

Eglinton Children's Centre

Paget Rise, Woolwich, London, SE18 3PY

Inspection date	4–5 March 2014		
Overall effectiveness	This inspection: Previous inspection:	Outstanding Not previously inspected	1
Access to services by young children and families		Outstanding	1
The quality of practice and services		Outstanding	1
The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for children and families

This is an outstanding centre.

- The centre plays a crucial role in supporting families within the community. In total, 90% of parents and children who live in the area are registered with the centre. The vast majority of these families regularly engage in centre services and this makes a considerable difference to their lives. Consequently, the centre is now regarded as a vital resource within the local area by both families and partner agencies.
- The headteacher is an inspirational leader. She successfully combines her role in managing the school and centre and consistently uses innovative strategies to drive forward improvement. She leads a strong, dedicated team of staff who demonstrate total commitment towards providing high-quality services which meet families' needs exceptionally well.
- From their very low starting points, children achieve extremely well once they start at school. Staff complete comprehensive assessments when children begin at nursery and/or attend services within the centre. This means early years provision is closely matched to support individual needs. As a result, at the end of the Reception Year, children's skills are above the levels expected for their age.
- The provision to support parents in their learning and development is exceptional. Parents could not praise the centre highly enough to inspectors and explained the positive impact it has on their lives. One parent expressed the view of many by stating, 'The centre has really boosted my confidence as a parent. I would not be here today without the support of the centre.'
- Partnership arrangements with other services and professionals are exemplary. This means health visitors, midwives, social workers, speech and language therapists, educational psychologists and other agencies work seamlessly together to identify the help families need. As a result, parents view the centre as a 'one-stop shop' for advice, support and guidance.
- Senior staff from the local authority, the advisory board, Family Forum, and the school's governing body work extremely hard to ensure the centre consistently delivers high-quality services which match families' needs. They regularly challenge the headteacher and centre staff and ensure that all services have a positive impact on protecting families and improving their welfare; enhancing parents' emotional well-being and increasing children's skills so they are ready to start school.

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 one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional inspector.

The inspectors held meetings with: the headteacher and centre staff; senior leaders and managers in the local authority; centre staff; volunteers; representatives from commissioned services, such as health partners, adult learning providers and support services; members of the Family Forum; and representatives of the governing body.

The inspectors visited a number of sessions being delivered from the centre during the inspection, including a stay and play session, a baby group, a creative art class and a parenting programme. Inspectors also visited the linked early years provision.

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

Inspection team

Jo Caswell, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ann Janssen

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

Eglinton Children's Centre is a stand-alone centre, although it does work collaboratively with the Pound Park Federation in the 'Central B' area of Greenwich. The centre shares the same site as Eglinton Primary School (URN: 132837) and Early Years Centre and is led by the school's headteacher. The school's governing body oversees the management of the centre on behalf of the local authority. All services are fully integrated and targeted at meeting the needs of local families. The centre is open from Monday to Friday throughout the year. Some sessions are provided at weekends and in the evening. The centre provides a range of services including health clinics, parenting courses, early years provision, adult learning and family welfare sessions. There is an Ofsted-registered early years provision located on the same site (EY286665). Both the linked early years provision and primary school are subject to separate inspection arrangements. The reports can be accessed at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

The centre is located in Woolwich in the Royal Borough of Greenwich. The community served by the centre is mixed with significant areas of deprivation and a very diverse population. The large majority of families live in areas categorised as being in some of the 30% most deprived areas of England. A total of 915 children aged under five years live in the area served by the centre. Currently, 23% of children aged under four years live in workless households. Over 50% of children aged under four years are from Black or other minority ethnic groups. The Woolwich barracks are close to the centre and a significant number of army families live within the area. Children's skills, knowledge and abilities on entry to early years provision are typically below the levels expected for their age.

The centre considers its target groups to include: male carers, children from Black and other minority ethnic groups, children living in workless households and army families.

At the time of inspection, the local authority is in the process of commissioning children's centres to new providers.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Work with the local authority to use data and other information even more precisely to help staff measure the longer-term impact of the centre's services.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Outstanding

- Centre staff and partner agencies have an exceptional knowledge of the local community. Multi-agency working arrangements and monthly 'early help' group meetings ensure all services work together to identify the families most in need and refer them to the centre. As a result of this highly effective working relationship, the vast majority of local families are registered with the centre and regularly attend groups and access wider services.
- The centre is particularly successful at reaching all of its target groups. Registration and reach data have consistently improved since the centre opened. Incisive outreach work based on the staff's perceptive knowledge of the needs of local families ensures that the most vulnerable and disadvantaged families regularly attend centre services. Current data confirm in the period from April 2013 to February 2014 that 70% of children living in workless households were supported by centre services. This is a 39% increase from April 2012 to March 2013. In total, the centre's registration and reach have risen by 30% since last year.
- The engagement of male carers has risen by 48% since last year. A total of 65% of fathers and male carers are now registered at the centre and attend services. While the staff recognise this is the hardest group to continually engage, concerted action is taken to consistently maintain contact and creative sessions are held within community venues to attract an even greater number of fathers and male carers.

