

Werrington Children's Centre

Welbourne Primary School, Welbourne, Peterborough, PE4 6NR

Inspection date 13–14 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
	Previous inspection:		
Access to services by young children and families		Select	4
The quality of practice and services		Select	4
The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management		Select	4

Summary of key findings for children and families

This is a centre that is inadequate. It is not good because:

- The governors and headteacher of the school have failed to provide adequate strategic leadership to ensure that the centre improves outcomes for families. Those in charge recognise that they do not have the capacity to identify priorities and make the necessary improvements to make this a good centre.
- Local authority monitoring of the centre identified concerns. The local authority has been slow to take action to ensure the rapid improvement required.
- The centre fails to sufficiently prioritise families or engage with some key target groups. As a result, only a very small minority of those families most in need of early intervention and support access the centre and its services.
- Weak policies, which are not sufficiently specific to the needs of the centre, combined with poor supervision of staff and poor security of the site, mean that safeguarding arrangements within the children's centre are inadequate.
- Leaders fail to adequately monitor the quality and impact of the services the centre delivers to measure whether or not their work has made a difference to the lives of families they help.
- The centre has insufficient resources and capacity to adequately meet the needs of families in the area. Staff are not appropriately trained or qualified for their roles.

This centre has the following strengths:

- The committed team of part-time staff do their best to ensure that services provided are enjoyed by families that come to the centre.
- Referrals by health partners to the family support worker have a positive impact for a few families.

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 leader and two other part-time centre staff, the headteacher, governors of the school and officers from the local authority. They also met health, employability, social care and education partners, parents, volunteers and representatives of the advisory group.

The inspectors visited the Werrington site only.

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

Inspection team

Jean-Marie Blakeley

Additional Inspector, Lead Inspector

Geoff Doritty

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

The centre became operational in 2010 as a phase three stand-alone centre and delivers a range of services to meet the core purpose. It is open Monday to Friday, from 9.00am to 3.00pm. The centre runs a monthly Saturday 'drop-in' for fathers and their children. The centre shares a site with Welbourne Primary School and Rainbow Pre-School which are both subject to separate inspections. The local authority has commissioned the governing body of Welbourne Primary School to manage the centre. An advisory group, comprising key partners, assist in its governance. The headteacher of the school is also the manager of the centre. A centre leader runs the centre on a daily basis alongside her role as the family support worker. The local authority is reviewing the management and commissioning of this children's centre.

There are 685 children aged under five years living in the centre's reach area. The centre is in the north of Peterborough and covers north and south Werrington and north Gunthorpe. The area is a mix of some relatively affluent areas and some pockets of deprivation. Werrington has one super output area which lies in the top 15% deprived nationally with a further two in the top 20%. Data provided by the centre show that 19% of children aged under four years live in workless households. Most families living within the reach area are of White British heritage although more than a third is from minority ethnic groups, including increasing numbers of Eastern European families moving into the area. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge generally expected for their age.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- The local authority should take prompt action to ensure that the centre has strong strategic leadership and management which has the capacity to rapidly improve the centre.
- Make better use of data and information from partners to identify and engage with more families from target groups.
- Increase the evaluation and monitoring of the quality of the centre's services and set challenging outcome and performance measures.
- Improve safeguarding arrangements by:
 - ensuring that the safeguarding policy is accurate, up to date and suited to the needs of the centre
 - providing supervision for the centre leader
 - improving the recruitment procedures for volunteers
 - introducing regular checks on safeguarding policies, staff training, supervision and the knowledge and practice of staff and volunteers
 - improving the security of the site.
- Ensure the centre is adequately resourced and staff are appropriately trained and qualified for their job roles.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Inadequate

- The centre is not making sufficient use of available information to identify and target families from key groups who are in most need of early intervention and support. It does not sufficiently encourage the participation of those families who are unlikely to access services. A very small minority of families from workless households and those from minority ethnic families access its services.
- The centre does not know which children at two years of age would benefit from, and be entitled to, free high-quality early years provision. It plays little part in ensuring children from target groups take up early years education. As a result, the centre is having insufficient impact in helping children be ready to start school and narrow achievement gaps.
- The centre provides satisfactory opportunities for volunteering but adults do not have access to

learning on site and very few are referred to local education or training providers. In addition, parents wanting to return to work do not receive sufficient information on the availability of childcare in their local area.

