

# Inspection report for Ingrebourne Children's Centre

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<b>Local authority</b>	Havering
<b>Inspection number</b>	383688
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Kubiak HMI

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<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
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<b>Linked school if applicable</b>	Not applicable
<b>Linked early years and childcare, if applicable</b>	Ingrebourne Neighbourhood Nursery EY281343

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:** December 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.

An inspection of the registered early years/childcare provision was carried out at the same time as the inspection of the centre under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006. The report of this inspection is available on our website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspector and an early years inspector. The inspectors held meetings with the centre management team, health professionals, representatives from the centre's advisory group, frontline staff, parents and partner agencies.

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

## Information about the centre

Ingrebourne Children's Centre is a phase 1 centre, located in the north of the Harold Hill area. It was designated in 2007 and covers the district of Gooshays. It is one of four centres which cover the RM3 postcode area of Romford. The centre serves one of the 30% most deprived areas in the country, with some parts the 10% most deprived areas. Homes consist of social housing, rented accommodation and privately-owned homes. Services operate from within the children's centre, with some targeted services offered in the community. Full daycare is offered by a private provider based on the same site. A Learning Support Unit is co-located on the site. The centre is open Monday to Friday from 8.00am to 6.00pm, all year round.

The local population consists of 92% White British families, and 8% from other minority ethnic groups. Most children enter early years provision with a range of skills and abilities typically below average for their age.

Ingrebourne Children's Centre provides the full core offer and has health professionals, including midwives and health visitors, operating from the centre. Governance arrangements are provided by the local authority. A Children's Centre

Local Advisory Group, which covers four centres, is in place and membership includes a range of stakeholders and partner agencies.

A mini-bus is available to transport families to activities at different local centres.

## Inspection judgements

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

### Overall effectiveness

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

**2**

### Capacity for sustained improvement

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

**3**

## Main findings

Ingrebourne Children’s Centre is a good centre as it understands and serves the needs of the local community well. It has some outstanding features including the quality of its provision and safeguarding arrangements. The centre has built excellent links with partner agencies and community resources and this is an outstanding feature. Staff are committed to improving the life chances of the most vulnerable and hard-to-reach families in the community. Families overcome many barriers to success as a result of the targeted outreach work provided by the centre as well as groups and activities that run from the centre and in the community.

Provision is exemplary. The outreach work is highly successful in supporting families most in need, including those from target groups including teenage parents. The centre has also been proactive in taking services out to the community, working closely with a range of partner agencies to provide a fully integrated service. Centre staff form highly positive, trusting relationships with all parents and their children. Families value the excellent support they receive. One parent echoed the comments of many by stating to inspectors, ‘Staff are always there to support me.’ Partnership working between all agencies is exceptional and these relationships play a pivotal role in the overall effectiveness of the centre. A swift process of screening referrals and allocation ensures that services are responsive and preventative work is put in place at an early stage. This results in improving outcomes for families most in need of intervention and support. The use of the Common Assessment Framework is fully embedded in the work of the centre and supports the excellent multi-agency approach. The provision of baby-related clinics at the centre run by midwives and health visitors has strengthened links with health colleagues. These clinics create

opportunities for families view what the centre has to offer and meet centre staff.

The centre management is committed to improving outcomes for families and strives for the highest standards. Case studies demonstrate that services are targeted at those most in need. A range of data is available from the local authority and the centre also collects some of its own data. However, often the data are not specific enough to the centre and this impacts on the centre's ability to effectively set ambitious targets in all aspects of its work. The centre has implemented a range of tracking tools to monitor the progress of individuals. These include tracking children who attend the respite crèche and regular reviews of progress. Early indications are that the centre is having a good impact on the families it supports.

The centre has worked effectively to engage hard-to-reach areas of the community including fathers and Travellers. Information and displays at the centre represent the diversity of the population.

Self-evaluation is completed largely by the centre staff and provides an accurate picture of the centre. There is a strong commitment from staff to reflect on the centre's effectiveness and they are proactive in seeking feedback from families. Ongoing evaluation of services ensures that the centre continues to meet the changing needs of the community. In some areas of the business plan, targets are not closely linked to improving outcomes. The centre is aware of where it needs to develop and strengthen its processes. As a result, its capacity to improve is satisfactory.

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

### **Recommendations for further improvement**

- The local authority should provide an effective range of data which is specific to the centre's reach area so that the impact of services can be effectively evaluated.
- Strengthen planning to bring about improvement by:
  - using data effectively as a tool to measure the impact of the centre's work
  - setting clear, measurable targets in all areas.
- Improve the rigour of self-evaluation by actively involving families, partner agencies and the Children's Centre Local Advisory Group.

