

Inspection report for Fazakerley Children's Centre

Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	383674
Inspection dates	09–10 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Elaine Murray HMI

Centre leader	Mrs Linda Campbell
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Centre address	Barlows Lane Barlows Lane Liverpool Merseyside L9 9EH
Telephone number	0151 2333705
Fax number	0151 2333713
Email address	fazakerleycc@liverpool.gov.uk

Linked school if applicable	Barlows Primary School URN104517
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	Fazakerley Children's Centre EY356074

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.

The report of this inspection is available on our website www.ofsted.gov.uk

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

The inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, members of staff and partner professionals from other agencies. Discussions were held with members of the advisory board, parents and service users and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors observed the centre's work and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

Information about the centre

Fazakerley Children's Centre is situated in the north of the city of Liverpool, close to Aintree Hospital and HMP Altcourse. The overall level of deprivation in Fazakerley is below Liverpool's average; 62.1% of the ward falls within the most deprived 10% nationally. Most families are of White British heritage but there is a small and increasing number of Asian minority ethnic families. The worklessness rate is 18.1%. Most children enter early years provision with a range of skills below those expected for their age.

The centre is located on the same site as Barlows Primary School and operates as part of a multi-purpose site. The centre is a Phase 1 centre which was set up in 2006 and designated in 2007. The centre delivers the full core offer, including a nursery offering full day care managed by the school governing body. Separate reports for both the school and the nursery can be viewed at www.ofsted.gov.uk. The delivery of extended services has been delegated by the local authority to the headteacher at Barlows Primary School. The work of the centre is monitored by an established advisory board and the local authority. The day-to-day management of the centre is undertaken by a children's centre coordinator. The

centre offers the full range of integrated services for children and their families and also offers targeted services.

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

The effectiveness of the children's centre in meeting the needs of and improving outcomes for families

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

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

2

Main findings

The centre's overall effectiveness is good with some outstanding aspects. The centre is well established in the community and those in charge have a clear vision for further improvement. Under the present centre leader, the children's centre has made rapid improvement in a short period of time. The centre gives the highest priority to safeguarding all children. Procedures to ensure that the premises are safe and secure are exemplary. Staff ensure that children whose circumstances make them more vulnerable than others receive the appropriate early interventions, which result in positive improvements to their well-being. Families using the centre benefit from the extensive range of services which are closely matched to families' needs. A commitment to inclusion is central to the centre's work. Services are carefully targeted to ensure that they meet the needs of the target groups, the most vulnerable and those traditionally hardest to engage. For example, a 'Dad's Zone' session on a Saturday morning to meet the needs of fathers and male carers, and a weekly support group for parents and carers of children with disabilities are well attended and have a positive impact on outcomes for families. Outcomes for families using the centre are good and are outstanding for health.

The centre is highly effective in managing a well-established and extensive range of partnerships. Partnerships with health are exemplary, with the result that a very large majority of those who live in the area engage in health services. The centre has an innovative and creative approach to its outreach work, and is proactive in developing the role of the centre in the community through providing services in community buildings, church halls and schools as well as in the main centre building. As a result, the centre is an integral part of the community, and the majority of families in the reach area are now accessing the centre's services.

Parents and carers report an increase in confidence and improvement in parenting skills as a result of support and training provided at the centre. As one parent commented, 'Without

the centre I would not have had a clue where to start.’ Parents and carers make a positive contribution to centre life through membership of the parents’ forum and advisory board. Most parents and carers express a high level of satisfaction with the centre. In times of crisis, families are confident to turn to the centre and are well supported. Signposting arrangements ensure that parents and carers receive good quality advice relating to preventative treatments, benefits and seeking work.

The centre is lead and managed well. The shared vision and drive of the head of centre and centre leader are effectively shared with staff, who are passionately committed to improve the life chances of the local community. As a result, good improvements have been made, particularly to the range of services provided and the quality of partnership working. For example, improved partnership working with health workers has facilitated a closer sharing of information about live births, with the result that currently 97% of the reach area are registered with the centre. There are clear lines of responsibility, and the senior management team and the advisory board meet regularly to discuss the centre’s work and its plans for improvements. Leaders have a good understanding of the impact of the centre’s work. However, this is not clearly reflected on the centre’s self-evaluation and targets to measure impact are not always identified in development planning. The centre has accurately identified key priorities for future improvements such as the provision of more accredited courses for adults. Alongside the recent track record of improvement, this demonstrates that the centre’s capacity to improve is good.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- Ensure that self-evaluation more clearly identifies the impact of the centre’s work on outcomes for families.
- Ensure that improvement planning more clearly identifies targets by which impact will be measured to enable the accountable bodies and the advisory board hold the centre to account for its work.

