

# Inspection report for Glossop Children's Centre

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<b>Local authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	404142
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<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Janet Stacey HMI

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<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	14-15 December 2011
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<b>Linked school if applicable</b>	Not applicable
<b>Linked early years and childcare, if applicable</b>	Little Beaver Childcare Ltd EY270736

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 the Chair of the Advisory Board, 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 plans, evaluations, key policies and the centre's equality and safeguarding procedures.

## Information about the centre

Glossop Children's Centre is housed in a single storey building which is shared with the supporting families and multi-agency teams. The centre provides the full core offer to the community of Glossop. It was established in September 2008 under Phase Two of the children centre development programme and became operational in January 2009. The centre does not have full day-care on site, but is affiliated to Little Beaver Childcare Ltd, private day nursery. The linked provision is subject to separate inspection arrangements and was last inspected in January 2009. The report of this inspection is available on our website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). Additional Early Years services are provided by private and voluntary early years organisations in the local area.

There are approximately 933 children under five years of age living in the reach area. The centre serves the wards of Dinting, Howard Town, Old Glossop, Simmondley and Whitfield. The communities covered are ranked amongst the 30% most deprived areas in the country. Social issues affecting these areas are a relatively high number of lone parents, teenage parents and adults with low-level skills and qualifications and unemployment. Families face a range of challenges in the local area including mental health issues, depression, pockets of drug and alcohol abuse and domestic violence.

The majority of families are of White British heritage. 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 higher than those expected for their age. The centre takes referrals from a range of professionals and supports families with children in one local school.

Governance of the centre is provided by the local authority. The advisory board oversees the work of three children’s centres, Hadfield, Glossop and Gamesley. Some of the centre staff work across all three centres. A range of professionals are represented on the advisory board that supports the governance and direction of the centre; these include officers from the local authority, health, Homestart, housing, High Peak Women’s Aid, Acorn Training, the volunteer centre, a local headteacher, the linked childcare provider and a parent, who is chairperson of the board.

## 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. Staff, leaders and the local authority have successfully tackled the inadequacies identified at the last inspection. The quality of provision has improved. It promotes good learning and development for families and provides good care, guidance and support. Most outcomes have improved as a result of better analysis of need and more targeted activities and support. The improved leadership together with good quality provision give the centre good capacity for sustained improvement.

Staff provide good support to families facing difficulties. This ensures they receive timely and effective multi-agency support to help them improve their circumstances. ‘I would not have known which way to turn.’ is a recurring comment from parents. The centre promotes good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles. A real success has been the drive to encourage new mothers to initiate and sustain breastfeeding which has already resulted in 45% of women in the community breastfeeding their babies. In addition the good range of support to promote healthy eating has resulted in only seven per cent of children entering Reception overweight,

which is below the national average. Building on this success, the centre is now encouraging more mothers to stop smoking during pregnancy.

The children's centre community fully reflects the make-up of the reach area. Various faith festivals are celebrated at the centre and children have access to a range of toys and equipment that help to celebrate diversity. Safeguarding is at the heart of everything the centre does. Systems are good and policies and procedures are understood and implemented by everyone in the centre.

Partnership working has improved and is good. Everyone is determined to provide the best services they can for families and work across professional boundaries to ensure this happens. A multi-agency approach was seen in all aspects of the centre's work. The centre is committed to working in partnership with parents and the relatively new parent's forum is already putting forward sensible ideas and suggestions to the advisory board. However, there is no system yet in place to inform users as to the outcome of these requests, nor is there a system to ensure that children's views are heard. While some adults are gaining the skills they need to enter the workplace, most adults in work are in low paid jobs or part-time work. As a consequence there is a high level of debt in the area, which in turn is causing a rising number of adults seeking support for depression. The centre does not work closely enough with its partners to look at ways they can help these families improve their economic well-being by astutely analysing the range of support and training on offer.

Leadership and management have improved and are now good. Links with the local authority have been strengthened, with quarterly monitoring now taking place. The local authority action plan written in response to the last inspection has been completed to time and improvement has been secured. The local authority now provides the centre with a good range of data. As a consequence several new approaches have been introduced to the self-evaluation and action planning process. These include a database for tracking the take up of services and a clearly focused development plan. While attendance of teenage parents is now tracked, not all target groups, such as lone parents, are as well monitored.

