

# Osmondthorpe Children's Centre

Rookwood Road , Osmondthorpe, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS9 0LX

## Inspection date

11–12 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
	Previous inspection:		
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		Inadequate	4

## Summary of key findings for children and families

### This is a centre that is inadequate.

- Governance arrangements are weak. The advisory board has not functioned effectively for a period of over two years. This is because there are too few professional partners as members and several meetings have not taken place due to lack of attendance. As a result, the advisory board does not provide sufficient challenge to the centre, shows little evidence of shared ambition and priorities and is unable to hold it to account for the difference it is making to local lives.
- The centre knows its reach area, but does not make sufficient use of the data provided by the local authority to ensure that it has the most accurate picture of its target groups and the extent of their engagement in centre services.
- Centre leaders and the local authority set appropriate targets for future development, which have brought about some improvements to engagement and service provision. However, systems to track the centre's progress towards these targets are still developing and, as a result, outcomes are not improving fast enough.
- The good quality services provided by the centre are not easily accessible to families in all parts of the reach. Low attendance, limited accommodation within the centre and a lack of services in some parts of the reach area impact on the effectiveness of the centre in meeting the needs of families.
- Not enough families in the reach area are engaged in services, particularly those from target groups.

### This centre has the following strengths:

- The centre prioritises the most vulnerable families in their role as part of the 'Early Start' team. Staff work well with health partners to identify and engage those in most need of help and support.
- Children's learning is tracked and the centre has evidence of the positive impact of its work on children's readiness for school and the progress they make in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Families who use the centre praise the help, guidance and support they receive from staff.

## 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 centre manager and deputy, centre staff, an officer from the local authority, professional partners from health, education and social care, parents and representatives of the advisory board.

The inspectors visited two services held at the centre and a local health clinic.

They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation including self-evaluation documents, development and planning data, performance monitoring records, programme evaluations and policies and procedures linked to safeguarding, including a range of case files.

## Inspection team

Elaine White, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Jackie Phillips

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about the centre

Osmondthorpe Children's Centre is a stand-alone centre managed by the local authority. An advisory board oversees the work of the centre. The centre has an on-site day nursery which is inspected separately. The report can be found at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). In September 2012 Osmondthorpe Children's Centre and Gipton Children's Centre joined with the East Leeds Health Visiting team to become the Early Start Team, working in partnership to share information and referrals. There are plans to develop a joint advisory board with Gipton Children's Centre. The centre offers a range of services which include family play sessions, family outreach support, family learning, health services, referrals to adult education services and parenting courses.

There are 644 children under five years old living within the reach area which is ranked within the top 30% most deprived areas nationally. Of these, 30% live in the top 1% most deprived areas and 24% in the top 6% most deprived areas. The majority of families are of White British heritage, although there has been a recent influx of families from Eastern Europe. Some 28% of children under five years old in the reach area are living in workless households.

Children enter early years provision with skills and capabilities below the levels typically seen in children of their age.

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

- Improve leadership, governance and management by making sure that the local authority and centre leaders:
  - ensure that the centre's advisory board's membership includes a range of professional partners
  - ensure that the advisory board meets regularly and can provide effective challenge to the centre and hold it to account for the difference it is making to local lives
  - ensure that centre leaders make better use of available data to identify more clearly target groups and the extent of their engagement in centre services
  - ensure that systems to track the centre's progress towards improvement targets are developed further.
- Increase the number of families who access services, particularly those from target groups.
- Review the delivery of services to ensure that they are accessible to families in all parts of the reach area.

## Inspection judgements

### Access to services by young children and families

### Requires improvement

- Most families in the reach area are registered with the centre. However, although increasing slowly, too few families are accessing the centre and engaging in relevant services, particularly those from target groups.
- The centre prioritises the most vulnerable families and works well with partners to identify and engage those in most need of help and support. The centre's work as part of the 'Early Start Team' means that those families' needs are accurately assessed and early help put in place.
- The centre works well with the on-site nursery to meet the needs of vulnerable two-year-old children who attend the nursery.

- A universal 'Stay and Play' session operates daily within the on-site children's nursery. This means that all families can engage, although attendance varies.
- Most three-year-old children take up their entitlement to nursery education, but there is a shortage of place for two-year-olds. The centre has plans to meet this need by expanding its own accommodation later this year.
- The centre engages well with all teenage parents in the area and the majority of families with two- year-old children. However, only a small number of families from minority ethnic groups, lone parents and fathers are engaged in, and therefore benefiting from centre services.
- In partnership with health visitors, the centre has recently begun to provide an antenatal service. This ensures that the expectant mothers and prospective parents who access these services receive appropriate levels of support.
- Although the centre provides a range of services which are relevant to the needs of families in the area, low attendance at sessions is an issue. In addition, the distance to the centre and the lack of services delivered in other areas of the reach is a barrier to accessing these services for some families. The effectiveness of outreach work is partly affected by the limited staff resources, as for the past year the centre has only had one outreach worker.

