

Fenchurch Street Children's Centre

Fenchurch Street, Beverley Road, Kingston upon Hull, East Yorkshire, HU5 1JF

Inspection date 5–6 February 2014

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 families from the most disadvantaged communities are regularly using the services on offer.
- There are not enough places for eligible two-year-olds to take up their free entitlement to early education. The centre has not found ways to ensure that those children, who do not have a place, are regularly accessing activity sessions or support from the centre.
- Arrangements to support children's transition to school and ensure their readiness when they start school have not been established for all children living in the areas of high deprivation. Systems to monitor and track the progress of children are not fully developed.
- The extensive data provided by the local authority is not sufficiently clear and concise and the data bases of the three former centres have not been merged into one. This makes it difficult for the centre to fully monitor, evaluate and evidence the impact of its work and to set precise and measurable improvement targets.

This centre has the following strengths:

- Strong partnerships have a positive impact on some key target groups such as refugees and disabled children.
- Families benefit from the wider opportunities and services provided through Goodwin Development Trust who have high aspirations for this community.
- The centre provides good opportunities for parents to volunteer and gain skills which improve their opportunities to gain employment. The 'Doula' project has had an excellent impact on improving breast feeding rates.
- The centre coordinator has created a strong team of well-trained staff who share her passion for meeting the needs of families. Families receiving support express high levels of satisfaction.

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 senior staff from Goodwin Development Trust, the local authority, and staff from the centre. Inspectors also met with a range of partners including those from health services, educational organisations and the voluntary sector, and representatives from the advisory board. They listened to the views of parents.

The inspectors visited The Fenchurch and Octagon sites and the Octagon Family Centre. They also visited the Fenchurch Nursery and the Octagon Nursery.

The inspectors observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation. They looked in detail at a number of case files of children subject to child protection plans, those deemed to be children in need and others in receipt of outreach support.

Inspection team

Jean-Marie Blakeley, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jackie Phillips	Additional Inspector
Sheila Iwaskow	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

Fenchurch Street Children's Centre is managed by the Goodwin Development Trust on behalf of the local authority. It was designated as a phase one stand alone centre. In November 2013, it merged with two other former phase one centres, Octagon Children's Centre and Marvell Children's centre. Most of the 2,574, children under five years of age living in the reach area live in areas that are in the top 30% most deprived in the country. All of the 1769 children in the former Marvell and Octagon reach areas live in areas that fall into the top 10% most deprived in the country.

The centre delivers a range of services to meet its core offer, including parenting programmes, focused play sessions, on-site health clinics, one-to-one family support and adult education classes.

An advisory board comprising key partners governs the centre. The centre staff are based at the Fenchurch Street site which it shares with Fenchurch Day Nursery (EY355671). The centre delivers services from this site; a partner's site; the Marvell site; and the Octagon site which it shares with The Octagon Nursery (EY311282). The Octagon Nursery and the Fenchurch Day Nursery are both subject to separate inspections. These reports can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Data provided by the centre show that 775 children aged under five years live in workless households. The majority of families living within the reach area are from ethnic minority backgrounds with increasing numbers of Eastern European families moving into the reach area. Some Traveller families also live in the reach area. Housing is mostly privately rented houses. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge below those generally expected for their age. Target groups include those families living in the areas of most deprivation, workless families, minority ethnic families, lone parents, disabled children and parents, teenage parents and Traveller families.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Develop strategies to increase the regular engagement of families from the most deprived communities with the services on offer and more carefully monitor the attendance and impact on families.
- Work with the local authority and partners to ensure more two-year-old children are regularly engaged in learning activities either through access to high quality early years provision or through targeted activities at the centre.
- Work with schools and early years providers to improve children's transition to school so that more children have the skills expected of them when they start.
- The local authority should provide timely, clear, concise data and the centre should bring together the information from all of its databases into one, so that it can carefully evaluate the impact of its work and set precise and measurable improvement targets.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Requires improvement

