

Loseley Fields Children's Centre

Green Lane, Binscombe, Surrey, GU7 3TB

Inspection date 3–4 December 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.

- Leaders and managers are passionate about meeting local needs and are effective in ensuring the centre makes sustained improvements. They have developed good partnerships with health services and social care and driven developments in the availability and quality of services delivered over the time that Caring Day Care have been managing the centre.
- Based on reliable information and local knowledge, the centre has correctly identified which priority families require more focused support, and engages them well. In two of the three most deprived areas the centre serves, a very large majority benefit regularly from the centre's good quality services.
- Safeguarding arrangements are robust and a strength of the centre. Partnership working with children's social care professionals is effective and as a result all vulnerable children receive good support. Regular supervision of staff coupled with frequent and effective quality assurance processes ensure case recording is of good quality and that families remain engaged.
- Common Assessment Framework processes are used well to assess the needs of families. They ensure that families, who need additional help, receive tailored multi-agency early support which is well coordinated and reviewed regularly.

It is not outstanding because:

- There is an insufficient range of opportunities for adults to develop their basic skills, including in English, mathematics and information technology, to allow them to further their opportunities into employment and volunteering.
- A small minority of families with children aged under five years, including those most in need of support, remain difficult to engage and are not benefiting from the services offered.
- The centre does not always effectively track and check the difference it is making in the short and long term for those adults and children who access groups, activities, education and training opportunities.

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 of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

The inspectors held meetings with the centre manager and deputy, the director of Caring Day Care, senior representatives from the local authority, the home-school link worker from the neighbouring primary school, members of the advisory board and parent forum, the manager for child protection family support workers and Homestart. They also met with outreach workers, a health visitor, a representative for family learning and many parents. In addition they met the centre's childcare manager of the on-site nursery.

The inspectors visited activities and also undertook a joint observation with the deputy manager.

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

Inspection team

Susan Crawford, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jonathan Palk

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about the centre/group

This is a phase two children's centre. In partnership with other local agencies it fulfils the full core purpose. There are currently 743 children under five years old in the reach area. Surrey County Council has a contract with Caring Day Care to manage Loseley Fields Children Centre. The centre serves the Godalming and Binscombe wards of Waverley and covers areas that are within the 70% most disadvantaged areas. Although there are some areas where deprivation is high, unemployment in the area that the centre serves is relatively low. The children's centre's advisory board holds the centre to account through its development plan and contract with Caring Day Care. There is also a parent partnership group in place.

The centre provides health and family support services, a limited number of adult learning opportunities, and early years advice and guidance. The numbers of teenage parents and obese children of reception age are below the Surrey average. There is a small minority of families from minority ethnic backgrounds. Most children's levels on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage are below those expected for their age.

A 91-place pre-school nursery for children aged from nought to five years is located in the building. It operates 7.40am to 6.00pm 51 weeks of the year. The nursery is managed by Caring Day Care and has separate early years inspection arrangements. The nursery was last inspected in July 2012 and was judged as good; the inspection report can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of the most vulnerable families who engage with the services available to them, particularly those from Godalming and Farncombe.
- More closely check and track the difference the centre is making for those children and families who access activities, groups, education and training opportunities in the short and long term.
- Work with the local authority and relevant partners to improve the range of learning opportunities for adults and fully support them in developing their basic skills, including in information technology, literacy and mathematics, and to go on to further training, volunteering or employment.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families Good

- Parents proactively support the centre in engaging more families, and, in particular, those that are less likely to do so. They regularly speak to new families to make sure they are aware of what the centre has to offer. A parent who spoke to inspectors summed up the view of many families when she said, 'Everything I do here is great and the staff here really do care.'
- Good information sharing ensures that the health services notify the centre of every pregnancy in a vulnerable family and every birth in the local area. As a result, the centre's outreach team, where necessary, undertakes home visits to expectant and new mothers and offers good early advice and support. When these families register with the centre they are provided with a wide range of information and advice on a range of issues including: breastfeeding, weaning, food safety, children's first aid and safety in the kitchen.
- The centre puts its in-depth local knowledge to good use and has registered most children under five living in the reach area. A large majority of these families regularly access services. In the two most deprived areas, in which the centre has rightly prioritised its work to engage more families who most need help, the very large majority are registered and most access the centre's services. These families include: lone parents, children who are in need and families living in the most deprived areas. The areas of Godalming and Farncombe have fewer registrations and lower take-up of services that the centre has to offer.

