

# Moorgate Nursery School & Children's Centre

Moorgate, Ormskirk, Lancashire, L39 4RY

## Inspection date

28–29 November 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, managers and governors are ambitious to continue to improve services and outcomes still further. Determined staff have worked hard to make sure that a large majority of children and families from the target groups in the most disadvantaged areas of the reach register with the centre and engage regularly in a range of activities.
- The centre is well known and enjoys a good reputation. Parents say of the centre that, 'it is the place to come to for advice, support or to get something off your chest. Staff are very welcoming and offer a variety of things to do and have fantastic, creative ideas.' Families know that their views are regularly listened to by staff and that they play a part in decision making.
- The very small but proactive team of outreach workers know the community well, including the groups most in need of support.
- Many families are helped to deal with difficult situations. Referrals, outreach work, universal services, observations and assessments are all used effectively to identify needs and to match families to the services they require.
- The progress children make from the time they first attend the centre to when they leave is carefully tracked and then linked to their achievements by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They achieve consistently well.
- Unemployed adults have good access to advice, guidance, education, training and volunteering opportunities to help them to return to employment.

### It is not outstanding because:

- Levels of registration and engagement of children and families are not yet high enough, although they continue to rise year on year.
- The centre has not succeeded in establishing a clear trend of improvement in reducing levels of obesity for children entering the Reception Year in 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 three additional inspectors.

The inspectors held meetings with centre staff, parents, members of the children's centre committee, volunteers, representatives from professional partnerships including health, adult education, early years and education, as well as officers from the local authority. The lead inspector observed one activity jointly with centre staff.

The inspectors visited a local primary school to discuss a project to promote school readiness. Inspectors took into account parents' views as expressed directly to them during the inspection, as well as through parents' recorded evaluations of the centre's work.

They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation such as the centre's checks on its performance, development plans and data, information related to safeguarding and a selection of case files.

## **Inspection team**

Jane Hughes, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Qaisra Shahraz Ahmad	Additional Inspector
Sue Pepper	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about the centre

This is a stand-alone, phase two children's centre. It is co-located with Moorgate Nursery School. The head of centre is also the headteacher of the nursery school, with a 0.5 teaching commitment. A children's centre coordinator works closely with the head of centre to provide services to the local community. A privately run childcare setting, Munchkins, also operates from the building. Both the nursery school and the childcare are subject to separate inspection arrangements. The reports of their inspections are available on the Ofsted website at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The range of services provided includes family support, health services, parenting, volunteering and adult education. Lancashire County Council commissioned the governing body of the nursery school to deliver the children's centre offer. The governing body has a dedicated children's centre committee which oversees the centre's provision and reports to the governing body. Target groups include families most in need, teenage parents, lone parents, male carers and children and/or parents with additional needs. The centre serves a wide rural area around the urban centre of Ormskirk. Services are delivered at locations across the whole reach area, where appropriate, so that they are as accessible as possible to families. The reach includes pockets of deprivation and rural isolation. One of the super-output areas within the reach area is within the 30% most deprived areas in the country and there are two within the top 40%. There are 1105 children under four years of age living in the reach area. Of these, 73% are registered with the centre. Almost all children are of White British heritage. Within the reach, 14.6% of children aged under five years live in households dependent on workless benefits. Children enter early years provision with skills which are generally below those expected for their age.

### What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Continue to work towards high levels of registration and engagement, particularly of target groups from the most deprived areas in the reach.
- Develop further the work in partnership with health professionals to reduce levels of obesity in children when they start school.

## Inspection judgements

### Access to services by young children and families

Good

- The large majority of local families, including those expecting children, are registered with the centre and have access to good quality services. Staff know the community well, listen to what families would appreciate and plan services that are most relevant to families. For example, the very popular free swimming sessions during the school holidays.
- Staff regularly check who engages with centre services. They know that a large, although not a very large, majority of families participate in activities provided by the centre. Families who require additional help are identified through their attendance at groups available to all; outreach workers make sure that these families go on to access targeted support to meet their individual needs.
- Due to the very small staff team and the wide reach area, services are closely targeted at families who are in most need of help. This focus is very successful in engaging the large majority of target groups in centre services. Male carers appreciate the many activities organised for them at convenient times.
- Close cooperation between the centre and health partners helps to drive up registration figures. These have risen from 58% to 73% over the last four years. Established relationships with external partners and families encourage increasing levels of self-referral to the centre by some families as they seek family support or signposting to specialist services such as Portage.
- The centre is successful in ensuring that the very large majority of families with the most needs are accessing free nursery places, particularly for two-year-old children.
- Adults have good access to services to promote employability skills, including advice and guidance from Jobcentre Plus. The take up of work-related courses is good. Volunteering opportunities at the centre have enabled family members to build their confidence and progress into training and eventual employment.

