

Inspection report for Parkland Primary School and Children's Centre

Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	383790
Inspection dates	25–26 April 2012
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Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
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	Holybrook Primary School 132184
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	EY336201 Simply Kids

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: May 2012

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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 of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one early years inspector. The inspectors held meetings with parents and users of the service, centre staff, managers, local authority representatives, and partner agencies. They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

Information about the centre

Parkland Children's Centre is a phase two centre. Designated off-site childcare provision is provided by Greengate House Nursery, registration number 302035. This is subject to a separate inspection under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006. The report of this inspection is available on our website www.ofsted.gov.uk. The centre provides targeted and universal services to children aged birth to five years of age and their families in the reach area that includes Parkland and six other primary schools. The centre provides crèche facilities for parents attending a range of activities throughout the week. The centre is co-located with Parkland Primary School and Albion Family Centre and is line managed by the headteacher of Parkland Primary School. The responsibility for governance rests with the governing body of Parkland and Holybrook which are federated schools. The centre's advisory board is made up of representatives from the local community, parents, and voluntary and statutory providers. A parent member chairs the advisory board. Day-to-day management of the centre is the responsibility of the children's centre leader who is assisted by the Family Support Manager and five family support workers some of whom work part time. The centre currently has one staff vacancy.

At February 2012 the centre reach area had increased to 1259 birth to five-year-olds. The area has a diverse range of social housing, including low cost private rental accommodation. Seventeen per cent of children within the reach area are entitled to free schools meals. In the reach area 97.2% families are mainly of White British heritage. A small number of

parents are from Central and Eastern European countries and some are of Asian-Pakistani ethnic origin. Local statistics indicate that while unemployment figures are average for the area, 16.3% of children are living in households dependent on workless benefits. The centre serves some families living within the 0 to 30% most deprived areas. At 27.5%, the number of parents claiming the childcare element of the working tax credit is higher than the Bradford average of 14.4%.

Local employment is predominantly part time and low paid. The skills and knowledge with which children enter early years provision are broadly in line with those expected for their age; some enter provision within the reach area with skills well above those expected and some significantly below. The children's centre works with a range of partners including the local family centre, the local community centre, the local church, schools, health visitors, midwives, GPs, mental health specialists and other community partners.

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

This is a good children's centre. It provides effective services for young children and their families. Partnerships are well established and meet families' needs well. The centre promotes learning and enjoyment for all users and has undertaken particularly good work with parents dealing with mental health issues.

Families feel safe in the centre and contribute well to their own safety. Risk assessments are effective and procedures regularly reviewed. Staff know families and the area well and the centre is accessed by a large majority of families. Participation rates are good and carefully monitored.

The centre promotes healthy lifestyles well through 'Cook and Eat' sessions. Children's obesity levels are improving, although challenges remain in ensuring expectant mothers stop smoking and mothers breastfeed their babies.

Families thoroughly enjoy the activities offered by the centre especially opportunities to play, learn and have fun together. Children make good progress in their learning and development and are supported well. Adults have sufficient opportunities to develop their economic well-being including through voluntary roles at the centre, however, too few enrol on accredited learning programmes to enhance employment prospects.

Good outreach work ensures that the most isolated and disadvantaged families are supported well. The team of committed staff deliver good quality care through a range of services. Family support workers and the centre's crèche staff are pivotal in developing parents' understanding of the learning and development needs of their children.

The good management and governance encourage effective teamwork. Parents are increasingly involved in the running of the centre, they make a positive contribution by their membership and chairing of the advisory board but parent forums have not yet been established. Safeguarding procedures are effective.

The self-assessment process is robust and well established. However, the promotion of the diverse area and Bradford's rich cultural heritage are not fully explored. The advisory board, along with the local authority, provides thorough scrutiny and challenge. Staff development and training opportunities are good overall. As a result of clear developments and effective action planning, the centre shows a good capacity for further improvement.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- Improve health outcomes by continuing to work with partners to increase the numbers of woman breastfeeding and to lower the rates of expectant mothers who smoke.
- Improve parental contribution by more efficient ways of obtaining their views and establishing a parent's forum.
- Involve more adults in accredited training courses and other opportunities to improve their economic well being.
- Be more proactive in promoting awareness of cultural diversity in contemporary Britain, particularly through staff training.

How good are outcomes for families?

