

# Inspection report for Leasowe Early Years and Adult Learning Centre

---

Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	383592
Inspection dates	7 - 8 December 2011
Reporting inspector	Jean-Marie Blakeley

Centre leader	Mary Mitchell
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Centre address	Twickenham Drive Leasowe Merseyside CH46 2QF
Telephone number	0151 6398923
Fax number	0151 6392503
Email address	schooloffice@leasowe-nursery.wirral.sch.uk

Linked school if applicable	104985 Leasowe Early Years and Adult Learning Centre
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	EY279600 Leasowe Early Years and Adult Learning Centre

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](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  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[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.

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).

An inspection of the maintained nursery 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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

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

The inspectors held meetings with staff and senior managers from the centre. Inspectors also met with parents, members of the governing body and representatives from Wirral local authority as well as a number of partners including those from the voluntary sector, health, education and social care. They observed the centre's work and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

## Information about the centre

Leasowe Early Years and Adult Learning Centre is a phase one children's centre, designated in 2005, providing services that meet the full core purpose. The centre was developed from the maintained nursery school. Full childcare is provided on site and a crèche is provided during some activities. The headteacher of the nursery school is also the head of the children's centre. The school's governing body is contracted by the local authority to govern the centre. Wirral Lifelong Learning delivers adult education services within the centre.

The centre is situated on the Leasowe estate, which is characterised by being in an isolated position, bounded by the Wirral coast, the motorway and light industrial development. With some partner schools and the Salvation Army, the centre provides two satellite centres, based in the Moreton area, sited within primary schools.

The centre serves a community, which experiences high levels of social and economic disadvantage. The proportion of children who live in households without paid employment at 35% is high, as is the number of families in receipt of benefits at 21%. Most children enter early education with knowledge and skills that are below typical expectations for their age. The majority of families are of White British heritage with 5% from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds.

## 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

Leasowe Early Years and Adult Learning Centre provides a good quality of service for children and families. The centre is led well by an experienced nursery school headteacher with good partnerships and teamwork leading to effective provision for families. The centre is at the heart of the housing estate on which it is situated and outreach provision is increasing opportunities for other families in the reach area.

Equality and diversity are good. The inclusion of the most vulnerable families and children is central to the vision for the centre and fully promoted in all aspects of its work. The centre has a very clear understanding of its key target groups and as a result, outcomes for those in most need of intervention or support are good. Outcomes for children are particularly strong, as evidenced in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, which demonstrate year-on-year improvements. The inclusive services for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are effective and as a result, their progress is good. The enjoyment of children attending the centre is evident. There is clear and demonstrable impact from the effective, targeted provision for two-year-olds. Adults benefit from well-planned learning and development opportunities and as a result, their personal development is good.

Safeguarding the health, safety and well-being of children and families is a high priority at the centre. There are clear policies and procedures which staff consistently apply well and the route for referral is clear. Increased communication with the local authority's 'Team around the Child' staff is improving information-sharing, resulting in the centre's ability to target its work appropriately.

An increasing number of users access the range of courses including first aid, parenting programmes, literacy and numeracy and some improve their economic well-being by gaining qualifications or progressing to further training, education or employment. Good on-site crèche facilities ensure that adults have equality of access to learning while their children are safe. The centre successfully engages with the majority of its key target groups. However, the centre recognises that too few men engage with the centre or access learning opportunities.

Partnerships with health professionals help ensure that families improve their health and well-being. Users are developing healthy lifestyles because of good advice, and support which promotes healthy living. Participation in provision such as 'Healthy Cooking on a Budget' and 'Baby Massage' builds parents and children's knowledge. As a result, families' health is improving and childhood obesity rates are reducing.

Leadership and management are good. The governing body, with its wide range of professional expertise and parent and community representation, provides good support to the centre. However, there is currently no parent forum or advisory board to enable more families to contribute to the decision-making of the centre.

The centre demonstrates a good capacity for sustained improvement. Good outcomes are achieved because the centre constantly monitors the impact of services and identifies how they can be improved. Careful analysis of the results on the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile has resulted in effective, targeted support to improve outcomes in identified areas of children's learning. However, leaders, managers and governors are not fully utilising all of the recently-improved data to plan provision and to monitor outcomes and set improvement targets.

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

### **Recommendations for further improvement**

- Establish an advisory board and a parents' forum in order to increase the number of families involved in the governance and decision-making of the centre.
- Utilise data more effectively in order to measure fully the impact of the centre's work and set improvement targets.
- Increase the number of men engaging with the centre to gain qualifications and/or progressing to further education, training or employment in order to improve the economic well-being of more families in the reach area.

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

<b>2</b>
----------

The children's centre is a safe and secure environment. Children that are subject to a child protection plan or Common Assessment Framework (CAF) are well supported and as a result, their progress is good. Families develop a good understanding of how to keep safe and reduce personal risk. The centre's well attended successful courses including 'First Aid', 'Nurturing' and the 'The Freedom' programme result in parents improving their confidence

and parenting skills. Families benefit from the 'Men's Freedom Programme' which helps tackle issues such as domestic violence. One father said, 'You can discuss your problems such as dealing with your anger or relationship difficulties. It has made me understand and change my behaviour. I now have a better relationship with my children'.

The centre effectively promotes health and well-being through its range of services and good partnerships with health services. As a result, health outcomes for families are improving. Obesity rates for children in Reception Year are reducing. Attendances at ante-natal and baby clinics are good. The centre provides good breastfeeding support and the number of babies that are breastfed beyond six to eight weeks has increased from 24% to 33% in the last three years.

