

Farcliffe & Lilycroft Children and Family Centre

56 Toller Lane, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD8 8QH

Inspection date 26–27 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.

- The centre is the hub of the community and parents feel welcomed and valued. They speak highly of centre staff and consider the centre to be a place where they are able to drop in at any time for friendship and support.
- The centre works hard to encourage families in the neighbourhood, including those who may be hard to contact, to access its services. As a result, the centre is usually successful in engaging the large majority of families who are most in need of support.
- The centre has a good impact on the general well-being and achievement of children and their families because it provides a wide range of good-quality services. Children make good progress and are becoming better prepared for school. Adults improve their parenting and academic skills, develop in confidence and are better able to support and protect their families. The centre is particularly successful at helping families to manage their finances.
- Leaders and the advisory board are constantly reviewing the quality of services and are committed to ensuring that the centre continues to drive forward improvement at a good rate. They work well with a wide range of partners to secure high-quality services that contribute well to improving the lives of local families.

It is not outstanding because:

- The centre has not yet succeeded in improving outcomes relating to obesity for children entering Reception or in encouraging more mothers to continue to breastfeed for a significant length of time.
- The systems to track and monitor the progress of adults and children, so that the centre can measure the long-term impact of its work, are not yet robust enough.
- Data provided by the local authority are not always sufficiently accurate. They are not presented and analysed in an easy-to-use way that gives a clear picture of the impact of the centre's work on the lives of local families. The targets set by the local authority for the centre's improvement plan are not always ambitious enough or sufficiently clearly defined to be able to measure its success.

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 area family support manager, children’s centre manager, children’s centre improvements officer, and the service manager for complex health and family centre services. They also held meetings with 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 ‘Baby weaning’, ‘Cook and Eat’, mathematics and the crèche. They also involved the centre area family support manager and children’s centre manager in all team meetings.

They observed the centre’s work and looked at a range of relevant documentation such as 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
Daniel Grant	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

Farcliffe & Lilycroft Children and Family Centre is a phase one centre. It offers a range of services which include child health, family play sessions, parenting programmes, adult education, family outreach and crèche facilities. The building also houses the family centre which works with families and children who are either at risk of significant harm or have complex family situations.

There are 970 children aged nought to five years in the locality, of which 100% live in the 0–30% most deprived areas in the country. There are significant issues in the area surrounding poor housing, low income, unemployment and low levels of literacy and numeracy. There is a predominantly South Asian population and a growing community of Eastern European families, many of whom speak English as an additional language. Housing is mostly private rental with some small areas of high affluence and privately owned housing. Levels of unemployment are high, with 39.3% of children living in households dependent upon workless benefits. Most children enter early education with knowledge and skills that are generally well below expectations for their age. There are links to the four local primary schools and the centre's onsite childcare provision is delivered by Farcliffe & Lilycroft Children and Family Centre which is run by the governing body of Lilycroft Nursery School. These are subject to separate inspection arrangements and the reports are available on our website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Governance of the centre is provided by Bradford Local Authority, in conjunction with an advisory board that includes providers, delivery partners, and members of the local community that attend the centre.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of services in supporting children and families to develop healthy lifestyles by:
 - reducing obesity in children under the age of five years by continuing to work with partners in health, primary schools and early years settings
 - providing further support to increase the number of mothers who sustain breastfeeding for at least six-to-eight weeks.
- Establish a system for more effectively tracking and monitoring the progress of adults and children so that the centre can measure the long-term impact of its work.
- Improve the way data are used by the local authority, centre leaders and the advisory board to measure the impact of the centre's work and to drive further improvements by:
 - ensuring that all data are accurate and presented in a way that provides a clear picture of the impact of services and aids the identification of all target groups, such as fathers and Eastern European families
 - working with the local authority to set more challenging targets to enable leaders to measure thoroughly the impact of the centre's work.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Good

- At 89.8%, a very large majority of families, including those expecting children and from target groups, are registered with the centre. The large majority are engaged and benefiting from its services regularly, with particularly strong participation by those families whose circumstances make them most vulnerable.
- The centre works well to identify families in need, in its area, because staff have a good knowledge of the local community. Active involvement in the local area, including partnership work with schools

and community groups, ensures that the centre is made aware of families that are most in need of their services. Staff work hard to involve families who fail to participate regularly. They use text messaging and e-mail to publicise the centre's work and services on offer.