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

### **Recommendations for further improvement**

- Further improve performance by:
  - strengthening the systems for recording the attendance of key target groups that attend the centre's activities
  
- Improve outcome by:
  - improving users' economic well-being through social independence, financial stability and their preparedness for employment, training or further education
  - ensuring the views of adults and children are used to develop services
  - give feedback about what has happened to their suggestions.

## How good are outcomes for families?

2
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Healthy lifestyles are promoted well. A variety of services to improve the health of families is underpinned by good partnership working with health visitors and midwives. Beginning at the antenatal stage, there is a busy midwife service at the local clinic where many parents first become aware of the centre and what it has to offer. Families then move on to access a good range of support around improving health and well-being. Breastfeeding is actively supported. 'The support from this centre has helped me to continue breastfeeding.' is a recurring comment from parents. Data show that smoking at delivery for expectant mothers is an issue in the area. However, the centre has been proactive, holding smoking cessation appointments in the centre which lead to improved results for those who access the service. Parents make the most of a good range of activities helping them lead healthy lifestyles, such as 'Cook and Eat' where parents learn the benefits of healthy eating and how to cook cheaper and healthier food options. These activities have contributed to a large majority of children entering school at a healthy weight.

All staff are strongly committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of families. Safety in the home and community is effectively promoted through many activities, events and home visits. Consequently, children and parents have a good awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe. The incidence of domestic violence is relatively high in the reach area. The centre works closely with the local women's refuge to help those experiencing domestic abuse. Families receive good support from the children's centre staff to help improve physical health and emotional well-being. Parenting courses are well attended and parents report that they have grown in confidence and made friends through attending such courses. Where families need more intensive help, good partnership working ensures they receive the support to prevent difficulties escalating. All families receiving personalised support have a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) undertaken, ensuring a multi-agency approach.

The early development of social, language and cognitive skills is supported by a programme in which parents enjoy reading stories and singing with their children, and which is threaded throughout a range of activities, starting at 'Baby Club' through to 'Stay and Play'. This in turn helps with bonding and attachment. The focus on early intervention and support is already paying dividends as 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. Data also show that 80% of children in the area achieved the expected rate of progress by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, which is well above the national average of 54% for children living in similar circumstances. However, insufficient attention is given in the activity programme to help adults gain qualifications that will help them get back into work, or gain better paid employment.

The centre has increased its engagement with target groups since the last inspection although they recognise there is further work to be done in this area to ensure the target group of lone parents is able to benefit from the services they offer. The new

parents' forum has membership from all the centre's target groups and some members are due to join the advisory panel to ensure parents have a strategic voice at the centre.

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>2</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>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?**

<b>2</b>
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The quality of provision has improved since the last inspection and is good. The establishment of a new outreach venue in the reach area enables services to be located where there is most need. The centre staff now work closely with the health team in the local clinic and visit the health centre on a weekly basis. As a consequence registrations have dramatically increased since the last inspection. This is due in part to the centre now receiving accurate and informative data from the Primary Care Trust, but also the determination of the centre manager to identify and engage with the majority of families in the area.

The centre ensures that a wide range of information about many aspects of parenting, including advice about how to keep children healthy and safe, is freely available to parents. Outreach is a successful part of the centre's work, and its involvement in the community. The centre successfully 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 centre is providing a range of services to encourage participation by harder to reach groups, such as young parents, fathers and lone parents. Although some developments are at an early stage they are beginning to impact positively on outcomes for these groups.

Children make good progress from their starting points through attending centre activities. This is a significant achievement for the centre and clearly shows the impact on children, who can be seen demonstrating an enthusiasm for learning,

building up their social skills and preparing them for the future. Children enjoy sessions and the achievement of both children and adults is well-celebrated. Childminders provide good quality childcare places and are supported by the centre to improve their practice and join in with centre activities. This has led to strong partnerships with private and voluntary early years settings in the area.

The personal testimony of families who receive support from the centre demonstrates that when support and care is most needed, the response from the centre is good. There are sound procedures to assess families' needs when they first engage with the centre, followed up by good quality care, guidance and support. Staff often have a leading role in implementing the Common Assessment Framework, ensuring that those needing more help receive good support from a range of agencies. A large majority of families go on to benefit from the full range of activities offered by the centre.

