

# Inspection report for Dewsbury Moor & Scout Hill Children's Centre

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Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	367789
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Centre leader	Mrs Sarah Knada
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
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Linked school if applicable	Not applicable
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	EY330285 Co-operative childcare formally Buffer Bear

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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## 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 additional inspector and one early years inspector.

The inspectors held meetings with parents, Action for Children management and staff, members of the advisory board and family forum. They also held meetings with staff from partner organisations representing health, the local school and church, adult education tutors, Jobcentre Plus and the local authority.

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

## Information about the centre

Dewsbury Moor & Scouthill Children's Centre is a phase one centre designated in March 2006. The centre uses purpose built accommodation which is located in the midst of the communities that it serves. Activities are also offered in an additional building across the road, and within a local primary school where the community is predominantly of minority heritage.

The centre serves a diverse population of families of South Asian and White British heritages. There are 1064 children under five years living in the community. All the children live in areas that are in the top 30% most deprived nationally, with half the children living in areas in the top 10% most deprived. The centre has bilingual staff and volunteers to support families who have limited English language skills. The centre has registered and made initial contact with 80% of the children aged from birth to five in the reach area. The centre offers a range of health, social care and family support services, and crèche facilities are arranged to support activities on site and at outreach venues. Action for Children own and occupy the main centre building; part of the building is leased to The Co-operative Childcare, a private childcare provider. The centre is one of five centres in the area that is led and managed by Action for Children through a commissioning arrangement with Kirklees local authority.

Children enter early education with skills well below those typical for their age and the number of children identified with special educational needs is high.

Worklessness is high in the reach area and the number of children identified as living in poverty is well above the Dewsbury average. The infant mortality rate is close to double the national average and rates of 'still births' and low weight babies are high. Smoking in pregnancy, poor diet, poor dental hygiene and tooth decay are also key health issues. The area has no General Practitioner (GP) practice or dentist and families are known to use the local accident and emergency department of the hospital rather than travel outside the area for a GP.

## 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

The centre's overall effectiveness is good and several aspects of its work are outstanding. It provides a safe, welcoming environment and this has a positive impact on children and families. Highly skilled family workers give prompt and sensitive care, guidance and advice to families in times of need. Very effective trusting relationships develop with parents who receive tailored support both at the centre and within families' homes. The excellent partnership working and good information sharing with professionals leads to the centre having a clear understanding of families and children's individual needs. The centre works successfully to break down barriers and reach the most vulnerable groups in the reach area. Participation rates have increased significantly and are high. The centre is effective in its promotion of services to families.

The centre provides high quality events and services for children and families which promote learning and development exceptionally well and meets their needs including those of the most vulnerable groups. This leads to high levels of enjoyment and achievement. Support for children and families is excellent and services are managed extremely well and this leads to good and improving outcomes for families and children. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities access appropriate services such as the use of the sensory room.

Highly effective support from bilingual staff promotes access for parents when English is limited. Services and events are evaluated well. However there is insufficient evaluation of the longer term impact of some services on outcomes for families.

Good leadership and management ensure safeguarding is outstanding. The promotion and monitoring of well-established robust policies and procedures, including excellent risk assessment, lead to highly effective safeguarding practices.

Governance arrangements are good and ensure that performance management and the deployment of staff and resources are effective and provide excellent value for money. Partner and community representatives and parents value the opportunity to be involved in and contribute to the advisory board and family forum. Attendance and representation of parents, particularly those from targets groups at the family forum has been inconsistent and the link between the family forum and advisory board is insufficiently clear.

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

### **Recommendations for further improvement**

- Further develop the family forum by:
  - extending the representation of parents including the harder-to to reach groups
  - developing and communicating clear terms of reference about the link to the advisory board.
- Develop more impact measures to assess the longer term benefits to families of using the centre's services.

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

<b>2</b>
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Outcomes for children and families are good and improving. Promotion of healthy lifestyles are good and the centre improves families' understanding of what constitutes a balanced diet, suitable portion sizes, how to cook without salt and reduce fat intake. Popular programmes such as 'Cook and Eat' and 'Big cook, Little Cook' and 'Family Learning' encourage parents to cook with their children which increases their confidence and enjoyment of learning together.

Good outcomes from breastfeeding support include young parents initiating and sustaining breastfeeding and parents' improved attachment with their babies. 'I never even considered breastfeeding whilst I was pregnant', was the comment made by one young mum, who is enjoying the experience of breastfeeding, encouraged by the high levels of support gained at the centre. Breastfeeding support workers and centre staff are provided with training and development to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to enable them to support breastfeeding mums.

As a result of the highly effective work with parents and families to improve their emotional health and well-being, parents overcome feelings of isolation and low self-esteem. 'This centre has been a lifeline to me when my marriage split up and my life was falling apart' was the comment from one parent which demonstrates the impact of the support offered by the centre. The good relationships between centre staff and families and the highly effective multi-agency working promote early intervention and targeted support for families. An increasing number of parents show improvement in their confidence and parenting skills. The centre offers a particularly successful volunteering programme which targets parents in the community and has a strong focus on the development of employability skills. Parents speak highly of the programme and how they have gained confidence and self-esteem. The programme is effective in helping parents move into employment with one now employed as a community link worker. The centre is particularly innovative in its development of volunteers with all of them undergoing the same rigorous recruitment checks and induction as employed staff.

The centre has very strong links with local schools and is able to demonstrate the difference it is making to improving outcomes for children when they enter early education. Support for children's transition to school is excellent. The centre provides an excellent transition programme which runs during the summer break leading up to entry to school. Information gathered by the centre from local schools report that the children's development when they enter school is significantly more advanced than those of children who have not had the benefit of the children's centre services. Children's achievement across the Early Years Foundation Stage is improving.

