

# Inspection report for Cauldwell Sure Start Peter Pan Children's Centre

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<b>Local authority</b>	Bedford
<b>Inspection number</b>	368271
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 October 2011
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<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
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<b>Linked school if applicable</b>	Caudwell Lower School 130326 Peter Pan Nursery School 109417
<b>Linked early years and childcare, if applicable</b>	Cherry Trees EY 286169 Peter Pan Neighbourhood Nursery EY 402721

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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**Report published:** November 2011



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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 governors and managers, users and a range of partners including health workers.

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

## Information about the centre

The centre is close to the centre of Bedford and housed in purpose-built accommodation. The space for families using the centre has been increased and the outdoor play area has recently been completely refurbished. The local population is ethnically diverse; 44% of families are from minority ethnic backgrounds and nearly a quarter of them are of Asian heritage. There is also a recently-arrived community from Eastern Europe. A significant number of families are housed in temporary accommodation owned by private landlords.

The centre primarily operates alongside the Peter Pan Early Years provision but some activities also take place at the Cherry Trees site. There is aligned day-care provision on both sites which is managed by the nursery schools. There are 37 and 38 places respectively. The centre was designated as a phase one centre in 2004 but was re-designated as phase two in 2010. It is managed by and accountable to the Spurgeons group on behalf of the local authority. The centre leader joined in an interim capacity two years ago and was appointed formally in 2011

The centre is in an area which is among the 10% most deprived in the country. Unemployment levels are the second highest in Bedford borough and out-of-work benefit claims are twice the borough average. Health inequalities are a particular concern and social-care case levels are also high. Levels of skills, knowledge and abilities on entry to school are below the national averages.

## 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

1

## Main findings

The centre effectively promotes improving outcomes for young children and their families. The quality of provision is outstanding as is the day to day management in the centre; leadership and management are good overall. Highly effective evaluation has led to significant improvements in the service. Because of the quality of leadership and provision and the improving outcomes the centre has an outstanding capacity for further improvement. The centre staff know the community extremely well and provide a welcoming and stimulating environment in which children and parents learn and have fun. The most vulnerable families receive outstanding care and guidance when they most need it and many speak movingly of the difference this has made to their lives.

The outstanding provision made by the centre results in good and strongly improving outcomes for young children and their families. The centre's approach to safeguarding is outstanding, especially for families who experience major difficulties. Like its strong approach to equality and diversity, safeguarding permeates every aspect of the centre's work with children and families. The centre is sensitive to the cultural needs and beliefs of the community and adapts its guidance and help in line with this understanding. Most of the families in the area use the centre but the centre does not do enough to encourage those from Eastern Europe to participate.

Good-quality support and advice is helping families to make healthy food choices and there are many opportunities for them to be more active with their children. Support for breastfeeding is particularly effective. Children make good progress in their learning and are well prepared for the next stages of their development. The provision of good courses is developing parents' confidence in helping their children to learn, and effective advice is helping them to support this learning at home. Users of the centre have opportunities to continue their own learning but staff do not celebrate their achievements sufficiently.

Good use is made of users' views in developing provision and there are many opportunities for parents to express their views so that they feel that they are listened to. Self-evaluation is incisive and accurate. The evaluation of individual services is used systematically to bring about rapid improvements. Planning for improvement is sharply focused and staff fully understand their role in, and are highly committed to, delivering improved outcomes. Self-evaluation is accurate and the evaluation of individual services is used systematically. As a result, planning for improvement is good and staff understand their role in delivering improved outcomes. The centre is able to very clearly demonstrate the effectiveness of the support provided for individual families.

Good work with partners is helping to improve the preparedness for work and users have opportunities to develop their skills and to re-engage with education.

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

### Recommendations for further improvement

- Celebrate the achievement of centre users in order to encourage others to continue with their learning.
- Further encourage more families from the Eastern European community to participate in, and benefit from, the services which the centre provides

## How good are outcomes for families?

<b>2</b>
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The centre is making a positive difference and outcomes for families are good. The effective use of data underpins a good partnership with health professionals and support is provided for those most in need of it. An increasing number of users are giving up smoking while new birth visits and courses such as 'Baby Brasserie' have contributed to a 10% increase in the rate of breastfeeding over two years. Mothers speak highly of the continuing support for this and as one put it, '...it's harder to give up now!' Good advice on healthy eating is provided at weekly sessions where staff and users take turns to cook. One father commented that, not only does he receive advice on healthy food choices, but he also gets time to spend with his son and meet other people. A good range of provision also supports children's physical development in an effort to reduce the levels of obesity. The outdoor area has been refurbished to encourage cooperative and independent play while courses such as 'Baby Rhythm' and 'On the Go' combine movement with fun.

