

# Derbyshire - New Mills Group

New Mills Adult Community Education Centre, Springbank, New Mills, High Peak, Derbyshire, SK22 4AZ

**Inspection date** 27–28 March 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
	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		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for children and families

### This children's centre group is good.

- Parents speak very highly of the two centres and their staff and regard them as welcoming hubs in the community.
- The group has made great strides in increasing the number of families registered and supported. Excellent partnerships have had a very positive impact on the number of families accessing and benefiting from a wide range of effective and targeted services.
- The group provides high levels of care, guidance and support. This results in improving outcomes for families from different target groups.
- Children are well-prepared for school. Similarly, adults improve their parenting and vocational skills, develop in confidence and are better able to protect and support their families.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are rigorous. Staff meticulously maintain family case files and leaders check them regularly to ensure consistency of practice.
- Outstanding leadership, management and governance have resulted in improvement to services and good outcomes for families. Performance management and monitoring systems are exceptional.
- The centre leader is highly effective. She and her staff are highly skilled, driven to reduce inequalities and work hard as a team to support families, including those living in rural areas. Other resources are used to good effect to ensure that families receive high quality services.
- The advisory board is very proactive and keeps a close check of how well the centre is working. Parents are confident, valued as volunteers and are active members of the advisory board. They fully understand their roles to support and challenge the centre's performance.

### It is not outstanding because:

- The engagement of a small number of target groups, such as fathers and lone parents, is low.
- The systems for monitoring and tracking the progress of children and those adults accessing further education or employment, are not sufficiently well developed to fully demonstrate the impact of the centres.

## 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. The centres that form part of this children's centre group are New Mills Children's Centre and Chapel-en-le-Frith Children's Centre.

This inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors held meetings with: local authority managers; representatives from the advisory board; parents; volunteers; community midwife; police support officers; and centre staff. Inspectors also met with: Early Years providers: headteacher from the co-located school; staff from Derbyshire Adult Community Education Services; and a number of other partners including the Multi-Agency Team (MAT).

The inspectors visited a range of sessions and activities held at each of the two centres. Activities observed included: 'Healthy Active Tots', 'Baby Massage', 'Messy Play', 'Sensory Play', 'Women's group and Crèche', and 'Stories, Music, Action and Rhythm Tour'.

Inspectors looked at the group's self-evaluation documents, activity plans, case files, safeguarding procedures and a wide range of other relevant documentation.

## Inspection team

Qaisra Shahraz, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Deborah Sanders	Additional inspector
Karen Cooper	Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about the group

New Mills Children's Centre is a phase two centre and is on the same site as Derbyshire Adult Community Education Services. Chapel-en-le-Frith is a phase three children's centre and located on the same site of Chapel-en-le-Frith Primary School (URN 133538). As a group they came together last year. The centres are managed and delivered by the local authority and the advisory board covers the two centres.

New Mills centre covers New Town, Low Leighton, and the hamlets of Thornsett and Hayfield. Chapel-en-le-Frith covers Chapel-en-le-Frith, the village of Whaley Bridge and several villages in the Hope Valley. Overall the centres serve affluent areas with some pockets of deprivation. Only one area (Ollersett and St Georges) is in the 20% lowest of deprivation.

Main target groups are children from families suffering domestic abuse, teenage parents, those living in the 30% deprived areas and those children in receipt of two year funding for early education. Most families are of White British origin. A few families (1.4%) come from minority ethnic groups. Housing is mainly owner occupied.

The New Mills Group delivers services from the two children's centres and other community venues, including village halls. They work in partnerships with a wide range of organisations to meet the core purposes for children's centres. Services include open access and targeted group sessions, family support, health services, adult education and counselling support.

There are 1680 children under five years of age living in the area. Children's skills, knowledge and abilities on entry to early years provision vary, but are generally typical for their age.

The centre manager is responsible for the day-to-day running of the two centres in the group. There is a Multi-Agency Team Manager who oversees the running of the services from each of the two children's centres.

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

- Increase participation rates from target groups such as fathers and lone parents where current engagement is low by:
  - planning more outreach activities
  - exploring innovative ways to reach more families
  - further marketing and promoting the children's centre services across the reach areas.
- Demonstrate that outcomes are improving for the majority of families by:
  - tracking adults to show qualifications achieved and employment gained and to demonstrate the impact of learning on their longer term economic well-being
  - monitoring more closely the progress that children make at the centre.

## Inspection judgements

### Access to services by young children and families

**Good**

- Most children under five years of age and expectant parents are registered with the centre and the large majority of these are involved with the centre group services. The use of live birth data and good partnerships with midwifery professionals working on site are helping to increase registration figures.
- Identifying disadvantaged two-year-olds as a target group has led to the large majority of those children taking up free places. The vast majority of children aged three and four take up their free entitlement to early education.
- Families from other target groups, and those affected by rural isolation, benefit from a wide range of effective and targeted services, including 'open access' sessions. These considerably improve their outcomes, personal circumstances and help to reduce barriers. However, the centre is aware that, while increasing, the number of lone parents and fathers who access their services is relatively low compared to other target groups such as teenage parents.
- Increasing outreach services and opportunities for staff with particular expertise to work as 'champions' across the centre group ensures a wider range of relevant services for families. Family support workers have good knowledge of the varied and difficult issues facing many families. Staff are highly sensitive to their needs, including those affected by rural isolation.
- Parents appreciate the advice, guidance and support received through the outreach programmes like 'Smart' and 'PEEPs' delivered all over the Hope Valley in community centres. These services have a clear focus on children's speech and language development. One grateful parent said: '(it's) brilliant to have an outreach programme, particularly as there is no public transport from Hope Valley to Chapel-en-le-Frith centre.'
- The centre group places strong emphasis on providing services for the development of users' social, emotional and personal skills and in particular for those subject to domestic abuse. New Mills children's centre supports the local 'Women's Group' by assisting them in community projects which results in self-empowerment and development of new skills for many women. Similarly, there is a very well-managed volunteer programme which impacts positively on several adults, including resulting in paid employment.