- Highly effective working arrangements with the local barracks and the Army Welfare Officer ensure army families are particularly well supported. Staff work tirelessly to address the needs of these families and provide services, such as 'Stay and Play' sessions and baby clinics, directly in the barracks to help engage as many families as possible. This is extremely successful and enables families to become familiar with services before they start attending the centre.
- The headteacher is aware that from this September a further 160 army families will be relocated from Wiltshire to the barracks. In preparation for this, centre staff and two local army families recently visited the Wiltshire barracks to introduce themselves and consult with families as to what services they might need. This was widely welcomed and generated an extremely positive response. As a result of this accurate analysis of need, the headteacher and staff are now planning how they will adapt centre services from September to accommodate the needs of army families new to the area.
- The centre has recently adapted its registered early years provision to provide solely for funded two-year olds. This means the vast majority of two-year olds eligible for nursery places are accommodated. As a result, children known to have low starting points benefit from high-quality early years provision. In total, 100% of children from the most disadvantaged areas of the community are supported in funded early years provision.
- The centre consistently increases its reach to Black and other minority ethnic families. Currently 80% of children from these families are registered with the centre and regularly access services. This figure has risen by 19% from this time last year. Case studies indicate many success stories. One parent has successfully secured employment within the school after completing the volunteering programme and an accredited training course.
- Midwifery services are delivered directly from the centre. Health professionals commend the work of the centre and the positive relationships established with families. Midwives and health visitors confirm this has led to an exceptional increase in the numbers of expectant parents accessing support services. Specialist services for pregnant teenagers and teenage mothers used to be provided directly from the centre. However, these services have now been centralised by the borough and are provided at a separate location.
- The centre has excellent systems in place for tracking the involvement of families in centre services. The vast majority of families using services are known to be vulnerable. Therefore, concerted action is taken to sustain contact with these families. Any non-attendance is quickly followed up and staff work tirelessly to ensure the families most in need access the support they require. Parents praised the work of the staff to inspectors and complimented the way in which staff help them and do not judge them. Many parents described the centre as their 'lifeline'. One parent summarised her views by stating, 'The centre is my second home.'
- Comprehensive outreach work within the community ensures that parents are fully supported in accessing services. Staff consistently identify strategies to overcome any potential barriers which may prevent parents from attending. Support is provided with funding and transport to ensure families access the help and professional services they require. As a result, attendance at services and sustained reach to all target families continue to rise and remain high.

The quality of practice and services

Outstanding

- The centre's work in identifying preventative strategies and intervention at an early stage is outstanding. Professional agencies work seamlessly together to provide an extensive range of holistic services. Information-sharing procedures are fully in place and ensure the most vulnerable families receive extensive levels of personalised support at the earliest stage. As a result of exceptional early intervention work, the number of children on child protection plans is consistently reducing.
- The centre is particularly successful in raising parents' aspirations and helping them to develop their skills and prepare them for further training and employment opportunities. The centre's case files indicate a vast number of parents who have progressed from attending centre activities, through to volunteering opportunities and on to training and employment. This is as a result of the exemplary care, guidance and support shown to all parents by centre staff. Consequently, parents begin to

believe in themselves and their own abilities. This has an extremely positive impact on their emotional well-being and self-confidence. One parent progressed from volunteering to completing a childcare course and has now decided to train to become a teacher.

