

# Inspection report for Selsey Children and Family Centre

---

<b>Local authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	383542
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Christine Field

<b>Centre leader</b>	Caroline Chalkley
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Centre address</b>	East Street Selsey PO20 0BN
<b>Telephone number</b>	01243 642906
<b>Fax number</b>	Not applicable
<b>Email address</b>	Selsey.cfc@westsussex.gov.uk

<b>Linked school if applicable</b>	Not applicable
<b>Linked early years and childcare, if applicable</b>	Not applicable

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:** December 2011



Corporate member of  
Plain English Campaign  
Committed to clearer communication

**361**

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](mailto: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/](http://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](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/100080](http://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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

No.100080

© Crown copyright 2011



## Introduction

The inspection addresses the centre's contribution to:

- facilitating access to early childhood services by parents, prospective parents and young children
- maximising the benefit of those services to parents, prospective parents and young children
- improving the well-being of young children.

The report is made to the local authority and a copy is sent to the children's centre. The local authority may send the report to such persons it considers appropriate and must arrange for an action plan to be produced in relation to the findings in this report.

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

The inspectors had discussions with the centre manager, parents and carers, partnership group members, parent forum representatives, local authority representatives, outreach worker, childminders, pre-school providers, health, well-being, disabilities and lone parent advisers, Jobcentre Plus and front-line staff.

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

## Information about the centre

Selsey Children and Family Centre is a phase two centre. It is situated in a 70% disadvantaged area, with approximately 820 children under the age of five within a total resident population of 21,483. Some 600 children have been reached by the centre in the last 12 months. The centre serves a diverse geographic area, mainly rural but with pockets of disadvantage. The most deprived areas are located adjacent the centre and nearby the satellite provision situated in East Wittering. Data show that 26% of households in the reach area are workless or in receipt of work-related benefits. At 14%, the proportion of lone families in the area is below that seen nationally as is the proportion of young teenage parents. The great majority of families living within the reach area are of White British heritage with a very small, but growing, proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds, predominantly Eastern European. Children's skills and knowledge on entry to early years education are variable due to the diversity of the locality, but are typically below the level expected for their age.

Since March 2010, the centre has delivered a range of services based around a 'core offer' of integrated early learning, information and advice to parents and carers, outreach, Jobcentre Plus, employment, training and health advice. The centre is

open to families from Monday 1.00pm to 4.00pm, Tuesday 10.00am to 12.00pm, Wednesday to Thursday 10.00am to 4.00pm and Friday 10.00am to 12 noon.

The centre is governed directly by West Sussex County Council, with the Centre Partnership Group (CPG) involved in the day-to-day management. A forum has been established to enable parents to contribute to decision making. The centre has recently undergone a staffing restructure and a new manager, who oversees four centres in the locality, was appointed in October 2011. The post of centre coordinator has not yet been filled.

## 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

Selsey Children and Family Centre provides a satisfactory level of effectiveness in meeting the needs of families in the area and enables satisfactory outcomes. Families receive good care, guidance and support. They identify the inclusive and supportive ethos as key reason for using the centre. The words of one lone parent sum up the views of many, 'The centre is my lifeline, I can drop in when I am feeling low and someone is always there for me.' Staff morale is good and it is testament to their high-level commitment and effective partnerships that satisfactory provision has been maintained during the staff restructuring.

An appropriate range of services are being accessed with almost three quarters of families with children under five being reached by the centre. Children are helped to keep healthy, stay safe and enjoy achieving through well-planned activities. However, obesity rates amongst young children remain stubbornly high and a lower proportion of babies benefit from sustained breastfeeding than seen elsewhere in the county. Children are enabled to enjoy achieving with the gap in attainment for the lowest 20% closing rapidly. Attainment outcomes reflect an improving trend. Adult users make gains in their personal development through courses run through the centre, but there has been only limited access to accredited training courses to improve their basic skills, increase employability and assist their economic well-being.

The lack of public transport is a recognised barrier to some vulnerable families and so the centre is working productively with a local church to provide services from its community hall in order to meet needs in the east of the reach area better. However, contact with some other target groups, for example those families eligible for workless benefits, is relatively low. There is an abundance of data available to help the centre analyse needs and inform planning, but these data have not been used consistently well to engage with all target groups. Self-evaluation is largely accurate with feedback following activities showing positive returns and used to inform the review process. However, the centre does not systematically seek feedback from all of its partners and too little use has been made of information to assess impact and assist service integration and development.