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

<b>2</b>
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The centre has a positive impact on improving outcomes for families in all areas. Families are extremely positive about the centre and how it has supported them in times of difficulty and crisis. One parent summarised the views of many when explaining that the centre was like a 'home from home'. 'The support network is brilliant.'

Staff make families feel at ease, provide a welcoming atmosphere and are very

approachable. One parent commented, 'If you need anything you can just ask.' All new parents in the reach area receive a welcome visit, where general information about the centre and services is provided.

Extensive early identification work and excellent preventative work help to keep children safe. Children subject to child protection plans or the Common Assessment Framework processes are closely monitored. Families receive excellent intensive support through highly-effective multi-agency working and direct input from highly-skilled centre workers. The welfare needs of the families are paramount to staff, who effectively coordinate a range of services and, as a result, outcomes for families who receive support from this service are outstanding.

The promotion of healthy lifestyles and supporting emotional well-being are high priorities for the centre. Evidence indicates that interventions are having a positive impact on improving the health of families, although information is not always available at centre level. Families benefit from opportunities to develop healthy lifestyle choices through attending courses such as 'Cook and Eat'. Breastfeeding is supported and encouraged through a range of initiatives and these are beginning to show an impact on improving breastfeeding rates. The perinatal support is effective in preparing for new births. The First Stop Drug Agency also offers clinics from the centre.

Activities at the centre are very popular and families engage with the wide range of activities available. Courses such as baby signing and baby massage strengthen the emotional bond between parent and child. More formal parenting programmes are well attended and parents report improvements in their relationship with their children. Parents report how they can see changes in themselves and their children as a result of the support they receive.

Early Years Foundation Stage data show that children make good progress in their learning from their starting points and the achievement gap between the most disadvantaged and the rest is beginning to close. At the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage around 77% achieve at least 78 points, with communication, language and literacy the weaker areas. Funding through the two-year offer is targeted at the most economically disadvantaged families to support their children in accessing early childhood education. Groups run at the centre follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, with planning taking into account the individual needs of the children. The centre has been particularly effective in identifying areas of the community that would most benefit from access to good-quality group sessions. As a result, groups are now run in local homeless hostels and on a local Traveller site.

Families develop excellent relationships and some are involved in the decision-making processes within the centre. The parents' forum meets regularly and is influential in some decision making at the centre. One forum member commented, 'You ask, it happens!' Parents have regular opportunities to share their views through evaluations at the end of groups and satisfaction surveys. As a result, some activities have been adapted following families' feedback.

The centre understands the importance of supporting parents to achieve educationally and develop economic stability and independence. Case studies demonstrate success in this area and there is effective signposting to agencies such as Jobcentre Plus and adult education providers. Courses such as first aid have been run as a result of interest from parents and this develops their confidence and self-esteem as well as providing them with valuable life-saving skills. The centre has begun looking more closely at how it can raise the aspirations of more families and better support their learning and development needs.

*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>

**How good is the provision?**

**1**

The centre offers an exceptional range of services tailored to the needs of the community. The work of the family outreach service is exceptional. A thorough screening process, rigorous assessments of individual needs and staff expertise and knowledge of the range of services and support available ensure that all families receive consistently high levels of support. Links with social care and health partners mean that intervention and support are swift and responsive. The provision of some health resources run from the centre has supported the multi-agency working approach as information and concerns are shared immediately.

Families benefit from the range of groups run at the centre as they help both their children's development and also develop new skills. Targeted courses, such as 'Cook and Eat', 'Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities' and first aid are popular with parents. Some of these courses are targeted at those families who will most benefit from the advice and training. Case studies demonstrate that the centre has been successful in signposting and supporting some parents in returning to work or accessing training. Staff take every opportunity to assess families who are accessing services to ensure that those most in need of intervention and support

receive this in a swift manner. For example the 'Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities' course includes a crèche so that parents with young children are able to attend.

The care, guidance and support offered to families are exceptional. Parents and carers were consistent to inspectors in their praise of the support they receive from the staff with comments such as 'great help to build confidence', 'fantastic', 'staff are brilliant here and really help us' and 'it's a lifeline coming in here'. Centre staff are proactive in promoting 'Team Around the Child' plans. Some of these involve a large number of partner agencies. However, centre staff coordinate these effectively and understand the valuable contribution they can make to the process. At times of crisis parents are well supported by the centre and help is tailored to individual family needs.

*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?**

<b>2</b>
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Governance arrangements are in place and lines of accountability at all levels are clear. The local advisory group has a good awareness of the area and the challenges families face. The group receives regular updates from the centre about its work. Action points are agreed at meetings, however the advisory group is not yet routinely involved in setting targets for the centre. Managers and staff are motivated in seeking improvements to the work of the centre and, as a result, services are introduced or adapted, for example a first-aid course was run following interest from families. Staff benefit from an effective range of support including personal and professional supervision, peer support and group supervision, with access to support through the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services Team. Staff have access to a range of training opportunities and are encouraged to develop expertise and specialisms.

