

Inspection report for Chinnbrook Family & Community Project

Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	406997
Inspection dates	17–18 October 2012
Reporting inspector	Susan Crawford HMI

Centre leader	Gina Graham
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Centre address	213 Trittiford Road Billesley West Midlands B13 0ET
Telephone number	0121 464 4772
Fax number	0121 464 4917
Email address	ggraham@chinnbrook.co.uk

Linked school if applicable	Not applicable
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	Chinnbrook Children and Parents Project URN 227245

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.

Report published: October 2012



Corporate member of
Plain English Campaign
Committed to clearer communication

361

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.

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/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at 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
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

No.100080

© Crown copyright 2011



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 an early years inspector.

The inspectors held meetings with centre staff, users and representatives from the local authority, the board, partners and services that use the centre.

They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

Information about the centre

This is a phase two children's centre. In partnership with other local agencies it fulfils the full core purpose to a community which has pockets of deprivation; Billesley Ward is in the top 20% of most deprived wards in Birmingham. The local authority has recently restructured all children centres. Chinnbrook is now part of the Hall Green Locality along with Maypole, Allens Croft and Highbury Children's Centres who they work closely with. There were 811 children under 5 years in the reach area but as a result of the restructuring this has increased to approximately 2191 children aged under 5 years. A third of the population are in workless families and dependant on benefits. Birmingham local authority has a contract with Chinnbrook Family and Community Project which is a company limited by guarantee and a charity. The children's centre's board of Directors /Trustees holds the centre to account through its action plan.

The centre provides health and family support services through outreach, adult learning, and early years advice and guidance. The level of unemployment, teenage parents and obese children of Reception age are in line with the Birmingham average. There is an increasing number of families from minority ethnic backgrounds. Children's skills knowledge and abilities on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage are generally below those expected for their age.

A 32 place pre-school for three year olds on admission, a 20 place playgroup for two year olds on admission and a crèche for children aged 6 months to 4 years 11

months are located in the building. These groups operate between 9am to 3:00pm in term time only. The setting provides support to children with a disability or special educational needs. The setting also offers a range of school holiday activities. The nursery is managed by the Board and has separate early years inspection arrangements. The nursery was last inspected in March 2009 and was judged as good. The inspection report can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

The effectiveness of the children's centre in meeting the needs of and improving outcomes for families

3

Capacity for sustained improvement

The centre's capacity for sustained improvement, including the quality of its leadership and management

3

Main findings

This satisfactory centre is making some positive strides to improve outcomes for users within the Chinnbrook area. The operations manager, who manages Chinnbrook Family and Community Project Children's Centre, was made responsible for the running of the centre in October 2012 following changes in the local authority structure. In the short time she has been in post, she has used her leadership and management experience to good effect. The centre is currently in a transition phase and a clear long-term vision has been developed in conjunction with the local authority.

Those who take advantage of the services and activities provided report that the centre is making a positive difference to them and their families, and they are unanimous in their appreciation and praise for the centre's staff. The centre's activities are generally well attended. However, the take-up of services by the wider community including those from target groups who find themselves in circumstances that make them vulnerable, remains low and the centre has not yet fully engaged with them. Consequently, the equality of opportunity for users in the area that the centre covers is satisfactory.

Satisfactory overall provision is underpinned by sound procedures to safeguard children and other users. Safeguarding is threaded through everything that the centre does. All the parents and carers, who made their comments known, said they were very happy and secure about the welcome and care that they receive in the centre. The centre is particularly effective in signposting parents and carers to additional services to promote their safety and well-being. There are appropriate

procedures for assessing the needs of the users and matching these to services.

Governance and leadership are satisfactory and improving. The local authority's procedures to hold the centre to account through its local priorities are strengthened through its annual conversation. The centre's action plan demonstrates an understanding of what needs to be achieved. However, the use of data on how well the centre is performing does not provide sufficient detail to allow the centre to make accurate evaluations. The data are not consistently understood by all those accessing and using it. Parents are consulted with and their views are heard and are used to help shape the centre's services. Fifty per cent of the board is made up of parents including the chair. Partners are not part of the board but a new locality partnership is currently being established which will feed into the board and governance of the centre. Leaders and managers at all levels and all other staff involved in delivering services, demonstrate a passion and determination to improve the lives of users. Regular quality assurance of the centre's services such as outreach, has resulted in improved services which have had positive impact on some outcomes for families. There are appropriate systems in place to evaluate regularly users' satisfaction. However, the centre has limited consistent methods in place to evaluate the improvement that activities and services provided by partners have made to users' lives, or the success of the centre's services in meeting local need. Consequently, the centre demonstrates a satisfactory capacity for improvement.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- Increase the take-up of services offered by the centre by reaching out to and engaging with members of the community who are in most need.
- Improve the evaluation of the effectiveness of the centre by working with all partners to gather information about outcomes for children and users, and the long term impact of services provided.
- Work with the local authority to obtain accurate, relevant up-to-date data which are understood and are specific to the reach area and provide the necessary information to provide challenge.

