

# Inspection report for KinCraig Children's Centre

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<b>Local authority</b>	Blackpool
<b>Inspection number</b>	407186
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28-29 November 2012
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael White HMI

<b>Centre leader</b>	Karen Appleby
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable
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<b>Linked school if applicable</b>	KinCraig Primary School
<b>Linked early years and childcare, if applicable</b>	Not applicable

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 parents, centre staff, and representatives from professional partnerships, the advisory board and the local authority.

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

## Information about the centre

Kincraig Children's Centre is a phase two centre located in the north of Blackpool. The centre is an integral part of Kincraig Primary School and they share the same site. In 2011, the centre also took over responsibility for running the phase three area of Anchorsholme, doubling the centre's geographical area. The delivery of the children's centre services has been delegated by the local authority to the headteacher of the school. The school's extended services manager, who is part of the senior leadership team, is the centre manager and manages the day-to-day running of the centre. The work of the centre is monitored by the school governing body, a children's centre advisory group and the local authority.

Blackpool is the sixth most deprived local authority in the 2010 Index of Multiple Deprivation. The centre is situated in an area ranked in the top 4% most deprived Super Output Areas nationally. Fourteen per cent of the population who live in the reach area of the centre live in the top 10% deprived areas of the country, with 32% of children living in the top 30% most deprived wards in the country. The town experiences one of the highest levels of population mobility of children and families in the country. The centre serves families who experience significant issues relating to health, deprivation and disability, unemployment and low income. Over one-quarter of all children from birth to four years live in households dependent on workless benefits. Most children enter early years provision with knowledge and skills that are below those expected for their age, with particular weaknesses in

communication and language and personal, social and emotional skills. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is 48%. The centre serves a community which is predominantly White British. The school nursery provides sessional and full-day childcare for children aged from three to five years. For children from birth to three years, the children's centre signposts parents to provision through a local authority partnership of registered childcare within the locality and across Blackpool.

## 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

This is a good children's centre overall. The good quality care, guidance and support together with the good safeguarding arrangements have a positive impact on the safety of families. Strong emphasis on healthy living supports the health and well-being of centre users. The centre is particularly focused on providing support to address issues of malnutrition within the area. Those users engaged with adult education achieve very well and make good progression into employment or further training. Early Years Foundation Stage achievement has improved sharply to now being well-above comparable data for Blackpool, although the absolute gap between the lowest achieving 20% and the other children remains.

Provision is well planned to support the needs of users. The assessment of children's needs, including the use of 'Team Around the Family' and the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) procedures is good. The centre provides a very welcoming and attractive environment for children and parents who benefit from the wide range of resources available. Parents make a good contribution to planning their child's learning and development. However, the planning of learning to meet the personalised needs of all children is not consistently good.

The centre is well managed. The collection of user views through questionnaire and consultations and their use to improve provision is satisfactory. However, the centre has rightly recognised the need to increase parental involvement in decision making and has already introduced the 'Your Voice' group.

The centre promotes equality and diversity well through its location of activities, good partnership working and the use of promotional materials and resources. The advisory board provides good support for the centre but its ability to provide rigorous challenge is hampered by it not being provided with sufficiently detailed performance data. Nonetheless, the overall good outcomes for users, good quality of provision and good leadership and management provide a good capacity to improve.

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

### Recommendations for further improvement

- Ensure that all sessions are good by:
  - consistently planning them to meet the individual needs of all the children
  - using a range of methods to seek user feedback and routinely informing them of the changes being made as a result.
  -
- Frequently provide the advisory board with an appropriately detailed summary of the outcomes for users to enable them to fulfil their role to effectively support and challenge the performance of the centre.

## How good are outcomes for families?

<b>2</b>
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The centre rightly places the highest of priorities on protecting the most vulnerable of its users. The assessment of the needs of children and adults is very effective and good use is made of the CAF process. There are many good examples of children and adults making good progress during, and following, the support they have received. This helps them to overcome significant barriers such as substance misuse. One parent felt that, 'If it hadn't been for the support of the centre I would have lost my children and my home.' Close working with a range of local agencies provides good support for those users with substance misuse or mental health issues.

