

Woodside Children's Centre

Fenwick Drive, Woodside, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD6 2PG

Inspection date 24–25 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
Access to services by young children and families		Inadequate	4
The quality of practice and services		Inadequate	4
The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for children and families

This is a centre that is inadequate.

- Recent changes have had an impact on the effectiveness of this centre, resulting in leadership, governance and management that are currently proving ineffective. Consequently, the centre's provision is not improving rapidly enough or meeting the needs of local families, particularly those in target groups such as workless households.
- Weak relationships with key partners prevent the effective sharing of information, data and checks on progress being made towards targets. Much of the data the centre does hold is inaccurate.
- Leaders do not monitor and evaluate the quality of provision and services well enough.
- Performance management systems, including record keeping for case files are inconsistent. This prevents staff from knowing what actions are needed, how well they are delivering services and what needs to be done to improve.
- Not enough children and families living in the local area including those who would benefit most from support, engage in the services provided by the centre.
- There are not enough opportunities for adults to access training or improve their economic well-being. Nor are there reliable systems in place to track the progress of adults and children who do participate in activities provided by the centre.

This centre has the following strengths:

- Links with some early years providers are strong and children's early education skills are broadly typical for their age.
- The centre promotes a welcoming and inclusive environment, especially for parents of disabled children and those with complex health needs. Free transport is provided by the centre and this helps to remove pressure from families and improves accessibility.

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 three additional inspectors.

The inspectors held meetings with the two acting centre managers, the headteacher, centre staff, data analysts from the local authority and workers from the family support and community team. They also met with health, education and early years partners, representatives from the advisory board, parents and volunteers.

The inspectors visited all the rooms in Woodside Children's Centre. They also observed activities off-site such as 'Rhythm Time' at Sedburgh community centre and held meetings with other early years providers at Wibsey Pre-School.

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

Inspection team

Emily Wheeldon	Additional Inspector, Lead Inspector
Sarah Drake	Additional Inspector
Philip Ellwand	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

Woodside Children's Centre was designated in 2008. It is a stand alone, phase one centre set within the grounds of Woodside Academy, formerly Woodside Primary School. The centre was managed by the headteacher of Woodside Academy until April 2013 when the local authority took over. The centre is undergoing a re-structure and is currently run by two acting centre managers from the local authority until the appointment of a new centre manager. The centre has an advisory board which supports the centre. The centre provides a range of services to meet the core purpose, including health services, social care, 'Stay and Play' sessions, parenting programmes, adult education and outreach services. Many of these services take place in community venues and local schools.

The centre is located in the Woodside area in the south of Bradford and serves over 1422 children from birth to four years. Onsite provision includes the children's centre and Woodside Academy. Woodside Academy is subject to separate inspection arrangements and its most recent report can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

The majority of children in the reach area live in the 30% most deprived areas in the country. Families experience moderate levels of unemployment, low income, social exclusion and poverty and 21% of children live in households dependent on workless benefits and 32% of adults have no qualifications. The large majority of families are of White British heritage and a small proportion belong to minority ethnic groups. Centre data indicate that high numbers of lone parents and disabled children and adults live in the reach area. Most children enter early years provision with skills and knowledge which are broadly in line with those expected for their age.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Improve the leadership, governance and management of the centre by:
 - increasing engagement with key partners, such as health services, centre staff and centre users
 - implementing precise and challenging targets based on robust analysis of the needs of families living in the area
 - improving monitoring, review and evaluation
 - ensuring performance management systems and record keeping are effective and used consistently.
- Improve access to, and sharing of, data between the centre, local authority and health partners and use this information effectively to target provision to meet the needs of local children and families.
- Increase the number of children and families using the centre especially those from groups identified as most in need of support.
- Improve provision for adult's and children's learning by:
 - strengthening links with key learning providers to increase opportunities for adults to improve their economic well-being
 - more accurately assessing adult learning needs and improving their attendance
 - tracking the progress adults and children make over time so that the centre can check how well it is supporting them and measure the impact of its work.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Inadequate

- Despite good levels of registration, not enough families regularly attend and engage in the centre's activities.
- Leaders do not have a clear picture of what needs to be done to improve access or shape provision. This is because the centre does not collect robust data to identify which children and families living in the local community are most in need of help and support and how many engage with centre services.
- Data sharing is weak between health partners, the local authority and the centre which prevents some of the families who need the most help from receiving early support. Where the needs of families are known, teams work appropriately together to provide support for children and other family members who may be at risk.
- Despite the work of language development workers and a pilot project to increase the registrations of disadvantaged two-year-olds, the take up for free nursery entitlement for two-and-three-year-olds is low. The centre is not doing enough to engage with families who could benefit, to ensure they take up their entitlement.
- The centre cannot identify whether adults from targeted families participate or succeed in adult learning and engagement levels for adult learning are low. Many courses tail off due to low numbers and staff in the centre are not always proactive enough in alerting adults to potential learning and employment opportunities.
- Strategies to encourage families to participate in services, particularly families in most need, are ineffective. Methods, such as door-knocking and distributing leaflets are not showing fast enough results. Not enough is done to identify the causes of low engagement levels from target groups in activities run by the centre, and the centre does not do enough to sustain engagement from these families once they register.
- Family support workers work closely with schools and others to support disabled children and those with special educational needs. This increases the access these families have to good quality early years provision in the area and helps to reduce inequalities.

