

Wadebridge and Camelford Children's Centre

Goldworthy Way, Wadebridge, PL27 7AL

Inspection date 13–15 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
Access to services by young children and families		Requires improvement	3
The quality of practice and services		Requires improvement	3
The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for children and families

This is a centre that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- Not enough of the families most in need, or who are less willing, are taking part in the centre's activities, as a result some families are not getting the information or specific support they need to improve their lives.
- Leaders are not using all the available information to review services or check whether families most in need are using them. Information gathering and target setting is insufficient to give priority to those most in need and make sure they get access to services and improve their lives well-being.
- Coordination and planning of services to improve the lives of meet families needs, particularly those who live in workless or low-income households is insufficient. Opportunities for adult learning, volunteering, increasing confidence, and gaining employment or education are not clearly coordinated and planned into the core work of the centre.
- Leaders do not track the progress of children and families most in need sufficiently and therefore the difference that these services are making is not clear.

This children's centre group has the following strengths:

- The centre's staff are highly committed and experienced and demonstrate good skills. One-to-one work, including work with those experiencing domestic violence and homelessness, makes a significant improvement to the lives of the families in the area.
- Safeguarding is given a high priority. The close working that exists between the health and social care professionals maintains a good focus on reducing the risk of harm to children. Families feel very welcome and safe at the centre.
- Strong links are developing with partners including school and health staff. Partners are committed to the work of the centre and make regular referrals, as a result, the number of families accessing services is increasing.
- Improvements to leadership and management are leading to more effective ways of working. The advisory board is now clear about its responsibilities and is providing a greater level of challenge. The centre manager feels better supported and is quick to make improvements when the need is identified.

Information about this inspection

The inspection of this children's centre group was carried out under Part 3A of the Childcare Act 2006 as amended by the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009. It was carried out at the same time as other children centres, which were Bodmin and Bude and Launceston.

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors.

The inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, managers from the local authority and centre staff. They also met health, education and social care partners, parents, early years practitioners, volunteers, and representatives from the advisory board.

The inspectors visited Camelford Children's Centre as well as Wadebridge Children's Centre. They had discussions with the parents forum, breastfeeding support group and a representative from Cornwall Works for Families. They did an observation of the 'Play Together, Learn Together' session jointly with the Centre Manager, they looked at the centre's self-evaluation, action planning, a survey of parents views, a sample of case studies and safeguarding procedures.

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

Inspection team

Penny Mathers	Additional Inspector, Lead Inspector
Jane Burchall	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sue Frater	Her Majesty's Inspector
Georgie Beasley	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

This is a phase three children's centre that began providing services to the public in March 2010. The local authority reorganised its children's centres in 2012 into six localities. Wadebridge and Camelford is one of three children's centres in the locality of North Cornwall that includes Bude and Launceston and Bodmin children's centres known as 'Locality Five'. The centre is managed directly by the local authority and has its own advisory board. The centre is in Wadebridge town and is open to the public Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 5.00pm and on some Saturdays. It has three linked sites at Camelford, Tintagel and Delabole. The Camelford site is within the Camelford School building. The school is subject to separate inspection arrangements

The children's centre covers a vast rural area of 188 square miles extending along the coast and across moorland. Public transport facilities are limited and families in outlying villages are at risk of social isolation. There are pockets of deprivation in Camelford, and Padstow where poverty levels are above the Cornwall average. Parts of the reach area are very affluent with a high population of working and middleclass homeowners in the Padstow and Rock area. The centre meets its core purpose by offering a range of services including 'Baby Explorers', 'Play Together, Learn Together', health early years sessions, twins group, dad's group, adult learning, and family support. Baby clinics, antenatal classes, breastfeeding support, counselling, early support for children with additional needs and youth work are also part of the services available.

Almost all of the families are of White British heritage. Most children in the area start early years provision with skills above what is typical for their age.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Improve access to services by children and families, especially those who are less likely to participate, so that a large majority of families engages regularly with the services they need.
- Collect and analyse information to determine whether those families most in need are using services and work with the local authority to set challenging and measurable targets for working with those families in order to improve their lives.
- Carefully check the progress of children and families, particularly those most in need, so that the centre knows whether the services and activities are making a positive difference..
- Develop, implement and evaluate a plan for working with those who live in workless households so that adult learning, volunteering and the services provided by employment agencies are central to the services available at the centre and lead to improvement.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Requires improvement

- The numbers of families registered with the centre is steadily increasing but it is not yet the large majority of those most in need who participate. Some families in the Padstow area are not able to easily access services because of transport difficulties? and as a result some of those most in need are not getting the information and guidance they need to improve their lives. However, services are available through a mother and toddler group and good one-to-one support is provided. For the future there are clear plans to improve access to services in the Padstow area.
- Staff work well to take services out to rural areas to increase the engagement of families but progress has been slow due to recent staff shortages. The staff team is now fully staffed and they are working across the rural area to improve access for families. Those families they work with receive information and advice in good time, are well matched to the services they need and improve their lives.
- A wide range of partners work well with the centre to identify individual families who may benefit

from early support services, including children with additional needs and those expecting children. Staff know the reach area well and make sure the families they are in contact with access the right services as quickly as possible.

