

Bagshot Sure Start Children's Centre

School Lane, Bagshot, Surrey GU19 5BP

Inspection date		18–19 July 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 well known and highly regarded within its community. More than 80% of families in the area are registered at the centre and enjoy its services. This includes between 65% and 100% of families in the four areas of the reach that are in greatest need of its support.
- Leaders, managers and governors have taken care to identify the groups of families particularly in need of its help, which are often different from those typically found nationally. Parents from these groups speak warmly of the care and support they have been offered by staff.
- Partnership working is strong, and the centre's staff are skilled in making links between different agencies for the benefit of families. Partners in health and early years say the centre is invaluable to them because of this.
- Senior staff are proactive in finding out what parents and partners want from them and in providing a good range of tailored services, both at the main centre and in the nearby village of Lightwater. Sessions are well attended as a result.
- The centre has an accurate understanding of what it does well and a clear plan for future improvement, and has the capacity to go from strength to strength.

It is not outstanding because:

- The centre does not analyse its attendance information to find out which sessions are most used by its target groups and those which are not, in order to refine its services further to meet their needs.
- Senior staff do not use school information about children's skills on entry into the Reception classes to assess the impact the centre is having on those children who have attended its sessions.
- Figures for breastfeeding have dropped by almost a fifth over the last nine months, though still remaining above national and local authority averages.

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 headteacher of Bagshot Infant School, the outreach worker, the play support worker and representatives of the local authority and the governing body. They also met with, or spoke on the telephone with, health, education and early years partners and parents, including representatives from the advisory board and the parents' forum.

The inspectors visited activities at the main hub in Bagshot, such as the Homebased Childcarers Group, the Postnatal Group and the New Babies and Under Ones Session. There were no activities taking place off-site during the inspection.

They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation, including analysis of data, the centre's self-evaluation document and strategic delivery plan, individual case studies, feedback forms from parents, planning folders, the centre's monitoring information and minutes of governing body, advisory board and parents' forum meetings.

Inspection team

Jane Chesterfield	Additional Inspector, Lead Inspector
Graham Saltmarsh	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

The centre is located on the site of Bagshot Infant School in the district of Surrey Heath, serving the villages of Bagshot, Lightwater and Windlesham. The local community is a diverse mix of owner-occupied, privately rented and social housing. Most residents are of White British heritage, though there are some Black and minority ethnic families living in the area. A recent housing development in Bagshot has increased the number of local families accessing the centre's services, but limited public transport has affected the number of families from Windlesham and Lightwater able to do so.

None of the areas within the reach of the centre is within the top 50% most deprived areas in the country. Unemployment is below the national average. The proportion of families with no working adult is below average and the proportion with families known to be eligible for free school meals is below average, though it has tripled over the last two years. Children's levels of development on entry to Early Years Foundation Stage provision are above average. Senior staff have identified a number of groups most in need of the centre's services. These are: referrals from partner agencies, families moving to a large new housing development nearby, isolated families, children on child protection or children in need plans, families with a disabled child or one with special educational needs, and those children who live in workless households.

The centre is a standalone centre funded by the local authority, though it works in a cluster with four other local children's centres. It is governed by the governing body of Bagshot Infant School. Two link governors attend meetings of the centre's advisory body and parents' forum. The centre employs four members of staff, all of whom work on a part-time basis. The centre manager is line-managed by the school's headteacher and reports to the governing body on a termly basis. The centre was designated as a phase 2 children's centre in February 2008. It is open from Monday to Friday, with special events at the weekends, and provides families and children with a range of services including ante-natal care, maternity care, family health, family support, and family learning. There is privately run childcare on the school site which is subject to separate inspection arrangements. The school was not inspected at this time.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Analyse attendance information to check the uptake of activities by target groups in order to judge the value and impact of services and develop them further.
- Analyse information on children's progress when starting school to check the development of children from target families and use this to shape future services.
- Establish reasons for the recent dip in the proportion of mothers breastfeeding at six to eight weeks, and use this information to arrest the decline.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Good

- The centre is effective in drawing in families and ensuring that most of those in target groups access services. The centre has successfully engaged most of the families in the area, and has successfully focused its work on those areas where families have the greatest need. All of those two-year-old children entitled to free entitlement to early years education are signposted to appropriate provision.
- The centre is alert to changes in its diverse community and the differing needs of its population. It recognises that issues such as loneliness and post-natal depression can occur across all backgrounds and uses services such as its ante-natal, post-natal and baby clinic sessions to help mothers get together and meet others in the same situation as themselves. It has also responded quickly to the increased level of need amongst families moving into social housing at a new development in the village, for example by linking up with a training company offering free provision for those without

work and claiming jobseekers allowance, and helping them to access this.