2

Good and improving attendance at antenatal clinics and regular visiting by health visitors help parents receive well-tailored early advice about the health of their babies. The centre works successfully with health colleagues to bring down the rates of admissions to hospital by promoting the importance of hand washing and offering free antibacterial hand gel. The outcomes of 'Cook and Eat' sessions promote healthy eating well and sessions are well attended. A good range of activities such as baby massage, 'stay and play' and 'mini music makers' promote children's personal, social and emotional development well and build good relationships. The centre has good resources to encourage oral health and uses these well in

promoting good oral hygiene. The number of mothers who continue to smoke throughout pregnancy remains higher than average for the local area and the centre is working with its partners to try and improve this. Encouraging mothers to take up breastfeeding continues to be a challenge. A new breastfeeding peer support group is proving effective and 10 mothers have gone on to become peer supporters.

The centre is sensitive to the needs of the more vulnerable families and does all it can to help them stay safe. Children behave well in the centre and play safely. Parents have a good understanding of how to keep their children safe and make suggestions about improving safety; for example in the outside play area. The use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) remains low; however, the centre has worked effectively with the 10 looked after children in its reach area. Collaborative working relationships with social care staff ensure good support for some of the most vulnerable children. Families regularly seek advice about safety and the centre runs a number of themed events supporting parents in keeping their children safe.

Numbers of children achieving at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile has fluctuated over the past few years. In 2010, it was 61.8%, which was higher than the Bradford average. There is a significantly improving trend in narrowing the gap between the lowest achieving 20% in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the rest. The centre offers a wide range of opportunities for parents and children to play and learn together. Evaluations from parents indicate how much they enjoy the sessions and how they have helped their children to develop.

Parents contribute to the centre; however, recent feedback suggests that the completion of forms following sessions could be complemented with other more interesting evaluation methods. Parent forums are not yet operating formally although the centre has plans to establish these as a regular feature of their work. Parents comment that their views are valued and taken seriously. Using bright displays the centre is very good at regularly canvassing the views of children and identifying the sorts of activities they enjoy.

The centre satisfactorily supports adults into exploring opportunities for training and moving into employment. One employability programme has run at the centre and this had good results with the majority of participants moving onto other accredited programmes, volunteering or into employment. Participants reported they have gained confidence and increased their work skills. A good range of volunteer opportunities exists across the partnership and the centre has been good at exploiting these for the benefit of its users. The centre offers very few accredited programmes and recognises it needs to do more to signpost users to further training opportunities locally. Jobcentre Plus has good and well-established links with the centre providing effective advice and guidance about job vacancies, further training and where appropriate how to claim benefits, particularly the childcare element of family tax credit.

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.	3

How good is the provision?

2

The centre assesses the needs of the most vulnerable families and effectively responds to them. The centre provides very responsive outreach services supporting families sensitively in the home. This is improving access to a range of services for some of the most disadvantaged families living in high levels of poverty. All staff have an excellent understanding of their responsibilities in identifying needs of vulnerable children in the reach area. The centre's targeted support works to good effect with parents who have mental health issues. The users who attended the 'Something for you' group, say they developed in confidence, increased their understanding of their own mental health, and improved their strategies for coping. The centre works well with young mums supporting them sensitively.

The promotion of learning and development is at the heart of much of the centre's work. Staff pay careful attention to accurately observing and recording children's learning and progress. Parents are encouraged to regularly observe their children and this is promoting a greater understanding of their children's development. Planning of sessions is effectively shared through regular newsletters, helping users understand how the activities on offer can support them and their children. In all sessions observed, parents and children showed enjoyment and pride at their achievements. The centre holds regular celebration events that are well attended and lively. Parents particularly enjoy the family links programme, show pride at their achievements, and comment that meeting other parents facing similar issues has helped them realise they are not on their own.

Staff take good care of children and adults who attend the centre's activities. Families say that staff are non-judgemental and this helps build trust between families and staff and other service users. Particularly good bespoke advice and guidance are available through Bradford Families Information Service. This provides information about health, education, employment and training opportunities and opportunities for face-to-face guidance. Partner agencies offer a wide range of complementary activities across the reach area in accessible locations. The centre offers sessions flexibly to best meet users' needs, for example the

'Men behaving Dadly' sessions are offered on a Saturday morning in a local church hall. Families say the support they receive is invaluable particularly in times of crisis.

