

# Chadderton District - Oldham

St Luke's CofE Primary School, Chadderton, Oldham, Lancashire OL9 9HT

<b>Inspection date</b>	12–13 June 2013		
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
Access to services by young children and families	Good		2
The quality of practice and services	Good		2
The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management	Good		2

## Summary of key findings for children and families

### This children's centre group is good.

- The local authority and Action for Children share a strong commitment to improving the lives of families with children aged under five years living in the Chadderton area. This is underpinned by a well-informed authority-wide integrated strategy, which places a strong emphasis on the work of children's centres in the early identification and support for families experiencing difficulties.
- The quality of information provided by the local authority about families attending the centre is excellent and provides accurate, up-to-date evidence about performance. This is used effectively by the centre's senior leadership team to plan and continually improve the delivery of a range of good quality services which engage the large majority of local families, including those identified as most in need.
- The 'Family Action Panel' ensures that the needs of most families in the reach area are accurately assessed and promotes an integrated approach to working with families in need. As a result, families receive the correct support from the most appropriate agencies in a timely manner.
- The highly effective team of engagement officers provides much needed support to some of the most vulnerable families in their homes. This, combined with a strong partnership with health, has secured the engagement of a number of families who might otherwise have chosen not to access services.

### It is not outstanding because:

- The local authority has been through a period of significant change. As a result, some aspects of the newly established district model are not yet fully embedded. While work with partners is well established, there has not been time for some to contribute fully to the new self-evaluation process.
- The number of families who engage in children's centre activities across the locality is high at 86%. However, despite an improvement in the past year, there are pockets where this level of sustained contact is lower, particularly around the area served by Stanley Road Children's Centre. Current systems for monitoring the centre's performance do not focus sufficiently on identifying those families who do not currently access services in order to plan how to overcome remaining barriers.
- The progress children aged from birth-to-two-years make when they attend some children's centre activities is not recorded sufficiently well. Planning and delivery of activities for children do not always take sufficient account of how best to support parents in developing their understanding of their children's development or how to help them support learning at home.

### Information about this inspection

The inspection of this children's centre group was carried out under Part 3A of the Childcare Act 2006 as amended by the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009. The centres that form part of this children's centre group are Stockbrook Children's Centre, Stanley Road Children's Centre and Holly Grove Children's Centre.

This inspection was carried out by three of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

The inspectors held meetings with the district lead for the Chadderton centres and the senior leadership team, the early childhood services team, engagement workers, officers from the local authority, social workers, the Oldham Lifelong Learning Partnership and the Troubled Families team. They also met health, education and early years partners, parents, volunteers and representatives of both the District Advisory Board and the District Executive Group. They looked at the centres' self-evaluation, development plan, a sample of case studies, safeguarding procedures and a range of other relevant documentation. Visits to activities were undertaken jointly with the district lead or engagement workers, who also attended all team meetings.

### Inspection team

Jayne Utting	Her Majesty's Inspector, Lead Inspector
Julie Winyard	Her Majesty's Inspector
Maxine Mayer	Her Majesty's Inspector

## Full report

### Information about the group

Chadderton District - Oldham Children's Centre group operates across three centres, approximately two miles apart. All three centres are located on school sites. Stanley Road Children's Centre is on the site of Stanley Road Primary School, Holly Grove Children's Centre is located on the site of Bare Trees Primary School and Stockbrook Children's Centre is based at St Luke's Primary School.

The day-to-day running of the Chadderton group is the responsibility of Action for Children as part of a commissioning arrangement with the local authority that has been in place since April 2012. Prior to this, each centre was managed by the governing body of the individual school where they were based. The local authority officially transferred to a district model for children's centre service delivery in April 2013. The district lead for the Chadderton group is line managed by Action for Children. The newly established District Advisory Board has been in place since April 2013.

The group serves three communities, which include areas ranked within the 30% most deprived areas nationally. There are 2010 children aged birth-to-four-years living in the reach area. Chadderton has a relatively low level of worklessness compared to Oldham overall, with around 15.6% of families claiming benefits. Almost half the population has no qualifications. Most local families are from a White British background with around 4% of families representing a range of minority ethnic groups.

Early years provision is provided through a number of early years settings, school nursery classes and childminders located within the locality. Children generally enter early years provision with skills, knowledge and abilities that are below those expected for their age especially in communication and language and personal, social and emotional development. The proportion of disabled children and those with special educational needs, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is above the national average. The primary schools and nearby early years settings were not part of this inspection as they are inspected separately. The reports are available on the Ofsted website at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

What does the centre/group need to do to improve further?

- Improve further the quality and impact of universal provision for children aged birth-to-two-years by:
  - embedding systems to monitor and track the progress children make from when they start attending, and by
  - supporting parents to better understand the links between group activities and their child's development so that they are confident to support on-going learning in their homes.
- Increase further the number of families living in the Stanley Road area who regularly access services by ensuring that monitoring and review activities focus on those families who are not currently attending in order to overcome remaining barriers.
- Ensure the District Advisory Board provides opportunities for partners to contribute effectively to the self-evaluation process.

