

Inspection report for Kilburn Grange Children's Centre

Local authority	London Borough of Camden
Inspection number	384048
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Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
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Linked school if applicable	Not applicable
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	Kilburn Grange Children's Centre: EYR 313122

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 an additional inspector and an early years inspector.

The inspectors held meetings with the centre's senior leaders, front-line staff, a range of partners, members of the parents' forum, the advisory group, childminders and parents. They also observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation including the locality self-evaluation form and action plan.

Information about the centre

This phase one centre, designated in 2006, is located in Kilburn in a 30% area of disadvantage, and fulfils the full core purpose of services. It is open Monday to Friday from 8am until 6pm all year round. Camden organises its 15 children's centres into five localities and Kilburn Grange is part of the Kilburn Priory locality along with Sidings and Langtry centres. It is managed directly by the local authority and there is a joint advisory board comprising key partners, parents and the local authority for all centres in the locality.

Leadership arrangements are overseen jointly by a children's centre head who manages the integrated care and early years education element and a children's centre locality manager responsible for ensuring delivery of all other locality services either directly or through partnerships or commissioning arrangements. There is an early years education setting on the same site as the centre which was not part of this inspection, having been inspected previously this year.

There are approximately 3,572 children under five years of age living in the locality. The locality's reach includes the five wards of: Kilburn, West Hampstead, Fortune Green, Swiss Cottage and Frognal and Fitzjohns. Kilburn ward has the third highest proportion of families (49%) living in poverty in Camden. Some 40% of the 875 children living in the Kilburn ward are from households dependent on workless benefits. Around a third of housing is privately rented. Three of Camden's largest

housing estates are situated in the locality with many low income families living in council tenancies. A lack of affordable housing is a significant issue facing local families.

The locality is ethnically diverse but key ethnic groups are White British and Any Other White with a significant minority from Black African and Bangladeshi backgrounds. The skills, knowledge and abilities of children on entry to early years provision are typically below the levels expected for their age.

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

Strong leadership, a united drive for improvement and outstanding partnerships underpin the centre’s good effectiveness in meeting the needs of its diverse local community and fulfilling its core purpose.

Good provision supports good and improving outcomes as reflected in most of the key performance indicators and the increasing level of engagement of families from all target groups. Outstanding procedures for safeguarding families together with staff’s excellent care, guidance and support result in some very vulnerable families living healthier and safer lives. ‘I don’t know what I would do without the support of the centre – it has helped me through some really tough times’ was one parent’s view that sums up many. Parents have high regard for the staff and expert support of partners who work as an exceptionally well-integrated team. Families identify that the tailor-made support they receive is seamless and that professionals work cooperatively in their best interests, particularly in times of crisis.

A well-planned programme of activities and good quality learning opportunities assist the good achievement of children and adults. Staff’s positive role modelling and high expectations of behaviour assist families in building good relationships, improved self-confidence and self-esteem. Parents’ contribution to the life and development of the centre is growing with five currently serving on the locality advisory board which is chaired by a Kilburn Grange parent. A high number of families improve their financial stability through the effective support of the welfare rights team and an

increasing number are enhancing their employability by accessing further education and skills training. Leaders are not yet tracking the full impact of the centre's work by looking closely at how well children and adults progress, as they move on in life, and this is an area for improvement.

Self-evaluation is accurate and there is good capacity to continue to improve. Centre leaders do a good job of engaging with the very transient community and are constantly striving to ensure that services best meet the needs of all target groups. A sensible number of priorities have been identified in the action plan that take account of centre, locality and borough needs and aspirations, but the absence of measurable targets and precise timescales limit its otherwise good potential for driving forward positive change at a more rapid pace.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- Ensure key priorities in the action plan have measurable targets and specific timescales so that leaders can check the impact of the actions taken to improve the outcomes for all target groups and adapt provision accordingly.
- Develop a consistent method for tracking the ongoing progress of children and adults who have accessed centre services by:
 - working with schools, early years settings and the local authority to devise a system to assess children's achievements when they move on to the next stage in their education
 - liaising with partners to follow up parents' achievements when they have accessed training, further education or employment advice.

