

Inspection report for Newbiggin Hall Sure Start Children's Centre

Local authority	Newcastle Upon Tyne
Inspection number	383528
Inspection dates	24 - 25 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Elizabeth Srogi HMI

Centre leader	Lisa Rayson
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Centre address	Gala Field Newbiggin Hall Newcastle Upon Tyne Northumberland NE5 1LZ
Telephone number	0191 2142470
Fax number	0191 214 6864
Email address	Lisa.rayson@newcastle.gov.uk

Linked school if applicable	Not applicable
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	EY336990 Places for Children
	EY431868 Sure Start Newbiggin Hall Children's Centre Creche

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'.

Picadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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 one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one early years inspector.

The inspectors held meetings with managers, staff members, partnership board members, parents, partners and local authority officers linked to the centre.

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

Information about the centre

Sure Start Newbiggin Hall Children's Centre is housed in purpose-built premises and originates from a Sure Start local programme. It was designated as a phase one children's centre in April 2006 and provides the full core offer of services. It is attached to Galafield Centre for which it has had management responsibility since April 2010.

The centre is situated within the Woolsington ward and also covers part of Castle ward. It serves a relatively disadvantaged area and is linked to six super output areas. At August 2010 there were 664 children aged nought to four living in the area. Recent figures show that there are approximately 190 lone parents with dependent children.

Estimated weekly income is significantly lower than the Newcastle average. The proportion of children attending schools in the area, known to be eligible for free school meals, is above the Newcastle average at 31%, as is the estimated number of 225 children aged nought to four years living in households dependent on workless benefits. The percentage of children aged nought to four years of age living in poverty is 39%, which is higher than the Newcastle average of 31.4%.

The majority of families are White British. Schools' census data for 2011 show that the number of children from minority ethnic families entering Reception Year is increasing, but remains lower than the Newcastle average, at 10.5%. Most children enter the centre, childcare or early years education with a much narrower range of experiences and skills than that expected for their age.

The centre hosts the separately-managed Places for Children, a day nursery registered to care for 49 children under the age of eight years of age at any one time. It is open 51 weeks a year, Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm. This provision is subject to its own inspection and the report can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk

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

Sure Start Newbiggin Hall Children's Centre is a very warm and welcoming centre where all staff work diligently to provide effective services for the families who use its services. The centre is inclusive and all staff, in their approach to the work they do, reflect a strong commitment to promoting equality and diversity. Users told us that everyone is made welcome, no one is judgemental about them and that staff go out of their way to ensure that individual and family needs are met. The centre provides many well-organised and purposeful activities to promote both adult and children's learning and development and all are encouraged to have high aspirations. Children and parents were seen enjoying activities together. Children are learning skills for the future; however, although those adults who take up adult education do well there, numbers are low.

The quality of care, guidance and support given to users is consistently of a very high standard. There is clear and compelling evidence to show how the centre takes every opportunity to provide the best guidance, care and support to the users of the centre either by themselves, their partners or by signposting to other services. Parents' or carers' comments overwhelmingly show how the centre has significantly helped them in times of difficulty, including where users have had child protection issues or domestic violence problems.

The centre's approach to safeguarding families who use the centre and who are engaged through, for example, family support work is outstanding. Child protection, safer recruitment procedures, staff safety procedures and risk assessments are robust. Staff's knowledge and confidence to implement action if they have any concerns is substantial. There are clear and well-understood processes in place to ensure that all who need to know about any safeguarding concerns receive the information to ensure that swift and appropriate action is taken. Parents confirm they understand the responsibilities the centre has to safeguard children and that the centre will, and does, act if a danger to children is identified.

A particular strength of this centre is the overall governance. There are very clear lines of accountability in place and there are meticulous links between strategic planning and delivery of services in the centre. The highly-committed and active locality partnership board clearly understands its role and is confident to challenge and question the centre's work. The enthusiastic, determined and passionate staff, at all levels, clearly understand the management processes and how they impact on their work at both team and individual level. This includes how the management arrangements of the different organisations who work integrally together under the umbrella leadership of the local authority within the children's centre dovetail in practice. Management at all levels knows the strengths and areas for development of the centre. Data used to inform planning are continually being enhanced and it is clear that the quality and quantity available has greatly improved over the life of the centre. However, it is acknowledged by centre, local authority data staff and inspectors that further development is needed to give greater clarity to the multiple outcomes for users that the centre achieves and to further influence the action plans in place.

