

Pyrford and Byfleet Children's Centre

Coldharbour Road, Pyrford, Surrey, GU22 8SP

Inspection date 24–25 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.

- Staff are highly effective in providing services for priority families across the Pyrford and Byfleet sites. This is despite the very limited opening hours, relatively few staff resources and the location of the main site in Pyrford being in one of the least disadvantaged areas.
- Outreach work is both innovative and flexible in meeting the needs of priority groups. As a result, the large majority of children in the most disadvantaged areas and a high proportion of fathers and lone parents use centre services. The very efficient and effective session booking system means that priority families take up over half of the spaces at popular groups such as Play and Learn.
- Sessions are well planned to ensure children's personal and social skills are developed strongly and children are ready to move on to school. Parents are given good guidance to help keep their children safe and to support their learning through well attended parenting courses and one-to-one advice, such as on behaviour issues or language delay.
- The care, guidance and support that individual families receive, especially when they are undergoing traumatic events in their lives, are excellent. Staff have built very strong levels of trust and respect amongst families and other partners so that tailored, effective help can be provided early.
- The governing body and the advisory board provide good levels of support and challenge. The head of centre and manager ensure staff and resources are used to best effect. Staff are only funded for 18 hours per week each, based on the perceived levels of need in the reach area. Despite this, outcomes for families, especially in the priority groups, are good; the centre is improving strongly.

It is not outstanding because:

- The information the centre receives from the local authority, especially in relation to some of its priority groups, is not always accurate and up to date. This means staff have to use their very limited time to check its accuracy or try to obtain their own information. The lack of recent local health information makes it difficult for the centre to gauge the impact of its work in some health-related aspects.
- There is no formal system to record the longer-term impact of the centre's work in developing adults' skills. Additionally, the centre is not measuring the progress of enough individual children when they attend activities or following their move to local schools.

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, centre manager and other staff, officers from the local authority, representatives from the health services, local schools and several other key partners. They met parents and representatives of the governing body and advisory board. The inspectors visited several activities, including one jointly with the centre manager. The head of centre and centre manager attended all inspection team meetings. Inspectors looked at the centre's self-evaluation, service delivery plan, a sample of case studies, safeguarding policies and procedures and a range of other relevant documentation.

Inspection team

Joan Lindsay	Additional Inspector, Lead Inspector
Graham Saltmarsh	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

The centre opened in 2008, as a part-time phase two stand-alone centre split across two sites. It delivers or supports access to a range of services to meet its core purpose. The Pyrford building is open 48 weeks of the year for 18 hours a week, Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9.00am until 12 noon and 12.30pm until 3.30pm. Services are also delivered in other venues in the community, including St Mary's C of E Primary School in Byfleet and Byfleet Village Hall baby clinic, and there is a monthly Saturday session for fathers. The centre is located in the grounds of Pyrford C of E (Aided) Primary School (URN 102955) whose governing body manages it on behalf of the local authority; the headteacher is the head of centre. The school and the privately-run nursery located on the same site are subject to separate inspections.

There are 1,100 children under five years of age living in the centre's reach area. Children enter early years provision at levels expected for their age. The centre serves 11 super output areas (SOAs) with none ranked in the 30% most deprived, although there are pockets of deprivation within the reach area. Approximately 8% of children live in households dependent on workless benefits, although this rises to 23% in the most disadvantaged area. Some 15% of families are eligible for the childcare element of Working Tax Credit. Most families are of White British heritage, with only 19% of children living in the reach area from various Black and minority ethnic groups. The centre has identified its priority groups as families in its most disadvantaged areas, fathers, lone parents and workless families with young children.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Work with the local authority and health services to ensure the information the centre receives about priority groups and health outcomes is the most accurate, recent and pertinent to the local area, so that the centre's impact can be measured more precisely.
- Sharpen the tracking of progress and measure the longer term impact of the centre's services on improving the learning and skills of adults who have used the centre or been signposted elsewhere.
- Track the progress of children, especially from priority groups, during centre activities and when they move on to school by:
 - establishing a workable system to measure how well children who attend the centre regularly progress in their learning and development
 - working with the local schools in the centre's reach area to create a rigorous way to measure the longer term impact of the centre's work on a greater number of children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families Good

- Staff have excellent local knowledge which enables them to have a clear understanding of the needs of the community, despite a lack of accurate information about some of the priority groups. As a result, the large majority of most priority groups, including families from the most disadvantaged areas, engage well. Although relatively lower than some other groups, the number of families from workless households accessing services is increasing due to the centre's effective ongoing work.
- Good links with all the local early years settings and health services, including staff attending baby clinics, mean that most young children and expectant mothers are known. There is 100% take up of free early education for three- to four-year-olds and the centre has supported 11 children to benefit from funded places for disadvantaged two-year-olds.
- Outreach work has been very successful in increasing engagement by priority groups, with a high proportion of the centre's activities, including the very popular Lions and Cubs group for fathers, taking place in the Byfleet venue. Other innovations, such as taking the mobile children's centre bus

to the Brantwood Estate, have successfully increased the number of families making use of the services from all priority groups, but especially lone parents.

