

Inspection report for Lockleaze Primary School and Early Years Centre

Local authority	Bristol City
Inspection number	365806
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Linked school if applicable	Lockleaze Primary School (URN 134014)
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	Lockleaze Primary School and Early Years Centre (URN EY364889)

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 registered early years/childcare provision was carried out at the same time as the inspection of the centre under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006. The report of this inspection is available on our website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an early years inspector.

The inspectors held meetings with the centre's management team, members of the management committee, the local authority, partnership agencies, members of staff and families using the centre. They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of documentation including key policies, the centre's self-evaluation documents, its development plans, evaluations of services and data about people who use the centre and about the wider community.

Information about the centre

Lockleaze Primary School and Early Years Centre is a phase two children's centre. It was designated in 2008 and became fully operational in 2009. It serves an area which is within the top 30% most deprived areas of the country overall, with some areas being in the top 10%. A high proportion of families are dependent on either workless benefits or low incomes. It is situated within a school and is run by the governing body. The centre offers a range of services which include some health services, family play sessions, parenting programmes and outreach services. These are provided both at the children's centre and at Boing!, the centre's locally-sited soft-play provision.

The centre's reach area covers Lockleaze South, Lockleaze North, Muller Road and Eastgate. The population is mostly White British, with a small but growing percentage of other ethnic groups, some of whom speak English as an additional language. There are 400 children under the age of five living in the reach area. Children's skills, knowledge and abilities on entry to early years provision are exceptionally low, particularly in communication, language and literacy development.

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

1

Main findings

Lockleaze Primary School and Early Years Centre is a good children's centre where the drive and ambition of the senior leadership team is outstanding. Leaders take an innovative and creative approach to service delivery and do not allow any potential barriers affect their ability to promote effective outcomes. Leaders are very clear about the key priorities. Well-targeted plans address these priorities and effective implementation quickly shows impact. For example, when local families expressed concern regarding the level of support received with sustaining breastfeeding, staff worked directly with mothers to develop peer mentoring which is now successfully delivered through a breastfeeding support group.

The development of a soft-play area has been hugely successful in introducing families to, and engaging them in, the children's centre services, particularly within the immediate locality. Staff are now extending this provision into areas where families have been harder to reach through the introduction of a soft-play bus and are successfully increasing engagement. Leaders also make extremely good use of resources within the co-located maintained school. They have built the centre's capacity to deliver high-quality, sustainable services to a wide range of families within a very tight budget. The centre provides outstanding value for money. The arrangements for staff supervision, including professional development, are highly effective in helping the centre move forward. Staff access a breadth of training and as a result are multi-skilled. The centre's very accurate self-evaluation is grounded in sophisticated data analysis and sharp evaluation of the impact of its actions on improving the outcomes for families. In consequence, the centre shows outstanding capacity to improve further.

Through the provision of effective early years education and care, the centre has been successful in securing a very strong rising trend in children's achievements at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. In 2009 only 27% of children were reaching expected levels in their learning and development; this has risen to 56% in 2012. Children are extremely well prepared for transition at all stages in their

education. Excellent communication between staff, strong links with parents and visits to the children, both at home and in their previous settings, means that staff know children individually and are able to support them extremely well as they settle into their new setting.

The quality of care provided for families is excellent. Many centre users who have experienced complex difficulties in their lives express their true gratitude for the care, guidance and support they receive which makes a discernable difference to their lives and those of their families. They confirm that their contact with the centre provides them with 'a massive confidence boost' enhancing their self-esteem. The 'warm and welcoming' approach from staff instils confidence so that, as one parent stated, they can 'trust everyone at the centre'.

The centre receives support from the local authority, for example through the provision of increasingly sophisticated data and opportunities for professional debate. Systems are being developed in order that the local authority is better placed to monitor the effectiveness of the centre. Centre staff have developed strong partnerships with a range of agencies in order to promote effective outcomes for families, such as community organisations and some aspects of the health service. Partnerships with the health visiting team are less advanced and are being prioritised by the centre.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- Implement proposed systems so that the local authority can monitor performance of the centre more closely and can hold the centre to account.
- Develop relationships further with the health visiting team to enable families easy or speedy access to a full complement of health services.

How good are outcomes for families?

2

Families are well supported in developing their understanding of how to provide a healthy diet. Through cookery and food hygiene courses and access to cheap fruit and vegetables in the centre's food co-operative, many families are now eating an improved diet. The development of outside provision has been well targeted at improving levels of physical activity. A strong focus by the centre on the promotion of health-related exercise means that children and their families are now much more active and fit. The percentage of children in reception classes who are obese has reduced over time and is now below that seen nationally. The support for new mothers has contributed to a strong upward trend in the proportion that sustain breastfeeding at 6 to 8 weeks, from 28% in 2007 to 57.7% in 2010.