How good are outcomes for families?

2

Outcomes are good and improving because of leaders' keen focus on assessing and meeting local needs and extending services to ensure families from all target groups benefit from them. 'I feel very well supported and in good hands' was a typical comment shared with inspectors. Parents make their views known through post-activity evaluations and at coffee mornings and suggest ideas for shaping future services. Parents are well represented on the locality advisory board, contribute to decision making and play a full role in governance.

The work of centre staff, partners and local mothers trained as peer supporters makes a tangible difference to 'championing' the benefits of breastfeeding. Peer supporters visit new mothers in hospital, attend clinics and are readily on hand at 'drop-ins' to help mothers from different ethnicities overcome any initial problems. In consequence breastfeeding rates are significantly above the national average. In contrast relatively high obesity levels are proving hard to shift despite a large majority of families engaging well with health services and becoming increasingly aware of the importance of exercise through events like the 'Mini Olympics' and soft

play drop-ins. Work is in progress to better target healthy eating programmes in families where weight issues are a problem and to monitor the impact of activities to ensure they are having the desired outcome. Joint work with health professionals to increase immunisation rates is bringing rapid improvement.

Children and families are exceptionally well protected due to the very secure safety net of support provided by the close-knit working of the various agencies active in the locality. Families often with multiple needs are assessed very quickly and supported exceptionally through the use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), including a 'parent friendly' version which empowers families to take co-ownership of how best to improve the situation they are in. This includes when children are subject to a child protection plan where there are good outcomes for the majority of children. Staff are working effectively with families to raise awareness about safety matters, for example through parenting courses, but are aware that some have a way to go before they have a full understanding of dangers and how to keep themselves safe without ongoing intervention.

Most children make good progress from their starting points due to well-planned experiences that promote their learning and in particular their communication skills and personal development. They love taking 'Freddie Frog' home and keeping a diary of what he does at the weekend such as going on a train. In the words of a two and a half year old, 'I like having Freddie at my house, he can come again.' Robust assessment, for example using the process oriented monitoring system (POMS), shows each child's learning journey and is an excellent tool for ensuring provision is meeting needs. The gap between the lowest achieving 20% of children and the rest is reducing quickly and at 29% is narrower than seen nationally. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development is slightly below the national average. Data clearly show that children who have accessed centre services, including those who speak English as an additional language or have special educational needs and then attend the co-located early year's provision, achieve at least as well as, and often better than, others of the same age. Leaders are aware that the next step is to work with schools in the locality to establish systematic progress tracking systems.

The centre works effectively to help adults build life skills and especially their self-confidence in order to take control of their lives. One parent identified that attending a course to strengthen family relationships helped enormously with managing her child's behaviour. Around a third are engaged in further learning opportunities through, for example, English language or parenting classes but leaders are not yet tracking closely enough what progress adults make or how well their skills develop. A high number of families are assisted to access the benefits they are entitled to and manage their finances more efficiently which is a growing need as rents increase and more families are faced with increasing concerns about housing and living costs.

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	2
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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	2
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

The good range of services and activities meets the needs of local families well. Effective planning and rigorous evaluations enable staff to make sensible adaptations in terms of the frequency, accessibility and timings of sessions. For example, a 'Dad's Rhyme Time' group now meets on the first Saturday of the month. Activities as diverse as den making, body painting, bug hunts and making bread are thoroughly enjoyed and have resulted in more male carers being attracted to join. The regular participation of families from all target groups across the different ethnic groups who comprise the locality is a very positive feature.

Sessions promote learning and development successfully. They are typified by their calm and purposeful ethos in which relationships are harmonious and staff expectations for respectful behaviour are met. Recently commissioned drop-ins delivered by a range of partners enhance the provision and monitoring shows that most are meeting the leaders' high expectations for quality and outcomes. At one session observed by inspectors a grandma said how 'great the sessions are but sad they only run in term-time'.

The quality of care, guidance and support offered to families, including those in target groups, is outstanding and results in families feeling totally confident to share their concerns with staff. There is open and transparent working among professionals in the locality supported by highly effective information sharing protocols. Agencies meet weekly to allocate cases and this leads to well-informed assessments and speedy interventions. Referrals for home visits are timely and skilfully handled. Families praise the expertise of support workers who they identify as highly effective in helping them overcome major barriers to their well-being.

