organised in conjunction with a local company. The skills they gained enabled some parents and carers to set up their own floristry businesses. Lone parents are few overall and they are given suitable support where this is needed.

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	3
The extent to which children are safe and protected, their welfare concerns are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them	3
The extent to which all children and parents, including those from target groups, enjoy and achieve educationally and in their personal and social development	2
The extent to which children engage in positive behaviour and develop positive relationships, and parents, including those from target groups, contribute to decision-making and governance of the centre	2
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.	3

How good is the provision?

2

Assessment is used satisfactorily to ensure that provision meets the needs of families. Centre staff understand the challenge they face in targeting provision to meet the needs of key target groups and the most vulnerable within their community. Partnerships are well established and used to assess the needs of individual families and also the wider community. Services are adapted to meet needs to ensure the most vulnerable families within the more deprived parts of the reach area and key target groups access provision. Available data and information provided by partners and through outreach work are used to assess needs. However, the use of data to monitor participation rates by target groups and to ensure provision is well matched to need is still developing.

Provision to help children and adults learn and develop is purposeful. For example, in

one observed session children, and parents and carers participated well in a 'play and learn' session and enjoyed activities which helped develop their listening and communication skills. Children also demonstrated confidence and independence in choosing activities and selecting rhymes. The centre has helped fathers in prison to learn how they can use the time they spend with their children on 'family days' productively to support their children's development and also as an opportunity to establish good relationships with their children. The prison views the service provided by the centre to fathers as a contributory factor in the process of breaking the cycle of re-offending. Activities organised by the centre and in conjunction with partners have also helped members of the Traveller community to acquire skills in computing that have enabled them to access other learning opportunities.

'I could not have coped without the centre and as a result I am now a better parent', was the comment of one parent which reflects how well cared for parents and carers who use the centre feel. The quality of care for families is good. Families using the centre receive effective support and care from centre staff and their partners. Case study evidence and testimonies from parents and cares show that intervention is effective in preventing crises from escalating. Parents and carers feel cared for and feel that the centre supports not just them as individuals but also those members of their family who are not directly involved in centre activities. The system of referrals and signposting used by the centre and the way the centre uses the Common Assessment Framework are also effective in enabling families to receive the most appropriate type of support and care.

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	3
The extent to which the centre promotes purposeful learning, development and enjoyment for all families, including those in target groups	2
The quality of care, guidance and support offered to families, including those in target groups.	2

How effective are the leadership and management?

3

Governance and accountability arrangements are in place and satisfactory. There are clear links between the overall strategic plan for the centre and operational management. The advisory board and the sub-committee of governors for the school, which has overall responsibility for the management of the centre and recruitment of staff, provide satisfactory support and challenge to the centre. Leaders and managers have a good awareness about key target groups for the centre and a satisfactory level of awareness about the strengths and areas for improvement at the centre. They are motivated to seek further improvement.

The self-evaluation process is satisfactory. The better use of data to improve the quality of self-evaluation has been recognised by all leaders and managers as an area for improvement. The development plan for the centre is detailed and much focused on improving areas related to the Every Child Matters outcomes. However, the link between the process of self-evaluation and development planning is still developing.

Value for money and use of resources are satisfactory and have a satisfactory impact on outcomes overall and a good impact in some areas. Local intelligence, observations and evaluations from users demonstrate that participation rates are increasing and that outreach work is effective. Accommodation is suitable and the centre makes use of other venues within the reach area to engage families from the most vulnerable groups.

Centre staff are sensitive to the needs of their key target groups. For example, an exclusive 'play and learn' group was set up for families from the Traveller community to encourage their participation. As their confidence grew and as their perception of feeling safe increased, the families attended groups with other families and now integrate well with families from diverse social and racial groups. Inclusion for all families is strongly promoted at the centre. Effective links are made with external agencies to provide specialist support for families with children who have disabilities or additional needs. Equality for all families is strongly promoted. Outreach work has been used effectively to identify what barriers prevent specific groups from engaging in activities and to identify how the needs of minority groups can be met. Leaders are proactive in endeavouring to involve adults and children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The promotion and practice of safeguarding are satisfactory. The centre works satisfactorily with a wide range of agencies to provide early intervention to prevent problems within families from escalating to crises. Effective support is also provided for victims of domestic violence. Safeguarding and the emotional well-being of families are also actively promoted. Governors with responsibility for recruitment have completed safer recruitment training and requirements for vetting and checking staff and volunteers are satisfactorily met. Staff training in safeguarding is satisfactory. Safeguarding practice is reviewed by the local authority and by the centre manager but not covered in sufficient detail during self-evaluation.

Partnership arrangements are satisfactory and relationships between key partners are clear and understood. Partners are actively involved in the development of provision and services. The centre works effectively with a range of partners from the statutory, voluntary and private sectors to develop provision and improve outcomes for families. User engagement is good. Families who use the centre are regularly consulted about how the centre can improve. Outreach work is very effective in engaging new users such as families from the Traveller community and fathers in prison. Partnership work with users is good and their views are taken into

account when developing planning.

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 effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secure improvement in outcomes	3
The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of families, including those in target groups	3
The extent to which equality is promoted and diversity celebrated, illegal or unlawful discrimination is tackled and the centre fulfils its statutory duties	2
The effectiveness of the centre's policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults	3
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	3
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	2

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

Findings from the concurrent inspection of St Lawrence Church of England Primary School.

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 Chobham and West End Children's Centre on 13 and 14 October 2011. We judged the centre as satisfactory overall.

We would like to thank you for taking the time to talk to us during the inspection. You told us how much you enjoy attending the centre with your children. Some of you also told us how centre staff have helped you to cope during difficult times in

your lives. We found that one of the key strengths of the centre is the way it supports and cares for families. Many of you highly value the way the centre offers support to entire families, even members of families who do not directly use the centre.

Some of the activities organised by the centre are helping your children to develop their social skills. Other activities are helping you as parents and carers to meet other parents and carers. For those of you who rely on public transport, we know how much you appreciate the opportunities you have to get out of the house and share experiences with others. Some of you are actively involved in helping the centre to improve and also work hard as volunteers to try and encourage other families to use the centre. We know that your hard work is appreciated by the centre staff.

The way the centre organises different activities to help you and your children improve your health is beginning to make a difference. From talking to some of you and to staff from local organisations, we also know that the centre has been successful in bringing different parts of the community together. We think this ability to support and welcome families from different backgrounds and to provide opportunities for all members of the community to participate in activities are other key strengths of the centre.

We know that you all feel safe at the centre and we realise that your safety and that of your children is a priority for staff. However, inspectors have identified that the centre's use of data is not yet well enough developed. As a result, opportunities for outcomes for families to be good are missed as leaders do not use statistics about the community to help staff plan developments to best possible effect. That is why we have also asked the centre staff to make better use of data. We also want the centre to find out more about whether activities organised are successful or not. If they do this, we believe the centre will be able to offer you and your families even more enjoyable activities that can help you succeed in life.

Once again many thanks for your help in supporting the inspection process and we wish you all the best for the future.

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