How good are outcomes for families?

2

Promoting healthy lifestyles is an important focus of the services provided, resulting in outstanding outcomes in health. Figures for obesity have shown a good reduction from 19.92% in 2007/8 to 15.4% in 2009/10. The breastfeeding support group and high quality information given to parents have resulted in a sharp increase in the number of mothers sustaining breastfeeding from 16.8% in the first quarter of 2011 to 37.8% currently. Users report that their understanding of healthy eating has increased due to the activities provided at the centre such as ‘Yum Yum Yummy’ healthy eating sessions. Highly effective partnership and integrated working at the child health clinics and during home visits promote and monitor very successfully the health, development and emotional well-being of parents, carers and children.

Parents and carers say that they feel safe and consider their children to be safe while attending the centre. They report having an increased awareness of home safety as a result of attendance at the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) course. There is a strong commitment to preventative work; case studies identify times when children have been prevented from becoming looked after children as a result of swift and appropriate action by the centre. The Common Assessment Framework is used well for the early identification of children’s additional needs and to ensure coordinated service provision to meet them.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress in their learning and development. Starting points for many children are low. Data held by the centre show that the achievement gap between the lowest achieving 20% of children and their peers is closing. Targeted speech and language support programmes are in place to further raise achievement and reduce inequalities. A recently developed tracking system is proving effective in monitoring children’s progress.

Parents and carers value highly the opportunity to socialise at the centre and make new friends. This enables them to support each other outside of the centre and removes the sense of isolation that many users stated they felt before coming to the centre. Parents report improved parenting skills as a result of the play and parenting courses. As one parent commented, ‘It makes you more confident in yourself as a parent’. Effective links with local nurseries and other preschool providers have resulted in better transition procedures for children transferring from childcare to school. Parents and carers are confident to contribute their views through evaluations of services, and some are involved in contributing to the delivery of services. For example, a stay and play group is parent run, and some parents act as breastfeeding support workers.

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	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.	2

How good is the provision?

The centre knows the families in the area very well and, through high quality communication with partners, skillfully identifies the ones whose circumstances make them more vulnerable and who are in need of greater support. Family support work is making a positive contribution to breaking down barriers, particularly for families at risk or isolated. Joint home visits are often made with partners from the referring agency ensuring that the family support work is carefully tailored to families' needs. Resources, including staffing for this specific work, are carefully considered and allocated, thereby ensuring the intensity of this work results in improved outcomes for families. Parents and carers greatly value the effective care, guidance and support given to them, which has in some cases been a lifeline to those facing difficult circumstances. As one parent commented, 'I don't know what I would do without the support of the centre'.

Outreach work is effective in encouraging engagement in the centre and ensuring that vulnerable groups and those traditionally reluctant to engage with the centre are reached. The centre has been successful in engaging fathers through activities such as 'Dads Zone', meeting on a Saturday morning to provide play sessions for fathers and male carers and their children. It has also effectively engaged with fathers serving sentences at the local prison and their families. A 'Dads Away' course has been established to develop parenting skills and awareness of child development, and a 'Family Day' at the prison helps to develop positive family interaction. Parents and carers of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very effectively engaged in the centre through 'Time for Us', a drop-in group weekly sessions and support. This has been effective in promoting parents emotional well-being and for children's wider developmental needs. The excellent range of services to promote healthy outcomes, such as healthy eating sessions, baby and toddler swimming, and baby yoga have good take-up rates. Health visitors and midwives deliver effective on-site services in the antenatal and baby weigh sessions.

The provision to help children learn, develop and gain skills for the future are good. Improving parents' understanding of how to support their children's learning is developed through a broad range of play and development opportunities such as 'Chatterbox' and 'Story Time' and 'Bookstart Boogie'. These sessions have a positive impact on children's learning, including communication, language, personal and social skills.

Parents and carers are effectively signposted to further training at the local adult learning centre and their progress to employment or further training is tracked. A small number of parents have become volunteers at the centre and the centre has established a programme to further develop this aspect and increase the provision of accredited courses at the centre, to enable more parents to move on to gain higher qualifications and paid employment.

The centre has a flexible approach to promoting user engagement in the excellent range of services provided. For example, an initiative to establish links with a local school by offering services on the school premises was highly successful in engaging families in the centre's work. The centre's use of local venues such as a community hall, library and church hall

successfully encourages a wider range of people to access the centre’s services. The centre has adapted its opening times to include weekend, evening and some out-of-term time sessions in response to parent requests and this has had a very positive impact on the numbers of families in the reach area accessing services.