Families are improving their understanding of how to keep their children safe through their involvement in activities such as road safety week and instruction on how to use safety equipment within their homes which they can purchase at a

reasonable cost. Children are learning how to keep themselves safe as they safely negotiate their way around the forest school environment and use tools competently. The centre's work with families to heighten safety matters has contributed to the significant decrease in the rate of children being admitted to accident and emergency departments. Staff are trained to recognise the indicators of domestic violence and those who are vulnerable are well supported to make relevant choices, including accessing a place of safety. There is significant and sustained evidence of improved outcomes for most children on child protection plans and, through early intervention, the centre has been successful in dramatically reducing the number of children subject to plans in their reach area. Where appropriate, staff make good use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) to support families with complex needs.

Children make outstanding progress as they are provided with an excellent range of activities which are tailored to meet their needs and interests. They enter Early Years Foundation Stage provision with skills which are well below those typically seen. By the time they move into Key Stage 1 in primary school, levels of attainment are just below that seen nationally. Parents really enjoy learning alongside their children, for example, at the Stay and Play sessions, in Talking Tips where they develop skills to promote language and communication, and during soft-play sessions. Fathers learn how to support their child's learning through specific and fun sessions, such as Kit Kars. Parents place great value on staff's sensitive and well-placed guidance, their effective role modelling and opportunities to attend parenting courses. One parent reflected that staff are 'really supportive and encouraging of parenting skills when I was struggling'. The centre works hard to successfully raise aspirations. Many parents gain further qualifications such as food hygiene, first aid and National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) in early years and play work.

The centre is at the heart of its community. It is a hub of services and staff work well to break down barriers. They recognise that there are some physical and cultural barriers which currently prevent full cohesion of the community and are working hard to remove these, for example by the introduction of a soft-play bus that visits families who find accessing the centre difficult and by engaging with local leaders of multi-ethnic groups. Parents are giving back to their community through volunteering their services in the centre. Some are contributing to the governance of the centre and to decision making. They are represented on the centre's management committee and are actively consulted about the development of provision.

Centre staff have rightly prioritised supporting the confidence and self-esteem of parents as the first step to entering employment. It has had significant success in supporting families to improve their levels of confidence, to undertake accredited training and, for many, to secure employment developing their economic stability and independence. Some parents have been supported in developing their enterprise and entrepreneurial skills, for example, setting up their own businesses.

These are the grades for the outcomes for families

The extent to which children, including those from target groups, are	2
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physically, mentally and emotionally healthy and families have healthy lifestyles	
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	1
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	2

How good is the provision?

2

Centre staff have been successful in registering a good proportion of families with young children in their reach area, particularly in areas of highest deprivation. Staff's excellent local knowledge has resulted in the approach to service delivery being effectively tailored to meet the specific needs of the community. The location of most services in the centre's soft-play provision has resulted in the effective engagement of most target groups, as staff have adopted a user-focused approach to service delivery. As a result, participation rates are good and are improving as the centre extends its outreach services to more effectively engage with those who have been harder to reach. Through the implementation of robust assessment systems, the needs of individual families, including the most vulnerable, are appropriately identified and individual packages of support are developed, tailored to meet families' specific needs. Staff adopt a sensitive, friendly and non-threatening approach to assessing need, thereby successfully engaging users in the process. The centre promotes purposeful learning well and activities are of good quality. Staff build well on families' prior interest, knowledge and achievements in order that aspirations are further raised. For example, they successfully supported some parents to gain experience through volunteering and then built upon this to help them to achieve recognised qualifications and to secure paid work.

Staff show an outstanding commitment to the care and support for families, and as early as possible, so as to empower them to face life's challenges with confidence. For example, a good focus is placed upon developing parental bonds in baby's early days in order to secure a positive parent/child relationship. There is a strong ethos of prevention rather than cure. Families who experience crisis in their lives confirm that they are extremely confident to turn to staff in the knowledge they will be provided with relevant help to ease their personal situation. Lone parents and those who feel isolated reflect how they truly appreciate the social relationships they have developed. 'I would have gone mad if I hadn't had the group to attend,' is a common view. They also really appreciate the opportunities provided to discuss their

concerns, to share experiences and to gain support. An example of this is the breastfeeding support group at the Honeysuckle Café, which is described as covering 'more than just breastfeeding' as users are signposted on to other services as required.

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	1

How effective are the leadership and management?

2

Centre staff are exceptionally well led by committed and passionate senior leaders whose skills are complementary and result in a cohesive leadership team. They ensure their areas of responsibility make best use of their individual skills and areas of expertise. Senior leaders and centre staff all show a true passion for improving outcomes for users and the wider community. Clear lines of accountability are present which result in the centre being extremely well run and organised. The recently appointed chair of the management committee gives a strong lead to the committee's work and is ensuring it supports the centre, as well as providing appropriate levels of challenge. Recruitment difficulties within the local authority have led to there being a gap in monitoring arrangements, particularly to check on how well the centre is performing. The local authority has recently been successful in appointing an improvement officer in order to address this shortcoming. Performance management systems are being further developed to support accountability and next steps development.