### The quality of practice and services

**Good**

- Parents' satisfaction rates are high. They regard the two centres as valued hubs in their community. They speak very warmly of the welcoming and helpful staff and the variety of high quality services they benefit from. They also appreciate how their achievements are celebrated through centre displays and certificate award ceremonies.
- Overall health outcomes are positive. Improving childhood obesity levels, very high immunisation rates and an increasing number of mothers who continue breastfeeding reflect the centre's effective targeted work and support. A strong commitment is in place to promote the good health and social and emotional well-being of families. Physical exercise and messages about healthy eating including through dissemination of recipes are promoted regularly through groups such as 'Healthy Active Tots', 'Kids Can Cook' and 'Healthy Walks.'
- Parents, carers and children play together in enjoyable, well-planned and high quality sessions such as 'Healthy Active Tots', and 'Messy Play' which enable children to make good progress in their social and language development. The recent introduction of 'learning journeys' to record the progress that

children make at the centre is still very new. Staff are not sufficiently able to track the children the centre works with to show how well they achieve when they go into Nursery or other Early Years provision and this is a missed opportunity to check the impact of its work.

- Parents enjoy a wide range of opportunities to extend their skills and knowledge, including in childcare and even have the option of gaining formal qualifications in GCSE mathematics and biology at New Mills Adult Community Education centre. Programmes such as 'Parents Early Education Accreditation', 'CAN', 'Confidence Building' and 'Kickstart your family life' have greatly enhanced parents' self-esteem and confidence in parenting skills.
- Adults seeking training with a strong focus on functional skills and employment have undertaken family learning, literacy and numeracy courses at all levels, resulting in good completion rates. However, managers recognise that the centre does not have robust tracking systems in place to see whether all parents it signposts to courses elsewhere successfully complete them, or if they go on to further training or employment.
- Parents and children are consulted very frequently and effectively so that most families contribute to decision-making in an informal way. The practice of gaining families' views more formally for example through 'you said-we did' display boards and representation on the advisory board, is now well-embedded. There are a number of parents from both centres who actively take part in the advisory board meeting. Inspectors observed them successfully taking part in robust discussions relating to child safety.

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

### **Outstanding**

- Leadership, management and governance are outstanding. Leaders, managers and staff are highly ambitious for the centre and are held in the highest regard by partners and parents. Self-evaluation processes are robust. Managers have an accurate view of how well the centre is doing and make good use of all available information to plan further improvements and to improve outcomes for local families.
- Performance management processes are excellent. Local authority officers set challenging and measurable targets and ensure that data reports are readily available and well used for performance monitoring by managers. They have also successfully implemented a quality cycle of activities. This includes annual conversations and the quarterly performance reviews, which effectively monitor the centres' performance through quality improvement visits, supervision, session observations and monitoring of development plans.
- The centre coordinator is highly experienced, enthusiastic, well qualified and has excellent knowledge about the local communities. She is well supported by a highly skilled team of children's centre workers, who share her vision and passion. Leaders ensure that good use is made of the diverse skills among staff by allocating them specialist 'champion' roles including for inclusion and breastfeeding. All staff benefit from a wide ranging programme of appropriate professional development opportunities as is amply evidenced by their detailed 'My plan' supervision records.
- Safeguarding of families strongly permeates the work of the two centres. Family case files are maintained to an exceptionally high standard by staff. They clearly record positive improvements in mental health, economic stability and the safety of families. They are securely audited by managers, thus ensuring children and families are appropriately protected.
- Excellent communication and partnerships with local schools, police, health and social care professionals have a very positive impact on families' wellbeing. Information sharing and strong

partnerships with the Multi-Agency Team (MAT) results in the centre staff being fully involved in the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process and thus effectively able to support families at risk of harm and children subject to child protection plans, looked after children and children in need.

- A strong, inclusive community spirit drives the centre group, with staff and managers demonstrating a strong commitment to reducing barriers for vulnerable families and those in most need. Diversity is well celebrated through the use of positive images in centre displays of disabled people and families from around the world.
- Families benefit from high quality resources which are maximised and demonstrate good value for money. The excellent sensory room at New Mills centre is a much-valued resource that ensures children with additional needs attend the centre and good links are established with other schools and Portage.

## 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 Group details**

<b>Unique reference number</b>	80067
<b>Local authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	434485
<b>Managed by</b>	The local authority

<b>Approximate number of children under five in the reach area</b>	1680
<b>Centre leader</b>	Emma Steeples
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01629 533000
<b>Email address</b>	emma.steeples@derbyshire.gov.uk

**This group consists of the following children's centres:**

- URN 20627 - Chapel-en-le-Frith Children's Centre
- URN 22103 - New Mills Children's Centre



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