The quality of practice and services

Inadequate

- The range and relevance of services is inadequate because too few families including those from groups identified as in most need of support are accessing the centre. The quality of practice is variable and inconsistent. Staff do not undertake regular checks on the quality of what is being delivered and whether this is making a positive difference for the adults and children who use them.
- Lack of planning for some sessions and the absence of checks on children's progress means that activities are not suitably adapted to individual needs.
- Provision for adult learning and the evaluation and review of activities are weak. Currently, there are no adult learning opportunities on offer. The lack of crèche provision is a barrier to adults learning. Leaders are aware that this is an area to develop, but are not proactive enough to secure well-established working partnerships with learning providers. Consequently, this prevents adults from gaining qualifications, moving into employment and improving their economic well-being.
- There are some opportunities for adults to volunteer, however the take up rate is not high and there is not enough support for adults to go on to further training.
- Health provision is delivered by community midwives and health visitors through antenatal and post-natal clinics in the centre and on home visits. Keep-fit and 'Clever Cook' classes are helping families to be fit and healthy. Midwives offer advice about smoking cessation to expectant mothers and health visitors support mothers to breastfeed and give advice about weaning.
- Despite this work to improve health outcomes for children and their families, smoking during

pregnancy remains higher than the district average. Breastfeeding rates at initiation and between six to eight weeks are well below the national average and obesity levels remain high.

- The centre provides appropriate levels of care, guidance and support for the families they know about. The nurture group, 'Stay and Play' sessions and home visits by family support workers help parents to learn how to keep their children safe, communicate with their children and improve their well-being.
- The quality of partnerships with childminders, nurseries and local schools to support school readiness and share knowledge about children's development is variable. Support for children moving on to school and the information gathered is stronger for children with special educational needs than it is for children from other target groups. Children's skills at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage are broadly average but the gaps in learning for some of the most disadvantaged children are not closing swiftly enough.
- Parents enjoy activities and appreciate the support provided, especially in times of crisis. This has a positive impact on outcomes for the minority of target families with whom the centre engages. Typically parents say, 'Staff made me feel welcome and were just so helpful and really listened. I had a lot of problems eating and sleeping. Throughout the two years, staff have helped me with debt and benefits and job readiness.'
- Provision for parents of disabled children or of those with complex health needs is appropriately delivered through the 'Hand in Hand' group. The group is recommended by health partners in the local area and word has spread about this good support for families. For example, family support workers who are Portage trained help parents to complete disability allowance forms and the group has a good support network so parents can share their experiences.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Inadequate

- The centre is in a state of flux as it adjusts from being run by the headteacher from the academy onsite, to being led by the local authority. This has had a dramatic effect on service delivery, on staff management and staff morale. Relationships are beginning to improve but communication is inconsistent. Leaders have identified the centre's many weaknesses and put in place strategies to tackle them but there has not been enough time for these to show any impact.
- Although the centre runs smoothly day-to-day, the local authority does not offer sufficient challenge to improve the centre and there is no clear direction from leadership, governance and management about how to move the centre forward.
- Governance arrangements lack rigour and challenge. The advisory board is not fully established and meetings are infrequent. The board does not check the centre's progress towards its targets or review priorities sufficiently.
- Leaders and centre staff do not have accurate knowledge about how many families from target groups regularly engage with the centre. While there are gaps in the data the centre receives, the centre does not sufficiently plan, monitor or review its work or the quality of the services it provides.
- The centre places a focus on identifying early intervention needs for children from birth to two years. However, insufficient attention is paid to meeting the needs of all children under the age of five from targeted families. There is insufficient data to demonstrate that targets are being met for all young children.
- Performance management and professional supervision take place but are inconsistently applied across the centre's work. For example, there is little evidence of supervision or target setting by leaders in case files, and record keeping is also inconsistent. Poor performance is identified by the centre, but new or recently planned improvements are not yet effective.
- Safeguarding arrangements are adequate. There is an appropriate focus on early identification of need for some of the most vulnerable families. Children and adults who are at risk of harm are identified appropriately by the social care team and family support team. This means that children who are looked after by the local authority and children subject to child protection plans are supported. The Common Assessment Framework is used as an early identification tool for families in

the greatest need.

- Parents contribute to feedback about the centre's activities and a few are represented on the advisory board. Evaluations from activities by parents provide the centre with sufficient information about how to make improvements to the centre.
- The centre has a programme of services which is open to the whole community, and provides targeted provision for a minority of families from target groups. However, the centre has not reached out to the community well enough and does not know who all the target families are. So although some families are receiving the support they need, many are not.
- Financial resources are sound. Staff are over-stretched, although new appointments are planned.

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	23670
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	427495
Managed by	Bradford Metropolitan District Council

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	1416
Centre leader	Kal Nawaz
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
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