The leadership team communicates extremely high expectations and aspirations for the community the centre serves. It inspires the staff team and the partners they work with to have the same level of expectation and commitment to improving the life chances of those who live locally. Through effective self-evaluation and the excellent use of data, all staff and partners are very clearly focused on key priorities and work extremely well together in order to facilitate change. Despite operating with a small budget, the centre has developed a wide range of services which clearly meet the needs of the community. Leaders are extremely proactive in securing a range of funding to support new initiatives and projects. They have built strong links with various community organisations to make sure that services are not duplicated within the community.

The inclusion of children and their families is central the centre's vision and there is a very strong ethos of community cohesion, which is supported by clear action

planning. The centre recognises that its reach area is becoming more culturally diverse. It has been proactive in engaging with key members within local communities to develop service delivery. Parents and children who speak English as an additional language are welcomed by the centre and are well supported. For example, information about services is translated into relevant languages and a Polish speaking member of staff works to engage Polish speaking families in centre activities. Children with disabilities and those with special educational needs are supported well as staff work well with other agencies to support their needs. All staff are proactive in removing any potential barriers to the engagement of families. They recognise, for example, that transport is a barrier for some families who live in an area; the centre is increasing outreach services to address this.

Staff are well trained in child protection matters. They have a good understanding of their responsibilities and are clear about the procedure to follow should they have a concern about a child. Protocols and practice for making referrals and sharing information within and outside the centre are very effective. Suitable staff vetting procedures and good site security mean that children and their parents are kept safe whilst engaging in the centre's provision. Parents report with confidence that their children remain safe in the crèche and early years provision while they engage in activities.

Centre leaders and staff have developed some very strong partnerships which have led to improved outcomes for families. For example, their strong links with a local neighbourhood trust has led to working together to develop an innovative and exciting project to improve accessibility of services in the local area. The centre has strong links with local childminders, supporting and developing their provision and developing improved links with the other primary school in the area and a newly established early years provider. The centre has developed effective partnerships with some health agencies. For example, it works well with the midwifery team to deliver antenatal programmes and with speech and language therapists to improve children's levels of communication, language and literacy. In partnership with the community health worker, centre staff successfully promote relevant health issues. However, despite concerted efforts, the centre has yet to develop a working partnership with the local health visiting team in order to ensure families have easy access to the full complement of health services.

Parents express strong satisfaction with the range and quality of services provided. Regular feedback is sought from parents on the quality of services and staff make good use of evaluations in developing services further. Families are represented on the management committee and the governing body and are beginning to play a more active role in decision making and in shaping future services.

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
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The effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secure improvement in outcomes	1
The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of families, including those in target groups	1
The extent to which equality is promoted and diversity celebrated, illegal or unlawful discrimination is tackled and the centre fulfils its statutory duties	2
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

Outcomes of the inspections of the maintained school in March 2011 and the on-site early years provision which was conducted at the same time as the inspection of the children's centre.

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. 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 Lockleaze Primary School and Early Years Centre on 11 and 12 July 2012. We judged the centre as good overall, and some elements as outstanding.

We found that staff and management are highly committed to providing you with the best service they can and they work extremely well together to do so. Leaders are particularly skilled at knowing how to provide you with the services you want and need and show outstanding ambition and drive to improve you and your families' lives. Where they identify that there are gaps, they work tirelessly to fill them, such as supporting some of you to become breastfeeding peer mentors. Even though they only have a small budget, the centre provides a really good range of services and gives outstanding value for money.

We judged the care, guidance and support given to you to be outstanding, especially for those of you who may, at times, face particular difficulties. You explained to us how much you trust staff and are helped to achieve good outcomes as a result. They work closely with you to help you focus on priorities for you and your families and support you to make relevant changes. You particularly value the opportunity attending activities at the centre gives you to meet people and make friends. Staff and management have developed some strong partnerships with other professionals and organisations so that they offer you the correct support, advice and guidance. We have asked them to work more closely with the health visiting team so that you have easier access to all of the health services you may need.

It was clear that you and your children enjoy and achieve exceptionally well. Your children make outstanding progress in their learning and development and it was very evident that you really enjoy learning alongside them. Many of you told us how much you value the support you receive to help you to improve your skills as parents, such as managing your children's behaviour in a positive way. Others of you have been successful in completing training courses and gaining qualifications.

Staff and management have an extremely good understanding of the quality of the services they offer and what they need to do to develop further. They collect a range of relevant information to help them understand what services they need to provide to ensure they meet your needs. They receive relevant support from the local authority who is developing systems to monitor more closely that the centre is doing all that it should be. We have asked leaders and managers to ensure that they implement these systems as soon as possible.

We would like to thank those of you who spared the time to speak with us and were willing to share your thoughts about the centre. We wish you all the very best of luck for the future.

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