- Most young children and their families in the local area are registered and have been seen at the centre. However, the centre has not found ways to ensure that the large majority of the families living in the areas of high deprivation, meaningfully and regularly engage with the centre and benefit from its services.
- Despite the high registration, participation rates and the sustained engagement of families across groups and activities are not thoroughly analysed. The centre has not focused sufficiently on monitoring this in order to identify those families who do not attend services or who fail to participate regularly. This has an impact on their ability to securely demonstrate meaningful, sustained engagement in appropriate centre activities.
- There are not enough places for eligible two-year-olds to take up their free entitlement to early education. The centre has not found ways to ensure that these groups of children regularly access activity sessions at the centre. Most children take up the three- and four-year-old funded places in provision that is good. However, some two- and three-year-old children accessed one provision found to be inadequate in its most recent Ofsted inspection.
- The effective partnership with health services increases access to services for expectant mothers, and mothers are encouraged to register with the centre at this stage. The prompt sharing of birth information with the centre leads to direct contact and home visits for mothers and babies living in the areas of greatest deprivation.
- Families with disabled children and refugee families engage well with the centre or partners' services. The strong partnership with social care ensures that families who are in most need are referred to the centre.
- Families using the centre appreciate the support offered by the staff. Outreach work is matched well to the needs of families and children so that care, guidance and support make a positive difference to their lives. The centre promotes information on its services and on other sources of help and advice through its attractive displays and posters.

The quality of practice and services

Requires improvement

- The centre has not fully developed its partnerships with local schools and early years providers in order to prepare children for the transition to school. Too many children do not have the skills and knowledge expected of them when they start school. The centre is not able to fully demonstrate the impact it is making on improving the performance of vulnerable children in their Early Years Foundation Stage and thereby reducing inequalities.
- Systems to monitor and track the progress of two- and three-year-olds that attend activities at the centre or access other early years provision are in the early stages and not yet fully embedded to ensure that children's progress is effectively monitored. Although some children achieve a good level of development, the gap between the lowest achieving children and their peers at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage is not narrowing sufficiently.
- Working with partners and volunteers the centre provides a range of learning, volunteering and employability programmes. Although numbers accessing these programmes overall is increasing, regular attendance at the work club is low and unemployment in the area remains high.
- The unique 'Doula' project is particularly successful in supporting pregnant mothers during and after pregnancy particularly those who are isolated or vulnerable. This is highly influential in increasing local breastfeeding rates to significantly above those found in Hull. The successful recruitment of highly committed volunteers on this project leads, for some, to employment, training and other volunteering opportunities.
- Strong partnerships mean that there is a reasonable balance of targeted and universal services. Good quality support is offered to vulnerable refugee families through the Haven project and the

refugee drop-in centre at Octagon Family centre. Disabled children and their parents benefit from good quality support and sessions at the centre in partnership with portage.

- The number of child protection cases, looked after children and children in need in the area is very high. Close partnership working between the social care team and centre staff helps ensure the needs of the most vulnerable families are met. As a result of the good quality care, guidance and support provided by the centre, outcomes for these families are positive, improving their life chances.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Requires improvement

- The extensive data provided by the local authority is not sufficiently clear and concise. The databases and records of the three former centres have not been merged into one. This limits the centre's ability to fully monitor, self-evaluate and evidence the impact of its work and to set precise and measurable improvement targets for key priorities.
- There is insufficient monitoring and analysis of the attendance of families living in the most disadvantaged communities to ensure that their engagement is good and sustained over time. As a result, evaluations do not draw well enough on data to monitor participation or show the full effect that services have on improving the lives of families.
- The advisory board is highly supportive of the work of the centre. Advisory board members understand their role of 'critical friend', with parents' and partners' knowledge and expertise providing a useful insight into the needs of the community. However, the challenge provided by the board to drive forward the improvements needed is limited by a lack of clear data and measurable success criteria for some priorities. This makes it difficult for members to evaluate the centre's ongoing performance.
- Families particularly benefit from the wider opportunities and services provided through the Goodwin Development Trust who have high aspirations for this community. The extensive range of services and resources provided, such as co-located early years provision, established volunteering programmes, training and employment opportunities and a free food bank for those in most need, adds value to the work of the centre.
- Operational management of the recently merged centre is good. Staff are well supported, trained and supervised in their work and contribute well to the on-going development of services. The centre staff work flexibly, sharing their skills and expertise, in order to support families effectively in a community with very diverse needs and high mobility rates.
- Parents using the centre feel that they are listened to and well supported by sensitive staff. They told inspectors that, 'It's the staff that make this centre. You get the best support.'
- Safeguarding arrangements are secure. Recruitment and checking of staff and volunteers ensure they are safe to work with children and vulnerable adults. The centre works well with health and children's social work colleagues in order to reduce the harm to children, including those subject to child protection plans, looked after children and those who are most in need.

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	21156
Local authority	Kingston upon Hull, City of
Inspection number	430196
Managed by	Goodwin Development Trust on behalf of the local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	2,574
Centre leader	Kerry Freeman
Telephone number	01482 497800
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