

Inspection report for Windsor Centre for Children & Families

Local authority	Wolverhampton
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Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
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Linked school if applicable	Windsor Nursery School URN 104283
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	Windsor Centre for Children and Families URN 224987

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 staff and senior managers from the centre and representatives from Wolverhampton local authority. Inspectors also met with parents as well as members of the advisory board, governors, and a number of partners including those from health, education and social care.

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

Information about the centre

Windsor Centre for Children and Families is a Phase 2 children's centre, designated in 2008, providing the full core offer of services. The centre is located within the same building as Windsor Nursery School and the separately registered Windsor Centre Children and Families day care provision. The school was inspected in December 2012 and the day care was last inspected in 2010. The headteacher of the nursery school is also head of the children's centre. Day care for children from two-years of age is available from 8am to 5.30pm and a crèche is provided during some adult learning activities.

The school's governing body is contracted by the local authority to manage the centre. An advisory board consisting of three governors, three parent representatives, community and professional partners, oversees the work of the children's centre.

The centre serves a mixed area with some relatively affluent areas and some pockets of the community, which experience high levels of social and economic disadvantage; the area has a mix of social housing, privately owned and rented housing. The proportion of children who live in workless households or with low incomes is high and increasing, as is the number of families in receipt of benefits.

Most children enter early years education with knowledge and skills that are below expectations for their age. There are 1088 children in the reach area.

The majority of families are White British heritage, however around a third of families are from minority ethnic groups with the greatest proportion being from Asian backgrounds. A growing number of families from other minority ethnic groups, particularly of Eastern European heritage, are moving into the centre's reach area.

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

1

Capacity for sustained improvement

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

1

Main findings

The centre is at the heart of its community and is extremely successful, providing an outstanding quality of service for children and families from target groups. As a result of highly effective evaluation and targeting of services 92% of families from minority ethnic backgrounds engage with the centre. The centre is exceptionally well-led with excellent teamwork leading to outstanding provision for families. Children's behaviour and the development of their personal and social skills are outstanding.

Parents overwhelmingly praise the commitment made by the children's centre staff who provide an excellent service. During the inspection, families made exceedingly positive comments. Examples include, 'They have given me confidence and I am a better parent now.' 'Staff here are great. They have given us so much support and helped us with housing and understanding our children better.'

Inclusion of all families and children is outstanding and fully promoted in all aspects of the centre's provision to ensure that their diverse needs are particularly well supported. The centre has an excellent understanding of its key target groups and as a result, outcomes for those in most need of intervention or support are outstanding. Year-on-year, outcomes for children are improving as evidenced in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, which demonstrates a clear narrowing of the gap between different groups. The fully integrated provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is excellent and as a result, their progress is outstanding.

The enjoyment of children in the onsite nursery school and day care provision is

evident from their laughter, confidence and excellent behaviour. The seamless provision and support for families between the nursery school and the children's centre, results in outstanding progress for children, particularly targeted two-year-olds, from their low starting points. Adults and children thoroughly enjoy the high quality learning and development sessions and as a result, their personal development is outstanding. Outcomes for children are improving as evidenced in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, which demonstrates that 73.8% achieve well in all personal, social, communication, language and literacy which is way above the national average.

In this area of high unemployment, good attention is placed on training and the personal development of adults. The majority of families access the courses available including literacy and numeracy, first aid and parenting programmes. A good number of adults progress to volunteering, further or higher education, paid or self-employment and improve their economic well-being. However, the local authority recognises that this children's centre is having difficulties in ensuring good access to a few courses as local providers have reduced their services.

Safeguarding arrangements within the centre are outstanding. An integrated approach and excellent knowledge of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) ensure that support is exceptionally well targeted. Identified concerns are dealt with effectively and promptly referred to relevant agencies. Strong partnerships and integrated working has a very positive impact on the safeguarding of children and as a result, their progress and safety are excellent.

Families are developing healthy lifestyles because of effective advice, partnerships and support which promote healthy living in some areas. Data indicates that some health outcomes such as the reduction in obesity levels is slightly lower than the others.

The centre demonstrates an excellent capacity for sustained improvement. Outstanding outcomes are achieved because leaders, staff and families constantly monitor the impact of services and identify how they can be improved. Robust self-assessment is based firmly on the analysis of outcomes and leads to the centre setting challenging targets. The positive contribution of families and their engagement in developing the centre is outstanding.

Outstanding outcomes and quality of provision and highly effective use of available resources provide excellent value for money.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- In partnership with the local authority, put in place an even better range of training programmes and courses to improve the economic well-being of families.
- Together with health partners develop strategies to further improve health outcomes.

How good are outcomes for families?