- Work with families in their homes is especially strong, and the centre manager and outreach worker operate as a skilful team supporting families in this way. The centre manager devotes much energy to making contacts with other professionals and raising awareness of the centre amongst the public, running stalls at local events and organising leaflet drops in targeted areas. Staff working with families in their own home focus on providing individual support to families referred to the centre, either by other professionals or as self-referrals, who have particular difficulties to overcome, such as those whose children are on child protection or children in need plans.
- The centre makes good use of its close partnerships, especially that with the infant school on site. Centre staff deliver talks to parents on relevant topics such as readiness for school or parenting skills. The centre is able to access the school's sensory room and capitalise on the expertise of the staff working in the school's special needs unit to help support its families with children who have disabilities or special educational needs. Membership of the centre's ASD (autistic spectrum disorder) group stands at over 70 families.
- Against national figures, the centre compares favourably in most areas of its work and it pays careful attention to information to ensure that it does not become complacent, and that any changes can be swiftly picked up. Research amongst its families has revealed, for example, that only around 1% are smokers, so smoking cessation is a lower priority, tackled with leaflets and individual counselling. Tracking of breastfeeding trends, meanwhile, has shown a dip over the last three quarters, so this has been highlighted in the centre's service development plan as an urgent focus for action.

The quality of practice and services

Good

- The centre is successful in offering a good range of both universal and targeted services. Feedback from families indicates that they are 100% satisfied with what is on offer. The centre has a positive impact on improving the lives and well-being of the families who attend. The proportion of children who achieve a good level of development by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage is above local authority and national averages.
- Coordinated work with other centres in the cluster means that their services complement one another and duplication is avoided. The centre has organised its sessions for young mothers, for example, in conjunction with its nearest neighbouring children's centre, to ensure that the girls can attend the groups most convenient to them. This means that they attend regularly, are helped to develop their parenting skills and encouraged to continue with their education.
- To help parents who find it hard to travel to the centre because of limited public transport, the centre offers its 'Play and Learn' and 'Baby Massage' sessions in a church hall in Lightwater as well as at the main centre. The centre keeps meticulous records of attendance and knows which activities are the most and least popular. However, it does not always break this information down to find which sessions are most attended by target groups, in order to refine its services still further.
- Feedback from families is sought by the centre for all activities, and staff respond to parents' requests. Based on these, it organises additional sessions such as sleep, weaning and healthy eating workshops and first aid courses. Parents learn how to keep themselves and their children safe and healthy through these opportunities.
- Senior staff are always keen to identify skills in their parent community, and support users to volunteer. Both the play support worker and the baby massage practitioner came to the centre as parents and have become established members of the workforce thanks to the centre's encouragement. They offer valuable services to families.
- Parents' ideas are always welcomed, and the parents' forum is developing well, with a balance of volunteers and invited participants. The centre has found that holding the forum during other sessions means that a wider range of parents are able to take part. Most fathers work during the week, but the centre is able to involve them through special events held at the weekends, such as gardening or spring walks.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- The centre is well run on a daily basis and there are clear lines of responsibility and reporting between the centre manager, the headteacher and governors of the school, and the local authority. Staff understand their roles and feel well supervised and supported in their work. Reviews of individual performance are carried out regularly and staff say they have good opportunities for training and development.
- The centre's self-evaluation is thoughtful and forward-looking, and the local authority's service development plan has been effectively adapted to meet the centre's priorities. Discussions with governors and the local authority show that they know how well the centre and its staff are performing and have a good grasp of data. They have a particularly good understanding of the specific needs of the community the centre serves and how these are met.
- The governors ensure that all safeguarding requirements are met, and that the centre's policies and procedures promote equal opportunity, foster positive relationships and tackle discrimination robustly. Children subject to child protection plans, children in need plans or the Common Assessment Framework are at the heart of the centre's work. There are currently no looked after children registered at the centre.
- The school carefully monitors information about its children's skills on entry to Reception and knows which children have attended the centre beforehand. It is able to identify general areas for development, such as communication skills, which led to the centre's involvement with the 'Every Child a Talker' initiative. Now that the centre has been open five years, the school is in a position to assess the performance of those who have attended the centre since they were born and the impact it has had on them.
- The centre uses its resources well to meet the needs of local families. Although finances are limited once staffing costs have been paid, it recently set aside funds to refresh furniture, toys and equipment to ensure that the accommodation is always bright and inviting to welcome families. It also responds to the wishes of families, for example providing more active games and toy trucks for the Lightwater 'Play and Learn' group after feedback from the children attending.

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	20166
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	421430
Managed by	The governing body of Bagshot Infant School on behalf of the local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	836
Centre manager	Caroline Atkins
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01276 473093
Email address	childrenscentre@bagshot.surrey.sch.uk

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