- The centre has also identified other groups of families with which it has successfully engaged. There is a thriving young parents' group, for example, and the number of lone parents accessing services has doubled over the last 12 months.
- The range of courses and opportunities for adults to improve their basic skills, including in information technology, English and mathematics, is limited and the centre is not fully supporting enough adults into further training or employment.
- Significant numbers of three- and four-year-old children access good quality early years provision at the on-site nursery. A hundred per cent of two-year-old children access free entitlement to good quality early education based on the centre's accurate and careful assessment of need. All children receive good support to help them prepare for school.
- The centre serves a large rural area and urban area. Leaders deliver services directly in the community via the mobile children's centre bus, and as a result, families who are isolated gain access to services which improve their emotional well-being.

The quality of practice and services

Good

- The support that the centre provides to families whose children are in need and those children on a child protection plan are good. A coordinated approach ensures that parents are fully supported to improve their parenting through courses such as 'Parenting Puzzle'. As one parent said, 'The centre helps me to notice the good things my partner does with our child, which improves our relationship and encourages our child to behave well.' As a result of the good work the centre does, parents remain engaged and say that they are very satisfied with the services that are provided.
- The 'Free Early Entitlement for two year olds' provides disadvantaged two-year-old children with 15 hours of good quality childcare per week. Effective work is enabling the lowest attaining children to catch up with their peers by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. At 71.4%, the proportion of children who achieve good levels of development by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage is just in line with the Surrey average. This is effectively improving their life chances and reducing inequalities.
- There is regular information that ensures tracking is focused on families and children's welfare needs. Those families who find themselves in difficulty, particularly those young mums and families with child protection plans in place, are carefully tracked. However, the tracking is not always as well focused to show children's progress and the impact that the centre is having on them.
- Adults do not have enough opportunities to gain qualifications or the skills needed for work. Adults who do access training are not being tracked so the centre does not know what impact it is having.
- Health outcomes have improved well. For example, due to effective partnership work the proportion of mothers who breastfeed at six to eight weeks after birth is much higher than the Surrey average at 75%. Obesity and overweight rates of children in their Reception Year are low, and the centre continues to provide a range of services to promote healthy living to ensure the rates of obesity remain low.
- Children and parents engage in a range of well-planned and delivered sessions to support families' well-being, such as 'Play and Learn' sessions, 'Weaning Workshop' and 'Fathers and Male Carers Group' held on a Saturday. Parents speak positively about the centre's services and how they are developing understanding of how to support their children's learning, particularly the importance of physical activity and promoting their communication and language skills.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- The highly qualified and effective centre manager has inspired a good team of ambitious staff and partners. Together with the director they have significantly increased the number of families using the centre over the last 12 months and deliver good activities and one-to-one support to families, particularly those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Resources are used well to maintain regular and positive engagement with families and to improve their well-being. An overwhelming number of parents were very keen to tell inspectors how much the centre had helped to improve their lives.
- Leaders and managers know the needs of the area well because they take the time to build up local knowledge; they also make good use of the information supplied by the local authority. They keep records of activities and evaluate them so they know how satisfied parents are of activities that they have attended. They know the centre's strengths and where improvement is required. However, the centre does not consistently track all individuals to show the full effect that all services have on improving the lives of adults and children.
- The centre uses good self-evaluation systems to identify priorities and set mainly challenging targets for improvement.
- Governance is good. Good links are in place between the advisory board, key partners and the local authority. The parents' forum is in place and well attended, and parents' opinions help to shape the services that are on offer. Parents are represented on the advisory board and regular surveys and evaluations ensure the centre knows the views of parents and uses these well to improve access and to shape services. They provide good support and a high-level of challenge to the centre to ensure that it meets the needs of the families in the area.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective. Well-qualified staff act quickly and make good use of the centre's detailed policies and procedures to make sure children are protected well. Children with additional needs are identified early and have tailored packages of support.
- Performance management and professional supervision are well established and consistently applied across all staff which ensures families receive swift, appropriate and good quality support. Case files are closely monitored and maintained to a good standard.

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 well-being 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.

Select details

Unique reference number	21860
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	427591
Managed by	Caring Day Care

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	743
Centre leader	Pam Arrowsmith
Date of previous inspection	3–4 December 2013
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