1

Children's safety and well-being are given the utmost priority. A highly effective multi-agency 'team around the child' approach ensures that those subject to a child protection plan or CAF process are extremely well supported. Children and parents develop an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe and reduce risk. Child and family practitioners provide excellent support to those who have been subject to domestic violence and abuse and also those who have other complex needs, and as a result, children's and parent's safety is much improved. Courses for adults including 'First Aid' and 'Nurturing' are all well-attended and contribute to keep families safe. Parents talk positively about how the ongoing support, information and equipment from the centre have helped them to think about child safety in and around the home. One parent said; 'Our support worker helped me reorganise my home to make it much safer for the children.'

Through outstanding play and development opportunities, parents are learning how to support their children's learning. As a result, outcomes for children from the identified key target groups are excellent. Attendance at the good nursery school and excellent day care provision leads to outstanding outcomes in personal, social, emotional, communication and physical development for children. The most vulnerable two-year-olds in the 'Terrific Twos' provision make excellent and rapid progress from their very low starting points in developing a broad range of skills, such as communication and language, that will help them in the future.

Adult learning is improving outcomes for families and is leading to positive progressions such as further education and employment. 'I have done as many courses as I can here. It has really helped me to get a job;' said one parent. However, the local authority recognises that, recently, it has become difficult for the centre to find adult education and training providers that will deliver a good range of onsite courses.

The centre routinely listens and gives high priority to the use of extensive feedback of families to shape and develop its services. Families participate significantly in the decision making of the centre through membership of the 'Parent's Voice', the advisory board and the governing body. They also make a strong contribution to the centre and other community activities through volunteering opportunities.

Effective partnerships with health services are improving health outcomes for families. There is a high take up of health services and immunisation rates are high. A recent key priority for the centre and its health partners has been to increase breast feeding rates. Strategies such as increased ante-natal contact with mothers

and new birth home visits are proving successful. As a result, the percentage of babies in the area that are breastfed beyond six to eight weeks increased in the last year by 15%. However, reductions in obesity levels are a bit lower than other healthy outcomes.

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	2
The extent to which children are safe and protected, their welfare concerns are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them	1
The extent to which all children and parents, including those from target groups, enjoy and achieve educationally and in their personal and social development	1
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	1
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?

1

The centre's excellent knowledge and understanding of the community it serves leads to the delivery of exceptionally high quality fully integrated provision. Staff demonstrate an outstanding commitment to improving the life chances of children and parents. The building is very well-equipped to provide activities for families, some health services, a nursery, a crèche and day care for children. Services and outreach provision are particularly well targeted to meet the needs of the most vulnerable families in the community. As a result, in one targeted area of deprivation, 72.5% of families engage well with the centre.

The centre is providing services to those who are in most need of intervention and support such as those children that are looked after, or identified as in need or subject to a child protection plan. Staff use information about children's starting points to effectively plan their learning and measure their progress. This is having an excellent impact on improving educational outcomes and narrowing the gap between those who achieve and those who do not. Partnership with parents is highly effective and is at the heart of the centre's philosophy. Parents are encouraged to support their children through such activities as 'Stay and Play' and to contribute to the exemplary learning journals. One parent said; 'I looked at all the day care provision in the area. This one is the best! My little girl loves it; she settled here straight away and is making really great progress and is speaking a lot more.' The centre provides highly effective individualised, integrated provision for children with a wide range of

disabilities. High quality support and partnerships with schools ensures that children’s transition into school is a smooth process.

The outstanding effectiveness of the centre’s approach to care, guidance and support is clearly demonstrated in families’ high uptake of its services. Family support workers are very successfully in engaging with families through home visits. Parents comment that the centre has made a big difference to their families. Typical comments were, ‘The support from the centre has changed our lives. They have helped us understand how our children feel and how this affects their behaviour;’ and ‘I now have the confidence to get a job.’ The centre has an extremely positive approach to offering information, advice and guidance, which is highly successful. One parent said, ‘We sat down with the children and the family support worker and created some house rules together. It has made a huge difference at home. It’s much calmer now.’ Staff appropriately identify need, provide ongoing support and refer to other services. Very strong relationships enable the majority of families to approach the centre with confidence, particularly during times of crisis.

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

How effective are the leadership and management?

1

The headteacher and staff team demonstrate an excellent understanding of and commitment to including families successfully in this children’s centre. This leads to excellent outcomes for families. Teamwork is highly effective and accountability arrangements are clear and understood. The headteacher communicates high expectations and ambitions to staff, who are inspired to drive forward and improve services. Responsibilities are distributed across the staff team, which ensures that each member of staff plays an important part in the children’s centre and its delivery of a range of excellent services.