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,	2

development and enjoyment for all families, including those in target groups	
The quality of care, guidance and support offered to families, including those in target groups	1

How effective are the leadership and management?

2

Good leadership and management are enabling the centre and locality to move forward with a unity of purpose and a clear vision for the future. This is resulting in families being well served by the services they receive due to the efficient and effective use of resources. The good and improving outcomes demonstrate good value for money.

Governance arrangements are well understood and the direct involvement of parents on the locality advisory board ensures that their views inform strategic decision making. The self-evaluation process is refined annually with leaders keen to establish a best practice model. The plans in place to drive positive change are well conceived and there are useful links between the plans of the local authority, locality and centre that identify common goals and enable a 'joined-up' approach to meeting them. A sensible number of priorities have been identified but the targets set to guide developments are not sufficiently precise and this makes it more difficult to chart progress and change tack as required.

Equality is promoted successfully in planning, policy and service delivery. Partners work hard to ensure that all groups are included in services and their excellent information sharing ensures that leaders can adapt provision as required, for example providing specific sessions for children with autism. One partner described their highly effective working relationship as, 'absolutely fantastic!' The promotion of community cohesion is a strength and engenders a high level of mutual respect among families from different cultural backgrounds. Between them, staff speak many community languages and this helps families feel welcome and safe in using the centre and joining in activities. Good use is made of translation services when required, for example in providing a family with the CAF form in Mandarin.

Safeguarding is given top priority and procedures exemplify high-quality practice that includes comprehensive systems understood and used by all partners and robust risk assessments. The number of CAFs is significant and their highly effective use has led to much improved outcomes for families. Staff receive regular safeguarding training, including child protection, and vetting arrangements meet all requirements.

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
The effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secure improvement in outcomes	2

The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of families, including those in target groups	2
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	1
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	1
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

The findings from Kilburn Grange Children's Centre: EYR 313122 inspection report dated June 2012 informed this inspection.

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Summary for centre users

We inspected Kilburn Grange Children's Centre on 6 and 7 November 2012. We judged the centre as good overall.

We talked with some of you, your children, staff, childminders, grandparents and a wide range of partners, the parents' forum, the advisory board and local authority representatives linked to the centre. Thank you very much for sharing your views so openly with us and spending time with us at sessions and drop-ins. We really enjoyed hearing how supportive the centre staff and partners are in helping you live happy, healthier and safer lives.

Strong leadership and outstanding partnerships are at the heart of the centre's success in meeting your families' needs and ensuring positive outcomes. A good programme of well-located activities taking place throughout the year responds well to your needs. Recently commissioned drop-ins are developing well, but there are a few inconsistencies to be ironed out, for example the number of participants and timing of sessions, that leaders' are monitoring closely. Leaders have identified and

are pursuing a sensible number of priorities to further improve what is available to you but not all targets and timescales in the action plan in place to support this are precise enough and this requires more work.

Outstanding safeguarding procedures ensure that you and your children are exceptionally well looked after, especially when you are facing personal crises. The staff's excellent care, guidance and support result in significant improvements to your well-being. 'I don't know what I would do without the support of the centre – it has helped me through some really tough times', was one parent's view that sums up many. You told us how brilliant the staff are and how highly you value the expert support of partners who work as a great team together. Some of you benefit significantly from the tailor-made support you receive and your evaluations say how positive this is, for example in securing housing benefits or helping pay off debts.

Good quality learning opportunities assists the good achievement of children and adults, particularly in building positive relationships, improved self-confidence and self-esteem. It is really promising to see how many of you contribute to the life and development of the centre through surveys, coffee morning sessions or as members of the locality advisory board which is chaired by a Kilburn Grange parent. Quite a few of you are involved in parenting or English language courses and others are signposted to a range of different courses aimed at improving your employability. Leaders are not yet looking closely enough at how well children and adults progress as they move on in life, and this is an area for improvement.

Thank you once again for your helpful contributions and very best wishes for the future.

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