

Angram Bank Children's Centre

Angram Bank Primary School, Kinsley Road, High Green, Sheffield, S35 4HN

Inspection dates	30 April – 1 May 2014
Previous inspection date	Not previously inspected

Overall effectiveness	This inspection: Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
		Not applicable	
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 yet good because:

- Only a majority, rather than the large majority of children and parents, particularly from target groups, regularly use the centre's services.
- In High Green, the proportion of children aged five years who are obese is too high, as is the incidence of dental decay.
- The planning of activities and use of current systems to record and track the progress of individual children and adults who regularly attend activities, courses or training are not well enough developed to provide useful information for the leadership.
- Leaders do not have sufficient access to data which are more relevant to the specific reach of the centre and so it is difficult for them to show the impact of all services.
- Children only have access to resources that develop their creativity in the nursery room rather than throughout the centre.
- There are vacancies for parent representatives on the local stakeholder forum.

This children's centre has the following strengths:

- Close working partnerships with health professionals enable the centre to contact and encourage families to register and access services very soon after their baby is born.
- Families speak highly of the quality of services they receive saying it has transformed their lives, helped to develop their confidence, self-esteem and improved their parenting skills.
- Safeguarding has a high priority. Families, particularly those in crisis, benefit from well-coordinated support from a wide range of services which helps to reduce the risk of harm.
- Leadership, governance and managers bring knowledge and experience to the centre; they have a clear understanding of what is working well and how to continue to improve outcomes for families, in spite of reducing resources.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Improve access to services and so ensure better equality of opportunity by increasing the number of children and families who use services regularly and, in particular, those from target groups.
- Improve further the impact of practice and services by:
 - developing the planning of activities and making better use of current systems to record and track the progress of individual children and adults who regularly attend activities, courses or training
 - in High Green, decreasing the numbers of children aged five who are obese, and the incidence of dental decay.
- Improve the impact of leadership, governance and management by:
 - ensuring leaders have better access to data which are more relevant to the specific reach of the centre
 - improving further the opportunities for parents to be consulted at a more strategic level by filling current vacancies on the local stakeholder forum
 - distributing resources available to children outside the nursery room and increasing opportunities for children to be creative.

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 an officer from the local authority who was present throughout the inspection, the local authority's children's centre coordinator (the centre leader), administrative staff, health professionals, intervention and prevention workers based with the MAST (Multi-Agency Support Team), the headteacher and business manager of the on-site primary school as well as parents. Telephone discussions were held with several partners.

The inspectors visited the health drop-in clinic at Chapeltown Library and the MAST offices in Sheffield. They also observed baby group, midwifery drop-in, and breastfeeding support. They reviewed a selection of family case files held at the MAST offices.

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

Inspection team

Jane Hughes, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Sue Pepper

Additional inspector

Qaisra Shahraz

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

Angram Bank is a purpose-built, single centre in the grounds of Angram Bank Primary School, in High Green, North Sheffield. It acts as the hub for the neighbouring communities of Chapeltown, Ecclesfield and Grenoside. The reach area changed in May 2013 following a council review. Governance is provided by Sheffield Local Authority, along with the new local stakeholder forum which replaced the advisory board.

The centre runs a range of integrated services both at the centre and across the area. These include baby group, baby massage, breastfeeding support, family learning, parenting group and midwife clinics. A weekly health drop-in is delivered by health visitors at the centre and at Chapeltown library. Target groups are black and minority ethnic groups, lone parents, and fathers in the 40% most disadvantaged areas, teenage parents and children of disabled carers.

There are 1595 children under five years within the reach area. Of these, 1205 are registered with the centre and 170 currently live in the 30% most disadvantaged areas in the country. The reach includes pockets of significant deprivation and affluence. Within the working-age population, 8% are unemployed and 14% of families are in receipt of the childcare element of working tax credits. Most families are of White British heritage. Children access early years education from a range of childcare providers and enter early years provision with skills generally typical for their age, with some below.

