

Ince Sure Start Children's Centre

Charles Street, Higher Ince, Wigan, WN2 2AL

Inspection date 26–27 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good	2
	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 is a good centre.

- The centre is reaching the large majority of local families, including those most in need of support.
- Services provided are well planned and of good quality. The provision of services at different community venues as well as at the main centre building enhances the work of the centre. As a result, the centre is working well with its main target groups of teenage parents, lone parents and families in the most disadvantaged parts of the community.
- Strong local knowledge and a clear system for assessing families' needs ensure that the programme of activities meets families' needs well.
- Parents speak highly of the centre and are actively involved in decision making. The parents' forum makes a strong contribution to the development of the centre.
- Leaders are strongly committed to ensuring that the centre continues to improve and meets the needs of families in the best way it can. The centre works closely with other professionals to share information and provide strong support. This ensures families are well protected and helps them to improve their lives.
- The collaborative leadership committee provides extremely effective support and challenge and contributes well to the drive for improvement by centre leaders and managers.

It is not outstanding because:

- Data provided by the local authority do not always ensure that the centre has an accurate picture of the extent to which target groups are engaged in the centre's services.
- There is an insufficiently broad range of targets linked to improvement planning, particularly in relation to health. This makes it difficult for the collaborative leadership committee to hold the centre to account for its work, for example in relation to improving rates of breastfeeding and reducing obesity.

Information about this inspection

The inspection of this children's centre was carried out under Part 3A of the Childcare Act 2006 as amended by the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009.

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

The inspectors held meetings with the head of centre, the centre manager, members of the collaborative leadership committee (CLC), parents, centre staff, a local authority representative, and partners from health, education, adult learning and early years.

The inspectors visited sessions held in the centre and at two other local community venues.

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

Inspection team

Elaine Murray	Additional Inspector, Lead Inspector
Philip David Ellwand	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

The centre is on the site of Ince C of E Primary School and the headteacher of the school is the centre leader. The centre is managed by the local authority. It is a phase two, stand-alone centre and opened in 2008. In partnership with other providers it provides early education, childcare and health services, family support and adult learning courses. The centre building comprises two rooms, one of which is used by 'ABC Childcare', a private nursery provider. The nursery is subject to separate inspection arrangements and the report of its inspection is available on our website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. Sessions are held at community venues as well as in the children's centre building. The centre's target groups include teen parents and families with disabled children.

All families live within the top 20% most deprived areas. There are six super-output areas. Five are in the top 20% and one is in the top 10%. The very large majority of families who live in the surrounding area are from White British backgrounds. Data show that 88% of families are living in households dependent on workless benefits. Children enter early years provision with skill levels which are below those expected for their age.

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

- Develop the effectiveness of centre leadership by:
 - working with the local authority to ensure that data provided are always accurate and timely to enable the centre to assess more effectively its success in engaging families in the area
 - working with the local authority, collaborative leadership committee and centre partners to improve the use of data to set a broader range of targets within improvement planning, particularly in relation to health-related targets such as breastfeeding and obesity.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Good

- The centre is successful in engaging the large majority of most target groups. It engages with all of the teenage parents and families with disabled children in its area. This is because staff know the area well and they ensure that services meet the needs of these families. The centre promotes equality of opportunity well. It fosters good relationships with the families it serves and takes positive action to tackle discrimination.
- The centre makes good use of a clear system for assessing families' needs when they join the centre to ensure that those families most in need of support receive the right level of help.
- The centre works well with local providers to ensure that as many as possible of the two-, three- and four-year-old children from target groups attend pre-schools or nurseries. Staff work well to help many families access places at settings outside their immediate area, due to a shortage of available childcare in the locality. As a result, the large majority of children take up these places.
- Centre staff effectively encourage families to participate in services which are relevant to their needs. They provide a good level of individual support to families through home visits and, through this, parents are invited to attend services at the centre.
- The centre is proactive in ensuring that local families in need have access to services. For example, when a large number of families from outside the centre's immediate area started to attend a particular session, centre staff took action to ensure that priority was given to local families.

