

# Inspection report for Wigston Magna Sure Start Children's Centre

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<b>Local authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	383852
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 April 2012
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sheelagh Barnes

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<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable
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<b>Linked school if applicable</b>	All Saints Church of England Primary School
<b>Linked early years and childcare, if applicable</b>	Not applicable

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.

An inspection of the co-located/partner primary school 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 an additional inspector and an early years inspector.

The inspectors held meetings with the centre coordinators and staff, chair of the Local Partnership Group (LPG), representatives from a wide range of partners, local authority members and users of the centre. They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

## Information about the centre

This is a phase two children's centre opened in 2009, which delivers the full core offer 50 weeks of the year. It is open from 8.00am until 4.00pm Tuesday to Thursday and 8.00am until 12.00pm on Fridays. The centre is part of a cluster, which was planned to comprise of eight centres. Currently, only five have been developed. The local authority has retained responsibility for managing the centre. There is also a local partnership group which meets on a regular basis. Most services are delivered at the centre site, but outreach services include family support in the home.

Data indicate that the reach area includes families which are in the bottom 70% in England with regard to economic advantage. A quarter of the adults in the reach area have no formal qualification. Around a half have qualifications at level 1 or below. Most families in the reach area are of White British origin, but there are growing numbers of families from a range of different minority ethnic backgrounds. The precise number of families in the area with adults or children with disabilities is not known to the centre. Nor does the centre have exact figures for drug and alcohol abuse, smoking or domestic violence. The proportion of families where no-one is in work is broadly average at around a tenth. Children's skills, knowledge and abilities

on entry to early years provision are below those expected for their age. Seventeen children in the reach area have been reported to Social Care, or are subject to a child protection plan, due to concerns with regard to the welfare of the child. The number of teenage pregnancies and the proportion of teenage parents not in employment, education or training in the reach area are low.

## 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**

**3**

## Main findings

This is a bright and welcoming centre that provides satisfactorily for the families and their children who attend. All staff carefully plan and evaluate the activities they provide for individual families. Information about the reach area from the local authority and partner agencies is plentiful, but not always the most pertinent needed for guiding the centre's work. Other information, which would be useful is not always shared with the centre leaders. As a result, the picture of the profile of families in the area held by the centre lacks precision.

Centre staff regularly monitor the impact of services they provide to the parents and children who attend. However, this is completed on an individual basis, family by family. Commissioned services are evaluated by partner agencies in different ways. The information is not then collated in any way that allows the swift evaluation of the impact of services on particular groups. Centre leaders recently identified that the system they had been using did not allow them to identify when the same family was involved in work with a variety of agencies. As a result, the knowledge of the impact of the centre's work on those from vulnerable groups is very general. A new system has been started to prevent 'double counting', but as yet this is too new to have much accumulated information.

Evaluation such as the value for money of different activities, is satisfactory, but lacks rigour. Planning of activities meets the needs of those who attend, but is not always tailored specifically to vulnerable groups, such as disabled parents. However, the work to support teenage parents is well recorded and evaluated. Work to involve fathers has been well received. Provision to encourage and support breastfeeding is highly successful and a particular strength of the centre. Parents say they feel

supported when they attend activities at the centre. One parent enthused, 'This is an excellent place for building my, as well as my child's, confidence'.

Leaders and managers are committed to ensuring the centre's work is evaluated and improved systematically. Parents are involved in the development of some courses, such as that for breastfeeding, which has then been extremely successful. However, the centre leaders have identified that there is a need to increase the numbers of parents who are actively involved in management. As a result, a new parental link worker has recently been appointed. Leaders regularly review the quality of the provision and set targets for improvement. Some targets lack sharpness and sufficient detail to enable decisions to be made that drive up standards quickly. The push forward for change for the better is satisfactory. As a result, the centre's capacity to improve is satisfactory.

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

### **Recommendations for further improvement**

- Involve more parents formally in the development of the centre.
- Ensure partnership agencies and the local authority share pertinent information about the reach area in a clear format to facilitate centre leaders in identifying the needs of vulnerable groups.
- Collate information about the impact of work with various groups more systematically in order to better measure the value of individual services and to then set more precise targets for improvement.