How good are outcomes for families?

3

The emotional well-being of users is improved by their engagement with the centre, particularly those who have suffered from depression. The centre is proactive in supporting new mothers, and targeted services such as baby massage are proving popular. One parent at risk of isolation reported 'The children's centre had been invaluable in offering advice and support.' There is an adequate range of healthy activities such as 'Let's Get Physical' and Stay and Play sessions which include a

healthy heart programme. Parents and carers who attend these sessions report that they have increased their knowledge of how they can be physically active with their children and some had made changes as a result to their diet and exercise, which promotes health. Activities are generally well attended. Membership of the centre is gradually increasing although it is not fully reflective of the wider community and those who are experiencing particular challenges in their lives. A dedicated outreach worker provides support to families with children who have or may have a disability or special educational needs; this leads to early diagnoses and enables the family to engage with all relevant activities and gain the specialist support necessary. One parent reported that she had received 'fantastic support and would have been lost without it.'

Vulnerable children, particularly those with child protection plans, and their families are supported effectively by the centre and through their partnerships with health, social services, housing and the police. Parents' and carers' written evaluations show that the lives of these families are improved through the effective implementation of the Common Assessment Framework procedures. For instance, parents have benefited greatly from the one-to-one outreach support and have improved how they deal with family matters and relationships with their children. Others have benefited from the interventions of the fire service through the support of the outreach worker to make their property safe. Whilst there are some examples of evaluation of the services the centre provides, this is not consistently used to evaluate the impact of all the centres activities.

Services and activities are provided in a happy and secure environment. Those parents who made their comments known report that they and their children feel safe within the centre. Children are developing well in aspects of their personal, social and emotional development and are generally making good progress from their starting points. Speech and language support is given high priority and focussed input assists children to develop the skills that they need to cope with the transition into school. Parents are growing in confidence in managing their children's behaviour following the attendance of positive parenting programmes. The centre successfully encourages a steady stream of volunteers to support activities including childcare provision and with the administration of the centre.

Parents and carers contribute their views through valuable feedback and some evaluations of the services provided. They report how much they enjoy the courses they have successfully completed and are proud of their achievements. They benefit from a range of courses. For instance, family learning programmes promote speaking & listening, numeracy and 'Let's Talk about a Book' where the importance of reading with and to their children is encouraged. Case studies show how 'Citizens' Advice' and centre staff have worked in partnership to assist parents to maximise their incomes, ensuring they claim appropriate welfare entitlements. Many parents and carers have accessed the two-year-old nursery funding with the support of the centre.

These are the grades for the outcomes for families

The extent to which children, including those from target groups, are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy and families have healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children are safe and protected, their welfare concerns are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them	3
The extent to which all children and parents, including those from target groups, enjoy and achieve educationally and in their personal and social development	3
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	3
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	3

How good is the provision?

3

Outreach workers are using assessments increasingly skilfully to engage with families, particularly those who are made vulnerable by their circumstances. This is resulting in an improved understanding of the needs of parents and carers. Services on offer are having an improving impact on users' safety and well-being and are tailored to meet considered needs. The centre is also successful at assessing and meeting the needs of users who come to the centre looking for support and guidance to help them raise their children. The centre successfully nurtures and fosters confidence in parents and carers so that they are well prepared to develop their skills and learning. The centre is becoming increasingly instrumental in helping parents access further education and welfare benefits advice and support, although this is limited to those parents who access the centre.

The centre, in partnership with other agencies, has accurately identified services which are targeted to parents and carers who are potentially at risk of social isolation and exclusion. New birth data is being actively used by a designated outreach worker to engage families in services. However, services for these targeted groups are new developments within the centre and it is too early to gauge the impact on users. The data used for tracking families is also not consistently implemented or understood. In addition, the centre's work to engage with the wider community and those families who are considered 'hard to reach' is at an early stage of development. The current centre membership is relatively low and there are many families living in the community who are not accessing the centre's services. Working in partnership with parents and carers, the staff team is seeking to assess the families' specific needs and to use this information to shape the centre's provision.

All staff provide a warm, welcoming and secure environment in the centre. Strong and trusting relationships are being developed between parents and carers and the centre staff. Several parents commented that the centre provides a hub of information, care, guidance and support and is where they come for help on a wide

range of issues. As one parent reported, 'The centre staff are always there to support when needed. They are very knowledgeable about all aspects of family troubles with children and you can speak to them confidentially.'

The range of activities and services meets the needs of most users appropriately. For instance, Ethnic Minority Women's Group has been established and they were instrumental in making the Eid celebration event a success. Childminders are supported and encouraged by the children centre teacher through regular meetings at the centre, which develop their expertise and provide the opportunity to share resources and good practise.