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>1</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?

<b>1</b>
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The assessment of family's needs is highly effective. Excellent assessment ensures the range of services, activities and opportunities meets the needs of families in the community

extremely well and in particular those in most need of support. Health and education partners confidently refer families to the centre and the excellent partnership working leads to a clear shared understanding of the needs of individual families and children. Centre staff provide an excellent level of tailored support to families and build highly effective trusting relationships with vulnerable, hard to engage parents. All families receive a particularly effective initial home visit that is highly valued by parents. Family workers carry out a comprehensive, sensitive assessment of the needs of parents which ensures that a well-informed plan of support can be developed. This individualised support leads to high levels of engagement and take-up of services by families.

The centre is highly effective in promoting learning and development to families. All activities and events offered to parents and children are supported by a comprehensive activity planning tool. This is used well to set clear targeted outcomes that meet the needs of the families and ensures that the activity or event is delivered to a high standard.

Kirklees local authority along with Action for Children has developed an excellent DVD resource 'The Child's Journey' which is built around a framework of good practice in child development and supports families well. Parents are able to learn from practical demonstrations in the DVD, how to encourage their child's development through attachment, communication, movement and play. 'It helped me to understand some of the signs and understand my child' one young parent said.

The centre runs a highly successful 'one stop shop' which is used well. Families value the local access and opportunity they have to obtain support from a good range of professional services that come together on a weekly basis. Parents are able to get support from organisations such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, Jobcentre Plus as well as engage with health professionals and obtain guidance and advice about issues that may be causing them concern.

The very popular weekly 'family day' promotes children's enjoyment of independent play and the development of their communication skills. Parents develop relationships and make friends. 'It's like my second home' said one parent/volunteer. One parent who had felt particularly isolated was delighted to have developed a friendship that was now continuing independently of the centre.

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>1</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?**

**2**

Leadership and management are good and the links between strategic planning and service planning ensure outcomes are good and improving. The relationship between the local authority and Action for Children is good and governance and accountability arrangements are effective. Parents welcome the opportunity to be part of the 'family forum' however its relationship to the advisory board is not sufficiently clear. The family forum and advisory board is currently under review.

The centre has particularly useful management information that is used well to inform management about the progress that is being made in improving outcomes. Data is used well to inform the self-evaluation process. The centre can demonstrate through its effective data systems that outcomes for families are improving in most areas. However, the centre is not yet in a position to demonstrate longer term impact of provision on families.

The management and quality assurance arrangements are effective and ensure efficient working practices. Staff expertise, roles and responsibilities are well matched to the needs of families. Staff carry out their roles with professionalism, enthusiasm and commitment and they work hard with families to encourage the development of positive attitudes. Staff supervision and the robust audit and quality assurance systems ensure a high quality service. Services are well used and engage a high number of families in the community. Services are well matched to meeting the community's needs and outcomes for families particularly those most in need of intervention and support are improving. The centre provides excellent value for money.

Partnerships and information sharing with partners and safeguarding arrangements are excellent. Staff and partners give the highest priority to safeguarding children. There is a high awareness of safeguarding amongst staff and they have a confident approach to their role with regard to identifying and reporting concerns. Health and social care partners confidently refer and work with staff in supporting 'children at risk'. Partner professionals are highly complimentary of the safeguarding work that the centre carries out. Excellent partnerships with the local childminding network support children's transition to school.

The centre promotes an inclusive approach to families and actively removes access to barriers for families, enabling them to gain centre support. The centre is successfully increasing the engagement of minority ethnic groups and carries out valuable work supporting children with disabilities.

User engagement is good. Families have good opportunities to be involved in evaluating the effectiveness of the services. There is regular and effective evaluation to measure impact and outcomes and the feedback from families informs future planning. Particularly effective 'focus groups' allows the centre to gain an in-depth understanding of parent satisfaction and areas where improvement may be required. A group of school children from a local school meets weekly at the centre to provide a young person's view of community needs. A

comprehensive community consultation is currently being led by the local authority to inform the future of the service offered.

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>1</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 integrated delivery of the range of services provided by the centre to meet its core purpose</b>	<b>1</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**

None

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 Dewsbury Moor and Scout Hill Children's Centre on 14–15 December 2011. We judged the centre as good overall with some aspects that are outstanding.

Thank you to those of you who came to speak with us during the inspection. It was a privilege to hear about your experiences and how you have benefited from the support that

the centre has provided to you and your children. Your centre provides you with a good service and some of the work is excellent and making a real difference.

The centre has developed outstanding partnerships and you have been able to benefit by accessing the 'one stop shop' and you make good use of the professional experience and knowledge of partner organisations. Together with partners, the centre assesses your needs exceptionally well to ensure support will make a positive difference to you. The centre has excellent safeguarding procedures in place which help staff identify and deal with safeguarding issues quickly and help you and your children to feel safe.

Your centre has worked hard to ensure a high number of families access support. Staff have also produced good quality resources for you to use at home and give you some practical ways to encourage your child's development. You told us about how much you had gained from the high quality parenting programmes, which have helped you to have more positive relationships with your children and family. The 'Dads group' is excellent and it is good to see that fathers have become more involved in the work of the centre. Your centre regularly gathers feedback from you to establish how satisfied you are with the centre services and this helps them to make improvements. Those of you who are involved in the 'family forum' and advisory group told us how you welcomed the opportunity to be more involved in the direction of the centre. However, the centre should make sure that you are clear about the link between the family forum and advisory board and we want managers to also make sure that the community has a strong voice within these groups. We have also asked the centre to develop further the work they do to assess the longer term benefits to families who use the centre's services.

Thank you, we wish you and your centre much luck for the future.

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