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

<b>3</b>
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Health outcomes for users of the centre are satisfactory. Childhood obesity levels in the reach are higher than national. Centre leaders have set up a number of health-promoting activities, including 'Boogie Bods', advice on eating and baby massage. These are much enjoyed. Parents say that the combination of sensitive staff, childcare facilities and making new friends helps them immensely. Breastfeeding figures six weeks after birth have increased following work by the centre to raise awareness of the benefits to mother and baby alike.

Safety and safeguarding of children and families are satisfactory. Safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is promoted adequately. The large proportion of parents who use the centre say that they feel safe when they visit. Outcomes for families supported by outreach services are improving as a result of the centre's work. The centre provides a reassuring welcome for children and adults alike. Support for children with a child protection plan, and for those with a child in need plan, is satisfactory.

The proportion of children who attain expected levels for their age in their skills knowledge and understanding by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved over recent years. It is broadly in line with national levels. The gap in attainment between the lowest-attaining children and the rest by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage is also broadly in line with that found nationally.

Parents who use the centre regularly are enthusiastic about it. They appreciate the friendly approach of the staff. They say they feel comfortable and welcomed. Behaviour by children and babies attending sessions is good. Parents enjoy opportunities to work and play with their children at the centre. Some parents have been involved in the development of courses, such as volunteers involved in the breastfeeding partnership. Members of the Teen Parent group requested a follow-up programme when their course finished and this resulted in the development of 'Baby Steps follow on group'.

The centre commissions some accredited courses to help parents increase their qualifications and confidence. Take-up so far has been low, but a small number of parents have acquired qualifications in literacy, numeracy, first aid and child care as a result. There are facilities in the centre for parents to access information about Jobcentre Plus. However, while the centre staff have spoken to individual parents about this, the centre has no overall data on how many people have gone on to apply for jobs, develop skills in writing curriculum vitae, attended interviews or claimed benefits.

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>3</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>3</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>3</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?**

**3**

The centre has an adequate understanding of the general needs of the families in the area and can demonstrate some improvement in outcomes. Centre leaders get a great deal of information from the local authority and health services. Some of this is

helpful in assessing what needs to be provided for families in the area. However, while there is a large amount of information in total, not all is highly relevant to the centre's work and there are gaps in information provided about some vulnerable groups. For example, information about disabled children and children of disabled parents is not automatically provided to the centre in a sufficiently systematic way. As a result, the centre is only able to match services to needs of families in the area satisfactorily.

The centre promotes purposeful learning for babies and young children. Sessions are planned well according to the needs of the children attending. As a result, they support children's learning effectively. Children and babies are relaxed, happy and engaged. Care is taken to ensure that the environment is bright and attractive. A specific Saturday session for fathers has been developed and a significant number of fathers have attended the centre with their children as a result.

Outreach services meet the needs of the wider community satisfactorily. The quality of advice about universal preventative treatment is appropriate. All centre staff are fully trained in using the Common Assessment Framework. Provision and support for families in times of crisis are good. Case studies indicate that the centre provides good support for parents and children, when they need help quickly, resolving issues and improving lives. One parent stated that, 'Having an outreach worker available to me at a time of stress was a huge support and invaluable!' Parenting courses are greatly appreciated by the parents who complete them. Half of the parents who attended one course fed back to centre staff that it had helped them to better manage their children's behaviour.

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

### **How effective are the leadership and management?**

**3**

The leadership and management of the centre at all levels are satisfactory. There are satisfactory links with other agencies, such as Jobcentre Plus and Homestart and also with other local children's centres. Links with the school with which the centre shares a site and those with health professionals are good. Inter-agency work is developing, but the centre lacks some information from partners to help it improve its effectiveness; for example, information about the social context of its reach area.

Staff training is appropriately targeted towards developing skills and services further.

Governance is satisfactory. There is appropriate rigour in the challenge provided to leaders and managers. Safeguarding arrangements are satisfactory, including those for child protection. The review and improvement of policies and practices are satisfactory. All required checks are made to ensure the safe recruitment of staff and regular updating of health and safety training is undertaken. Support for victims known to have undergone domestic violence is sensitively planned and managed. Security systems are rigorous. Centre leaders ensure sound use is made of the skills of staff and the centre's resources. Value for money is satisfactory.

