

# Inspection report for Burnett Fields Children and Family Centre

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Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	404422
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Centre leader	Arthur Martin
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
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Linked school if applicable	Not applicable
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	EY277601 The Children's Place

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.

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 members of the steering group and parents. They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation including the centre's development plans, evaluations, key policies and the centre's equality and safeguarding procedures.

## **Information about the centre**

Burnett Fields Children and Family Centre is situated in Bradford, West Yorkshire. It was established in September 2007 under phase 2 of the children centre development programme. Childcare provision is provided by The Children's Place private day nursery. The linked provision is subject to separate inspection arrangements and was last inspected in March 2012. The report of this inspection is available on 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 1051 children under five years of age living in the reach area. The centre serves the ward of Little Horton. The communities covered are ranked amongst the 30% most deprived areas in the country. The main social issues affecting these areas are a high percentage of worklessness and the number of families living on benefits. Qualifications achieved are lower than the national average, as are the wages paid for those in employment. Life expectancy is significantly lower than the national average. Families face a range of challenges in the local area including domestic violence, children living in overcrowded households, significant levels of maternal mental health problems and pockets of drug and alcohol abuse.

The centre offers the full core purpose. Family support, health, parenting programmes and Early Years advice are offered by a multi-disciplinary team based at the centre and also through outreach, group and home visiting programmes. The majority of families is of South Asian heritage. There has been an increase in the number of Eastern European communities in the area. The reach area is characterised by a mix of private, private rented and social housing. Data show that most children in the reach area enter Early Years provision with a range of experiences and skills in line with those expected for their age. The centre also operates some groups and activities in designated sites across the community. The centre takes referrals from a range of professionals and supports families with children in three local schools. Health services are offered by three health centres in the area, Park Road, Little Horton and Woodroyd.

Governance of the centre is provided by the local authority. A range of professionals is represented on the steering group that supports the governance and direction of the centre; these include The Job Centre, family information service, childminders, Woodroyd Children's Centre, Burnett Fields Family Centre, The Children's Place nursery, a dads' group representative, 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**

## Main findings

The overall effectiveness of the centre is good. Children and families access good quality services and support. Outcomes for users are good overall; parents say how much they enjoy their time at the centre and are highly satisfied with the provision and services delivered. A typical comment was, 'without the support of this centre I don't know what would have happened to me and my children'. Users participate enthusiastically in the very large majority of activities provided. Parents' views are taken into account when planning and delivering services and most parents raise realistic suggestions for improvement and offer creative ideas for outings and activities.

Children are extremely well safeguarded and very robust safe working practices are employed by staff and partners that work with the centre. All users say they feel completely

secure and view the centre as an extremely safe haven. This absolute trust in the centre staff ensures that families, particularly those whose circumstances make them more vulnerable, benefit from a range of good quality services that are carefully tailored to meet their particular needs. Provision for children is of high quality, well planned, and activities cover all areas of learning. As a consequence children are well-prepared to start nursery where they continue to make rapid progress in their learning. The centre ensures that parents have access to employment and training advice and accredited adult learning. However, there are few opportunities for parents to take on volunteer roles at the centre, which impacts on their economic and social well-being.

A notable strength of the centre is the highly successful and sustained engagement with families when intensive support is most needed and the provision of very effective emotional support in times of crisis. The management and staff demonstrate a clear commitment to equality. The centre places great importance on listening to both adults and children. As a result, gender barriers are being removed with more men starting to take an interest in their young children's learning and women becoming less isolated and making new friends.

All staff share the leaders' enthusiasm, commitment and ambition for the future. Staff morale is very high. As a consequence, leadership and management is good and there is good capacity for sustained improvement. Effective management and supervision arrangements are in place and leaders have a good understanding of strengths and areas for development. However, these are not well identified, specific or measurable in the centre's development plan. All leaders and managers work well together and are clear about their roles and responsibilities. While all staff have ownership of evaluating and planning their services, evaluation is often inconsistent and does not always capture the impact the activities have on improving outcomes.

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

### **Recommendations for further improvement**

- Improve outcomes by:
  - increasing opportunities for users to engage in volunteering roles in the centre.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that evaluation of activities is consistent and captures more evidence of impact upon improving outcomes in the area
  - ensuring that targets in the development plan are specific, measurable and focused on improving outcomes.

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

<b>2</b>
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Parents' understanding of how to keep themselves and their families healthy is improving through well-attended midwifery sessions, popular baby massage courses and informative post-natal groups. The 'Jelly Beans' sessions, led by the family support workers for parents

and babies under 12 months, is popular and offers a high level of support, information and guidance to new and young parents. The support to lead a healthy lifestyle continues when the children reach one year of age as they move on to 'Jiggle Tots'. Here, parents and their children learn and develop new physical skills and enjoy creative play and movement to music and rhymes. Very encouraging outcomes from the specific programme for promoting parenting skills show that the very large majority of parents attending felt more able to empathise with their babies and comfort them. Many also said they had increased confidence in their parenting skills following the completion of the programme. This was epitomised when a parent said, 'I used to look at my children and cry all the time. I could not cope, now I can and I feel like a normal mum'. Advice and support in relation to breastfeeding in all groups has had a profound effect on mothers as the rate of sustained breastfeeding is currently at 58% compared to the national average of 45.7%. Smoking at delivery is not so positive, as data show that the rates are slowly increasing.