Families and children benefit from the outstanding support to keep them safe. The high priority given to this is evident in all that the centre does, from the use of display to the meticulous attention to detail when planning courses. Safeguarding boards in every room provide visible reminders about process and accessible guidance on where to get help. Risk assessments are made for each activity and safeguarding forms record any incidents, the action taken and the follow up. There is also a considerable strength in the quality of support and joint working with partners on the Common Assessment Framework for vulnerable families and those in crisis. Individual case studies show that for some families this prevents concerns escalating

to the level of child protection. Where appropriate families also benefit from very good partnership working on child protection plans. Parents also feel safe to share confidential information with staff knowing that they will be listened to sensitively and with respect for their culture and beliefs.

The achievement gap between the bottom 20% and others has narrowed across all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage and children make good progress from their starting points. The numbers achieving well across all six areas of learning has increased over two years with a significant improvement in children's personal, social and emotional development including their behaviour and relationships. The centre provides photographic and written records of the stages in a child's development and individual advice is given on how this learning can be supported at home. The centre also effectively supports children when they move onto the next stage of learning. The 'Chatterbox' course is jointly delivered with nursery school staff and provides an opportunity for staff to introduce nursery routines and for parents to enjoy books with their children. As a result, parents are better informed and more confident in supporting their children's learning.

Parents are actively involved in the life of the centre and are well represented on the advisory board. In addition, parent advocates provide regular feedback on day-to-day activities. Their views are welcomed and the centre has adapted and changed provision as a result of their input.

Advice from the centre has contributed to a decrease in the number of unclaimed benefits and helped to lift some families out of poverty, but a few vulnerable families are reluctant to seek help. Many parents who have experienced support from the centre go on to become volunteers which further improves their readiness for employment. Some provide peer support for breastfeeding and become parent advocates while others go on to achieve accreditation through the 'Step into Childcare' course. The centre effectively encourages users to engage with other learning provision, for example enrolment at the local college. Although the centre acknowledges individual achievement, it does not do enough to celebrate it and so provide encouragement to others.

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>1</b>
<b>The extent to which all children and parents, including those from target groups, enjoy and achieve educationally and in their personal and social development</b>	<b>2</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>
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## **How good is the provision?**

<b>1</b>
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Provision is outstanding because the centre has an in-depth knowledge of its local community and has developed an excellent range of services in line with this. The centre is working with over three-quarters of families in the reach area, and attendance at the wide range of appropriate courses is high. The analysis of need is based on good use of both local and national data and partners also make an important contribution to the planning and delivery of appropriate services. In addition, staff go into the community on 'ward walks'. These walks provide useful opportunities for staff to meet with local people and learn about their needs and concerns at first hand. Outreach workers are particularly effective in engaging families who are hard to reach, for example women who are reluctant to leave the family home and teenage parents.

The needs of individual families' are assessed sensitively to ensure that services support those most in need of intervention and help. This includes work with teenage parents and those who are alone. There is a high incidence of domestic abuse and the Freedom Group provides outstanding support for those who have experienced it. Participants speak movingly about the difference this has made to their self-esteem and that, as result, their children feel more secure. They also appreciate the cultural sensitivity with which it is delivered; parents are able to receive help on a one-to-one basis in their home language. Evaluations by centre users are overwhelmingly positive. One parent stated, 'I have more confidence in what I am doing with my children' and another said, 'I have even learnt to enjoy messy play!'

Very good partnership working between Jobcentre Plus and the centre's welfare coordinator is helping to improve prospects for many families. High-quality advice ranges from support for those wishing to start their own business, help with writing curriculum vitae to advice over housing difficulties. Volunteers benefit from a programme of training and support to further develop their confidence and enhance their aspirations. Where necessary, adults are referred to other agencies for help and the centre follows up on all referrals to check that they have made a positive difference for the family.