The quality of practice and services

Good

- Good-quality services are provided for the families living in the area. Sessions such as 'Jo Jingles'

and 'Little Movers' are well attended and parents praise the opportunities to engage with other parents and for their children to learn.

- The centre is making good progress in developing children's readiness for school. The centre has recently introduced a detailed system of checks which shows that children who attend the centre make good progress from their individual starting points. The proportion of children who achieve a good level of development by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage has increased in recent years to 63.3% in 2012, which is in line with the national average. The local school nursery reports that children's skill levels on starting nursery have shown a rise due to the work of the centre.
- A good range of courses is provided to help adults further their education and to obtain work. Attendance is high, and centre data indicate that over 50% of adults access further training and employment.
- The centre successfully encourages adults to take up volunteering opportunities, which in turn help them into employment. For example, many volunteer in the local school. Parents praise the impact of these opportunities on their expectations for the future, saying, 'This made me proud and now I can achieve more in my life.'
- A clear process of referral helps to ensure that families' needs are met promptly. Case studies show that families who receive the good-quality help and support make good progress in their personal development.
- Health-promotion services such as 'Food Positive' help to promote families' awareness of healthy eating. These services have yet to impact positively on obesity levels. Centre staff provide good support to parents in sustaining breastfeeding, but rates currently remain low.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- Leaders are committed to improving life chances for children and adults and reducing inequalities. Team spirit is high and staff are well motivated. This contributes to the effective work of the centre.
- The centre monitors its performance well and uses evaluations of services and data to identify where results could be better. Services are adapted to ensure the best possible use of resources and to meet the needs of families. Community venues are effectively used to provide services in parts of the locality where families may be reluctant to attend the centre building.
- Strong partnerships with local schools and nurseries have a very positive impact on children's learning and families' welfare. A close sharing of information plays a key part in ensuring that children's and families' needs are identified and that children's progress is checked. This strong partnership is further enhanced by the presence of several local headteachers on the centre's leadership committee.
- Parents play an important part in the life of the centre. A thriving parents' forum contributes to decision making, as do the parent representatives on the collaborative leadership committee. Parents run their own weekly parent and child session. They have recently been proactive in planning and fundraising for the development of an outdoor area.
- The collaborative leadership committee provides high levels of support and challenge. It has a thorough knowledge of the quality of services, how well the performance of staff is managed and what the centre is aiming to improve. Its members play a key role in evaluating the work of the centre and have a good knowledge of how data are used to inform this. For example, they are aware that the centre is helping to reduce inequality in Early Years Foundation Stage profile scores by contributing to narrowing the gaps in attainment.
- The local authority sets some challenging targets for the centre, which help to close gaps in outcomes for children and families, and checks the centre's performance well. It provides a broad range of data which the centre leaders use well to evaluate how well services are used and are meeting the needs of families. At times, data provided are not sufficiently accurate or timely to provide a clear picture of families' engagement with services.
- The centre has a track record of good improvements to the range and quality of services and to the number of families engaged with the centre's services. Improvement planning is clear but does not include a broad range of targets, particularly relating to health outcomes such as breastfeeding and

obesity. This limits the extent to which the centre's leadership committee and the local authority can hold the centre to account for its work in improving these outcomes.

- Safeguarding policies and procedures are effectively in place and understood by staff. Safeguarding is given high priority and effective use of the Common Assessment Framework means that families' needs are assessed accurately. This includes looked after children and children in need. Positive sharing of information and co-working with key professionals ensure that families' needs are well met.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
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 details

Unique reference number	21606
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	421470
Managed by	The local authority
Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	720
Centre leader	Jillian Hyde
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01942 245218
Email address	headteacher@admin.ince.wigan.sch.uk

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