Sophisticated and thorough evaluation is driving forward rapid improvements. The local authority provides an extensive range of data and information on the centre’s priorities and monitors closely how well it is meeting them. The centre and the advisory board use data exceptionally well to plan and evaluate the delivery and impact of its services and to set targets for improvement. The views of families are given the highest priority and play a vital part in developing the provision.

The involvement of families is outstanding and fully promoted in all aspects of the

centre's provision to ensure that their diverse needs are supported and barriers to access the centre's resources are removed. Diversity is celebrated well and the centre makes an excellent contribution to uniting the community. The centre is highly effective in engaging with its key target groups through sessions such as the monthly 'Poppa's Group' for fathers. The inclusion of disabled children is highly successful with excellent support which meets the individual needs of children with complex medical needs.

Good partnership working makes a strong contribution to improving the life chances of the most vulnerable children and families within the area. Safeguarding arrangements are exemplary. Senior leaders are highly effective in ensuring children and families are safe through rigorous attention to child protection, vetting and recruitment procedures. Close partnerships with other key agencies are helping to keep children safe. Resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of families and ensure sustainability. Families using the centre state that provision and support are highly effective and makes a significant contribution to their improved outcomes. As a result, services of the centre are used very well and engage the large majority of families in target groups. The centre therefore provides excellent value for money.

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	1
The effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secure improvement in outcomes	1
The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of families, including those in target groups	1
The extent to which equality is promoted and diversity celebrated, illegal or unlawful discrimination is tackled and the centre fulfils its statutory duties	1
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	2
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	1

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

The most recent inspections of Windsor Children's and Family Centre and Windsor Nursery School were used to inform this inspection.

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Summary for centre users

We inspected the Windsor Centre for Children & Families on 28 February-1 March 2013. We judged the centre as outstanding overall.

Thank you very much for talking to us and letting us come into your sessions. You told us how the children's centre has supported you very successfully to improve your lives and how you now have a lot more confidence. It was clear that you are very proud of your achievements. Many of you talked enthusiastically about your involvement with the centre and how it has helped you and your children. You told us how it has become easier to ask for help and support because of the friendly welcome and extremely good quality relationships that you develop.

Many of you who start by making contact with the centre become more involved than you expect to. We found out that many of you have learned new things and developed new skills, and increasing numbers gain qualifications, go on to further training, volunteering or find work. The local authority recognises that although you have had access to a good range of courses it is becoming difficult for the centre to find adult education providers to deliver a good range of courses at the centre. We have asked them to help the centre find more adult education providers.

Many of you said how the involvement with the centre is improving your lives and the lives of your children, and how much you appreciate the outstanding support and encouragement staff give you. The centre is very successful at engaging with the majority of local families that really need some support.

We found that staff have an excellent understanding of child protection procedures and that they are well trained. You said that you feel your children are extremely safe at the centre and that advice from the centre helps you stay safe.

Families enjoy the sessions such as 'Stay and Play' with their children. Those parents with children in the Nursery or the day care really value the care their children receive. We found that children benefit from accessing services at the centre and make outstanding progress from their starting points.

Children behave very well and learn to keep themselves safe. The health service works closely with the centre to provide health services and advice for families. Early intervention through meeting mothers at ante-natal clinics and visiting them at home when their babies are born is resulting in a lot more babies being breastfed beyond

six to eight weeks. We have asked the health service and the centre to continue to find ways to further improve these outcomes, for example, to reduce obesity levels.

The centre listens to you and asks you what you think of the services and activities they offer. They change how and when they do some things because of what you say in 'Parents Voice'. Some of you are highly involved in making decisions about your centre through being on the advisory board or the governing body and are involved in strategic decisions.

We found that the leaders and staff are exceptionally keen to promote equality and diversity. Many of the families with the greatest needs are enjoying sessions to help them and their children. The centre works exceptionally well for everyone in the community, irrespective of their background or disability, and in doing so it contributes very strongly to community harmony and unity. Families treat each other with respect. The number of the local fathers coming into the centre is increasing well and they too are improving their confidence and parenting skills.

We recognise the outstanding leadership that makes the centre so successful. The staff are very committed to improving the work of the centre. They provide you with an excellent range of high quality services that are tailored to meet your individual needs. They use their contacts to call on professionals from health, education, voluntary organisations and social care to make sure you get the best service. The governing body and local authority rigorously check how well the centre is working and supports and challenges them to improve. The centre staff are ambitious to continue to improve the work of the centre and the outcomes for families and based on their excellent track record we believe their capacity to do so is outstanding.

Thank you very much for your welcome and openness with inspectors. We thoroughly enjoyed talking to you, sharing your stories and meeting your children. We wish you every success in the future.

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