

Inspection report for Rosehill Children's Centre

Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	383600
Inspection dates	16 - 17 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Jean Webb

Centre leader	Kellyann Mercer
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
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Linked school if applicable	Not applicable
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	EY296149 Rosebuds Nursery

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 primary school was carried out at the same time as the inspection of the centre under Section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The report of this inspection is available on our website www.ofsted.gov.uk

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

The inspectors held meetings with senior managers and staff from the centre and the local authority, parents and volunteers, members of the advisory board, local school and partners including health, social care, Jobcentre Plus and voluntary organisations.

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

Information about the centre

Rosehill Children's Centre is one of three phase one centres which are based in Ashton under Lyne and managed by one children's centre coordinator. It shares a site with Rosehill Methodist Primary School to which there is direct access from within the centre through a secure entrance. Full day-care provision is provided by Rosebuds Nursery which is housed in the same building and families access the nursery through the children's centre main entrance. The building is on one level and fully accessible. There is a satellite centre based at St. James Primary School in the south west of the reach area.

The centre was designated in March 2006 to provide universal services to a community in one of the 30% most deprived wards in the country. Families with children under five years are concentrated in parts of the community which are in the 10% most deprived areas. There is mainly social housing with pockets of private housing near to the centre itself. Most children enter early education with a range of skills below that expected for their age.

Governance of the centre is provided by the local authority with support from the advisory body.

Over 70% of the community are of White British heritage, around 11% are of Pakistani origin and there is a small group who are of Polish heritage. There are high levels of lone parents as well as children who live in households dependent on workless benefits.

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

The outcomes for families served by Rosehill Children's Centre are satisfactory. The range of services is targeted well to those most in need and services are planned well in response to those needs. Good partnership working ensures the integrated delivery of services and good care, guidance and support for families. However, there are insufficient data available to the centre to fully evaluate the impact of their services and how well they are reaching vulnerable families in the reach area. Many changes are taking place in the local authority and new systems are not yet fully embedded. Overall, the effectiveness of the centre is satisfactory.

Safeguarding is given a high priority and is embedded well in all services. Policy and procedures have recently been extended and improved even further, particularly in respect to vulnerable adults. There is good sharing of information between partners to ensure the protection of children. Staff are trained well in safeguarding procedures and risk assessments are particularly thorough. Some partners need more support with completion of the Common Assessment Framework to the good standard achieved by most partners.

The centre is very active in promoting breastfeeding, although indications are that breastfeeding rates are not improving in the area. They have, however, been particularly effective in highlighting the importance of support from fathers and contributed to a well-received DVD entitled 'Dads and breastfeeding: the best support a mum can get'. Fathers feel very welcome and included at the centre for breastfeeding support sessions. The centre shares a

site with a primary school but there are no arrangements for support in transition to the early years provision.

Overall provision is good. The activities are planned in response to the needs of the most vulnerable families referred by the appropriate agency. When a sufficient number are identified, a service is arranged at an appropriate venue which is not always at the centre. Other services available to all families are delivered by voluntary organisations and parent volunteers. The activities are mostly of a good quality and can demonstrate good personal development and achievement for the users.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The centre coordinator is one of two senior practitioners responsible for allocating targeted families to appropriate caseworkers, some of whom are centre staff. This change in structure of the service is still evolving but there are clear action plans in place to ensure that there will be appropriate data to measure impact and reach. Currently, any data available are not used to show the impact and reach of services specifically in the Rosehill area. In the meantime, the local authority relies on qualitative information to monitor and manage the performance of the centre. The advisory board does not have sufficient parental representation and it is not sufficiently directing or challenging the centre. The satisfactory outcomes and good provision, combined with the successful early implementation of a very different service with clear action plans for future development, reflect that the centre has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- Make better arrangements for transition into early years provision by:
 - developing better links with the on-site school
 - identifying those children most in need of transition support and putting activities in place for those children and parents.

- Improve the timeliness and completion of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) by:
 - ensuring all partners are appropriately trained and supported to complete an effective CAF
 - ensuring action plans make full use of the CAF and all targets are specific and measurable.

- Improve self-evaluation and target setting by:
 - working with the local authority to make sure national and local data are collated and analysed to show the reach of the centre and the impact of its services.