Children are exceptionally well safeguarded within the centre. Staff act as excellent and highly positive role models and children are encouraged to be safe. For example, they are gently reminded to be aware of others' space during a parachute activity during 'Play and Stay'. Due to an above average rate of fatal road incidents and accidents in the home, there has been a real focus on promoting road safety, fitting car seats correctly and reminding parents of the importance of wearing seatbelts. This concerted effort has resulted in the number of fatal incidents reducing from seven in 2010 to two in 2011. Family support workers conduct a very detailed home safety check on all visits and work closely with Action For Children who provide free safety equipment to identified families. The family support and community resources teams are an integral part of the local authority's early intervention and prevention strategy. Individualised support is available to meet families' needs appropriately, particularly for those subject to a child protection plan and looked-after children. The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is being used exceptionally well to support families and prevent the escalation of problems and the need for specialist services.

Children and parents participate enthusiastically in a good range of play and learning opportunities provided at the centre. Early Years staff work closely together to plan sessions that meet children's individual needs and cover all areas of learning. Children's progress is recorded and shared with parents. Data show that the achievement gap between the lowest achieving 20% in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the rest has narrowed overall across the area from 28% in 2008 to 20.3% in 2011. The centre is not complacent and is determined to close the gap even further to reach the national average of 12%.

Children behave well and parents, staff and children treat each other with respect. Parents have good opportunities to share their ideas and influence the design and delivery of services. The centre has tried to establish a parents' forum but this is not currently proving successful. However, three parents are involved in the steering group and put forward suggestions and requests from other parents attending groups in the community.

The extent to which parents are encouraged to access training and employment and thereby improve their families' economic well-being is satisfactory. The centre promotes accredited literacy and numeracy courses that are easily accessible. However, the number of parents

taking up these opportunities is low considering the number of parents registered at the centre. In addition, parents are keen to take up volunteering roles but have very few chances to develop skills and gain experience that could help them to enter the workforce.

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>2</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>1</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>2</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>2</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?

**2**

The centre makes good use of assessment across all aspects of staff's work with children and their families. The family support and community resource teams use a range of assessment methods exceptionally well to identify needs early. The electronic Integrated Central System (ICS) and E-Start database used in conjunction with the CAF, are extremely complementary and highly effective use of these systems ensures that staff avoid duplicating tasks. Good levels of supervision and safe systems ensure that staff are well supported and children's needs are closely monitored. Staff at the centre have highly developed informal assessment skills, which ensure that children and parents are introduced to services, such as the 'Strengthening Families' programme, in a sensitive and appropriate manner.

The centre promotes learning and celebrates achievement well. Effective links with Early Years providers in the centre and across the area ensure consistent planning and collaborative work to improve identified outcomes for children, such as the need to develop communication, language and literacy. Activities provided are popular and highly valued by parents. For example, the 'Forest School' project takes families out of their urban environment and allows children and their parents to explore the natural surroundings and take managed risks, such as lighting fires and building dens. Centre staff and the special educational needs co-ordinator work well in partnership with other agencies, particularly the on-site childcare provision, to enable effective early identification of additional needs, with the provision of universal services successfully leading to targeted support, as needed. The quality of the activities provided at the centre is consistently good. Informal learning within the centre is successfully improving users' personal development.

The centre continues to learn more about the reach area and the families that it needs to attract. Good quality data from the local authority and health partners are helping to move this work forward, although the centre has only recently started to focus its work on the increasing number of Eastern European families moving to the area.

Parents praise the outstanding level of care, guidance and support received from the staff at the centre. They state that staff are approachable, friendly and make everyone feel welcomed. Effective signposting to other services takes place frequently, and staff are beginning to record this so that they can better demonstrate improved outcomes. The quality of information, advice and guidance for parents on accessing appropriate learning programmes, seeking work and help with debt and finance management is good.