Overall, the good leadership and clear impact that the centre is having on children and families, along with an appreciation of the centre's strengths and areas to improve, indicate that the centre's ability to improve is good.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- Develop further, as a centre and in partnership with others, the provision of adult learning.
- Enhance the already good data collection and use to show more fully the multiple outcomes of the work done by the centre.

How good are outcomes for families?

2

The centre provides a wide range of activities which are developed well in partnership with other agencies and professionals. Healthy lifestyles are efficiently and enthusiastically promoted to contribute to the centre's on-going commitment to the obesity strategy.

Attendance at activities such as 'big cook, little cook' and 'the first taste weaning' course are identified by parents as helping them provide healthy foods from scratch and at appropriate times for their children. Parents and children were seen enthusiastically taking part in a physical activity session and there has been a good rate of participation in 'pushy mothers', a light post-natal exercise session for mums and their babies to improve adult physical fitness, reducing social isolation and potential post-natal depression. The percentage of babies breastfed at six to eight weeks is low but has improved from 24.1% in 2008–09 to 27% in 2010–11. There is a significant commitment to the promotion and support of breastfeeding and exceptional support is provided within the breastfeeding group and by peer supporters. Comments from mums in the support group include 'been a lifeline', 'really appreciate this group, all of a sudden I have a life' and 'this is my biggest achievement'.

The centre has a strong focus on promoting safety for children and families. Good preventative advice is given and staff model good practice. At registration a free 'goody bag' is given to parents containing a variety of information leaflets, books and equipment such as carbon monoxide detectors. A small information pack on domestic violence is also included, but the inclusion of this is managed carefully so as not to potentially exacerbate already difficult situations. The centre provides courses for families on such topics as learning together through play, first aid and food hygiene. Attendance at targeted courses, such as those for women who are experiencing or have experienced domestic violence are evidenced as improving their lives, enabling them to make better choices in their lives and to make changes for the better. However, sustained attendance can be an issue as the courses can be as much as 12 weeks in length and are provided as a city-wide resource.

The many activities provided encourage children and parents not only to play and have fun together but improve their self-esteem and parenting skills. All activities are well-planned, clearly linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage and follow the development needs of the individual children attending as well as the group as a whole. These good learning opportunities, along with the skilful input of the Sure Start teacher and childminding staff in supporting the private and voluntary sector to raise standards and support vulnerable children, and the significant input of the speech and language team is contributing to the improvements in Early Years Foundation Stage Profile results. The proportion of children achieving targets rose to 55.3% in 2011 from 50% in 2010 and 41.7% in 2009. Vulnerable groups who consistently perform below the average include boys; to help address this, the rolling activity programme includes a 'boys' development programme'. Data identify that the attainment gap between the lowest-attaining and the rest has decreased from 43% in 2010 to 27.5% in 2011.

Children's behaviour throughout the centre is good. Parents and carers highlight how they express their views through regular evaluations, are confident that they are listened to. There are parents from the locality on the partnership board and centre staff are constantly looking for more ways to give them an even greater voice in the running of the centre.

The centre effectively promotes economic stability. For example, there is much advice, guidance and support available to assist users to obtain help to ensure they are accessing the benefits they are entitled to and evidence shows this has helped to improve financial

situations. There is access to an Istop kiosk, Jobcentre Plus and Newcastle Futures Employment and Training Advice drop in and a very recent addition is a Job Club. However, data to show how successful adults are in going into training and employment are limited.

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	2
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?

2

The centre uses assessment and continuous evaluation well to meet the needs of families and to ensure that the services and activities are those that are needed. New birth data are used well to identify potential users, all new mums are contacted at least by letter and those in the target groups are visited to encourage registration and engagement. The centre knows its area well and works diligently to ensure all those in target groups are identified and engage with the centre. For example, of the 10 teenage mums in the area nine access children's centre services. Staff are trained and experienced in the use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), This along with clear information about children on the child protection register and those identified as being in need, and the pro-active use of the Supporting Families Process ensure that families receive the tailored support they need to help improve their lives. Assessment and planning for individual families involves them as partners and identifies desired outcomes.

