

Brightside Children's Centre

Brightside Nursery and Infant School, Jenkin Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S9 1AS

Inspection date 15–16 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	This inspection: Previous inspection:	Good Not previously inspected	2
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 has been very successful at increasing the number of families who are registered. The large majority of those who are most in need of support and those who live in the most deprived areas make good use of the services that the centre delivers.
- Prevention and intervention work is effective in enabling vulnerable families who face significant challenges to build resilience, make well-informed decisions and take control of their lives.
- Young children enjoy the high-quality and well-planned activities such as, 'Early Movers' and 'Big Cook Little Cook' sessions, that help them to move on effectively in their learning and personal development. The centre's purposeful links with early years partners help the children to prepare confidently for school.
- Strong partnerships, especially with schools, health and social care professionals, have a very positive impact on children's learning, families' welfare and in reducing inequalities.
- Safeguarding arrangements are promoted well. Parents identify that they feel safe and well looked after when they use centre services.
- Good leadership, management and governance enable the centre to focus clearly on priority developments. Well-targeted action planning, underpinned by a thorough process of ongoing review, and robust local authority monitoring, means that the centre has a good capacity to sustain future improvement.

It is not outstanding because:

- Only a small minority of mothers, particularly in the Shiregreen area, choose to breastfeed for a significant length of time, and a high percentage of mothers smoke during pregnancy.
- Systems are not in place to check the long-term impact of the centre's work on some priority groups.
- Not enough parents are directly involved in the centre's decision-making and development. Those on the advisory board do not fully reflect the diverse communities within the area.

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 centre coordinator, officers from the local authority, centre staff, parents, members of the advisory board and a number of partners including health, education and children's social care professionals.

The inspectors visited a number of sessions held during the inspection including, 'Early Movers', 'Big Cook Little Cook' family learning, a breastfeeding support group and a health visitor clinic. They also involved the centre coordinator in all team meetings.

They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation including the centre's self-evaluation and development plans, parent evaluations, key policies and the centre's equality and safeguarding procedures, as well as a range of other relevant documentation.

Inspection team

Tara Street, Lead Inspector

Additional inspector

Jean Webb

Additional inspector

Aileen King

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

Brightside Children's Centre is a phase two centre situated within the grounds of Brightside Nursery and Infant School. It offers a range of services which include child health, family play sessions, parenting programmes, adult education, family outreach and a sensory room. The centre delivers services across Wincobank and Brightside and its reach has recently been widened to include Shiregreen.

There are 1,723 children aged nought to five years in the locality. Within the reach of the centre, there are significant issues related to teenage pregnancies, isolation, unemployment, substance misuse and low levels of literacy and numeracy. There is a diverse mix of residents. Twenty-four percent of children belong to Black and Minority Ethnic communities, with a growing population of Roma Slovak families, many of whom speak English as an additional language. Housing is mostly social or private rental with some areas of privately owned housing. Levels of unemployment are high, with 32% of children living in households dependent upon workless benefits. Many of the existing jobs are low paid. Most children enter early education with knowledge and skills that are slightly below expectations for their age. There are links to the four local primary schools which are subject to separate inspection arrangements. The reports of these inspections are available on our website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Governance of the centre is provided by Sheffield local authority, in conjunction with an advisory board that includes providers, delivery partners, and members of the local community and users who attend the centre.

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, particularly in the Shiregreen area, by working even more closely with health partners to:
 - reduce the number of mothers who continue to smoke during pregnancy
 - increase the number of mothers who continue to breastfeed at six-to-eight weeks.
- So that the centre can measure its long-term impact, establish a system for checking how well:
 - children who access centre services, achieve by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage
 - adults, particularly those on low incomes or who are workless, achieve on the courses to which they are signposted.
- Strengthen the role of parents in centre decision-making, and increase the numbers who serve on the advisory board to reflect more fully the diverse communities within the area.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Good

- The centre is pro-active in promoting its activities and the benefits of the services on offer to families who live in the area. At 79%, the large majority of families are engaged in centre services, including those whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable. The coordinator is highly ambitious and is going all out to achieve 100% contact and involvement with children and families. As a result, despite the recent addition of the Shiregreen area, both registration and engagement percentages have increased.
- Families benefit from a good balance of targeted support and access to the universal services offered by the centre and its partners. Good use of new-birth data, highly effective partnerships

with a range of professionals and effective prevention work have all played key parts in the centre's success. Staff have a good knowledge of the varied issues facing families in their community. Through effective referrals and sharing of information, families' needs are quickly identified and met.