- Improve the role of the advisory board by:
 - ensuring there is good parental representation and that they are able to clearly voice their views and any concerns they may have

- including information and data appropriately summarised so the board can challenge and direct services more effectively.

How good are outcomes for families?

3

A number of Tameside-wide health initiatives are promoted as part of the centre's work and there is a significant decrease in teenage pregnancies as well as some improvements in the levels of childhood obesity. Centre activities embed aspects of healthy living and children learn about being healthy. There is good attendance at the nine-month-old check-ups and the weekly baby clinics. Both of these services promote health and issue low cost toothbrushes and toothpaste. Staff promote smoke-free environments for children but smoking levels during pregnancy remain high.

The centre is a friendly and welcoming place where families feel safe. Safety awareness activities are run at the centre and safety assessments made in the home. Families develop their knowledge and understanding of how to keep their families safe. An approach based on early intervention ensures children do not escalate to higher levels of need for intervention. However, there are no data to show how well this approach is impacting on numbers of children on child protection plans.

There is a successful programme to recruit and train volunteers. Some services would not be possible without the contribution of parents. Volunteers help to engage more families by running services such as a coffee morning where they can get to know the centre and the services it offers. The interests and preferences of children are used to shape play activities such as when attending the crèche, where children and parents complete a visual display of their likes and interests. Parents make use of the twice-weekly advice sessions led by Jobcentre Plus. Effective referrals are made for such things as advice with childcare, confidence building, benefit advice, job search skills and vocational choice. Some parents move into further education and work.

Parents learn from attending a good range of parenting courses. It helps them to manage their children's behaviour and understand the growth and development of their children. Meeting other parents is also very beneficial; as one parent said, 'It's good to know others feel the same and go through the same anxieties'. There is a very popular discussion group for parents whose first language is not English based in their local community at St. James satellite centre. They would like the opportunity for more English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)-based courses and discussion groups they could attend at this centre.

Children enjoy and achieve in the sessions they attend and the percentage gap between the lowest-performing 20% is closing. The principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage are embedded in activities to support children and parents. Speech and language activities such as 'baby babble' are offered to address some of the low levels in speech and language. Parents use the skills taught during the session at home. The early years workers use the established links with the childminder network to ensure support for children with special

educational needs. Children and parents are helped in their transition between different settings in the centre but transition to schools is not currently supported.

These are the grades for the outcomes for families:

The extent to which children, including those from target groups, are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy and families have healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children are safe and protected, their welfare concerns are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them	3
The extent to which all children and parents, including those from target groups, enjoy and achieve educationally and in their personal and social development	3
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	3
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

Services and activities are tailored to the needs of targeted families particularly well. Each family has a designated case worker who manages a specific package of support in a holistic way for each family. Referrals for support are for families with children up to 19 years of age. This means that a child under five years of age in a family where the original referral was for an older child will also have their needs reviewed and met. Many services are delivered on an individual basis, such as speech and language therapy. Group activities are arranged when there are enough people identified as requiring the activity which is delivered at one of the children’s centres in Ashton under Lyne. Services are therefore built very effectively on the needs of the most vulnerable families and the available resources are used to the best effect.

The quality of care, guidance and support given to families is good. A crèche is available for all parents attending training sessions and childcare is of a good quality. Partners exchange information between themselves very well and this helps the caseworker to pass on up-to-date and relevant information. The lines of communication between partners also ensure support is readily available for families as required. Family files are kept to ensure accurate records. Families are helped very well in times of crisis and there is an increasing number of referrals that are self-referrals. Centre staff are trained very well to care for the families and have recently completed further training on recognising domestic abuse and also substance misuse.

A wide range of sessions are available across three children’s centres in Ashton under Lyne and Rosehill offers some of these. Families from all three areas go to the different centres

but the number of families attending these sessions from the Rosehill area is not routinely collected or used to identify what other learning opportunities may be relevant for Rosehill families. Reduced financial budgets are partly responsible for this reduction in activities. Most learning opportunities are evidence based and learning is celebrated and recognised well by the centre.

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

How effective are the leadership and management?

