

Inspection report for Bewbush Children and Family Centre

Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	383479
Inspection dates	13–14 December 2011
Reporting inspector	Joanne Caswell HMI

Team Manager	Elaine Blanks
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Centre address	Bewbush Children and Family Centre Dorsten Square Bewbush Crawley West Sussex. RH11 8XW
Telephone number	01293 651760
Fax number	Not applicable
Email address	Elaine.Blanks@westsussex.gov.uk

Linked school if applicable	Bewbush Community Primary School
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	Bewbush Neighbourhood Nursery (EY303397)

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.

Report published: January 2012



Corporate member of
Plain English Campaign
Committed to clearer communication

361

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'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: 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 an early years inspector. The inspectors held meetings with the centre management team, the local authority, health professionals, representatives from the centre partnership group, front-line staff, parents and partner agencies.

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

Information about the centre

Bewbush Children and Family Centre is located in the residential area of Bewbush, in Crawley, West Sussex. It is one of four centres managed by the same team manager within the area. The centre is a phase 1 centre which originated from the Sure Start Local Programme and was designated in 2005. It is purpose built and located on the same site as Bewbush Community Primary School. There is a mixture of privately-owned homes and rented accommodation within the area, with a high proportion of social housing. The centre serves an area just outside one of the 30% most deprived areas in the country. Life expectancy in Bewbush is significantly lower than the Crawley average. Housing issues, crime and education are the most significant factors affecting families living in the Bewbush area. Children's levels of skills and understanding on entry to school are often lower than those expected for their age.

Levels of worklessness and unemployment are high within the centre's reach area and are above the national average. The majority of families living in the area are of White British heritage, although there are an increasing number of minority ethnic group families. Full daycare is provided by the nursery which is managed by West Sussex County Council. The nursery offers care for children under five years, Monday to Friday from 8.00am to 6.00pm, throughout the year. Crèche services are offered to support centre activities.

Bewbush Children and Family Centre provides the full core offer services and has health professionals, such as health visitors, operating from the centre. Governance arrangements are provided by the local authority. A centre partnership group is in place and includes membership of partner agencies and a range of stakeholders.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

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

3

Capacity for sustained improvement

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

2

Main findings

Bewbush Children and Family Centre offers a welcoming and very safe environment. The provision is satisfactory and improving. The centre has recently been subjected to many changes and disruption following a restructure of management and service delivery by the local authority. A new team manager has been appointed with responsibility for the management of four centres within the Crawley locality. At the time of inspection, the team manager had only been in post for eight weeks but is already able to demonstrate a significant improvement to services and provision. She is a strong and dynamic manager who is fully committed towards improving the centre and meeting the needs of local families. Centre users have noted the significant improvements being made and praise the work of the senior management team. One centre user told inspectors that with the new leadership team in place, 'We can see things getting better and better.' Another parent told inspectors, 'The centre has improved and changed so much over the last few months.'

Due to the recent disruption, some services have been stopped and the centre's opening hours have been reduced. These changes do not effectively support the needs of vulnerable families within the Bewbush community. The team manager is working tirelessly at both local and strategic level to immediately improve the shortfalls in provision and reinstate as many services as possible. Concerted action is being taken based on an accurate analysis of the provision and families' needs. Comprehensive action plans are now in place and significant improvements are already being seen. For example, improvements have been made to the quality of services provided and this leads to increased numbers of families attending. The new manager has already instigated a meeting at strategic level to improve partnerships with health partners. As a result, the centre demonstrates good capacity to improve.

Outcomes for families are satisfactory and improving. The quality of care provided for centre users is a strength of the centre. Staff are fully committed towards supporting all families, particularly at times of crisis. Safeguarding arrangements are robust and good attention is given towards keeping children and adults safe.

Partnership arrangements within the centre are good. However, links with other key agencies, particularly health and adult learning providers, are less effective. Data are not readily shared between partners and action planning is not linked at strategic level. As a result, the centre receives infrequent data about the impact of some services on families. Some services are not always sufficiently integrated to work towards shared targets.

Evaluation procedures are satisfactory within the centre and staff and families recognise the importance of reflecting on services and identifying areas for development. However, due to the lack of available data, targets are not always effectively monitored and measured. The new centre management team fully understands the importance of self-evaluation and has already implemented an improved system for measuring the impact of services. However, it is too early to assess its effectiveness. The team manager recognises the centre has not been carrying out sufficiently robust evaluation over time to measure the long-term impact of the centre's services and to drive improvements.

