

Wycombe (Disraeli & Downley) Children's Centre

The Pastures, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP13 5JS

Inspection date 15–16 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:		
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 a very clear understanding of the needs of the local community. Consequently, the large majority of those it has identified as requiring most support, namely lone parents, workless households with young children and families from Black and minority ethnic groups, benefit from good services that meet their needs. As a result, they engage well with the centre.
- The very wide range of activities and services provided for adults have had excellent outcomes for many, especially in relation to building their confidence and supporting them to help their children lead healthy lives and be ready for school. A typical comment from a parent is that 'the centre is vital to the success of being the best parent you can be and ensuring a very healthy start for all children'.
- Very close ties with the link school and excellent tracking of children who have used the centre's services show that those children make good, and often better, progress as a result of their contact with the centre.
- The one-to-one support that the families receive who are identified by the centre as most needing help is of a very high standard, so that the outcomes for those families are excellent.
- Day-to-day management of the centre is highly effective; parents have extremely high regard for staff. They see the centre as a safe, warm and welcoming hub of the community, reflected by comments such as, 'Disraeli has changed our world and for that I am eternally grateful.'

It is not outstanding because:

- The data the local authority produces for the centre to enable it to know about the various groups in the local area and to measure its impact, whilst recently improved, are not always readily available. Consequently, the targets set by leaders and managers and those set by the local authority are not concise or measurable enough to drive faster improvements.
- The information that is shared by the local authority and social care is not detailed enough for the centre to know all vulnerable individuals in the local area who may need support. For example, children subject to child protection plans, looked after children and two-year-olds who are eligible for free early education.

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, who is also the headteacher of The Disraeli School, centre manager, officers from the local authority, representatives from health services and other key partners including those from adult education. They held discussions with parents and members of the advisory board and the governing body.

Several activities were observed by the inspectors, including one jointly with the centre leader who, along with the centre manager, also attended all team meetings. Inspectors looked at the centre's self-evaluation, action plan, a sample of case studies, safeguarding policies and procedures and a range of other documentation including several written testimonials from parents.

Inspection team

Joan Lindsay	Additional Inspector, Lead Inspector
Marinette Bazin	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

The centre was designated in February 2008, as a phase two stand-alone centre. It delivers or supports access to a range of services to meet its core purpose. The building is open 48 weeks of the year Monday to Friday, from 8.45am until 3.15pm, and provides activities every Saturday and one Sunday each month. The centre is located adjacent to The Disraeli School (URN 131852) whose governing body manages it on behalf of the local authority. The headteacher line manages the centre manager. The school is subject to a separate inspection.

There are 779 children under five years of age living in the centre's reach area. Children enter early years provision at levels well below those expected for their age. The Disraeli ward, where the centre is located, is ranked three out of 10 in terms of deprivation in the local authority. The centre serves seven super output areas (SOAs), with three ranked in the 30% most deprived in England. Approximately 15% of children from birth to four years of age are living in out of work benefit claimant households. White British heritage families account for 70% of the population. There is a wide range of other ethnic groups with the largest being Pakistani families who account for 17% of the Black and minority ethnic families.

The centre has identified its priority groups as Black and minority ethnic families, lone parents and those from workless households who have young children. The centre has also identified fathers in those groups as a key focus of their work.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Work with the local authority to get easier access to reliable, timely, pertinent data so that they and the centre can set challenging targets in the action plan and measure its impact more precisely, especially in relation to its focus groups.
- Improve information sharing with the local authority and social care so that the centre has accurate details in relation to the most vulnerable children in its reach area, especially those subject to child protection plans and two-year-olds who are eligible for free early education.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Good

- The local authority has recently changed its system to monitor access to children's centres and some important information is not readily available. However, because long-serving staff live locally and extensive outreach work is undertaken in homes, there is a deep understanding of the needs of the identified target groups. Consequently, the centre has registered and engaged the large majority of their target groups, particularly in the three most disadvantaged areas.
- Services are tailor-made to meet families' needs. For example, very popular weekly Saturday sessions and monthly Sunday outings, such as woodland scavenger hunts, enable fathers to be fully involved and support lone parents who find weekends isolating. Children are also given experiences they may not otherwise have had.
- Black and minority ethnic families are consulted on their needs with English language courses, Eid parties and sewing groups bringing families into the centre who were previously reluctant to engage. Wide-ranging support for families who are workless has also had a big impact on the numbers accessing and benefiting from the centre.
- Closer links with health services, child health clinics now taking place in the centre, good support from speech and language therapists and dental health have increased access to early childhood services for the large majority of families.
- There is a 100% take up of early education for three- and four-year-olds locally. However, the centre has only recently been made aware of statistics for take-up by eligible two-year-olds and is

not given information to enable them to contact and support families in their application.