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>2</b>

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

**2**

Previous inadequacies have been effectively tackled so that leadership, governance and accountability arrangements are now good. The local authority has increased its role in monitoring and is now holding leaders to account. There are regular performance management arrangements and supervisions in place. Priorities within the development plan are well adapted to meet changing user needs. A new database has been introduced to track families' progress and ensure that the majority of families from their target groups are benefiting from services. While this has proved to be successful in tracking improved outcomes for teenage parents, it has been less so for lone parents. Advisory board members are knowledgeable about the work of the centre because they are now more actively involved in service delivery and monitoring. Resources, including staffing, are well-deployed to ensure that delivery of services is as effective as possible. The budget is carefully deployed and focuses support where it is needed most. As a result, the centre is now giving good value for money.

Inclusion is at the heart of the centre's work. The staff are committed to ensuring that everyone living in the area can access and benefit from what the centre has to offer. 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 known to them.

The centre has effective partnership working with a range of services that meet the needs of users very well. The links with health partners has been particularly successful in helping to register and engage the large majority of families living in the area. Multi-agency partnership meetings take place and the majority of partners routinely share the day-to-day impact of their work with the centre. This enables the centre to capture collective knowledge and improve outcomes even further for families in the area.

Parents have raised a number of suggestions, such as the moving of activities into the evenings so working parents can attend, and were instrumental in the development of the 'Twins Group'. While they receive some feedback on the 'You Said We Did Notice Board' this is not used as well as it could be to share pertinent information to all users in the area. In addition, while children are very vocal and confident, the centre does not utilise opportunities to capture children's ideas to help shape services.

Good safeguarding arrangements are in place and there is a system to maintain and update them. Robust vetting procedures safeguard children and adults and ensure that only suitable people are able to work with children and families. Criminal Record Bureau checks are accurately recorded and maintained. Staff are trained in child protection to levels that are appropriate to their responsibilities. The premises and environment are safe and security is good. The risk assessment of the environment is effective in minimising risks and is well-monitored to ensure that this remains the case.

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 secure improvement in outcomes</b>	<b>2</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>2</b>
<b>The extent to which partnerships with other agencies ensure the integrated delivery of the range of services provided by the centre to</b>	<b>2</b>

<b>meet its core purpose</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**

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 Glossop Children's Centre on 17–18 October 2012. We judged the centre as good overall.

We really enjoyed chatting to you in meetings and during activities at the centre. You expressed your views very clearly and they were very helpful to us. You told us that you appreciate the centre staff going out of their way to listen to you and creating a caring and safe environment. It is clear to us that the centre knows local families and the wider community well, particularly teenage parents, but we found that there is more to be done to ensure that lone parents' needs are being as well assessed. We have asked the centre to address this. 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 at home, particularly in their play and learning, and that the centre has had a huge impact on improving how you feel about yourselves. We gathered evidence to confirm that the majority of you are very satisfied with the service you receive.

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 centre workers. We agree that the quality of support provided is good. Centre staff and other professionals, with whom they work closely, care a great deal about you and are fully committed to helping you improve your lives. This caring approach by all the adults working in the centre is reflected in the good safeguarding procedures that help local children and families to live and learn safely.

It was really encouraging to hear that many of you feel less isolated in the community and have been able to socialise more by popping into the centre or some of the sites used by the centre. We found that some of you are involved in the new parent's forum and that you are starting to raise ideas and suggestions to the leaders of the centre. We have asked the centre to ensure that you receive feedback

on these suggestions and that everyone's voice is heard, particularly the voice of the children in your area.

The centre workers offer a good service to you and your children. You told us how much you appreciate the support they all give you to help you understand how your young children learn and develop. A consequence of the good partnership between the centre, early years providers and the local school, is that most children in your area are now entering school ready and keen to learn. This is a tremendous achievement and one which we are sure you are equally proud of. Whilst many of you told us that you are learning new skills yourself, particularly in understanding how your children learn and develop, we found that there are few opportunities for you to learn skills and gain recognised qualifications that will help you find employment and improve your family's economic stability. We have asked the centre to address this.

It was a pleasure to meet some of you during the inspection. 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. Thank you for your contribution to the inspection. We are very grateful and wish you 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).