- Parents are fully involved in the assessment of their own needs and the 'team around the family' approach is used effectively. Good professional support for children and their families, from a range of agencies, ensures that they get the right support and practical help with issues such as childcare. The uptake of funded early years education is high. Almost 73% of entitled two year olds access places. The uptake for three- and four-year old places is 86.9% in Brightside and 96.5% in Shiregreen.
- Disabled children and their parents are well supported, through good access to a well-resourced sensory room and clear signposting to specialist support groups. Extremely strong links with some local schools have helped to increase Roma Slovak children's school attendance from 50% to 90%.
- Centre users speak highly of the friendly and supportive services they receive from staff, who work hard to build trusting relationships and ensure that everyone is included, irrespective of their background. Parents give high praise to breastfeeding support workers and say how quickly they react to any concerns. One parent commented that, 'Breastfeeding this time around was so traumatic for me, I was really glad to have them around to support me.'

The quality of practice and services

Good

- The wide range of well-planned, good quality services offered by the centre and its partners, results in increasing participation rates and families' improved well-being. Prevention work effectively helps families to get through times of crisis and become much better equipped to make future choices. Strong multi-agency work, especially with health, education and social care professionals, underpins the safety net of support to protect those most in need.
- Health outcomes are variable despite a strong drive to promote healthy lifestyles. Staff encourage parents to attend walking groups with their children; as a result, recent data show that levels of obesity are falling. The uptake of immunisation is high but the number of mothers choosing to continue breastfeeding at six-to-eight weeks, particularly in the Shiregreen area, is low at 28.9%. Staff offer good quality advice, guidance and practical support to those who wish to stop smoking but the number of mothers smoking in pregnancy remains too high.
- Effective partnership work with most local schools and early years settings helps the children who use the centre to make good educational progress. Targeted family learning sessions to boost children's development, such as 'Families Love Books', 'Story Sacks' and 'Play and Say', have a good impact on improving their skills. As a result, the achievement gap is narrowing and children are well prepared for school.
- However, there is no system for checking up how well children who access centre services achieve by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage compared to those who do not. This means that the centre cannot measure its impact in this area and inform future development planning.
- Parents enjoy a wide range of opportunities to extend their skills and knowledge, including in child development. Adults seeking training with a strong focus on functional skills and employment have undertaken courses in family learning, English for Speakers of other Languages, English and mathematics. Good completion rates and the gaining of formal qualifications effectively improve their life chances and reduce inequalities.
- Parents benefit from the availability of a crèche for all their adult learning courses. Achievements are celebrated with certificate award ceremonies and parents value this. However, the system to track adults' progress and measure the centre's long-term effectiveness in this area is under-developed.

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

- Governance arrangements are effective. The centre has robust systems for checking on its performance, including the performance management of staff, and setting priorities for future improvement. Good self-review procedures include centre staff, partner agencies and the passionate and challenging advisory board in looking critically at what works best and why. The local authority officer provides robust, accurate monitoring and works closely with the coordinator to support the centre towards still better effectiveness.
- The coordinator is highly motivated and knows the centre's strengths and where improvement is required. Procedures for evaluating its performance are effective. This includes the setting and monitoring of measurable targets in the centre's development planning to drive improvement. Parents' views are gathered through annual parent satisfaction surveys. Evaluations following activities also help the coordinator to shape centre services.
- Partnerships between the centre, on-site school and nursery are seamless. They work together extremely well to use high-quality resources, including staff deployment, very effectively and efficiently. As a result, they meet the needs of an increasing number of children and families, and children in particular are better prepared for the next step in their learning.
- Initiatives are underway to re-invigorate the parents' forum and there are some promising signs of parents committing to volunteering in the centre and running activities. However, few are directly involved in centre decision-making and participation on the advisory board by a wide range of parents who reflect the diverse communities in the area is under-developed.
- All the required policies and procedures are in place to ensure effective safeguarding practice across all aspects of the centre's work. There is careful monitoring of staff members' and partner professionals' suitability to work with children. Strong multi-agency partnerships and good use of Common Assessment Framework procedures ensure that children at risk, including those subject to a child protection plan or who are identified as being in need, are well-protected and kept free from harm.
- The inclusion of families and children is central to the centre's work. It has worked hard to build positive relationships with Eastern European and Roma Slovak families moving into the area and this is beginning to result in them feeling part of the community.

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	20435
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	427451
Managed by	The local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	1,723
Centre leader	Catherine Tunney
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
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Email address	catherine.tunney@sheffield.gov.uk

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