- Committed staff provide good support, care and guidance in the home to assist families who are most in need and who find accessing the centre difficult. This includes those parents who speak English as an additional language.
- Centre users speak highly of the friendly, supportive services they receive from staff, who work hard to build trusting relationships and ensure everyone is included, irrespective of their background. The comments of two parents sum up the views of many: 'The centre is a nice environment to come to and I feel safe here.' 'Staff are really helpful, professional and make me feel welcome. I can speak freely and I'm treated as an individual. They show genuine interest in me.'
- Most eligible children from target groups take up the entitlement to free early education, although there is only a small number of funded places available due to the limited local childcare provision. The centre has been active in supporting parents to identify other good provision outside the area so that more children will be able to take advantage of good-quality free early education in the future.

The quality of practice and services

Good

- The wide range of well-planned, good-quality universal and targeted services offered by the centre results in increasing participation rates and families' improved well-being. Sessions such as 'Stay and Play Together' and 'Cook and Eat' are well attended. At the monthly 'Dads' Group', fathers enjoy a wide range of activities, such as pizza making and visits to local play centres, which strengthens family bonds.
- Outreach work is a strength. It helps families in need to get through times of crisis and become much better equipped to make sensible future choices which improve their life chances. Work with the growing Eastern European community, such as a dedicated bilingual family support worker, is beginning to break down barriers and reduce inequalities.
- Partnerships with local providers of early education are very good. Well-established school readiness programmes have ensured children's skills on entry to nursery are continuously improving. 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 planning.
- Health outcomes are variable despite staff's hard work. The uptake of immunisation is high and staff offer good-quality advice to those who wish to stop smoking. As a result, the number of mothers smoking during pregnancy is particularly low at under 5%. The proportion of Reception-age children who are obese continues to rise and now stands at 11.9%, which is above regional and national averages. In addition, although the percentage of mothers choosing to continue breastfeeding at six-to-eight weeks is positive at 46%, this has dropped by 12% in the last year.
- Parents are well supported to become volunteers and to access a wide range of further education courses. These include 'Working with Children', functional mathematics and English, and English for Speakers of Other Languages. This has led to many undertaking further accredited courses and being supported into employment. However, systems to track adults' progress and measure the centre's effectiveness in this area are underdeveloped. Strong partnerships with a benefits and debt advice organisation enable families to manage their finances more effectively.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- The centre leader is highly respected by other managers, staff and partners and has effectively built upon existing good practice at the centre. Procedures for checking the quality of the centre's work have increased in rigour while still retaining the welcoming atmosphere that is highly appreciated by parents.

- Performance management and professional supervision of staff are well established. Staff have opportunities to undertake relevant training and development. This has a positive effect on staff knowledge and on how well they meet the needs of families. The sharing of expertise and services with partner agencies and other centres also helps to ensure that resources are used effectively to meet families' needs.
- Data provided by the local authority are not always accurate or organised in a way that presents a clear picture of the centre's impact on local families, including those in target groups such as fathers and Eastern European families. Additionally, targets set by the local authority are not always sufficiently challenging and are not helping the centre to secure outstanding practice. Nevertheless, the centre does its best with the available data and, because of leaders' and staff's excellent knowledge of the local community, it recognises where it needs to develop further.
- The advisory board contains a good mix of committed professional partners and local community representatives. They receive a good range of information about the centre's work. Members know about the way staff are managed and ensure that the centre is successfully tackling inequalities. For instance, the parent Chair takes an active role in staff recruitment procedures. However, the board's ability to challenge is reduced by the way that data are collated and presented.
- Duties relating to safeguarding are taken very seriously. Policies and procedures are thorough and the Common Assessment Framework is used appropriately in order to reduce levels of risk. The centre, in collaboration with colleagues in social care and community resource workers, provides good support for looked after children, their carers and children that have been identified as being in need or who are subject to a child protection plan.
- Relationships among centre users and with staff are very positive. Parents report a very high level of satisfaction with the work of the centre. They are consulted about their needs, and services are designed and developed in response to their requirements.

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.

Children's Centre

Unique reference number	21139
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	427461
Managed by	The local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	970
Centre leader	Mrs Jackie Greenwood
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
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