

Inspection report for Ganneys Meadow Early Years Centre

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| Local authority | Wirral |
| Inspection number | 383586 |
| Inspection dates | 13 - 14 September 2011 |
| Reporting inspector | Julie Pomone |

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| Centre leader | Caroline Roberts |
| Date of previous inspection | Not applicable. |
| Centre address | New Hey Road Woodchurch Wirral Merseyside CH49 8HB |
| Telephone number | 0151 6779255 |
| Fax number | Not applicable |
| Email address | headteacher@ganneysmeadow.wirral.sch.uk |

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| Linked School, if applicable | 105039 Fender Primary School 105067 Woodchurch CofE (Aided) Primary School 104986 Ganneys Meadow Early Years Centre (nursery) |
| Linked early years and childcare, if applicable | EY287866 Ganneys Meadow Early Years 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.

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 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 parents, grandparents, carers, staff including the senior leadership team, partners, governors and representatives from the local authority. They observed the centre's work and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

Information about the centre

Ganneys Meadow Early Years Centre is a Phase 1 children's centre, designated in 2004 and has been providing the full core offer since November 2009. The centre has developed from a nursery school (established 1974) and a Social Services Family Support Group and relocated to its current site in 1995 and now operates from a refurbished junior school in the centre of the Woodchurch estate in the Upton Ward of Wirral. The centre shares a campus with a primary school and the local branch library. The centre is managed by a Head of Centre together with a senior leadership team comprising a Family Services Manager, Family Support and Outreach Co-ordinator, a Senior Teacher/SENCO and a Foundation Consultant.

The centre provides nursery education, childcare and a children's centre for the community of Woodchurch and the Overchurch estate where outreach provision is offered for two hours each week at the Jubilee café. The centre liaises with 23 schools. Two of these are main feeder schools, Fender Primary School which is co-located and Woodchurch Church of England (Aided) Primary School.

Of the 1160 children under five years old in the Ganneys Meadow Early Years Centre reach area, 676 live in some of the 30% most deprived areas of the country. Of these, 446 (66%) are registered with the children's centre. The centre has 691 children registered overall

representing 60% of the total number in the reach area. Around 25% of the children in the reach area are from homes with lone parents. Of these, 141 (56%) are registered with the centre.

The centre reach area has 21% of the 0-4 year olds in the footprint living in workless households. Around 21% of eligible families are in receipt of working families' tax credits. The majority of families are of White British heritage and there are 6% (70 children) from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds.

Ganneys Meadow Early Years Centre provides nursery education for up to 80 FTE children. It provides day-care and a crèche for up to 94 children with no more than 24 under the age of two at any one time. Children enter Ganneys Meadow Early Years Centre at levels below those expected for their age. Ganneys Meadow Early Years Centre nursery school URN 104986 was judged as outstanding when it was inspected in May 2010 and the report is available at www.ofsted.gov.uk

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

3

Main findings

Ganneys Meadow Early Years Centre is effectively promoting equality and diversity. Outcomes for children and families are improving and the centre is narrowing the achievement gap in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children make good progress from low starting points.

Health professionals, who were relocated from general practitioner areas to the children's centre provide appropriate services to meet the needs of the locality. Practitioner Nurse services are well advertised and available on four days each week within the centre. The specialist practitioner nurse is accessible to families and offers advice on a wide range of health matters including smoking cessation, weight management and sexual health. Parents access health promotion courses in groups or as individuals. The popular healthy cooking course helps parents to develop skills they can use in the home. However, the centre lacks data to confirm the extent to which the work that is done to promote healthy lifestyles in the community is making a difference.

The assessment of safeguarding hazards is robust and effective and minimises risks to children and staff. One parent made a typical comment ‘...this was a safe haven for me’. Data to demonstrate whether there had been a reduction in accidents and admissions to hospital are not readily available.

Computers are available in a dedicated area for parents to carry out Internet job search activities and to research education training and employment opportunities. However, the amount of support, advice and guidance for families on education, training and employment is insufficient and the partnership arrangements with Jobcentre Plus are not effective enough

The centre signposts families to local agencies for support in seeking employment.

Views of centre users are gathered effectively and used to help the centre plan its provision. Parents feel listened to and the centre makes changes to meet their needs. The annual audit is well established identifying priorities for the centre’s action planning process. The centre does not solicit the views of non-users to better establish whether provision is meeting their needs and particularly if barriers exist to accessing services.