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.	2

How effective are the leadership and management?

2

Effective and well established governance is provided by the advisory board which reports directly to the school federation governing body. The local authority offers regular and robust challenge helping the centre to continually improve. The headteacher from the co-located school provides confident and visionary leadership. Managers are clear about their roles and responsibilities for governance and have a secure oversight of the centre. This includes effective quality assurance and performance management processes and sound financial accountability.

Staff use high-quality data well through the e-start system. This helps them accurately identify need, plan provision, and ensures targets are set which are measurable and timely. Managers are ambitious for the centre to continually improve and communicate high expectations to all staff and users. All partners are clear about the centre's priorities and they work well with the centre staff to ensure they are met.

The centre's good resources, including a number of multipurpose rooms, good play space and outdoor area are used well. This results in good outcomes, particularly for families in greatest need. All areas of the centre are safe and clean making them attractive to both children and adults. Resources are utilised to best effect. The centre displays a high commitment to sustainability, including a focus on recycling and encouraging users and families to consider sustainable resource usage, for example a rag collection, clothes swap and a food bank for those families in greatest need.

Robust safeguarding arrangements are in place and good practice is adopted across all areas of the centre's work. Risk assessments are completed to ensure resources and activities are safe and recruitment procedures ensure all staff are suitable to work with children and vulnerable adults. Staff are suitably trained in relation to child protection. Criminal Record Bureau Disclosures are in place for all staff, volunteers and parent governors. Sound policies and procedures ensure the centre meets its legal and statutory requirements in relation to promoting equality and diversity and ensuring appropriate actions are taken to prevent discrimination of any kind. Outreach provision is working well and improving access for the more disadvantaged, isolated and vulnerable. Staff training on

promoting diversity including cultural diversity is not yet fully effective and so opportunities to promote Bradford's rich cultural heritage are frequently missed.

A good range of partnerships support the delivery of services well. The centre has worked intensely with local childminders who access its services regularly. Partners speak highly of the centre and the services offered. The developing partnership with the co-located family centre is helping facilitate more collaborative working which effectively supports the wider assessment of children and their families. Excellent partnerships with local schools help children make good transitions.

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	2
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	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	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

Information from the inspection of Greengate House Nursery and Parkland Primary School was used to inform the inspection.

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Summary for centre users

We inspected Parkland Children's Centre on 25 and 26 April 2012. We judged the centre as good overall.

Thank you to those of you who came to speak to inspectors. We read all the things you have written when you have been on courses. We found that many of you who use the centre enjoy the courses and activities you attend. The centre places a high priority on helping you and your children learn new skills and this is helping you to develop in confidence and your children to be better prepared when starting school.

While lots of you told us that the centre gives you good information about being healthy, particularly the 'Cook and Eat' sessions, we want the centre to work closer with its partners in supporting expectant mothers to give up smoking when they are pregnant and encouraging more mothers to breastfeed their babies. We are pleased that the centre is working with you on how to make sure your children are not overweight and they have lots of opportunities for exercise and outside play.

We know that those of you who act as volunteers at the centre really enjoy this role. You told us you feel the centre takes your views seriously, particularly those of you on the advisory board. However, you also told us you would like more interesting ways to evaluate your sessions and we have asked the centre to consider this and involve you more by setting up a parents' forum.

Some of you have undertaken training courses at the centre and have had help with finding employment. However, the centre has not run many training programmes that are accredited. We have asked the centre to offer you more opportunities for training and help you access further training opportunities with other partners so that your opportunities for finding future work are increased.

The centre offers a number of different services, which are helpful to families. These include baby clinics, play activities and healthy-eating sessions. We found there is much helpful information for you and many of you are making good use of the Bradford Information Service by finding out about what it offers and what help you can get for you and your

family. We learned that some of you with mental health needs are particularly welcome at the centre and you have enjoyed the 'Something for you' group.

The centre is good at making sure that families receive the right sort of support when they need it. Many of you told us that you feel valued when you come to the centre and you like the fact that nobody judges you. We know you live in a close-knit community, but we think the centre could do more to help you understand and celebrate the rich diversity of cultures in Bradford and in the wider community. Thank you once again to those of you who came to speak to us. We wish you all the best for the future and every success.

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