The on-site primary school is inspected separately; its inspection report can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Requires improvement

- Across the reach area, only a majority rather than a large majority of users, particularly from target groups, such as minority ethnic backgrounds, lone parents and fathers, make regular use of centre services. As such, the promotion of equality of opportunity requires improvement.
- Most children and parents living in the 30% most disadvantaged areas are registered with the centre, and a large majority use services regularly. Registration figures overall have risen to 76%, while 55% participate regularly in centre-led activities. All teenage parents and children with disabled carers are registered and engage regularly with the centre.
- Effective partnerships are well-established between the centre and health professionals who are helping to drive up registrations and build trusting relationships with parents. Consequently, families expecting babies, as well as those most in need, have access to a wide range of information and support.
- The centre works well with local providers to ensure that children from target groups take up the free entitlement to early education. Almost all three- and four-year-olds in the reach area take this up. The centre works effectively with other providers and the local authority to ensure that there are sufficient places available for eligible two-year-olds to do the same.
- Staff signpost families to the many local, good-quality early years providers so children get off to a good start. Contacts through MAST match families to the individualised support they require from partner agencies, especially those who may be less likely to access such services. Volunteering opportunities in areas such as breastfeeding or the 'doula' new mother support programme, is successful and helps to build adults' confidence and to smooth their pathway to work.

The quality of practice and services

Requires improvement

- Planning of activities at the centre is underdeveloped and current systems to record and check the progress of individual children and adults who participate in activities, courses or training are not used well enough to be able to demonstrate the progress made.
- Local data show that, when children start school, a majority have made good progress from their various starting points. As a result, a higher than average proportion of children reaches a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year. The gap in attainment between the lowest achieving 20% and others is slowly narrowing. Children are generally well prepared for learning in Year 1 and for making the most of school to improve their life chances.
- Disabled children and those with special educational needs receive good levels of support. Their needs are identified at an early stage and they enjoy good-quality support packages, which are organised by the inclusion teacher who works closely with other agencies.
- Effective sessions run by health professionals, such as the midwife and health visitors' clinics are well attended, both at the centre and at outreach venues. Parents say how much they appreciate the opportunity, for example, to meet other parents at drop-in clinics such as at Chapeltown library. Friendships flourish, helping new mothers to overcome feelings of uncertainty or isolation.
- Good support from intervention and prevention workers based in the MAST, in partnership with other agencies, helps families to move beyond crisis situations and to keep children safe. The centre provides good practical advice and guidance to families on topics such as housing, finances, and drug and alcohol misuse. This helps to improve life chances for local

families.

- The proportion of Reception-age children who are obese, particularly in High Green, is too high and dental decay is too prevalent. Although breastfeeding rates are a little below the national average, there are increasing trends in breastfeeding at delivery and when sustained for six-to-eight weeks, due to the skills of breastfeeding support workers and volunteers.
- Parents say that they 'feel comfortable at the centre' and describe health workers as 'invaluable and absolutely brilliant'. A thriving childminders' self-support network meets twice weekly.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Requires improvement

- Leadership and governance show keen ambition and clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve the impact of the centre. Precise action planning and broadly accurate self-evaluation are in place, despite ongoing reorganisation across children's centres in Sheffield.
- The local authority sets challenging targets that are helping to reduce inequalities. Officers review quarterly how well the centre is doing. Local authority data about the centre's performance across a range of provision is updated regularly. However, some data are not specific enough to the centre's reach and so are unhelpful to leaders when trying to show local impact.
- Governance overall is well organised with a wide range of highly motivated professionals involved on the local stakeholder forum. Members are experienced, check data carefully and challenge the performance of the centre with the leadership. They know that, although the centre is helping to close the gap for children and families in terms of learning and experience, improvement is required with regard to access and to the quality of practice and services.
- Procedures for the management of staff performance and professional supervision are well established. The small staff team is well qualified and access relevant training planned to meet the needs of the centre. Under the latest organisation, the centre leader has no line-management responsibilities.
- Parental involvement is actively encouraged by the leadership and parents know that their views are heard through consultations and regular evaluations. Parents have previously been involved in running the centre as part of the former advisory board and parents' forum. Since the recent introduction of the local stakeholder forum, parent representatives have not been elected. It is proving more difficult to find parents to take on this role.
- Safeguarding is a key priority; policies and procedures are effective. The building is secure and staff are correctly vetted for their work with children and families. Good use is made of the Common Assessment Framework to ensure the right mix of professional support for families most in need of help. Integrated services allow swift identification of any need for support from MAST intervention or prevention workers, or social care. This includes children supported with a child protection plan, children in need or looked after children.
- There are plentiful, good-quality resources in the 'nursery room'. However, there is little opportunity for children to make creative use of these throughout the centre, including outdoors and in the roof garden.
- Staffing cuts have diminished the centre's capacity for outreach work, thereby increasing the importance of well-established partnerships. These partnerships help to provide human resources to meet local priorities and the needs of targeted children and families within the reach area.

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.

Centre details

Unique reference number	20093
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	442879
Managed by	The local authority
Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	1595
Centre leader	Catherine Ellison
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
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