The new centre manager appointed six weeks ago brings with her a wealth of experience and an infectious enthusiasm for moving things forward. She has already undertaken a robust audit of provision and has planned prioritised actions for securing improved outcomes during 2012. The Centre Partnership Group (CPG), currently without a chair, comprises representation of all service providers who are united in their determination to serve their community well. However, they recognise that there is a need to clarify their specific role and remit to ensure effective oversight of services and to provide critical challenge. Through the forum, parents feel they have a strengthening voice in decision making and welcome the revitalised opportunities to play their part in supporting improvement. These features, combined with the continuing commitment of staff to improving outcomes for families during a difficult last six months, show that the centre has a satisfactory capacity for future development.

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

### **Recommendations for further improvement**

- Make effective use of all available data and information to:
  - ensure the needs of all target groups are known
  - set measurable targets in the business plan with clear milestones that enable the robust tracking of progress towards meeting them
  - evaluate longer term impact.
- Develop the Centre Partnership Group (CPG) by:
  - moving swiftly to appoint a chair
  - developing a specific role and remit
  - ensuring effective oversight of the integration and development of services
  - providing critical challenge.
- Devise a strategy and take action to:
  - reduce obesity rates to meet or fall below the county average
  - increase breastfeeding rates to meet or exceed the county average
  - increase participation rates in adult education and skills training.

## **How good are outcomes for families?**

<b>3</b>
----------

The centre's close work with health partners and other agencies encourages families to make healthy choices and know how to keep safe and this has a positive impact on their well-being. Through a certificated cookery course run by the Women's Institute for example, young parents are helped to prepare and cook nutritious meals at low cost. One mum told inspectors that she continues to put her knowledge to good use and makes a 'great shepherd's pie'. Nevertheless, obesity rates among young children in the reach area remain stubbornly high at 11%. Two thirds of under fives have a healthy weight, which is well below that seen in other areas of the county.

Outcomes are improving in some areas, such as the take-up of immunisation which at 97% is good. Anti-smoking work is proving effective in helping adults overcome their addiction and the positive promotion of sexual health is reflected in the reducing number of teenage pregnancies. The centre is proactive in supporting new mothers who want to breastfeed their babies and the success rate is improving. However, at 37%, the level of sustained breastfeeding for more than eight weeks is below the county average. The centre works sensitively in support of children subject to a child protection plan and outcomes are improved as a consequence. Good use of the Common Assessment Framework helps to prioritise services and ensure efficient use of resources which, together with well-targeted outreach interventions, keeps families safe and protected. Links with the police help raise awareness about the potential dangers in the home and neighbourhood. The rate of non-accidental emergency admissions to hospitals is falling.

Data show that children, including those with special educational needs or who are learning to speak English as an additional language, achieve successfully from their starting points and this assists their future economic well-being. The gap in achievement between the lowest 20% and the rest is reducing quickly. Close to 50% of children attain 78+ scale points including communication, language, literacy and personal, social and emotional development by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Parents build positive parenting skills with the centre's support and grow in personal confidence as they see their children's behaviour improve. Families say that they enjoy family learning courses but would like more opportunities to undertake accredited training, for example in computing or basic skills qualifications to improve their chances of work. The centre has no secure evidence to demonstrate its impact on improving the outcomes for the 26% of families who live in workless households.

All observations of activities during the inspection showed behaviour and relationships to be positive with experiences valued. Parents and carers have the opportunity to make their views known mainly through informal conversations, post-activity evaluations and via snapshot surveys. Forum representatives identify that they would like closer involvement in shaping services and greater awareness about the work of the CPG.

*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</b>	<b>3</b>
---	----------

<b>lifestyles</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>3</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>3</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>3</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>3</b>

## **How good is the provision?**

**3**

Centre staff know the families well and are responsive to needs. The setting up of the satellite provision at East Wittering for the most vulnerable children is in direct response to local need. Partnerships with a range of key agencies enable the effective referral of families to the centre where they can access an appropriate range of services. However, access to services is limited in terms of promoting adults' educational development in a bid to enhance employability and reduce worklessness.

Provision meets the needs of the youngest children successfully. 'Stay and Play' and 'Messy Play' sessions are well attended and parents identify that their children can't get there quickly enough to take full advantage of the exciting opportunities such as making monsters from recycled materials. 'Aiming High' funding has been secured to provide multi-sensory workshops for children with disabilities that include puppet making and other hands-on activities. Evaluations show just how much workshops are enjoyed, with comments such as, 'I love the parachute games, they are so much fun', reflecting their positive impact. However, providers are not yet looking collaboratively at the impact of service delivery on outcomes, for example in combating obesity. There is potential to better integrate services in the interests of both efficiencies and adding positive value to the outcomes for some target groups.

