

# Kings Oak Children's Centre

Bondfield Close, Wombwell, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S73 8TX

**Inspection date** 11–12 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 is a good centre.

- A large majority of young children and families from the local community, particularly families living in the most deprived areas, access the high-quality services the centre provides.
- Families can rely on the good support and sensitive guidance of the enthusiastic and caring staff team and their partners. The commitment and enthusiasm of the staff is clear. Parents who are in most need are very well supported in reducing the risk of harm to their children.
- Passion for promoting high standards in the early years is evident and children's individual needs are very well met. As result, all children using the centre services make good progress.
- Strong, highly qualified leaders with a wide range of professional backgrounds and expertise work well together to run and manage the centre. They make sure governance of the centre is effective and that they provide high-quality services, which are continually improving, for families.

### It is not outstanding because:

- Only a small minority of mothers choose to breastfeed for a significant length of time and a fairly high percentage of mothers smoke during pregnancy.
- Routes to enable adults to take-up formal learning opportunities so that they develop the necessary skills to be more ready to enter the workforce are not as strong as the rest of the services.

### 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 centre manager, the senior leadership team, family support workers and Parental Support Advisors and representatives from the local authority and the governing body. They also met with members of the advisory board, parents and key partners. The inspectors reviewed satisfaction surveys.

The inspectors visited the activities which took place at the centre.

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

### Inspection team

Sue Pepper	Additional Inspector, Lead Inspector
Priscilla McGuire	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about the centre

Kings Oak Children's Centre was designated as a phase one, single centre in 2006. It is located on a shared site alongside Kings Oak Primary Learning Centre and the linked nursery. The nursery is subject to separate inspection arrangements. The inspection report can be found on our website at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The centre is situated within Wombwell in Barnsley, South Yorkshire. Although the area was previously a mining community, the main employers now are a few factories and a large call centre. The majority of families are of White British heritage and there are approximately 826 children under five years of age living in the community. The majority of the areas are ranked amongst the 30% most deprived nationally with one area ranked within the 10% most deprived nationally. There are significant levels of social and economic disadvantage in the super output areas with high levels of unemployment and parents in receipt of benefits. The area is characterised by a mix of social and private rented housing. Families face a varied range of challenges and issues including poor oral health, domestic violence and low levels of literacy. Some children enter early years provision with a range of experiences and skills below those expected for their age, with communication and language being the weakest area.

Governance of the centre is managed on behalf of the local authority by the school governing body. The Children Centre Sub-Committee is the advisory board. The centre offers a range of universal and targeted services with the support of key partners on site.

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

- Further improve the effectiveness of services in supporting children and families to develop healthy lifestyles by:
  - monitoring the impact of smoking cessation
  - promoting breastfeeding for at least six to eight weeks.
- Provide more opportunities for parents to gain skills and qualifications to increase their chances of employment and economic independence.

## Inspection judgements

### Access to services by young children and families

**Good**

- The centre has successfully developed very good partnerships with health visitors and midwives. Together they identify most families with young children in their community and are in a strong position to form close relationships with those who are more reluctant to participate in services. As a result, they have greatly increased attendance at clinics.
- Families benefit from the well-established centre which provides them with a good range of easily accessible high-quality services. The centre worked with the local authority to develop the 'Having a Baby' course to help expectant parents effectively prepare to give babies the best start in life. This course is one of many, such as, 'Now I am Here' which helps parents to have the confidence to manage their children's behaviour more positively.
- The family support team and parental support advisors have good knowledge of the varied issues facing families in their community. Effective work with families in their own home successfully ensures that many of those who are suffering from a range of difficulties are very well supported. Some families have benefitted from volunteering opportunities and basic courses, such as information and communication technology, but numbers are quite low.
- Parents are fully involved in the assessment of their own needs and the 'team around the child' approach is used very effectively. Good professional support for children and their families from a range of agencies ensures they get the right support and practical help with issues such as childcare. The uptake of funded early years nursery places is high.
- All children flourish in this inclusive environment. Fathers have their own 'Dads and Kids' club and they enjoy exciting opportunities such as den making. Disabled children and those with special educational needs are extremely well supported. As a result, the centre is beginning to receive specific referrals from paediatricians because of its good reputation and effective support.