## Inspection judgements

### Access to services by young children and families

Good

- The group of children's centres in Chadderton have a good understanding of the needs of the families that live in their district. This is informed by the centre's own activities, an accurate analysis of the excellent data provided by the local authority and effective partnerships with most other local agencies, particularly health. As a result, almost all families in the district are known to the centre.
- The centre has been successful in ensuring that most local families are regularly involved in centre activities, including a large majority who, without their support, might have otherwise chosen not to participate, including those from black and minority ethnic groups and fathers. However, regular contact rates with the families most in need around Stanley Road Children's Centre are lower than those for other families. While this has been identified through effective monitoring, there has been less of a focus on looking at who is not accessing services in order to inform on-going work to engage them.
- The commitment of centre engagement workers to visit all parents within three months of a new baby being born, has been effective in securing families' engagement in centre activities, as well as the early identification of any difficulties they might be experiencing. Where the need for support from other agencies is identified, partners report that families are often more willing to work with them due to the reassurance and support already received from the centre team.
- Centre staff are proactive in working with other agencies to promote a 'joined-up' approach to family support work across the district. Monthly 'Family Action Panel' meetings have provided a useful opportunity to discuss areas of concern within the district, such as domestic violence, low mood and support for children with complex needs. This has informed the development of new groups and improved participation by these families.
- Arrangements for children to take up the free entitlement to early education for two-year-olds are good and improving. Families eligible for the entitlement have been identified and an appropriate engagement target for this provision has been set. For those families who are unable to access this service, plans are at an advanced stage to provide a package of home tuition.

### The quality of practice and services

Good

- A wide range of good-quality activities are delivered by both the children's centre team and their partners. The location and content of these activities are constantly reviewed in response to the centre's growing understanding of the needs of the local community, as well as feedback from parents. One mother described the centre as a 'place of opportunities,' and it is evident that many families flourish because they are given the confidence to take advantage of opportunities that have improved not only their lives, but the lives of their children.
- The centre's 'Family Action Panel' provides a model of best practice for the accurate assessment and early identification of need. Where a need for specific support is identified, the team ensures that families receive the correct support to make positive changes to their lives. For those families whose attendance at a large group activity would not be appropriate or would be difficult, a wide range of services are delivered in the home, or through smaller, good-quality focus groups, such as 'Little Learners' and 'Movers and Crawlers'.
- Where children attend school or registered early years provision, the majority make good progress in their learning. However, the progress of children aged birth-to-two-years is recorded less well where they attend only universal children's centre activities, such as 'First Friends'. This is because staff do not always use their good knowledge of child development when planning and delivering these sessions. As a result, parents do not always gain a clear understanding of the links between group activities and their own child's development and some are not confident to support this continued learning within their homes.
- Opportunities for parents to undertake courses of further education, training and personal development are good. Strong partnership arrangements with the local outstanding community learning provider ensures that parents are able to participate in, and complete, programmes such as

literacy and numeracy, leading to improved skills and higher aspirations.

- Groups such as 'Cooking is Fun' and 'Busy Bodies' have contributed well to families' good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. This has facilitated a reduction in the number of children who are overweight, and is supported by effective working between centre staff and health professionals. Activities are targeted in areas where they are most needed and so have the maximum impact. For example, the provision of additional peer-support volunteers in the south of the district to promote breastfeeding.

### **The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management**

Good

- The local authority has a clear strategy in place to improve the lives of families living in Oldham and sees children's centres as an integral part of their strategy's delivery and success at a local level. Service delivery across Chadderton is strengthened further due to the values and leadership of Action for Children. This, combined with the close monitoring of performance and clear procedures established for working together, has secured real and sustained improvements for a large majority of families and represents an efficient use of resources.
- The high quality of the data and information provided by the local authority ensures that targets are accurate and ambitious. Self-evaluation by the centre's leadership team is perceptive and leads to the clear identification of key issues for on-going improvement. However, processes to involve partners in self-evaluation, for example through the District Advisory Board, need time to embed. As a result, links between self-evaluation and some shared targets are less clear.
- Staff and volunteers are given regular opportunities to review their own work through supervision and to challenge each others' practice in a safe, reflective environment. Senior leaders regularly monitor the quality of centre activities delivered by their own staff, and this is linked to on-going training and development opportunities, ensuring staff remain well-qualified and knowledgeable.
- All staff have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of procedures to keep children and families safe and this is supported by the very strong practice developed by Action for Children. The centre works closely with health and social-care colleagues in order to reduce the risk of harm to children, including those subject to a child protection plan, looked after children or those identified as in need. By working together, partners have had a significant impact on the lives of many families, including those whose difficulties have been assessed using the Common Assessment Framework.
- Parents using the centre feel they are listened to and well supported by sensitive staff for whom the 'work is not a job but a vocation.' This is reflected in the many examples of the impact of the good work seen by inspectors. Parents feel that the centre is open to anyone in the area and those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds particularly appreciate the fact that several staff are able to greet and talk to them in their own language.

**What inspection judgements mean**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Judgement</b>	<b>Description</b>
Grade 1	Outstanding	Practice consistently reflects the highest aspirations for children and their families and as a result inequalities are reducing rapidly and gaps are closing.
Grade 2	Good	Practice enables most children and their families to access good quality services that improve children's wellbeing and achieve the stated outcomes for families.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	Performance is not as good as it might reasonably be expected to be in one or more key areas.
Grade 4	Inadequate	The needs of children and families in its area are not being met and/or the leaders and managers are not providing sufficient challenge to bring about improvement to the quality of services.

**Children's Centre Group details**

<b>Unique reference number</b>	80168
<b>Local authority</b>	Oldham
<b>Inspection number</b>	423331
<b>Managed by</b>	Action for Children on behalf of the local authority

<b>Approximate number of children under five in the reach area</b>	2010
<b>Centre leader</b>	Gail Cassidy
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161-770-5384/8383/8404
<b>Email address</b>	Gail.Cassidy@actionforchildren.org.uk

**This group consists of the following children's centres:**

- 22916, Stanley Road Children's Centre
- 21531, Holly Grove Children's Centre
- 22932, Stockbrook Children's Centre

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

(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.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

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 St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013