The quality of practice and services

Good

- The centre provides a wide range of high-quality and relevant services that are tailor-made to meet needs that have been thoughtfully assessed through the centre's good knowledge of local families. Seamless links with The Disraeli School, sharing resources and staff expertise, close ties with health services and especially adult education providers, all combine to ensure outcomes for key groups are at least good. Sessions such as Tea, Toast and Twinkletoes are very popular and highly enjoyed by all.
- The centre has been particularly successful in helping children progress and be ready for school. Detailed learning journeys are used very well to track the progress of supported children and contribute well to narrowing inequalities. Children are tracked when they move on to The Disraeli School. Monitoring shows a positive impact from their contact with the centre; parents all say that sessions, such as Preparing for Nursery, help their children make a smooth transition.
- Children are also supported very effectively through parents' skills being developed well as a result of various structured parenting courses, such as Holding Hands and Parents as First Teachers. The large number of crèches provided by the centre not only enable more parents, especially from target groups, to come to activities, but also encourage children's independence.
- Health outcomes are good, with improving breastfeeding rates at six to eight weeks, low childhood obesity levels and high immunisation rates. The centre has a strong focus on promoting adults' and children's health through the involvement of a sports coach and sessions such as Munch Brunch and Firm Up Friday. This has had a positive impact on parents' understanding of how to lead healthy lives.
- The work the centre does to improve adults' confidence and key skills is a major strength. Groups for adults such as the Dizzy Choir and drumming, literacy, numeracy and language courses, and support for those wishing to return to work, have had a very positive impact on the large majority of adults' lives. Many parents have gone on to be literacy champions, volunteer in the centre or return to work as a result of the high aspirations set by the centre. The impact is summed up by comments such as, 'They gave me invaluable skills which I will carry with me for years to come.'
- The one-to-one support for the most vulnerable families is very effective even where there are multiple and complex needs such as mental health issues. It is highly appreciated by families, many of whom wrote or spoke to inspectors about the life-changing impact. However, the centre is hampered in ensuring some of the most vulnerable families' needs are met as it is not provided with enough information about children who are subject to child protection plans, looked after or those families where two-year-olds are eligible for free early education.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- Day-to-day management of the centre by the leader and manager is highly effective; the staff team is dedicated to improving the lives of local families. The local authority has recently improved the quality of data provided to the centre, but there are still some areas where the information is not readily available. As a result, the local authority and the centre do not always make effective use of data to set challenging targets and measure outcomes more precisely.
- The advisory board and the governing body are clear about their different roles. Members pay regular visits to the centre and so are knowledgeable and able to challenge the centre. Parents, including those who have benefited from the centre's targeted support and want to 'give something back', are well represented on the advisory board.
- Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults is given a high priority in the centre by well-trained staff and comprehensive policies and procedures. Parents have complete trust in staff. The centre is fully involved in multi-agency work. Staff instigate support through assessments done together with families using a system that has replaced the Common Assessment Framework locally. However, information sharing about the most vulnerable families is limited and the centre does not have a

named link social worker.

- Resources are of high quality and used very effectively. Staff are shared across the school and the centre, bringing not only a wealth of expertise but a consistency for parents and children.
- Families, including children and those from key target groups, are regularly consulted and fully involved in decision making. Parents' forum views and ideas are taken to the advisory board by parents' representatives and have been instrumental in shaping services.
- The centre is seen as a hub of the community, bringing together and celebrating all cultures and groups through major events such as the carnival. Parents are unanimous in their support for the centre, with comments such as, 'I cannot sing the praises of this centre enough. When I meet new mums, I always make a point of recommending Disraeli,' being very common.

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	23694
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	428589
Managed by	The governing body of The Disraeli School on behalf of the local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	779
Centre leader	Jatinder Virk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01494 445177
Email address	headteacher@disraeli.bucks.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

(Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