Governance arrangements are satisfactory. There are generally effective procedures in place for the local authority to monitor the centre's work, although target setting is not always sufficiently challenging to move the centre forward. For example, the centre's current target is to increase registration rates from the current 71.37% to 75%. However, the new manager has set her own target to increase registration rates to over 90%. This demonstrates the clear and ambitious vision the new manager has for the centre. The centre partnership group is fully committed to its role in representing the views of local families and is beginning to make a positive impact in shaping services. However, group members are not always sufficiently questioning the centre and holding the team manager to account to ensure continual improvements are made.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- With local authority support, improve the procedures for measuring and robustly analysing the centre's data to demonstrate the impact of the centre's services on all vulnerable groups.
- Sharpen governance arrangements to improve procedures to challenge the centre and hold it to account in meeting all targets.
- Strengthen partnership arrangements with key agencies, particularly health and adult learning providers, to:
 - improve planning and provision of services at both centre and strategic

- level to accurately meet the needs of the most vulnerable families
- improve the integration of services to ensure all partners are working towards shared targets.

How good are outcomes for families?

3

Parents appreciate the centre's work and recognise the positive impact it has on their lives. One parent told inspectors she thought the centre was 'invaluable'. Another parent told inspectors, 'I would be absolutely lost without it.' Children enjoy the various groups and benefit from quality play opportunities. Parents begin to recognise the value of purposeful play and start to understand how they can support children's learning at home. One parent stated, 'The groups are very good here and the children love it.' The use of the toy library is beginning to increase. As a result, children benefit from using a greater selection of toys and resources which support learning and development.

Children achieve well within the nursery from their initial starting points and make good progress when they transfer to school. Nursery assessment data show the gap between the most disadvantaged children and the rest is closing steadily. Generally, boys and girls achieve equally. The opportunities for parents to achieve and support their own development are less effective due to the reduction in adult learning provision. A small number of parents worked with the Prince's Trust and improved their confidence and developed key skills to support them in applying for employment. Volunteering opportunities within the centre are satisfactory. This helps some parents develop responsibility and learn key skills which support them in the workplace. Parents are beginning to reflect on their own achievements and evaluate their own performance through designated evaluation programmes. However, other measures to monitor the long-term impact of services are not fully embedded.

Some health outcomes are beginning to improve. Obesity levels in children are improving as parents develop a clearer understanding of the importance of healthy eating and leading a healthier lifestyle. Children follow good hygiene routines within the centre and benefit from outdoor play and physical activities. Health services for parents are less effective. The breastfeeding supporter is currently on maternity leave and no arrangements have been put in place to cover this. As a result, breastfeeding support has stopped. The services of a health trainer who used to give parents advice on smoking cessation and health promotion have also stopped. Health visitors carry out clinics from the centre and work well with centre staff to assess any health concerns regarding children's development. However, midwifery services are not available. Teenage parents are signposted to a specialist support group operating from a neighbouring centre.

Children stay safe at the centre and parents develop a good understanding of how to prevent hazards. Some parents have completed first-aid courses and regular themed safety events help families feel safe within the local area. The centre has established

good links with the police community support officers who are regular visitors to the centre and commend its work in improving community relations and neighbourhood safety. Children who are subject to a child protection plan are supported very well as the centre works effectively with other agencies. As a result, the centre identifies any vulnerable families early and takes necessary preventative and responsive action to keep children safe. The Common Assessment Framework is used effectively by all agencies to identify services to help keep children safe. The centre works collaboratively with children's services and ensures looked after children are supported appropriately. Evidence from multi-agency meetings in safeguarding cases praises the work and intervention of the centre's staff in keeping vulnerable families safe.

Children behave well and all centre users develop positive relationships with one another. The centre's strap line, Heart and Voice of Our Community, endorses the vision and commitment of all centre staff. Parents praise the way in which centre activities promote a sense of belonging for everyone. Some parents are now involved in the centre partnership group and begin to contribute towards the decision-making process. Most parents share their views through the Family Forum and this is beginning to be effective in shaping future services.

These are the grades for the outcomes for families:

The extent to which children, including those from target groups, are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy and families have healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children are safe and protected, their welfare concerns are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them	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	3
The extent to which children engage in positive behaviour and develop positive relationships, and parents, including those from target groups, contribute to decision-making and governance of the centre	3
The extent to which children are developing skills for the future, and parents, including those from target groups, are developing economic stability and independence including access to training and employment.	3

How good is the provision?

3

The quality of care, guidance and support for families experiencing great challenges in their lives is good. The effective outreach work and family support programme is tailored towards individual need and staff build strong and trusting relationships with local families. One parent summarised this by stating, 'Outreach workers are so knowledgeable.' The centre provides a good range of information for parents

regarding a wide range of family issues and this is adapted, where necessary, to ensure the information is accessible to all families. Good provision is made for local childminders who use the centre regularly to enhance their own delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Training and support for childminders are good and this is leading to improved early years provision. Further learning and development opportunities for parents within the centre are currently limited.

The range of services is currently adequate, although the reduction in the centre's opening hours has affected provision. Targeted groups are generally supported appropriately. Assessment within the centre is effective and staff work together well to identify levels of support required. This is particularly evident between the nursery and children's centre staff. However, the lack of data means services are not consistently delivered as a result of the robust analysis of the needs of some local families.

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

How effective are the leadership and management?