The centre provides an effective range of universal and targeted services. Work within the community has a specific focus and monitoring and evaluation ensure that those most in need benefit from the outreach services. To avoid duplication some activities are offered at specific centres and, if appropriate, transportation by mini-bus is available between the different centres. As a result, the centre demonstrates good value for money.



Data are used by the centre to monitor the impact of its work in bringing about improved outcomes for families. For some areas of the centre’s work data are not available at centre level, or they are difficult for leaders and managers to get hold of. This lack of data impacts on the centre’s ability to set ambitious targets and, as a result, impacts on the overall quality of its planning. Monitoring and evaluations are in place and these are used to feed into the centre’s self-evaluation. Although centre staff are actively involved in the centre’s self-assessment process, the involvement of partner agencies, families and the local advisory group is not as strong. Systems to measure the long-term impact of the centre’s work, particularly that related to children, have recently been introduced.

Safeguarding procedures are exemplary, supported by outstanding partnership working between agencies. Recruitment and selection processes, effective resource allocation and targeted services safeguard the most vulnerable children and families. Frequent monitoring and evaluation of intervention work mean that services are highly effective. Concerted efforts to support families at difficult times, for example when living in hostels, have resulted in centre staff taking services to those families.

The inclusion of all families is integral to the centre’s work. Celebrations and information, such as in relation to Black History Month and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender History Month, promote the diversity of the community. The centre is aware of its community and displays reflect the specific diversity of the centre, for example a welcome board provides images of centre families whose first language is not English with the word ‘hello’ in their first language. The centre promotes inclusive practice through displays and the effective work with children and families with disabilities. The centre is seen as an integral part of the community and the participation of the centre in events such as the Harold Hill Festival promote it as a community resource.

*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>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>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</b>	<b>1</b>

<b>integrated delivery of the range of services provided by the centre to meet its core purpose</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**

An inspection of Ingrebourne Neighbourhood Nursery was carried out in October 2011. The nursery was judged as good.

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 Ingrebourne Children's Centre on 23 and 24 November 2011. We judged the centre as good overall. Many of you took the time to meet us and tell us about your experiences and involvement at the centre. Without exception, all of you who we met praised highly the work of the centre. It was a pleasure to meet you all and to hear from you what a difference the centre has made to your lives and that of your families.

We found that the centre staff provide you and your children with excellent levels of support. Staff have worked extremely hard to build outstanding links with partner agencies. Those of you who receive support from family support workers particularly benefit from these outstanding partnerships. Staff are skilled in identifying the individual needs of the families they work with and use these excellent links and their knowledge of the community to effectively support you to bring about improvements to your families. This includes children on child protection plans and those identified as 'children in need'. Where some of you may have difficulties accessing the centre, because for example you are living on local Traveller sites or in homeless hostels, the centre bring services to you.

Many of the activities at the centre for your children are based around the Early Years Foundation Stage and activities are planned taking into account the individual needs of your children. Many of you benefit from the two-year-old funding which provides your child with access to early years provision.

The centre regularly evaluates the services that it offers and plans how it can improve things. It does this by reviewing the evaluations you have completed on services, looking at case studies of the support it has offered you and from personal knowledge. The centre also uses data to effectively assess how well it is improving

outcomes for you. These data are not always available at the centre level which makes it difficult to accurately assess its work and to plan to make services even better. We have asked the local authority to look at how the data they provide can be more closely linked to the centre and we then want the centre to use these data to plan more effectively.

Staff are actively involved in evaluating the service with partners and parents contributing through evaluations and feedback. We have asked the centre to widen the audience of people who contribute to the centre's self-assessment.

Some of you sit on the parents' forum and have the opportunity to make a contribution to how the centre is run. As one forum member told us, 'You ask, it happens!'

The centre's management team is good. The centre leader and staff team have a good understanding of the community needs and are all very committed to improving the outcomes for you. They constantly seek your views and feedback and adapt and introduce new services which you will be interested in and will help you. The centre is committed to improving your skills through training and supporting you in developing employability skills. They have been working closely with the local adult education college to look at short courses which can be run at the centre. Some of you have been successful in accessing paid employment and obtaining places on accredited courses. Safeguarding arrangements are outstanding. Those of you who use the centre also report how you feel safe at the centre. Staff act as good role models to support you. Safer recruitment procedures are thorough and these ensure that staff looking after your children are suitable to do so.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to come and meet with us and to share your thoughts and views. We are grateful to you all and wish and your families every success for the future.

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