The promotion of healthy living is good and parents develop a good understanding of how to keep their families healthy. The centre recognises that malnutrition is one of the main health issues for children in the reach and, in response, they provide a well-attended breakfast provision giving children and parents a healthy and nutritious start to the day. Outreach workers provide vitamins as a routine part of their home visits to pregnant women and they support families to claim healthy start vouchers for vitamins, fruit and vegetables for the under-fives. Midwife clinics are effective in engaging with those most in need of support with increasing rates of sustained breastfeeding. The attendance at weekly smoking cessation classes is increasing rapidly and showing good evidence of impact. Links with local park rangers are used well to provide children with a range of outdoor activities encouraging physical activity and greater understanding of local nature. Extended services in the primary school provide parents with good access to physical activities such as fitness classes.

The centre has a strong focus on raising users' awareness of how they can improve their children's safety. Outreach workers make a full safety assessment at their first

home visit, providing information and relevant resources to improve any issues identified. The centre provides a safe and welcoming environment and users of the centre confirm it as a safe place to attend. The centre has a very good atmosphere with children behaving well, showing respect for each other and high levels of enthusiasm.

Learners make good progress in their learning and development. The proportion of children achieving 78 profile points and at least six points in each of the scales for communication, language and literacy, and personal, social and emotional development in the Early Years Foundation Stage is rapidly improving and at 61.6% is well above the Blackpool comparator of 51.5%. The percentage gap between the lowest achieving 20% of children and the rest, at 26% remains broadly the same as in the previous year but below local comparators. Communication is recognised as a particular need in the area and effective support through the 'Communicate' speech and language provision is provided. The nursery staff and centre staff work closely together to provide services and support to enable effective transition to school.

The development of adults' literacy and numeracy skills is a recognised key priority given the high levels of unemployment in the reach area. The success rates for both literacy and numeracy courses are excellent with all learners being successful. Links with Jobcentre Plus and other partners are very well established and provide users seeking employment with access to good and frequent support. The volunteering course has also been equally effective in helping users gain employment. For example, one parent recently returning to the country following a lengthy period of time living abroad found the volunteering course effective in helping her to gain employment as a teaching assistant. She felt that the support provided by the centre, 'empowers both parents and children'.

The advisory board has had a strong focus on developing provision to meet community needs and continuing the approach previously taken by a 'community toolkit'. The use of questionnaires and consultations is well established. However, the development of a 'Your Voice' group to increase parental involvement in decision making is quite new. Although it has already been proactive in making suggestions to shape future development, it is too early to judge its full impact.

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,</b>	<b>3</b>

<b>contribute to decision-making and governance of the centre</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>2</b>

## **How good is the provision?**

<b>2</b>
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The population within the area served by the centre is highly transient and the centre effectively uses its good links with a range of other services to maintain a good knowledge of the community and provide support to meet those needs. Good links with other community groups are used well to promote the services of the centre and to locate families not engaging with centre activities. Centre staff have a good understanding of 'Team around the Family' and the CAF processes and use them well to support children. Consequently, some parents have been able to overcome their difficulties and make sustained improvements to their families' lives.

The centre is very welcoming, providing both parents and children with a positive and enjoyable environment and giving a sense of pride and belonging in the centre. The celebration of achievement is good and this motivates users to enter into other activities. The achievement of adults in accredited provision is excellent and progression to further training or employment is good. For some groups, the progression into employment is excellent. The support for the communication and language needs of children is good. Sessions provide good opportunities for parents and children to socialise. However, the promotion of purposeful learning and development for children is satisfactory because not all sessions are planned sufficiently well to consistently ensure that individual needs are fully met.