Centre managers and leaders are aware that they do not evaluate the impact of the centre's work in relation to meeting the needs of all vulnerable groups in the area as rigorously as possible. Nor do they have access to all potential data to plan to meet the needs of all groups. Senior leaders ensure a satisfactory range of enjoyable services are matched to the wants and needs of the families who use the centre. The impact of sessions is evaluated through obtaining parental views, staff views and partner agencies views on how effective these activities have been. It is planned to use a new computer tracking programme as an evaluation tool in the near future. Little information is gained from some agencies such as the local college and Jobcentre Plus as to the outcomes for parents who are signposted there for support in gaining qualifications or employment.

The centre provides satisfactorily for equality and diversity. Provision to ensure disabled access for any user is appropriate. Equality of opportunity is given suitably high regard in the planning of sessions and all staff work to ensure that activities are inclusive. Leaders are aware that they have not yet extended the range of users as fully as possible to include all families from vulnerable and hard-to-reach groups, such as lone parents, and families of children with disabilities. This is a current aim in the centre's development plan. A number of initiatives have recently started, including work to increase parents' input into the direction the centre's development takes. Parents spoken to who use the centre were very enthusiastic, saying that they felt it is a hub of the community. One said, 'I cannot think of any more that they could do!'

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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secure improvement in outcomes</b>	<b>3</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>3</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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the centre's policy, procedures and work with key</b>	<b>3</b>



<b>agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults</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>3</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 of All Saints Primary School, which judged provision for young children to be satisfactory.

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### **Summary for centre users**

We inspected the Wigston Magna Sure Start Children's Centre on 26–27 April 2012. We judged the centre as satisfactory overall.

Thank you for taking the time to talk with us, sharing your views and contributing to the inspection of your children's centre. Overall, the effectiveness of the centre is satisfactory. Those of you who use the centre told us how you benefit from the provision. The centre is a welcoming place. It provides you with sound, practical advice on health, care and safety. Many of you who attend the parenting courses say that these have helped you to manage your children's behaviour and support their learning and development. You said that you feel safe at the centre because staff are supportive and that they look after you and keep your children safe. We found that staff have a satisfactory understanding of child protection procedures and that they all have up-to-date training.

Your children's behaviour at the centre is good. Many of you find the breastfeeding advice and keep fit activities really interesting and enjoyable; they help you and your children learn about how to stay healthy. The centre works effectively to increase breastfeeding rates and to encourage more families to improve their health by taking more exercise and choosing healthier menus.

We found that children have fun and enjoy the many activities the centre offers. They make satisfactory progress in their preparation for school. You told us how much you enjoy sessions such as 'Baby massage' with your children. The centre works with adult learning and training providers so that you improve your own

education and employment opportunities. However, it does not always measure how successful it is overall, in the work it does.

We found that the centre tries hard to help everyone. It is keen to promote equality and diversity. It is particularly good at making sure those teenage parents it works with are supported well and have good opportunities to achieve well. The centre manager and all staff are working hard to support every family. Many of you have benefited through the support it offers when families need help quickly.

The centre listens to you and asks you what you think of the services and activities it offers; it encourages you to help organise activities such as breastfeeding courses and 'Baby Steps' that benefit families in the area. We have asked the centre leaders to increase opportunities for you all to have a real say in how the centre develops, as they have planned.

The centre needs to evaluate the services it provides but managers do not always have the data they need to contribute to this so we have asked partner agencies and the local authority to help them to obtain clearer information about the area. Centre leaders do analyse the data to evaluate what has been effective, but we have asked them to work on a simpler system, so that they don't count the same families more than once. This should give them better information on what has been most effective. That way, they can improve provision even further and set targets that benefit more families who do not use the centre currently.

Thank you to those of you who took the time to come in and talk with us and for letting us join you in some of your sessions. We wish you all the best for the future. The full report is available from your centre or on our website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).