Activities and services are well-advertised within the community and in the centre and the centre website is both up-to-date and informative. Activities are well-located and a rolling programme of some activities is used to maximise opportunity. There are many examples of innovative work being done by centre staff to promote the learning, development and enjoyment of users, particularly those identified as in need, which is having a good impact on the outcomes for children and families. Examples of how achievement is celebrated throughout the centre includes the presentation of certificates and displays of both children's and parents' work. Some health services are available in the centre such as the baby clinic drop in session with community health visitors and the recently-introduced 'C card' scheme for condom distribution and access to chlamydia screening is contributing to the provision of and easier access to sexual health services.

The care, guidance and support provided by this centre are an area in which this centre excels. There is a vast amount of useful information displayed throughout the centre. Staff are diligent in all their work to ensure they do not miss an opportunity to help families access services, progress and build on their achievements.

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	2
The quality of care, guidance and support offered to families, including those in target groups.	1

How effective are the leadership and management?

2

The very clear lines of accountability in place are clearly understood by staff and are diligently implemented in the centre's work. There are very clear definitive links between strategic planning, centre plans and service delivery. The extremely high level of enthusiasm and motivation exudes from all levels of management and staff. Managers are extremely supportive of staff and the clear processes of supervision for both line management and professional support are known to all. Staff have access to training required for their role and are also supported to gain further professional qualifications.

Throughout the centre there is a clear commitment to continuous evaluation and the accurate self-evaluation document is contributed to by managers, staff, partners, the partnership board and parents. The wealth of data available are being used well and the centre is aware of where data improvements are desired. It is clear that action plans are based on evaluations and data, and plans are used well to drive improvements. However, they do not always have sufficiently measurable and time limited targets to fully ensure success can be tracked.

Effective partnership working is seen to be in place at all levels and is successfully promoting good outcomes for children and families. The centre has many partnerships in place including with professionals, such as health and with local partners, such as the Senior Action group. There is clear evidence of joint working and development of provision to ensure the needs of the whole family are considered and sharing of resources; this impacts significantly on the sustainability of the provision and ensures good value for money.

There are robust procedures in place covering the breadth of the safeguarding needs of the centre. All required clearances for staff, volunteers and on-site partners are in place and are updated regularly. In addition, all staff and volunteers have regular training as required for their specific role. The centre gained the Centre for Excellence in Child Safety award in February 2011.

Equality and diversity is at the heart of all the centre does. Consideration has been given to the accessibility of information to families and such facilities as interpreters are available if needed. The centre works to continuously improve its contact with its target groups and although they do work with some families from minority ethnic groups they are currently working to engage more successfully with them. Overall, user engagement is good and many methods are used to ensure they can contribute their views and influence services and activities.

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	1
The effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secures 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	2
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	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.	2

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

The findings from the most recent inspection of Places for Children day care were taken into consideration when coming to judgements for this inspection.

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. 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 Newbiggin Hall Sure Start Children's Centre on 24-25 November 2011. We judged the centre as good overall with three outstanding aspects.

As part of the inspection we visited a number of activities, looked at the centre's documentation and talked with a range of children and adults including parents, staff, managers, partnership board members and partners. We were very pleased to speak with many of you either in specific meetings or as you participated in the centre's activities. You made your views known to us and we have used them to help us make our judgements.

We are very happy to be able to say that your centre is working very hard to support you and your families and we agree with you that the care, guidance and support you receive are outstanding. You told us how the centre staff work well together to make things better for you and that many of you have made positive changes to your lives following your attendance at the centre. You particularly told us how you had made friends by coming to the centre and how this had helped you to feel less isolated.

We saw you and your children enjoying the activities on offer and you told us how attending such things as 'big cook, little cook' help you to improve your family lives. The activities provided for you and your children to play and learn together are helping with children's development and achievement. Services such as Jobcentre Plus are available in the centre and some courses are available to you as adults to help you develop the skills and knowledge you need to further improve your and your families' well-being and to help you gain qualifications to assist you if you wish to go into employment. However, although those who take up the courses do well, the number of you taking up the offer is small. We have asked the centre to develop the courses available to you to encourage more of you to access them.

All staff in the centre work really hard to identify and plan how they can further help to improve your lives. They use data to see how they are doing but we have asked them to use data more to further ensure that the work of the centre is meeting your needs.

It was a pleasure to meet some of you during the inspection. We hope that you, your children and many more parents and children will continue to enjoy and benefit from the services provided by the centre. Thank you for speaking to us.

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