3

The new team manager is supported effectively by a strong centre coordinator. Parents comment how responsive the new senior management team is in reacting to parents' feedback and making necessary changes. Governance arrangements are steadily improving. All staff work effectively and clearly understand their roles and responsibilities. Line management arrangements are clear and generally good support is given towards promoting professional development.

Safeguarding arrangements are good. All staff are appropriately trained in child protection and liaise effectively with other agencies to support families identified at risk. All areas of the centre are safe and good attention is given towards making the premises secure. Recruitment procedures are good and all staff have a strong awareness of health and safety issues. Relevant training and support are offered to families experiencing domestic violence and abuse. Staff and family outreach workers are well supervised in their work to protect children through regular safeguarding meetings. Disabled children are supported effectively through the centre's links with services such as Portage.

The centre is fully inclusive and resources are provided in different languages and formats. Designated support for some minority ethnic group families helps to build

relationships between families and support inclusion. Staff are committed to welcoming all families into the centre and overcoming all barriers to success. The reach to fathers is continuing to increase. However, the centre recognises it needs to offer more services to support pregnant mothers and teenage parents and is currently working at strategic level to address this.

The engagement of families is improving and the new management team demonstrates a strong commitment towards responding to parents' views. Parents comment how satisfied they are with the centre and are beginning to share their own ideas for future services. At present, children's views are not routinely sought and linked in to future planning.

Self-evaluation procedures are improving, but have previously not been consistently effective in identifying the key target groups. As a result, it makes it difficult for the centre to consistently target services according to need. Resources are deployed satisfactorily and this is leading to at least satisfactory improvements in family outcomes. Outreach to most target groups is effective and improving. At present, the centre delivers satisfactory value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management:

The extent to which governance, accountability, professional supervision and day-to-day management arrangements are clear and understood	3
The effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secure improvement in outcomes	3
The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of families, including those in target groups	3
The extent to which equality is promoted and diversity celebrated, illegal or unlawful discrimination is tackled and the centre fulfils its statutory duties	3
The effectiveness of the centre's policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults	2
The extent to which partnerships with other agencies ensure the integrated delivery of the range of services provided by the centre to meet its core purpose	3
The extent to which the centre supports and encourages families in the reach area to engage with services and uses their views to develop the range of provision	3

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

None

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance *Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted* which is available from our website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like us to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Summary for centre users

We inspected the Bewbush Children and Family Centre on 13 and 14 December 2011. We judged the centre as satisfactory overall. We would like to thank those of you who took the time to talk with us about your involvement and experiences at the centre. It was very enjoyable to meet with you and your families. It is very clear that you value the people who work at the centre and the services they provide. Many of you told us the centre has a very positive impact on your lives.

We noted the recent changes which have been made to your centre as a result of a restructuring programme within the local authority. We are aware of the impact this has had on the range of centre services available to you and the reduction in the centre's opening hours. We were impressed with the new team manager and can already see the many improvements she is making and the extensive plans she has in place to make positive changes for you. Many of you also told us that you could already see improvements within the centre under the new management arrangements.

The care shown to you by all centre staff is a real strength of the centre. We observed the centre's work and read many case studies and can see how dedicated staff are in helping you, particularly when you are experiencing very difficult and challenging periods of your lives. We also noted how well the centre keeps families safe, both within the centre and by helping you understand how to recognise dangers and hazards within the home. All safeguarding arrangements are good and staff work well together with other agencies when they identify children and families could be at risk.

We observed how much children enjoy the centre's activities and this is particularly evident for children who attend the centre's nursery. Children's development is promoted well through quality, purposeful play and this enables children to make good progress in their learning and be well prepared for starting school. The provision for adult learning is less effective now that training is not provided directly by the centre. We know that some of you have attended training, but the centre staff do not receive any information about this. Therefore, the centre cannot help you to continue to move forward and identify any future learning and development needs you may have. We have asked the centre's managers to obtain more information from training providers to enable them to improve this area of their work.

We talked to you and some of the health professionals and it was evident that parents find attending clinics within the centre helpful as they can seek advice about their child's development. However, we found that not all health services are running effectively. For example, the breastfeeding and health training services have both stopped due to the recent changes in services available and there are no midwifery services available from the centre. The centre's managers told us that they receive very limited information about the needs of local families from the health professionals and this makes planning services for you very difficult. We have asked the centre's managers to address this.

We met with some representatives from the centre partnership group. We were impressed with how many of you have involvement with this group and are beginning to share your views and ideas. However, we found that the group is not yet asking challenging questions about the centre and helping it to improve. We met with senior managers from the local authority and noted that sometimes they do not set challenging targets for the centre to meet, so we have asked the centre to improve its governance arrangements to address this.

We noted a very happy and friendly atmosphere within the centre. It is a very welcoming environment and one that makes families feel at ease and able to seek help from some professionals.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you very much again for engaging so positively with inspectors during the inspection. We wish you and your families the very best for the future.

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