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	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**

The centre’s leadership team, supported by the local authority and advisory board, has had a positive impact on improving outcomes for centre users. The centre leader is highly respected by professionals and parents and has been instrumental in developing the excellent range of partnerships with health agencies. Staff are highly committed and motivated and have a shared vision to promote the best possible outcomes for users. Governance and accountability arrangements are clear and understood. The parents’ forum and parent representatives on the advisory board share their views on how to improve services. Senior leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths and successes of the centre and focus their work on meeting the needs of the target and vulnerable groups. The centre’s action plan accurately identifies ambitious priorities for further improvements, such as development of the volunteer service and training staff to deliver accredited courses, but measurable targets are not always identified.

The centre works highly effectively to promote the inclusion of all groups. Fathers are integrated well into the provision and the centre works extremely well with families with disabled children. There is a determination to reach all families and breakdown barriers. The centre has been particularly successful in engaging the Asian minority ethnic families in the area. The provision of services at the local Memorial Hall is well attended by a cross section of families from different cultural backgrounds, with positive impact on community cohesion.

Leaders have established excellent partnership working to meet the needs of users. The broad range of partners with which the centre is engaged reports excellent communication in sharing information and working together to ensure families needs are effectively met. The centre is seen as being at the heart of community life, as one partner commented, ‘I don’t know what we would do without the centre.’

Safeguarding procedures are extremely robust and vetting and recruitment practices are applied rigorously. Protocols for information sharing and referrals through key agencies are exemplary. Through regular training, staff have a comprehensive awareness of safeguarding

issues. The centre provides an attractive, safe and welcoming environment. A careful priority is given to the value of services and to ensuring premises is effectively used. The quality of resources is good. The centre is proactive in making good use of resources to benefit families in the community, For example, working in partnership with staff at the local hospital, the centre provided funding to help refurbish the family room adjoining the mental health ward, so that visiting families and their children could benefit. Services offered by the centre are well used and engage the majority of families in the target groups in the area. The centre provides good value for money.

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	2
The effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secure improvement in outcomes	2
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	1
The effectiveness of the centre's policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults	1
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.	2

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

The outcome of the inspection of Barlow’s Primary school on 25/01/2010 has been considered as part of 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 the Fazakerley Children's Centre on 9 and 10 November 2011. We judged the centre as good overall with several outstanding features.

We enjoyed our visit to your centre and meeting so many of you. We found that the centre offers a warm and welcoming environment, and makes sure that everyone is valued and included in its services. We found that, under the strong leadership of the centre leader and head of centre, the centre has provided a wide range of high quality services that are carefully tailored to meet the needs of the people who use them. The centre provides a particularly good range of activities to promote your health. Many of you said that you find sessions such as 'Yum Yum Yummy' and baby massage very valuable and we agree. The centre is successful in giving new mothers good support to continue breastfeeding. We also think your centre is very good at involving fathers and other male relatives and carers. The sessions provided for parents of children with disabilities are particularly helpful in supporting those parents and children. The centre asks for your views on activities and courses and some of you are involved in helping manage the centre.

We found that the centre provides a safe place for you and your children and some of you we spoke to said that the centre had helped to improve safety in your homes. Staff make sure the building is very safe and secure, and staff are very well trained in protecting children and keeping them safe. The centre provides a very good range of activities to help your children to enjoy their learning through play, such as 'Chatterbox' and 'Bookstart Boogie'. They also help you to support your children's learning and development at home by providing services which help you bond with your children, such as baby massage. You have told us that services provided by the centre such as 'In Credible Years' parenting course have helped to improve your skills and confidence as a parent.

Those of you seeking advice relating to job seeking, training and benefits are effectively directed to the best place to receive help. The centre is developing its provision of accredited courses so that you have better chances to gain qualifications which could help you gain employment. The centre provides you with a good level of support through giving you advice and support to help you improve your lives and making sure you access the right services to do this. Some of you have told us that you have appreciated the effective help and advice given by the centre and that it has made a real difference to your lives.

The centre manager and other senior staff have recently brought about a number of very good improvements to the centre. They are determined to improve the lives of users even more. We have asked the centre to make some improvements by ensuring that they make very clear to all involved in running the centre what targets for improvement they are aiming for, and make sure they are clear about how well the centre is improving the lives of families.

We would like to thank everyone who came to speak with us. It was a privilege to be able to talk with you. Your honest and open discussions helped us immensely with the inspection.

We enjoyed spending time at your centre and wish you and your families the best for the future.

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