Leadership and management are good overall, and staff feel well supported with good professional development. Communication between staff and partners is good, they work together effectively to support families and improve outcomes for children. The governing body is well established with a wide range of expertise and representation. They are well-organised and meet regularly providing good support to the Head of Centre. A series of sub-committees meets to focus on specific development areas such as finance and marketing. However, there is currently no parent forum or advisory board through which families can contribute to the governance of the centre.

The quality of data provided by the local authority has improved and is starting to provide more clarity about the centre’s reach area and its most vulnerable groups. However, the centre has insufficient evidence to evaluate the improvement it has made to families’ lives, or the success of its services in meeting local priorities. Consequently, the centre demonstrates a satisfactory capacity for improvement.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- Ensure there is an established and clearly-defined advisory board to provide advice and assistance on the effective operation of the centre and contribute to the governance of the centre.
- Improve the opportunities available for families to access education, training and advice on employment opportunities.
- Utilise data more effectively to
 - inform the self-evaluation process and decision making
 - target groups, including those who have difficulty accessing the centre
 - track progress, including the impact of services on healthy lifestyles.

How good are outcomes for families?

2

Ganneys Meadow Early Years Centre promotes healthy lifestyles to its families through a range of targeted activities. This is supported by the centre partnership working with experienced health and family support professionals. Children are able to benefit from playing in the fresh air and natural environment and improve their physical and mental health through the exceptional outdoor play areas at the centre. Staff are particularly vigilant in their contact with children and parents and this leads to effective referral and take up of family health support. However, availability of information to assess the impact on families' lifestyle is variable from the centre and some of its health partners. As a result data does not give an accurate indication of the changes in lifestyle being made.

The centre successfully provides practical and emotional support for 26 families who have babies in the local hospital neonatal unit. Data provided by the centre confirms that over the last 3-year period there has been a small increase from 23% to 27% of mothers who have sustained breastfeeding at 6 to 8 weeks. Sessions for first-time mothers and parents named 'Beautiful beginnings' are part of the planned developments of the centre, aimed at encouraging breastfeeding.

Ganneys Meadow Early Years Centre provides a particularly safe environment where families comment about the priority the centre gives to the implementation of safe and hygienic practices. 'The safety and security at the centre is impressive' is a representative quote from one grandparent. Good health and safety and hygiene practice are demonstrated in play and learning sessions. Advice on home safety enables parents to sustain safe practice in their home environments. Parents' safety concerns are listened to and appropriate safeguards are put into place particularly for children with learning disabilities and difficulties.

Effective multi-disciplinary approaches including referral and self-referral allow early intervention to ensure those at risk or in need of help get timely targeted support. Staff are well-trained in common assessment framework (CAF) procedures and out of 617 consultations only 11 CAFs have been necessary. Particularly good initiatives are in place to support women affected by the high incidence of domestic abuse in the area.

Children enjoy their learning indoors and outdoors. Effective tracking systems demonstrate the good progress children make in all aspects of their development including their speech and language. The centre would like to see greater development in this area and provides specialist speech and language support workers to provide this support. Behaviour across the centre is good; the atmosphere is calm and well organised with children in the centre relating well to each other. 'Stay and Play' sessions provide compelling evidence of children, parents and carers developing their personal and social skills through a variety of activities. The centre provides an inclusive environment where dads and granddads are made to feel most welcome and enjoy the opportunity to play with their children and grandchildren and mix with other parents and carers. Due to changes in funding the centre has currently few

opportunities for parents to access adult learning; however, plans are in place to offer a limited provision. Staff raise parents' aspirations by challenging the workless cycle faced for too long by many families in the area.

Children are active, inquisitive and independent learners and they are encouraged by all centre activities to develop the skills that they need for their future lives.

Advice for parents seeking childcare is good and the centre is able to provide highly valued local day care for working families. Some crèche support is available for parents wanting to access courses.

Personal testimony from individual families demonstrates the positive impact their engagement with the centre had when they were faced with life challenges.

These are the grades for the outcomes for families:

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| 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 | 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 | 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

Effective multi-agency working and the sharing of information is improving the knowledge available to the centre about its current users. Improved assessment of needs more closely ensures that support and provision is better targeted to improve the life chances of children and families. Provision is linked carefully to improving 'Every Child Matters' outcomes. The centre uses a range of measures to gather user feedback and is responsive to their views. Data provided by the local authority is starting to show how well the centre meets the needs of families and target groups.

Provision is focused on maximising effective learning and development for children in the centre. The introduction and use of technology to promote learning in the centre and display children's work is a positive development. Parents and children are proud of their 'Learning Journey' books which reflect the individuality of each child and their achievements and strengths as they engage in learning. Children are motivated and interested in the broad range of activities and experiences provided by staff. They are able to make choices in what they do and initiate their own learning.