- There is insufficient use of assessment to accurately identify families' needs in order to plan learning and support and monitor progress. However, observations of children in sessions are used effectively to identify and refer children to specialist services.

- The centre does not provide outreach services, other than home visits for a very small minority of children identified as being at risk. The limited capacity of the staff team means that they are unable to support all those families and children who may benefit from the centre's services.

The quality of practice and services

Inadequate

- The centre fails to adequately track and monitor the quality and impact of the services it delivers on families' lives. Centre staff provide enjoyable activities for families that attend the centre and some sessions have a particular focus, such as improving the communication and language skills of babies and toddlers. However, drop-in sessions are insufficiently targeted at families most in need of support and are not adequately planned to meet specific outcomes.

- The centre is not effective as a hub for community services for families with young children, although some families benefit from the partnership with the on-site pre-school, health and midwifery services. However, the centre and its partners do not adequately monitor their impact on health outcomes. Breastfeeding rates remain low and childhood obesity is high and increasing. Parents attending sessions to promote healthy eating do not sufficiently use information gained to improve their families' health and diets.

- There is an imbalance between universal and targeted services. As a result, the centre engages with a minority of families in the area and makes insufficient contribution to the personal development and well-being of its key target groups. It fails to sufficiently identify, recruit, support and develop the parenting skills of those adults who would benefit from help and advice.

- There is a positive impact on the small number of families who access family support. Information, advice and guidance and effective support helps some parents get back on track and improve their own lives and those of their families.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Inadequate

- Governance arrangements are weak and do not provide sufficient challenge to the centre. There is little evidence of shared ambition and priorities. The headteacher and governors recognise that they do not have the capacity to lead and govern the centre at the same time as trying to improve the school. With four centre leaders since the centre opened in 2010, the centre's day-to-day management has been ineffective with inadequate strategic leadership and monitoring by the school.

- Governors and the headteacher do not identify key priorities or performance measures for the centre and, as a result, outcomes are not improving fast enough. There is insufficient use of data to set challenging targets and measure performance.

- Local authority performance data and quarterly monitoring visits have accurately identified some concerns about the centre. However, action to tackle issues in order to bring about the rapid improvement needed has been too slow. Service level agreements and financial monitoring lacks sufficient rigour to ensure adherence to the contract and value for money.

- Safeguarding policies and procedures for the school have not been sufficiently adapted to meet the needs of the centre. Staff at the centre have only had basic training and none have had safer recruitment training. As a result, the recruitment of volunteers is poor as there are inadequate checks on their suitability or history. There is insufficient supervision and monitoring of family support

caseloads to ensure children and families are kept safe. The centre has insufficient resources to provide support for all children who may be identified as in need, subject to a child protection plan or assessment under the Common Assessment Framework. Staff are not sufficiently aware of which children are looked after. Access to the site is not secure enough to provide a safe environment for children, parents and staff.

■ Resources and services are not used effectively to meet local priorities, resulting in insufficient capacity to target and meet the requirements of young children and families most in need of early intervention and support. Staff at the centre are not appropriately trained, qualified or supervised. The centre leader does not have a budget for the purchase of resources and the attractive building and gardens are not sufficiently well-equipped to provide high-quality learning and play environments.

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	23491
Local authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	422490
Managed by	Welbourne Primary School on behalf of the local authority.

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	685
Centre manager	Annette Dagless
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01733 864780
Email address	annette.dagless@welbourne.peterborough.sch.uk

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