### The quality of practice and services

**Good**

- Health outcomes are variable despite a strong drive in place to promote healthy lifestyles. The uptake of immunisation is high but the numbers of mothers choosing to initiate and sustain breastfeeding are fairly low. At the 'One Stop Shop', parents learn the importance of promoting later weaning, what foods to eat or avoid and how to care for their babies' teeth to reduce dental decay which is high across the borough.
- Recent information suggests that the level of obesity is falling. Enthusiastic health trainers are regularly available to carry out basic health checks on parents and they encourage more physically active lifestyles, such as walks in the local community with their children. Staff are 'Smoke Stop' trained and they offer good quality advice, guidance and practical support to those who wish to stop smoking but the numbers of mothers smoking in pregnancy remain quite high.
- The centre works very closely with local private providers of childcare to make sure assessment and observation of children are very reliable and are used well to help all young children to make at least good progress whatever their individual need. The 'Well Comm' toolkit is used successfully to assess children's levels of understanding. Parents say they are supported to know what they can do in their own home with their children to promote good communication and language skills.
- Attention to inclusive practice is good. Recent information strongly suggests that, from some low starting points, the gap in children's achievements is closing more rapidly than seen nationally.
- Children have good opportunities to independently choose and explore stimulating and interesting high-quality resources. These actively promote purposeful learning through fun, imaginative and creative experiences. Children respond well to high expectations and staff who act as good role models. As a consequence, children develop positive behaviour and friendships, all children enjoy learning and they are well prepared for school.
- Opportunities for parents to improve their parenting skills and self-confidence are plentiful and parents know the importance of singing and sharing books with their children. A few parents have had opportunities to work as volunteers but numbers attending the types of courses which can improve their employability skills such as basic numeracy and English are generally low.

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

- Centre leaders are dynamic and accurately evaluate what the centre does well and where it could further improve. The local authority oversees the information the centre collates to measure how it removes any barriers, which can prevent some families from improving their lives. They set the centre challenging targets, which helps to drive up the number of families they support.
- Staff are highly motivated and ambitious. Prior to the 'Local Well-being' partnership ceasing, staff took an important role in combining their expertise with others to share good practice. Staff have clear performance aims and areas of responsibility which drive their strong commitment to continually develop their skills and expertise well. As a result, users of the centre express high levels of satisfaction.
- The advisory board has changed from a joint to a single board. The new board know what the centre does well and they are actively increasing their membership to enhance their already strong role in holding the centre to account for its work. Parents who are not ready to express their ideas and views formally and contribute to governance on the advisory board attend the less formal parents' forum which enables them to be more involved in decision-making.
- Partnerships between the centre, school and nursery on site are seamless. They work together extremely well to use the high-quality resources, including staff deployment, very effectively and efficiently. As a result, they meet an increasing number of children's and families' needs and children in particular are better prepared for the next step in their learning.
- The relationship with adult education is not as strong as other partnerships. The centre manager is keen to forge closer relationships with a nearby college which parents can reach more easily. Information collected about the impact of work from those who support parents with employability skills is adequate.
- Attention to keeping children and families safe is a high priority. A single central record is in place to ensure careful monitoring of staff suitability to work with children. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures are followed which cover safer recruitment of staff, training and day-to-day running of the centre which are regularly up-dated and reviewed.
- Good support is provided for families whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Staff are well trained to use the Common Assessment Framework and their work with children subject to child protection plans, who are looked after, or are identified as in need is focused and effective. Consequently, staff develop trusting relationships with parents to help them reduce the risk of harm to their children by creating a more nurturing home environment.

**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**

<b>Unique reference number</b>	21689
<b>Local authority</b>	Barnsley
<b>Inspection number</b>	421472
<b>Managed by</b>	The Governing Body of Kings Oak Primary Learning Centre on behalf of the local authority

<b>Approximate number of children under five in the reach area</b>	826
<b>Centre leader</b>	Hope Hawksworth
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01226 273240
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:h.hawksworth@barnsley.org">h.hawksworth@barnsley.org</a>

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