Through a good range of play and development opportunities, parents are learning how to support their children's learning. Attendance at nursery, day care and crèche provision leads to good outcomes for children. The centre recognises that boys' achievements are below that of girls' and the centre is developing strategies to increase the progress made by boys. Parents and children treat each other with respect. Adult learning courses are improving outcomes for some families. 'I have passed my literacy level 1 and I am taking my Level 2 soon' said one parent. However, the centre recognises that unemployment in the area remains high and that too few men access the good opportunities the centre provides to help improve their economic well-being.

The centre routinely listens to and uses the feedback from families to shape and develop its services. Centre users are encouraged to participate in the strategic decisions of the centre through membership of the governing body. However, it has not established an advisory board or a parents' forum to increase the number of users contributing to decision-making.

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>2</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>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?

2
---

The centre's good knowledge and understanding of the community it serves leads to the delivery of good-quality provision. Training, courses and progression routes are carefully planned based on the assessment of individual needs. The building is well-equipped to provide adult learning courses, activities for users, some health services, a nursery school, crèche and day care for children. The centre is proactive in its approach to working with community organisations in order to enhance the provision. Good relationships with partners, particularly with the Salvation Army and Brook mean that services are coordinated effectively in order to reach and support the most vulnerable families.

Staff use information about children's starting points to plan their learning and measure their progress effectively. This is having a good impact on improving educational outcomes and narrowing the gap between the highest and lowest achieving children. Parents and carers are encouraged to support their children through enjoyable activities such as 'Sparkles' and 'Mini Monets. Adult successes are celebrated well through publications and presentation events.

Strong partnership-working results in effective support for families. Family support workers are successful in engaging and working with families and users particularly value home visits. Staff appropriately assess users' needs, provide on-going support and refer to other services. The highly effective approach to care, guidance and support is demonstrated by the improving outcomes for families who may be vulnerable due to their circumstances. Parents comment that the centre has made a big difference to their lives. Typical comments were, 'The support from the centre staff has been amazing. I would not be here now without them.' Good relationships enable families to approach the centre with confidence, particularly during times of crisis.

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>2</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>2</b>

## How effective are the leadership and management?

2
---

The centre leader demonstrates a clear vision of inclusion and a good understanding of and commitment to the success of the centre. Governance, leadership and management are effective, which lead to good outcomes for users. Accountability arrangements are clear and understood. High expectations and ambitions are communicated to staff, which drive forward and improve services for families.

The centre seeks and welcomes the views of all families and uses them to develop the provision. The local authority has recently improved the data it provides on the performance of the centre against its key priorities. However, the centre recognises that leaders, managers and governors are not routinely using all the available data to evaluate the impact of its services, plan provision and set measureable targets for improvement.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The inclusion of all families and children is promoted in all aspects of the centre's provision, to ensure that their diverse needs are supported and barriers to access are removed. The centre is effective in engaging with the majority of its key target groups. Young parents improve their parenting skills through dedicated provision. The centre recognises that some families do not engage with them and as a result is increasing its targeted outreach provision.

Professionals from a range of agencies make a good commitment to partnership working and to improving the life chances of children and families within the area which results in good and improving outcomes. Safeguarding arrangements are good. The centre is effective in ensuring that children and families stay safe through good attention to child protection, vetting and recruitment procedures. As a result, the progress and outcomes of looked after children; children in need or those on child protection plans are good. Resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of users and the wider community.

Families using the centre state that provision and support are good and make a strong contribution to their improved outcomes. As a result, services of the centre are used well and engage the majority of families in target groups. The centre therefore provides good value for money.

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 secures improvement in outcomes</b>	<b>2</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>2</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>2</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**

The inspection findings from the concurrent inspections of Leasowe Early Years and Adult Learning Centre childcare and nursery provision were both taken into consideration during the inspection of the children's centre.

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 Leasowe Early Years and Adult Learning Centre on 7 - 8 December 2011. We judged the centre as good overall.

Thank you very much for talking to us and letting us come into your sessions. The information you gave and the stories you shared with us helped us to make our judgements. Many of you talked about how the centre has helped you and your children. You told us how the children's centre has supported you to improve your lives and how you now have more confidence. It was clear that you are proud of your achievements. You told us how it has become easier to ask for help and support because of the friendly welcome and good quality relationships that you develop with centre staff. You also told us about the friends you have met and the things you have learnt as a result of your involvement in the centre's activities.

It is clear that you feel welcome at the children's centre. We found out that many of you have learnt new things and developed new skills, and some of you gain qualifications, go on to further training or find work. Many of you said how the involvement with the centre is improving your ability to keep your children safe, and how much you appreciate the support and encouragement staff give you. We found that staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures and that they are well trained. You said that you feel your children are safe at the centre and that advice from the centre helps your families stay safe at home.

You enjoy the sessions with your children such as 'Mini Monets' and 'Sparkles'. Those parents with children in day care, the nursery school or the crèche, value the good care their children receive. We found that children benefit from accessing services at the centre and make good progress from their starting points. The centre works well with the adult education service to give you access to courses to help improve your own education and future employment opportunities. The centre is successful at engaging with the majority of local families that really need some support but they still need to find ways of engaging with the men from local families so that they can help improve their families' economic well-being.

Your children behave well and you learn more about how to stay healthy. The centre listens to you and asks you what you think of the services and activities they offer. They change how and when they do some things because of what you say. Some of you are involved in making decisions about your centre through being on the governing body. However, the centre has not established a parents' forum or an advisory board in order to involve more of you in making decisions about your centre.

We found that all the staff are keen to promote equality and diversity. Many of the families with the greatest needs are enjoying sessions to help them and their children. Families treat each other with respect. The centre works well for everyone in the community, irrespective of their background or disability, and in doing so it contributes well to community cohesion. However, the centre is not fully using all the available data to develop and monitor its provision.

Thanks you again for taking the time to talk with us and we wish you 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).