### The quality of practice and services

### Requires improvement

- Many aspects of the centre's practice and services are good. Nevertheless, the quality of practice and services require improvement because too few families benefit from the provision, including those from target groups.
- Centre staff support some adults to access training and find employment. The centre works in partnership with Leeds City College to signpost adults to courses. A small but increasing number of parents have accessed training and a small number have gained employment.
- Parents' and children's views are obtained through discussion, course evaluations and consultations and are used appropriately to help shape services.
- The children's centre teacher and deputy centre leader, who is also head of the on-site nursery, work well together to support and develop children's learning. Clear tracking of children's learning shows the positive impact the centre has on children's readiness for school and the progress they make during their time at the centre.
- Sessions provided are based on a sound assessment of the needs of families and children who attend. For example, two sessions have been provided, 'Fun with Sounds' and 'Little Explorers', aimed at developing the learning and communication skills of children between two and three years old in order to meet the needs of this target group.
- A close working partnership with local primary schools has a positive impact on children's transition to school. As a result, children settle in quickly and are ready to learn.
- Weekly allocation meetings between centre staff and health partners ensure a prompt assessment of families' needs and the implementation of appropriate support packages. Families identified as being at risk of domestic violence, children on child protection plans, and children in need are supported well to improve their well-being, safety and reduce inequalities.
- The centre works well with those referred to the centre with issues relating to domestic violence, mental health and substance misuse, to improve well-being and life chances.
- The centre supports families to develop healthy lifestyles and works with health partners to give advice on issues such as weaning and breastfeeding. Health care advice is given at the centre's 'Baby Massage' session. As a result, obesity levels have decreased and the proportion of mothers sustaining breastfeeding has risen.
- Families praise the good level of care, guidance and support they receive from centre staff, helping to meet their needs in times of crisis and providing support to promote their confidence.

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

- Governance arrangements are weak and the advisory board is unable to fulfil its purpose. Centre leaders provided a statement of purpose in April 2012 to establish an advisory board which would support and challenge the centre. Since that time membership has not increased and meetings have been held infrequently. The local authority has not ensured that the board has sufficient representation. The board has not met its aim to meet three times per year for the last two years. As a result, although its members have a satisfactory knowledge of the centre's strengths and areas for development, it has not provided sufficient support or challenge to the centre and has not been able to hold the centre to account for its performance through shared ambition and priorities.
- Despite the lack of effectiveness of the advisory board, families' access to services and the quality and impact of those services is not inadequate. This is because centre leaders provide an adequate range of services which have a positive impact on children's readiness for school, health and well-being. The centre ensures that it prioritises its most vulnerable families for help and support. As a result, it works well with those most in need to improve their well-being and life chances.
- Leaders are committed to improving provision. They have developed partnerships with health professionals to improve early identification of families' needs.
- Centre leaders evaluate services and provision and the local authority provides the centre with appropriate targets based on relevant priorities for development. However, systems to monitor progress towards these targets are not sufficiently well developed. As a result, centre leaders do not always have a clear idea of how well it is progressing towards its targets and outcomes are not improving fast enough.
- Data provided by the local authority are not used sufficiently well enough to ensure that the centre leaders have an accurate picture of the extent to which target groups are engaged in the centre's services.
- Safeguarding is prioritised appropriately. Those families most in need of help and support, including those subject to a child protection plan are prioritised and case files show that staff work well with other agencies to meet their needs. The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) procedures are implemented well. Staff have a good level of training in safeguarding children and families.
- Parents who access the centre are very satisfied with the services and their views are requested and taken into account. They contribute to decision-making through membership of the parents' forum which feeds in to the advisory board. However, the meetings are not attended consistently well and as the advisory board meets very infrequently, their impact is limited.
- The centre provides a welcoming, inclusive environment. Staff work positively to ensure that families for whom English is not their first language can access services by enlisting the help of interpreters.
- Resources are generally used appropriately. The centre has been understaffed as it has been without one of its family support workers for the past year. Staff have worked well to continue to provide services and to support individual families who are reluctant to access services. The centre's accommodation is mostly limited to one room and services are not provided in other parts of the reach area. This affects the extent to which the centre is able to engage with families in some parts of the reach area.
- Performance management systems are clear and targets for staff link to the centre's priorities. Staff attend a good level of training to ensure that they fulfil their roles effectively.

**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**

<b>Unique reference number</b>	22275
<b>Local authority</b>	Leeds
<b>Inspection number</b>	430157
<b>Managed by</b>	The local authority

<b>Approximate number of children under five in the reach area</b>	644
<b>Centre leader</b>	Janine Wallace
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