

# Inspection report for Old Trafford Children's Centre

---

Local authority	Trafford
Inspection number	367850
Inspection dates	16–17 May 2012
Reporting inspector	Janet Stacey HMI

Centre leader	Val Gray
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Centre address	Old Trafford Library Shrewsbury Street Manchester M16 9AX
Telephone number	0161 912 5542
Fax number	0161 881 9110
Email address	val.gray@trafford.gov.uk

Linked school if applicable	Not Applicable
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	EY302746 Old Trafford Community School (Sanyu)

The inspection of this Sure Start Children's Centre was carried out under Part 3A of the Childcare Act 2006 as inserted by section 199 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/100080](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/100080).

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

No.100080

© Crown copyright 2012



## 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 senior leaders, members of staff and partner professionals from other agencies. Discussions were held with the Chair of the advisory board, a local headteacher, representatives from the local authority and parents. They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation including the centre's development plan and safeguarding procedures.

## Information about the centre

Old Trafford Children's Centre is a phase one centre which was established in 2007 and is located on the site of Old Trafford Library in Old Trafford, Greater Manchester. The centre has moved sites three times since it was established and moved to its new site in March 2012. Full day care is affiliated to Old Trafford Community School (Sanyu) day nursery. The inspection report on that provision is available from our website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Early years services are also provided by private and voluntary early years organisations in the local area. There are approximately 1189 children under five years of age living in the reach area. The centre serves the wards of Clifford and Longford. A large majority of families live in the 20% most deprived areas in the country. The main social issues affecting these areas are the relatively high number of lone parents, children living in workless households and the high number of teenage parents. Families face a range of challenges in the local area including overcrowded households, domestic violence, mental health issues and poor dental hygiene.

Family support and early years advice are offered at the centre. Health partners are based at Stretford Public Hall. The social work team is based at Stretford Public Hall. The majority of families are of South Asian heritage. Some families are refugees and a small number are seeking asylum. The reach area is characterised by a mix of private and social housing.

Children in the reach area enter childcare and early education with a narrower range of experiences and skills than those expected for their age. The centre operates some groups and activities on site but the majority are delivered at sites across the community. The centre takes referrals from, and supports families with children in three local schools.

Governance of the centre is provided by the local authority in conjunction with an advisory board. A range of professionals are represented on the advisory board including centre staff, local headteachers, representatives from health and Jobcentre services, housing officers, , local authority advisory staff and parents.

## 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**

Old Trafford Children's Centre has been through a turbulent time and it has taken five years for it to finally find a home where it can flourish even further to help improve outcomes for families in the area. Case studies show that families, especially in times of difficulty, have received excellent support from a wide range of services within, or coordinated by, the centre. Data show that the numbers of families who are registering and engaging with centre activities, particularly those families whose circumstances make them more vulnerable, are increasing month by month. This is due in part to the effective partnership with the centre's staff and colleagues from health services who ensure families are registered with the centre at any time, but particularly soon after a child is born. The overall effectiveness of the centre is good because of the effective leadership and governance of the centre. From the start, leaders have listened to the views of the local community and gained their trust to give children the best start in life. They have achieved this through times of change and have maintained good links with a wide range of professionals in the area and established secure satellite sites in which to deliver their activities. These factors, along with good self-evaluation procedures that take into account national and local indicators, demonstrate good capacity for sustained improvement.

Outcomes and provision for users are good. Parenting courses to enhance family relationships and children's play and communication skills from birth have good levels of attendance. In addition, the 'Opening Doors' transition into school programme has been successful in raising attainment in communication, language and literacy skills from being in line with, to above the national average by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage for

children from similar backgrounds. Courses and activities to promote healthy lifestyles have also proved successful as the number of children in the area known to be obese has reduced and the number of women breastfeeding their children at six to eight weeks is well above the national average. The centre is not complacent and acknowledges that more work now needs to be done to improve dental hygiene in the area.

Adults have access to a wide range of opportunities to gain certificates and qualifications in literacy and numeracy. They attend courses including, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), information and communication technology, and childcare at National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level. However, the centre is not routinely kept informed by all training partners as to whether these activities are helping parents to move into employment, or gain the qualifications that they need to enter the workforce.

Equality and diversity are promoted effectively; strong links have been established with the South Asian community and agencies that provide support for families with disabled children and those who have special educational needs. Safeguarding of all users in their day-to-day lives, while in the centre, at home or working in the community, is outstanding. Parents appreciate the work of the centre fully. The centre is highly regarded and plays a critical role within the community to help protect children from risk of harm. Among many comments praising this aspect of the centre's work was, 'I am in a different place now due to the support of the children's centre', and, 'Before I had the support from the centre I was nobody, now I am somebody'.