Good quality care, guidance and inclusive practices help families that use the centre to feel free from harm and bullying. Parents of Travelling and Russian heritage told inspectors about the centre's good work in promoting equalities and how valued they feel as a result. Relationships at all levels are respectful and trusting. One mum who uses a wheelchair identified how beneficial she finds the sessions at East Wittering as the centre is one of very few places where there is enough space for her to sit and play with her child. The good focus on supporting parents in building confidence and self-esteem reduces feelings of isolation and improves family bonds. Monthly support and information forum meetings between service partners usefully enable the sharing of information, for example about those most at risk. Families highly value the centre's support and are confident that they will be given good quality advice and

guidance.

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

## **How effective are the leadership and management?**

**3**

Following a period of some uncertainty during the restructuring, the centre is now moving forward with new staffing arrangements agreed and improvement priorities identified for 2012. The new centre manager is upbeat about the challenges ahead. Staff morale is good and everyone shows strong commitment to realising the centre's well-articulated vision. Data analyses have not always been sufficiently robust to give staff a fully accurate picture of the needs of the whole community, or help them to set measurable targets that enable good outcomes. Nevertheless, the centre has a secure and growing knowledge about its strengths and weaknesses. Good advancements have already been made in auditing provision and sharpening business planning. Resources are being used appropriately to secure sound outcomes and increasing participation and as a result the centre is judged to provide satisfactory value for money.

Safeguarding arrangements including staff vetting are thorough as is the centre's attention to promoting equalities and this ensures that families are well protected and enjoy harmonious relationships. The centre's early intervention, multi-agency cooperation and staff's responsiveness result in families having a strong sense of well-being, positive mental and emotional health. Adults and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included and have equal access to all the activities and support available, and good recognition is given to the needs and welfare of the very small number from minority ethnic heritages. Accommodation is bright and stimulating and comprehensive risk assessments ensure that the centre provides a welcoming and safe environment for families.

The local authority has regularly monitored the centre's development as part of its governance role and has an accurate view of its effectiveness. Members of the CPG usefully represent all of the key partners in the reach area. They are wholly supportive of meeting the needs of target groups but appreciate that their work has lost impetus during the process of management change. The absence of a chair has been a limiting factor to the group's development. Members identify the need to refocus efforts on developing their role in helping the centre to shape and integrate services and become a critical friend. Parents are also keen to support development.



For example, a 'parent's champion' is working with leaders to develop the outside play area.

*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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secure improvement in outcomes</b>	<b>3</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>3</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>3</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>3</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>3</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>3</b>

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

Not applicable

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance *Complaining about inspections*, which is available from our website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

## **Summary for centre users**

We inspected the Selsey Children and Family Centre on 17 and 18 November 2011. We judged the centre as satisfactory overall.

We talked with you, your children, staff, and a wide range of partners and members of the local authority linked to the centre. We observed the centre's work and looked at a range of documents.

We very much appreciated having lunch together and seeing the children enjoy the pineapple, grapes and strawberries! We would like to see more children in the area eat healthily and take regular exercise as too many have unhealthy weights. The centre is keen to work with families to reduce obesity so please let them know if you want their help.

We found that the centre currently makes satisfactory provision for the increasing number of young children and families who use its services. One of the strengths of the area is the improving academic achievement of the youngest learners. However, we would like to see more adults have wider opportunities to improve their basic skills and support for finding work. Please let staff know what further learning courses you would find valuable to your future success so that they can help.

A further strength of the centre is the good-quality care, guidance and support provided. You told us that staff are friendly and that the centre is accessible, inclusive, child-friendly and supportive. Staff make sure that you are well looked after when you visit. The close attention paid to safeguarding arrangements help you feel safe and free from risks. We agree that these features are really important and make you want to continue joining in activities. The centre's work with families with young children in East Wittering and Bracklesham as well as Selsey makes a positive difference to their daily lives.

We really enjoyed observing 'Stay and Play', 'Drop Ins' and the toy library exchange. It was super to see your young children behave so nicely and take full advantage of the well-planned learning experiences. Watching the children choose which toys to borrow with so many exciting things on offer was a delight. When talking to the midwives, and some of you who are 'breast-feeding buddies', it became crystal clear how keen you are to support new mums and work to increase the number who continue to breastfeed their babies for longer than eight weeks. However, there is still some way to go before the proportion of mums who breastfeed their babies compares favourably to the rest of West Sussex.

The new manager and staff team are doing a good job in making sure that things move forward after the changes experienced over the last six months. They have a lot of information to help to plan carefully and set targets to bring improvements. However, data have not always been analysed well enough to see what local needs there are, what services are required and what impact these have on you and your family. We have asked the centre to give close attention to these matters from now on. The CPG works with staff and the local authority to keep a check on how well the centre is doing, but it is currently without a chair. We have asked for this to be rectified and suggest that through the forum you continue to work together to support the centre in going forward.

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