- Excellent working arrangements between the centre and the local authority's 'Learning Together' and employment teams ensure programmes of support and progression are clearly tailored towards individual need. The centre has an exceptional volunteer programme in place and this year seven volunteers have progressed on to formal training and employment. Volunteers are used widely within the centre for administrative duties, working in the school and assisting with the delivery of groups. This enables parents to develop a wide range of skills and attributes and helps to improve the economic stability of lone parents and those from workless households.
- Centre staff are exceptional in providing opportunities for parents to develop and use their newly acquired skills. One parent was so inspired after completing a training course she took the initiative to develop the resources of the centre's sensory room and created a course to deliver to parents with babies.
- Parents clearly take an active part in identifying their own skills development. For example, at parents' own requests, a sewing group was established. This has been so successful with parents a second group has been started for those who have progressed from the beginners' group. Parents are overwhelmed at the acquisition of their new skills. One parent took pride in telling inspectors she is now making a wedding dress. Another parent stated she had been so proud to make her daughter a new dress and an outfit for imaginative play.
- Centre staff utilise every opportunity to build parents' self-confidence and improve family well-being. At the 'Health and Happiness day' organised with health partners last summer, parents who had completed a cookery course prepared all the healthy refreshments to be served on the day. Parents were so impressed with the snacks provided that a cook book has been produced to help other families benefit from the healthy recipes.
- The support to improve family welfare is outstanding. Health services work cohesively together and identify priority areas for improvement. Breastfeeding rates at six to eight weeks at 68.5% far exceed the national average. Families are positively involved in identifying strategies to adopt a healthy lifestyle. A group of parents are currently involved in a fitness challenge with other local children's centres and this is generating considerable interest among parents in how to improve physical activity levels and maintain a healthy weight.
- As a result of parents' improved self-esteem and emotional well-being, the positive impact on children is evident. Parents told inspectors they felt much more confident as parents, having completed specialist parenting programmes, and now fully understand how to manage behaviour positively. As parents' own skills and confidence have grown, centre staff now state parents are requesting more and more information about how they can support their children's learning at home. Targeted programmes are delivered to the most vulnerable parents and a discernible difference can now be seen in parents' confidence and children's skills and abilities to learn.
- The high-quality early years provision within the centre, and the excellent links with the school's Nursery and Reception classes, ensure the delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage is closely monitored. Parents told inspectors how much they enjoyed attending activities at the centre and particularly liked the opportunities for children to learn outside. Consequently, children develop positive attitudes towards learning and achieve very well at the end of Reception Year.
- Greenwich is recognised as being the second highest borough within England for Early Years Foundation Stage attainment. This is a significant achievement, given children's very low starting points, and means children are extremely well prepared for progression into Key Stage 1.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Outstanding

- The centre is exceptionally well managed and the headteacher and staff should be commended for the positive way in which they have continued to deliver services of the highest quality despite the period of significant change and restructuring arrangements which are due imminently.

- The school's governing body fully embraces the work of the children's centre within the school community. As a result, resources and finances are managed extremely well to enable staff to continually deliver high-quality services to the families most in need. The success of the children's centre has been partly down to the fully integrated way in which the children's centre and school work seamlessly together.
- The advisory board represents a wide range of services and professionals, all of whom take a keen interest in ensuring local families receive the highest levels of support. Governance arrangements are fully embedded at every level and there is clear evidence to confirm the high level of challenge provided to the centre to ensure it consistently delivers highly efficient services which make a positive difference to families.
- The local authority clearly invests in children's centres and recognises the value services bring to improve the life chances of local families. Data are regularly collated which helps to sharply monitor the centre's performance. However, occasionally this can be unwieldy and does not clearly help the centre to accurately reflect the exceptional impact it has had on families over longer periods of time.
- Safeguarding arrangements are exceptional. Partner agencies work extremely efficiently together to identify the highest priority families and organise immediate interventions. This has a significantly positive impact on family well-being and in reducing the numbers of children recognised as being at risk. The centre takes a lead role in the Common Assessment Framework with procedures for Team around the Family and Team around the Child systems being fully embedded. As a result, the local authority has identified the centre as providing the lead role in the process in a notable number of cases.
- The centre plays a fundamental part in supporting looked after children, and those who are also young parents. Services are tailored towards individual need and staff work extremely well with children's services to provide integrated support. There is exceptional provision in place for victims of domestic abuse. Many parents told inspectors how the centre services had helped them to rebuild their confidence and self-esteem at times when they were feeling very low.
- Performance management arrangements are excellent. The headteacher oversees the delivery of the centre's services and is supported by a highly effective team. All staff share the same vision and commitment to improve the life chances of vulnerable children and adults and they achieve this exceptionally well. The constant identification of new and innovative ways to engage the highest number of target families underpins all of the centre's work and is a real driver in the centre's success.
- The centre has been highly successful in reaching out to the hardest to engage families. This is through the tireless commitment and dedication of the staff. Consequently, the centre continually reaches the families who most need services and consistently seeks their views about how the centre can improve. The Family Forum is an extremely effective way of gathering the views of all families and significant improvements have been made as a result of parents' views. For example, parents requested later opening hours for the 'Stay and Play' group during school holidays and outings for low income families. Both of these suggestions have been fully acted upon by the centre.
- The success of the centre in delivering outstanding services is the way in which it has helped to significantly improve the life chances of the most vulnerable families in the most disadvantaged communities. Parents are wholly appreciative of the work of the centre and the dedication shown to them by staff. As a consequence, the centre is now highly regarded within the community and there are extremely harmonious relationships between all families. This has not always been the case within the area and the centre has been fundamental in strengthening community cohesion, promoting equalities and breaking down barriers between family groups.
- Parents truly value the input and support they receive from the centre and recognise how it empowers them to make changes to their own lives. They fully understand that every contact they have with the centre makes a considerable difference to their own well-being and their confidence as parents. One parent summarised this by telling inspectors, 'Instead of sitting at home doing nothing, it is better to come to the children's centre and do something. At the end of the day, you will go home with something in your head.'

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.

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Local authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	430149
Managed by	The local authority
Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	915
Centre leader	Maggie Carney
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
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