The centre satisfactorily uses the views of users to develop the range of provision. Some parents play an active part in the governance of the centre but these tend to be from only one of the centre's target groups.

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

### **Recommendations for further improvement**

- Further improve outcomes by:
  - engaging a wider range of users in the day-to-day governance of the centre
  - providing feedback to families on the suggestions and requests that are put forward to the advisory board
  - working with partners delivering adult learning to evidence the impact of these programmes.

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

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

Parents who attend the centre are very positive about their experiences. Most evaluation forms confirm high levels of confidence and satisfaction. Typical comments are: 'The staff are always at the end of the phone', and, 'I never knew just how much the centre could do for you'. Parents take part in a variety of physical activities and healthy family workshops where they learn about what it takes to lead a healthier lifestyle. The centre staff work

closely with the team on the 'Brush Bus', where families receive a welcome pack, advice on dental hygiene and help to register with a dental surgery. The centre staff have noted a slight improvement in dental health. They give out leaflets to all new mothers on weaning from bottle to cup and know that there is more to be done to drive improvements further. The walk-in dietician clinics, which take place across the local area, are extremely popular. Parents receive advice on a wide-range of health issues, for example expectant mothers learn about the types of food to eat while pregnant to help give their baby the best start in life. 'Parent craft' sessions are popular and operate alongside the antenatal clinics. Expectant parents, particularly first time mothers, discuss their birth plans and any worries they may have with professionals and with other parents.

The 'Incredible Years' course helps to build bonds between parents and their children and provides the security that young children need if they are to thrive. Fathers are seen regularly in the centre and attend a good range of activities with their children. The 'Family Man' Saturday group is generally well attended and provides an opportunity for fathers to meet together, play with their children, talk to other fathers and share ideas.

Children and users of the centre are exceptionally well safeguarded. A majority of parents have attended first aid training and activities including the safety week event are helping to keep children safe. Parents learn valuable knowledge from the training they receive. A parent told the inspectors how, after attending first aid she helped to save a child's life that was choking. Children in the centre move around safely and are extremely well monitored. Early identification of concerns and intervention by the centre's staff team, along with other agencies, play an extremely important part in the reduction of harm to children. Information from case studies about children who are subject to a child protection plan illustrates that, as a result of support through the centre, children's safety is greatly enhanced. The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is used very effectively when specialist intervention is required, including support for teenage parents, lone parents and families dealing with domestic violence. All parents, especially those receiving specialist assistance through the centre, express high levels of satisfaction with the service they have received.

Parents learn specific strategies to enable the development of their child's speech and communication skills during the 'Chatterbox' and 'Talking Together' sessions. Feedback from these sessions, support offered in the parents' homes or at the 'Early Bird' groups for children with autistic spectrum disorder confirms children make good progress in their development. While the proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage is increasing year-on-year; the achievement gap between the lowest achieving 20% in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the rest has fluctuated across the area. Early years staff and teachers across the reach have acted quickly to analyse and understand the trend. They astutely identified that the area included a high percentage of children born in the summer term. As a consequence, joint visits with the health visitors to summer born children now take place to offer one-to-one support in the home and introduce them to 'Bookstart' which aims to inspire a love of reading and give these children the flying start in life that they need. Adults have access to a wide range of opportunities to gain certificates and qualifications, but this has yet to have an impact on reducing worklessness in the area.

The once active parents' forum has lost some of its momentum, and while the parents' views are shared at a strategic level, not all target groups are represented and their voice is not always heard.

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>	2
<b>The extent to which children are safe and protected, their welfare concerns are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them</b>	1
<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>	2
<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>	3
<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>	3

## How good is the provision?

**2**

The centre is very welcoming. Staff work closely with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAHMS) who offer one-to-one counselling sessions to adults with a wide range of social and health issues. 'New Year New Start' an event organised by the centre attracted a wide range of partners to inform users of the training, education and volunteer opportunities available to them. The event attracted over 100 adults from across the reach and resulted in some users seeking further advice and support. The employment training officer links with the centre, Trafford College and St John's Centre and all volunteers have development plans to help them move into employment. The Jobcentre service works closely with the centre to share the impact of their work, but other training and employment agencies do not routinely share the impact of their work.

The centre's capacity to offer activities on-site is somewhat limited due to the open access of the library and reception area. However, the children's centre manager has placed activities in strategic sites across the reach to ensure that all target groups can access what the centre has to offer.