The centre provides outstanding care and support to all and particularly to those in crisis. Working in partnership with parents, careful early work is done to establish what kind of support would make a real difference. In this way, staff personalise their interventions in line with individual needs and they also measure the impact the support they provide. As one father commented, '...(they) tell me what I need to know rather than what I want to hear.' The centre makes an important contribution to improved outcomes for individual families. One parent arrived in the area cut off from her family and with no self confidence in her ability as a parent. She says of the centre, 'It healed me.'

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?**

**2**

Governance and accountability are good. The local authority and the operational management team from Spurgeons work together effectively to provide a good level of challenge and support for the centre which is contributing to improved outcomes. The advisory board has recently been restructured in order to strengthen the representation of parents and partners. The centre has experienced a period of considerable change and, throughout this period, the centre leader has provided inspirational and committed leadership. Day-to-day management is now outstanding with regular supervision, and all staff can relate their personal targets to the centre's strategic planning. There has been considerable investment in staff training and they speak with passion about the positive impact of change. Staff now work more effectively as a team while retaining their own specialist knowledge; this has increased their effectiveness with users of the centre.

Value for money is good and resources are well used. Figures on engagement and attendance at sessions are regularly monitored and there are examples of where provision has been decommissioned either because of poor attendance or because the impact has not been strong enough.

The centre and partners work hard to ensure the inclusion of the various cultures across the community. Parents speak very positively about how culturally sensitive the centre is.

Safeguarding is outstanding. Very good policies and procedures support excellent practice and staff work well with other partners in using the Common Assessment Framework to support families when necessary. The centre provides a warm and welcoming environment for all communities in the area and the centre staff are representative of the community. This enables them to translate for families where English is not the first language.

Self-evaluation is accurate and the evaluation of individual services is highly effective. This emphasis on evaluation has contributed to the improvement in children's learning and in families' access to good-quality advice from external agencies. Levels of engagement and attendance are regularly monitored. This information is then used to evaluate current provision and make any necessary



changes. For example, attendance at a course designed to support those with disability was poor. As a consequence, it was stopped and, in consultation with partners, new approaches are being explored before it is delivered again. Partnerships are strong and other professionals believe that the centre helps them to be more effective. One midwife now supports hard-to-reach families more effectively as a result of good information-sharing.

All families have good opportunities to shape services and their evaluations are also used to develop the range of provision. Parents on the advisory board provide very pertinent feedback when new services are discussed. However, families from the Eastern European community are under represented as users of the centre.

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>1</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>2</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>2</b>

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

.The childcare on both sites was inspected as part of the schools' section 5 inspections. No separate grade is awarded

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## Summary for centre users

We inspected the Cauldwell Sure Start Peter Pan Children's Centre on the 26th and 27<sup>th</sup> October 2011. We judged the centre as good overall.

We were very pleased to speak with some of you about the centre and the activities it provides for you. We would like to thank all of those who came especially to talk to us. We took account of all the people we met when we made our judgements about and we also looked at some of the evaluations you had completed.

All of you told us how much you appreciate the support that the centre provides for you, especially in times of difficulty. For some of you, it has provided a lifeline when all other support was unavailable. You told us that you enjoy learning and playing with your children, and you say how much you have learnt from attending courses at the centre. We found out that you particularly like the 'Family Books' as they are a very good way of seeing what your children can do and how you can support them to improve further. The centre staff know you very well and they make sure that all members of the community are welcome. We have asked them to do further work to encourage families from Eastern Europe to attend the centre.

There is a good partnership with the health service and advice on healthy eating and cooking is enjoyable and informative. We also saw how much you enjoy the activities and how much you appreciate the support you receive to achieve more educational qualifications. We have asked the centre to celebrate your achievements more widely.

The centre staff listen carefully to what you say about the courses and make changes as a result of your comments. The centre is outstanding in providing a safe environment for you and your children. The safety, welfare and happiness of you and your children is at the heart of everything that it does. Staff work closely with the centre's partners to make sure that you get the help you need at times of crisis. The centre leader provides outstanding leadership to her staff and the quality of the provision at the centre is outstanding.

We think that the centre gives good value for money and that it makes a real difference to the lives of families in the community. We wish the centre and you and your families all the very best for the future.

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