Users gave very compelling accounts of how they gain from the care, guidance and support that is provided by all the staff. 'They saved my marriage' and 'They are not workers they are friends,' are typical of what parents said. The ability of the staff to make users feel welcome and at ease encourages families to seek appropriate timely support.

These are the grades for the quality of provision:

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| The extent to which the range of services, activities and opportunities meet the needs of families, including those in target groups | 2 |
| 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?

2

Ganneys Meadow Early Years Centre is established at the heart of the Woodchurch community and nursery education and day care is highly regarded in the Woodchurch area. Governance of the centre includes representation from parents whose children have been users of the service and includes one parent who lives in its reach area. Plans exist to extend representation from the area not so well-served so that the centre understands more fully the needs of the families and targets its provision accordingly.

Through the clear vision of the governing body, the centre has developed its multi-agency integrated provision which is having a positive impact on outcomes for families. Leadership and management are good, staff are well-supported and they have clear roles and responsibilities which are linked to the centre improvement plan. Staff act as positive role models for families.

Self-evaluation is inclusive of staff and users and provides a descriptive account of the evidence that supports the strengths of the centre. It makes good use of user feedback and the findings of inspections. However it is insufficiently evaluative and self-critical to inform continuous improvement.

The continued introduction of partner agencies into the centre is providing an effective one-stop-shop for local families. Users of the Children's Centre benefit from excellent accommodation and resources that are well-managed and wholly appropriate to provide the best possible learning environment for families and their children providing good value for money.

Equality and diversity are promoted effectively with well-targeted support particularly for children with additional learning needs. Effective strategies have been implemented as a result of identifying that boys often need more outdoor play than girls to promote their learning. In an area which is predominantly White British the staff educate children well

about the need to respect 'difference'. Outreach is underdeveloped for those living furthest away and who may have difficulty accessing the centre provision.

Safeguarding is a key priority and underpins all of the centre's work. All staff undertake regular training and updates and are well-equipped to spot signs of abuse or neglect. Sound procedures are in place to ensure all staff and partners are suitably vetted.

Strong partnerships are built with parents and they are encouraged to continue and sustain their children's learning and development in the home environment. Partner agencies work effectively together to provide support to families. The support from partner agencies to explore employment prospects is currently unavailable.

Families using the centre express their satisfaction with the service that the centre provides to support their children. Parents whose children access nursery or day-care are highly satisfied with the care and service that Ganneys Meadow Early Years Centre provides for their children including effective and much-valued respite care for those in need.

These are the grades for leadership and management:

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| The extent to which governance, accountability, professional supervision and day-to-day management arrangements are clear and understood | 2 |
| The effectiveness of evaluation and its use of 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 | 2 |
| 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 | 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 | 2 |
| 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

An inspection of the on-site nursery provision was carried out on 25 May 2010 and inspectors considered these findings during this inspection.

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 Ganneys Meadow Early Years Centre on 13 and 14 September 2011. We judged the centre as good overall.

Thank you for meeting with us and sharing your stories of how the centre has helped you continuously and about how the centre has supported you at times of crisis and helped you to cope. Some of you told us how as 'grandparent carers' you have had support from the centre which had a very positive impact on your lives whilst caring for your grandchildren.

Some of you also told us how well the staff work with your children when they have particular needs such as learning difficulties and disabilities and the good progress they make in developing their confidence and social skills.

We looked at plans and records of your children's work and were able to see how you and your families are making progress and benefiting from the services that your children's centre provides. We particularly liked the learning journals and how well they show the progress that your children have made at Ganneys Meadow Early Years Centre.

Ganneys Meadow Early Years Centre works hard to prepare your children for school, particularly with their educational and social skills, as a direct result of the support they receive through the centre. The good progress your children make at the centre means that they enter school with a much better start. There is more work to do in improving attainment and this will be through the good partnerships you have developed with the centre and hopefully will continue to develop with your children's school teachers.

We spoke with the governing body of your Children's Centre and were pleased to see that some of you are members. We would like to see more parent involvement through an advisory board or parents' forum which has representatives from all of the centre's target groups. We would also like to see Dads represented.

We have asked the centre to make better use of information about your area to ensure that those with the greatest need get appropriate support. Where you have difficulty getting to the centre it should provide some provision nearer to your homes.

It would also be beneficial if the centre could find out more about its impact on you and your families' lives and how successfully they are contributing to your community.

Your area has a high percentage of unemployment. We have asked the centre to provide more advice and guidance for your families to encourage them into employment and help you develop the skills that you need through programmes like the 'get confident' course that the centre offers.

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