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>2</b>
<b>The extent to which the centre promotes purposeful learning, development and enjoyment for all families, including those in target groups</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The quality of care, guidance and support offered to families, including those in target groups.</b>	<b>1</b>

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

<b>2</b>
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High expectations are shared by all staff. The centre management team is highly respected by professionals and parents and across the community. The performance management of staff is rigorous and arrangements for supervision meetings and appraisals are thorough. As a result, the effectiveness of governance and accountability arrangements are good. Regular meetings with staff have helped to identify the key strengths and weaknesses of the centre's services. Teamwork amongst staff is very good and contributes well to the positive ethos and welcoming environment in the centre. Development plans are in place, but they do not provide a clear strategic approach as to how the centre is going to tackle the needs of the emerging Eastern European community, or the reliance on living off benefits for many families in the area. In addition, while evaluation of activities takes place, it is inconsistent and fails to capture fully the effectiveness of the programmes on offer. The centre has developed some good partnerships, in particular with social services, The Children's Place nursery and Bradford Community Advice and Debt Solutions. As a result the centre provides good value for money.

The centre's comprehensive range of policies and procedures is embedded well and applied routinely. The centre promotes diversity which is celebrated through resources and information which reflect different faiths, cultures, and backgrounds. Careful consideration has been given to the design of the centre so that all users can gain full access. The centre provides an effective level of service for families with disabled children and those with special educational needs that are known to them. The support for fathers is outstanding. The centre plays a critical role in the 'BD5 Dads' Group' that works in partnership with three



other centres. Fathers have produced a DVD which gives a real insight into the issues that affect men in the community; alongside this they have produced a range of books that have been published. As one dad put it, 'The staff here are non-judgemental, they don't take sides. They are just here to help us'.

Safeguarding users is a clear priority at the centre and keeping children and families safe is at the forefront of their work. The centre's comprehensive policies and procedures are well embedded in the centre and applied routinely. The premises are fully risk-assessed and secure. Case study evidence indicates that families have received extremely well-integrated and sensitive support in times of crisis. Safeguarding arrangements effectively comply with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board requirements. Excellent procedures are in place for reporting child protection issues and are fully understood and followed by all staff and key partners. The receptionist at the centre is extremely vigilant in ensuring that no one passes through into the centre until they have signed in. All areas of the centre are protected by key pad systems.

User engagement is good. The centre has sought the voice of parents and children through regular questionnaires and surveys. Outcomes are shared in the newsletter which is sent to every home in the area. For example, activities such as 'First Aid' and summer trips to Scarborough and the local children's farm mean that views and opinions are valued.

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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secures 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>2</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the centre's policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults</b>	<b>1</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>2</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>2</b>

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

The childcare provision at The Children's Place was inspected in March 2012. The inspection of the children's centre was informed by the findings and judgements of this inspection.

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 Burnett Fields Children and Family Centre on 22-23 August 2012. We judged the centre as good overall.

Thank you to those of you who spoke to us to give us your views on your centre. Your views were very useful in helping us make our judgements. Like you, we found your centre to be very welcoming and friendly. It gives a high priority to your safety and welfare and that of your children. Professionals work extremely well together to make sure that they understand what you need and that you get the right care, guidance and support quickly. This is having a positive impact on your lives and those of your children.

The wide range of activities the centre provides in relation to health ensures that most of you are developing healthier lifestyles and are learning about the importance of a healthy diet. You and your families are developing an excellent understanding of how to keep yourselves and your community safe, through the advice and guidance provided by the centre. The centre wants you and your children's first experience of the centre to be a positive one and works with partners to ensure that any additional support you need is individualised. This is one of the reasons why this centre is so successful in engaging with families with circumstances that make them vulnerable and in need of help and support.

The centre activities are very good at helping your children to make progress in their learning and development, and you are learning how to support them through parenting courses and guidance. We were particularly impressed by how much the centre and their Early Years partners have done to raise your children's knowledge and skills as they enter their first year in school. This is a tremendous achievement and one which we are sure you are equally proud of. We found that some of you have been supported to obtain qualifications and gone on to gain employment. Those of you who volunteer get good support and gain valuable skills that will be useful to you in the future. However, some of you told us that you would like more opportunities to take on volunteer roles in the centre; therefore we have asked the centre to look more closely at this aspect of its service.

Centre leaders provide many opportunities for you to tell them what you think about the services provided. They ask you to evaluate the activities you attend and use your feedback to plan what activities and services the centre needs to provide you with. However, staff do not always capture how well the activities you attend are helping to improve your families outcomes. We have asked the centre to improve this.

Many of you told us how well your centre has supported you in times of crisis. Those of you we spoke to thought very highly of the staff at the centre. More than one of you told us how the family support workers and community resource workers have supported you in many ways, both at the centre and in your home. We agree that the quality of support provided by the centre to safeguard you and your children is excellent. Centre staff and other professionals, with whom they work closely, care a great deal about you and are fully committed to improving your lives.

The centre is led and managed well. An effective leadership team is supported by dedicated and knowledgeable staff. Leaders are very ambitious but do not always set clear and challenging targets regarding the issues that they need to address. We have asked leaders to look more closely at this aspect of their service. The reason that we have asked the centre to address this issue is that once this is in place, the centre will be in a stronger position to see how well it is doing to meet all of your needs.

We are very grateful for your input to the inspection and wish you all every success in the future.

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