3

Rosehill Children's Centre has recently become part of a wider Youth and Family Team which works with targeted families with children aged up to 19 years. The changes in structure within the local authority and arrangements for services are working satisfactorily but the inclusive and early intervention vision of the local authority has yet to be fully developed. The management information systems that allow careful monitoring and evaluation of services are also in a developmental stage. Some roles need further clarification. The new structure has meant extending the skills of staff and sharing expertise between staff which has been facilitated very well. Staff are supervised well and receive good professional training and development. Value for money is satisfactory.

Safeguarding arrangements are good. There are very effective processes and procedures for lone working of staff and all Criminal Records Bureau checks are completed to the recommended requirements. Partnership arrangements to ensure protection of children are very effective and families are supported extremely well in ensuring the safety of their family.

The centre knows its area and the different groups within it. They provide services for the community of families whose first language is not English and continually try to engage them further in services, including summer activities to encourage community cohesion. There is an active dads group at a local children's centre which is used by Rosehill dads and they are made to feel particularly welcome at all centres. Staff have been trained well in equality and diversity and to respond to the needs of particular groups. This includes supporting those whose welfare benefits have been affected by national cuts. The needs of children with disabilities and learning difficulties are met effectively.

Partnership working is strong and makes good use of combined expertise. The number and range of partners has increased considerably as part of the Youth and Family Team. There

are robust service level agreements in place to work with voluntary organisations and management of these services to ensure good quality of services. Voluntary organisations contribute to the collection and use of data. Parents are consulted during activities they attend regarding development of services and this is their expressed preference, rather than attending parents' forums. There is only one parent represented on the advisory board.

These are the grades for leadership and management:

The extent to which governance, accountability, professional supervision and day-to-day management arrangements are clear and understood	3
The effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secure improvement in outcomes	3
The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of families, including those in target groups	3
The extent to which equality is promoted and diversity celebrated, illegal or unlawful discrimination is tackled and the centre fulfils its statutory duties	3
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.	3

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

None.

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 Rosehill Children's Centre on 16 and 17 November 2011. We judged the centre as satisfactory overall.

During our visit we evaluated your centre's work and the quality of its resources, as well as its plans and documents. We talked to a number of you and the professionals that work with you. Your centre does some things especially well, for example how well they respond to families most in need and the good-quality care, guidance and support offered to you and your family. They ensure your and your children's safety and well-being in the centre and at home. Your centre works very well with other services, including voluntary organisations, to coordinate the services provided for you. You told us you feel safe in the centre and how warm and welcoming an environment it is.

You enjoy and value the quality of the activities your centre offers and, in particular, the courses that help with parenting skills and understanding your children's growth and development. Your centre really benefits from the volunteering that many of you do. You feel well prepared and trained as volunteers and run services for other parents. Your children are supported in their moves to new settings such as the nursery but there is no structured support for the move to when they start school. Your centre does a great deal to support mothers who want to breastfeed and also recognises the importance of support for work and finding suitable work. Your centre asks for your feedback about the services they provide and how they could improve them. You have asked to be consulted during activities rather than be part of a parent forum. Your centre is trying to get more parents to represent themselves at an advisory board that works with all the partners in the community. So far only one parent has committed to this.

The people responsible for the running of your centre are making sure services are effective and improving. They are working hard to improve the way they collect data and other information in order to evaluate their services. Staff are very well trained and prepared to carry out their role. They give safeguarding a high priority. They work very well with partners to safeguard parents and children at risk. Some partners do not assess the needs of families to the good standard of other partners and training is taking place to improve assessment skills.

Your centre promotes equality and diversity effectively. For those of you who do not speak English as a first language there are discussion groups to help you develop your speaking and listening skills whilst learning more about children's development. They have supported families who have been affected by welfare cuts. Dads are made to feel very welcome at the centre. Unfortunately, your centre cannot be sure if it is reaching all those in need as the relevant data and supporting information are not routinely collected and analysed.

We have asked the manager and the local authority to look at how they can make things even better. The most important things to do are: make sure children and parents are supported in the transition to school; make sure that the support needs of families are consistently assessed well by all partners; collect and use local and national data so that they can evaluate services better and encourage better representation of parents on the advisory board whilst making sure the board is able to challenge and give direction to your centre.

Thank you very much for your welcome and frankness with inspectors. We are very grateful and wish you every success in the future.

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