Comprehensive and tailor-made packages of care, guidance and support are given to parents and families in times of crisis. One parent commented that, 'I wouldn't have had anywhere else to go and, without the support of the centre, I would have been in a much worse place.' Another stated that, 'The children's centre staff really want to help, support and make a difference. It isn't just a job for them.' In the centre, noticeboards and a wide range of leaflets and other resources provide users with good information about the range of provision and support available. Users have good access to laptop computers and internet access to support them during training or while in job clubs. Domestic violence is a particular issue in the area and strong partnerships have been forged with a local women's refuge to ensure that women experiencing domestic violence can safely access the activities and receive support from 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>3</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?**

<b>2</b>
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The children's centre is an integral part of the Kincaig Primary School. The recently appointed headteacher has very quickly identified the key priorities for the continued development of the centre and is rapidly implementing actions to achieve these. The centre rightly focuses on meeting the needs of those facing the highest levels of deprivation.

The advisory board is well experienced, has good representation from across the community, and has a good understanding of the issues facing centre users. However, while the board receives regular reports these do not sufficiently cover all the outcomes of the centre. This prevents the board from providing good support and challenge and aiding the centre's continual improvement. The centre's good understanding of what it needs to do to continue to improve is clearly identified in the action plan arising from the centre's self-evaluation. However, the self-evaluation itself does not make sufficient use of the wide range of evidence available to inform its judgements.

Partnerships with a wide range of professionals are good and partners identify mutual benefits from the good inter-agency working. Staff have good expertise, experience and qualifications. The co-location with the school enables very effective sharing of resources. The high quality accommodation and resources are managed well and, together with the good outcomes, provide good value for money.

Safeguarding arrangements are good. Risk assessment is used well to promote the safety of users and staff, particularly when lone working or making home visits. The procedures for ensuring the safety of visitors to the centre are good. All staff have received appropriate training and are confident in identifying and reporting safeguarding concerns. Arrangements for the recruitment and vetting of staff, including Criminal Records Bureau checks for all staff and other agencies and services attending the centre, are appropriate. Building checks and health and safety arrangements are rigorous.

Mutual respect is strongly promoted throughout the centre. Materials and displays are used well to raise awareness of, and celebrate, cultural diversity. Community groups are used effectively to widen the engagement with those not attending the



centre or using its services. The centre is increasingly effective in providing for the specific needs of some ethnic heritage groups. For example, a recent course in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) was very effective in helping the learners to achieve their goal of entering employment. The centre works very effectively with partners to provide services for children with disabilities.

Feedback from users is regularly collected through various methods including questionnaires and consultations. However, user engagement is satisfactory because the recently formed 'Your Voice' group is only just beginning to involve users in decision making and it is too early to judge its impact. Evaluations of sessions are always in written form rather than differentiated and users are not always clear on the changes resulting from them.

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>3</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 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>3</b>

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

Before the inspection, inspectors read the Ofsted inspection report for the linked primary school and the centre's self-evaluation form. The local authority provided comparative data about the centre's performance.

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## Summary for centre users

We inspected the Kinraig Children's Centre on 28 and 29 November 2012. We judged the centre as good overall.

We found the centre's approach to safeguarding to be good. You informed us that the centre provides a safe environment for you and your children and that the centre supports you well in staying safe. Your children are well behaved and enthusiastically join in with learning activities.

You appreciate the range of services offered by the centre and find the sessions you attend particularly good at enabling you and your children to socialise. As part of our inspection activities, we observed some learning sessions. As a result, we have asked the centre to ensure that the planning of every session fully meets the individual needs of each child so that sessions are consistently good.

The centre listens to you and uses your feedback to improve its services. You appreciate the new 'Your Voice' forum to give you greater involvement in the decision making of the centre and feel that it is already having a positive impact. However, we have asked your centre to use a wider variety of methods to ensure that everybody is able to fully contribute to giving feedback. We have also asked the centre to make sure that you are made aware of changes made as a result of the feedback you give.

It is also good to see that some of you are willing to be advisory board members and we would urge others of you to consider joining the board. We have asked that the centre provides the board with more information about user outcomes so that it can better support and challenge the centre's work.

Thank you for talking with us and contributing to the inspection of your children's centre. A special thank you to those of you who took the time to come in and talk to us and for letting us join in with some of your sessions.

We wish you all the best for the future.

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