### The quality of practice and services

Good

- Staff are highly skilled and versatile as they are few in number. The outreach team delivers a range of services including bespoke support in families' own homes. This work is very successful. Children with additional needs and mothers with emotional issues are well supported by outreach workers who build trusting relationships and share good advice and support.
- Parents describe how the lessons they learn on courses run by the centre help them to keep their families safer and happier. For example, they learn how to deal with choking incidents, how to avoid or treat burns and how to manage children's behaviour more successfully.
- Good partnerships exist with playgroups in the more rural area of the reach area as well as with private and voluntary childcare providers in order to promote health and well-being messages and to develop skills. Local childminders regularly take advantage of the centre's provision to promote children's social skills. Despite the high-profile messages concerning healthy lifestyles promoted by the centre, obesity rates in reception-age children in the area fluctuate and are currently too high.
- Support for breastfeeding mothers is a strength. Of those mothers who attend the centre's 'From Bump to Birth and Beyond' group, 100% initiate breastfeeding.
- The centre maintains extremely strong partnerships with local schools and early years providers to promote school readiness and 'forest school' activities. Children benefit greatly from these meaningful activities. They develop good skills and are well prepared for school.
- A high proportion of children across the reach achieve a good level of development by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage and develop key skills for future success. The rate of children's progress is improving year on year and the gap in attainment between the lowest achieving 20% and the rest continues to narrow. This gap was much narrower than the national figure in 2011/12 and the centre is improving children's life chances and reducing inequalities.
- Opportunities are good for adults from target groups, such as lone parents, male carers and disabled parents, to participate in a range of activities that enhance their personal skills, education

and employability. Adult users regularly volunteer and provide feedback and ideas which help with the running of the centre. Good quality advice and guidance are displayed throughout the building to support users as they develop their skills and knowledge.

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

Good

- Together, the head of centre and the centre coordinator ensure that the centre provides carefully targeted and effective services for the community. Their complementary skills support an equal focus on education and social care. Close working links with the co-located childcare and nursery school mean that transition to the next stage of learning is smooth.
- Governance through the children's centre committee is effective, well informed and knowledgeable about all aspects of the centre's good performance, including that of staff and their impact in reducing inequalities. Committee members check the impact of the centre's work, review data, add to the accurate self-evaluation of the leadership and offer effective support and challenge.
- The local authority sets challenging annual targets for the centre and provides pertinent support and expertise. Officers ensure that the centre can access all data on a daily basis. Leaders make good use of this, review the data accurately and plan how to improve further provision and practice.
- Safeguarding arrangements are good, including the recruitment of staff. The centre and its partners work closely to ensure children and families are kept safe from harm. There are clear policies and procedures that are transferred into daily practice. Centre staff, along with other partner agencies, provide swift support to families at risk of harm and provide good support to families with children subject to child protection plans, looked after children and children in need. There is effective and well documented use of the Common Assessment Framework process, to assess the needs of families.
- Partnership work is highly successful and is vital in view of the very small staff team. Through the careful use of available resources, the centre is able to provide a varied range of activities and services to meet the needs of families and the community. Staff are still working to register, support and engage even greater proportions of local families and will always look for different solutions.
- Levels of staffing have reduced following financial cuts but the quality of resources and staff remains good. Effective leadership, appropriate partnership work and skilled budgeting have enabled the centre to increase its impact. Leaders ensure good use is made of the diverse skills of staff. Staff are supervised meticulously by the centre coordinator and their targets are clearly linked to priorities for the centre.
- The centre is successful in its promotion of inclusive practice. Every effort is made to remove barriers to engagement and success for families, to promote equality and to tackle any discrimination.
- Families are highly complimentary about the centre, its staff and services. They are involved in decision-making processes. Parents are represented on the children's centre committee and also contribute ideas through 'family voices' and regular evaluations of activities.

**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**

<b>Unique reference number</b>	22040
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	427468
<b>Managed by</b>	The local authority
<b>Approximate number of children under five in the reach area</b>	1105
<b>Centre leader</b>	Jan Holmes
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable
<b>Telephone number</b>	01695 573470
<b>Email address</b>	head@moorgate.lancs.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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013