Outreach services are a vital and highly successful part of the centre's work. The centre ensures that families benefit from a coordinated approach and for those who cannot attend the centre, joint home visits are made to provide support and encourage engagement with other services. The outstanding support and intervention are clearly helping children at risk

and improving their life chances. Staff work closely with the local domestic abuse team to help ensure women's safety from domestic violence and to prevent domestic violence from occurring.

Children who attend the crèche are assessed and learning journals used to help build a picture of the child's progress which is shared with parents. The centre has many examples of improvements made through its work, ranging from healthy food cookery sessions, first aid, weaning programmes and purposeful play.

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

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

**2**

Governance and accountability are understood well by senior leaders and centre staff. Good links between the local authority, the advisory body and senior leaders enhance long-term strategic planning, especially in relation to sustainability, development plans and service provision. Members of the senior leadership team and advisory board also lead different aspects of provision. This ensures effective collaborative working and monitoring of integrated provision. The centre provides good value for money.

Despite the previous lack of a settled base, morale in the centre is high. Staff are enthusiastic and determined to do their best for the community. Relationships are strong. Day-to-day management arrangements work very well as all staff take responsibility for the smooth running of the centre. They know they are accountable for their roles through appraisal and the way they bring about good and improving outcomes for users. Safeguarding procedures are extremely robust. Local authority procedures and guidance for safe recruitment are followed closely. All staff have been subject to Criminal Records Bureau checks and are fully trained in child-protection procedures. Centre staff have formed successful partnerships with a wide range of agencies to protect children and vulnerable adults. The electronic ECAF system ensures that all agencies working with individual families receive instant information and up-to-date knowledge of the support and intervention each agency is offering.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. All members of staff demonstrate a strong commitment to inclusion and to tackling any discrimination. Careful consideration is given to the design of the centre so that all users can gain full access. Centre staff and partners



provide a very good level of service for families with disabled children and those who have special educational needs.

The centre satisfactorily uses the views of users to develop the range of provision. While their views are respected and acted on, the centre does not have systems in place to let users know the action that has been taken, or how strategic decisions are reached. The centre has sought the voice of some parents and children through regular questionnaires and surveys; they have had some influence on shaping services. For example, arrangements for parenting and play and communication sessions have been altered to ensure working parents can attend and to ensure that groups do not conflict with religious meetings. Children's views are valued and their opinions were sought to help with the activity programme of the 'Diamonds' course, a group which runs for young parents.

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>	2
<b>The effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secures improvement in outcomes</b>	2
<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>	2
<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>	2
<b>The effectiveness of the centre's policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults</b>	1
<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>	2
<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>	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 *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 Old Trafford Children's Centre on 16 May 2012. We judged the centre as good overall.

We would like to thank you for allowing us to join with you during some of your sessions and for sparing the time to talk with us about the centre and its activities. Through your comments we found that the centre promotes equality and diversity well. Everyone is included, treated with the utmost respect and able to access all that the centre provides. It is clear to us that the staff know local families and the wider community very well and we can see how the centre is making a positive difference to your lives. Everyone we spoke to told us how much the centre had helped you and your families. We were delighted to hear that some of you now feel more confident to support your children's learning at home and that the centre has had a huge impact on improving how you feel about yourselves. We found that the support that you get from the centre staff and other professionals working in the area to protect you and your children, particularly in times of crisis is outstanding. All of you told us how safe you felt in the centre and in your community.

The people in charge of running the centre are doing a good job in helping you find the support and practical help you need to give your children the best start in life. The centre manager works extremely hard to make sure that everything the centre does for you will make a difference to the area in which you live. The whole family is at the heart of what everyone is doing and this is seen in the good quality of the individual support that is provided by the centre staff and the wide range of partners that work in the centre.

We have identified some elements of the centre's work that need to improve. We have asked the centre to encourage a wider range of users to participate in decision making at the centre. We have also asked the centre to ensure that you are kept informed of any decisions that are made regarding your suggestions that are presented to the advisory board. We know that you have access to a wide range of training courses and volunteer programmes to help with your education and employment opportunities, but some partners are not keeping the centre informed of how many of you go on to further education, or gain employment. We have asked the centre to work more effectively with these partners.

We have raised these issues because once they are in place the centre will be in an even stronger position to see how well it is meeting all of your needs.

Thank you to all that we met for your input into the inspection. It really was appreciated. We hope that you, your children and many more parents who live locally will continue to enjoy and benefit from all of the services available to you in the future.

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