- The centre administrator is highly effective in the way she manages the booking system and records the attendance by priority groups, closely following up any non attendees. Consequently, spaces are made available at activities such as Nought to Walk for those who need most support. Through careful planning, the centre achieves a good balance of services that are open to all and those targeted at specific groups such as the fortnightly childminders' group.

The quality of practice and services

Good

- Despite the centre's limited opening hours, good planning, including with neighbouring children's centres and making effective use of partners' services, means that the quality, range and relevance of the centre's services are good. The Play and Learn hours focus well on developing children's skills, such as concentration and dexterity when cutting soft fruit. Such experiences also give the children a good understanding of healthy food.
- Services open to all enable staff to identify any delay in children's development at an early stage. Parents say this has been invaluable in enlisting specialist support, such as for speech and language or behaviour issues; the centre provides 'brilliant help and very practical support'. Staff model positive behaviour very effectively and encourage children to become independent, especially children from target groups, so that they are well prepared for school.
- Local Early Years Foundation Stage profile results show a strong improvement in 2012 compared to 2011, with 70% of children reaching a good level of development. The gap between the lowest achieving 20% and the rest narrowed and both outcomes are better than the national figures. The achievement of children who have attended the centre and move on to Pyrford Primary School is tracked and shows they make good progress from their starting points. However, these are only small numbers as most children accessing centre services transfer to other schools in the reach area, where their progress is not highlighted.
- The centre encourages healthy lifestyles very effectively, for example by sending out 460 immunisation letters and jointly running the local breastfeeding café in Woking. Where measures are available, however, they are either very old data or not specific to the local area, making it hard for the centre to be precise about its impact. Nevertheless, parents feel very well supported in knowing how to keep their children safe and healthy through parenting courses, first aid and encouraging physical exercise such as walks at Wisley Gardens.
- Parents' trust and respect for staff are overwhelmingly positive, especially where families have had periods of great difficulty in their lives. Detailed and well-kept case files and parents' testimonies verify this, with comments such as, 'If they hadn't been there I would have ended up very depressed.' 'I know I can talk to the staff about anything,' backing this up further.
- Staff are fully involved in working with other professionals where children are subject to high levels of supervision or are supported by the Common Assessment Framework procedures. Intervention by staff, once a need, such as move to an unfurnished property, has been identified, is very swift and effective.
- Parents are active participants in shaping the services through good attendance at parents' forum meetings and representation on the advisory board. They are also very willing to help on an ad hoc basis, such as organising the book swap or summer and Christmas events.
- A large majority of parents from priority groups have been supported in developing their skills and learning, largely through signposting to other full-time centres. Feedback from parents is positive, but the centre is not yet recording its impact in helping meet their needs over the longer term.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- The significant impact this centre has had on identified priority groups is impressive, given the limited staff hours and the difficulties of the location of the main site in one of the least deprived areas, with no transport links to it. What they have achieved has been made possible due to the

efficiency and dedication of all the staff and the effective governance, support and challenge from the advisory board and the governing body.

- Local authority representatives carry out regular monitoring visits, although the authority is aware that there is a need to support the centre further by providing a full and accurate set of information on priority groups and health information so it can measure the impact of its work more efficiently and precisely.
- Safeguarding families is inherent in all the centre's work. The additional staff at the Byfleet venue to ensure access is secure and safe is indicative of the robust procedures and policies. Where vulnerable families are identified, or referred to the centre, staff become fully involved in working with a wide range of partners to support families to move on to less intensive levels of support. Consequently, there are currently very low numbers of families where children are subject to child protection plans or other levels of social care involvement.
- Both main sites are very well resourced and carry a wide range of information for parents. The most valuable asset is the staff, who are used highly efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of the priority groups. There are no outdoor spaces available at either site during term time but the centre makes up for this by using local parks, and school's grounds, including a swimming pool, during the holidays.
- Parents' and children's views are canvassed regularly and taken into account when planning sessions. Parents are unanimously supportive and actively recommend the centre to others, highlighting how well everyone 'whatever their background' gets along and makes friends.

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.

Unique reference number	22438
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	427474
Managed by	The governing body of Pyrford C of E Primary School

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	1,100
Centre manager	Clare Gane
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
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