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

How effective are the leadership and management?

3

The leaders have faced significant challenges while re-structuring takes place. The centre has further challenges ahead before it gets into a steady state. The centre's work in providing services is making a difference to the lives of some of those users who access the centre's services. In this respect, the centre provides satisfactory value for money. There are appropriate performance monitoring systems in place to assure the work of the centre staff. A particular strength of leaders and managers is in creating an environment in the centre that is productive for both service partners and users. The centre staff have a 'can do' attitude and are focused on improving outcomes for all children and families.

Safeguarding procedures are in place and include the vetting of staff, volunteers and others who have unsupervised contact with children and vulnerable adults. All statutory requirements are met. Early intervention arrangements are effective including those which provide effective services for children with disabilities. Staff are suitably trained to support their role in ensuring users' safety, including child protection and the use of the Common Assessment Framework. Staff are alert to the needs of some individual families who are encountering challenges and difficulties, and respond promptly and sensitively when referrals are made. Families experiencing crises, including domestic violence, are particularly well supported within the centre. Specialist outreach workers ensure that families are provided with a place of safety and are instrumental in ensuring they access appropriate services swiftly to ensure the safety of the parent and children.

The number of people using the centre has increased. However, there is still a

proportion of the community who are not accessing services. Health visitors work effectively with families who encounter severe difficulties and deprivation and regularly make referrals to the centre to ensure targeted services are prioritised. The data provided by health partners are invaluable to the centre and have helped the centre to successfully identify some of the families who are most in need.

The inclusion of children and families is helping the centre to begin to engage with those from the wider community, including new mums. Children with a disability or with special educational needs and those identified at risk of developmental delay, receive good targeted support in partnership with their parents. The centre's policies and procedures are used to promote the understanding of the importance of inclusion for staff, students and volunteers.

The centre is not fully aware of the impact its services are making because of the lack of detailed and informative evaluation and local data other than that provided by health partners. This is hindering the leaders and managers from making the rapid progress possible to engage with the most vulnerable groups in the wider community. In addition, the board of directors/trustees is not sufficiently informed to challenge the work of the centre. There are some weaknesses in the centre's self-evaluation which limits its impact in outlining the provision organised by the centre. Staff and partner agencies, and parents and carers contribute to the evaluation process. However, evaluation of the centre lacks evidence of the impact on outcomes for children and families over time.

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	3
The effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secure improvement in outcomes	3
The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of families, including those in target groups	3
The extent to which equality is promoted and diversity celebrated, illegal or unlawful discrimination is tackled and the centre fulfils its statutory duties	3
The effectiveness of the centre's policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults	3
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	3
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	3

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

The Chinnbrook Children and Parents Project Pre-school and Playgroup were inspected on the 18 March 2009 therefore the previous inspection judgements were not taken into consideration at 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. 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 the Chinnbrook Family & Community Project on 17–18 October 2012. We judged the centre as satisfactory overall.

We would like to thank those of you who spoke to us. Your views were very helpful to the inspection team. We agree with you when you told us how welcoming and helpful the staff are at the centre. We think that the range of services and activities on offer is helping you to improve your parenting skills and enabling some of you to train and gain confidence. We think that those of you who are experiencing difficulty in your lives are well supported to make your families and children safe and healthy. We also know that the centre has helped some of you who have experienced real difficulties in the past to be much more confident and be able to look forward to a brighter future.

A few of you have volunteered to help in the centre. This has been invaluable in developing your self-esteem and skills. Those of you, who made your comments known, spoke of the centre and its staff with high regard. However, we think it is a pity that not enough people in the area are taking advantage of the activities on offer.

You told us that one reason why you like coming to the centre is because of the well-trained, helpful and friendly staff who work there. They try their best to help you to make improvements to your lives. For example, the outreach workers are doing well. They expertly help you to decide on the services and activities that you need in order to make improvements to family life. They then work well with other agencies like the health service and social care, to make sure that the help is just right for you and your families. Some of you were keen to tell us that, if you had not received help from the centre, you would not have been able to train. Some of you said how grateful you were that the staff had helped you to gain the benefits to which you are entitled. The centre has introduced a number of activities to improve your health, such as the 'Preparing for Birth' sessions. We are glad to see so many of you on the board so that you can influence how the centre is run.

The centre leaders have been successful in safeguarding the families who use it. They show that they know well the different groups in the community that could benefit from the centre's help. Leaders do not yet check well enough how the activities on offer are leading to improvements, both for you and your families, and for the community overall.

We have asked the centre to make some improvements. We have asked staff to make sure they are supporting the whole of the community and increasing the membership of the centre. We have asked the centre leaders to improve the range of information available to show how the centre is meeting the needs of children and their families. We have asked them to look at ways to improve their evaluation of the centre's work in the difference it is making to families in the community.

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