- Work with those families most in need is increasingly seen as a priority. The centre is working in effective partnership with social care to meet the needs of children subject to child protection plans. Staff work well with the professional central assessment centre, social workers, school staff and health workers who are all confident to make referrals, as they know families will receive sensitive care and the personalised support they need to improve their well-being.

The quality of practice and services

Requires improvement

- For those families who attend the centre or receive one-to-one support the quality and range of services is good. Centre staff have high aspirations for the families they work with and provide good role models. They work hard to maintain high standards in the quality of practice and early support and as a result parents and carers value highly the support they receive and say it has been 'life-changing'.
- Monitoring of the progress families and children make is not fully developed. The assessment and action planning is good but the monitoring of the outcomes of those children and families most in need such as families in workless households is not yet fully analysed so that the difference services are making for these groups and individuals is not clear. Progress in learning and achievements made by adults is not regularly recorded or checked so the centre does not know how successful the courses have been or what the outcomes are after referrals are made to partner providers.
- Partnerships are strong and becoming more effective at providing early help for those most in need, including those new to the area and those in need of help with finances or housing. Midwives provide early appointments at the centre for those expecting children and valued antenatal classes are delivered jointly with children centre staff. Families appreciate the opportunities to see the health visitor and midwife at the centre and gain support with breastfeeding and weaning.
- A good number of families from workless households are referred to 'Cornwall Works for Families' and some adults gain qualifications but there is no clear plan of how adult learning, volunteering and opportunities to increase confidence are used to support families on a secure pathway to employment or further education. As a result, some opportunities are being missed to improve the lives of families quickly.
- Good quality parenting courses, where places are prioritised for those most in need, are successfully helping parents to be good parents and learn how to manage their children's behaviour. The centre maintains a good focus upon improving children's speech and language and parents report they have learned how to promote good speech and listening skills. Breastfeeding and healthy lifestyles are well promoted and the Breastfeeding Café and weekly drop in sessions for babies are both well attended and highly valued for the friendly support available.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Requires improvement

- The local authority is now providing clear leadership and guidance for the centre and recent monitoring reports undertaken by the school improvement team show there is now more understanding of the areas requiring improvement. Delays in recruitment in the past slowed the rate of progress, for example in taking services out into the community, but the current, fully staffed team, are keen to learn and ready to move the centre forward.
- The centre is central to the local authorities plan to give families the early help they need and procedures are in place to achieve this. Highly skilled staff are developing well through a very comprehensive programme of training that supports them in providing early help to families. The training includes nationally recognised early help training and, to ensure standard practice, this training is also offered to organisations that provide services for the centre.

- Resources are used effectively and the buildings at Wadebridge and Camelford are of good quality and well equipped. The day-to-day management of the centre is good. It is very well organised and staff feel valued and appreciate the regular supervision and appraisals that are well established.
- Not all the information available is used to check whether families most in need are using services or what the improvements to their lives are. Leaders have not yet set precise targets linked closely enough to the priorities of the reach area to bring about improvements. For example, the centre has not been set precise targets on expected levels of improvement in relation to working with those families living in workless households.
- Assessment of needs and action planning is robust, but monitoring of improvements to peoples' lives has had less attention. For example, the evaluation of the provision of adult education, opportunities to volunteer and services aimed at supporting workless families into employment or education is not clear. As a result, the centre is not sufficiently focussed on developing this aspect of their work.
- Safeguarding policies, procedures and practices are clear and a culture of safeguarding is well established throughout the centre's work so that arrangements to safeguard users is good. Recruitment and selection procedures ensure that all the necessary pre-employment checks are undertaken. Families feel safe at the centre and know how to keep their children safe from harm.
- Parents are involved in the running of the centre through a parent forum and parents regularly attend advisory board meetings. Parents are also consulted about their needs and any changes to services. Parents' views are gained through events and end of course surveys, however the evaluations of parenting courses are not yet fully analysed to ensure future courses are improved by the parent's feedback.
- The advisory board includes members from a wide range of support services including education, health, voluntary services and parents. A new chair of the advisory board has recently been appointed and roles and responsibilities have been clarified. The increased understanding of the requirements and a stronger ability to challenge means the centre is in secure position to drive forward further improvements.

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	23435
Local authority	Cornwall Council
Inspection number	427535
Managed by	The local authority
Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	1,918
Centre leader	Debbie Babb
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01872 322270
Email address	dbabb@cornwall.gov.uk

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