

Park Lane Children's Centre

Park Lane Primary School, Park Lane, Nuneaton, CV10 8NL

Inspection date 30 April – 1 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good	2
	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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for children and families

This is a good centre.

- The large majority of children and families in the area access children's centre services regularly, especially those from priority groups, including families in workless households, lone parents, families living in the most deprived areas, disabled children and those with special educational needs.
- Children attending the centre's sessions make good progress from their starting points and as a result move into school well prepared to learn. Specific workshops help to build parents' confidence, improve parenting skills and enable them to manage their children's behaviour positively.
- Health outcomes for families are good because of high quality provision and effective partnerships with health workers.
- The centre is a warm welcoming place where all families feel at ease. Staff know the local community well. They listen to families and provide good quality support that meets their needs well.
- Leadership, management and governance are good. Self-evaluation is robust and accurate with a clear focus on improvement. Staff are committed to meeting the needs of children and families, especially the most disadvantaged, to the very best of their abilities. As a result there is strong capacity to sustain improvement.

It is not outstanding because:

- There are not enough opportunities for workless adults to train or acquire skills that will improve their chances of gaining employment.
- Improvement targets are not sufficiently precise or measurable. As a result, the centre cannot show clearly whether its services are making a positive difference to the lives of children and families.

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 centre staff, the local authority, the children's centre manager and school headteacher; members of the governing body and advisory board; parents and users of the centre; and representatives of organisations who work in partnership with the centre.

The inspectors visited activities taking place in the centre. They observed the centre's work, and looked at a sample of case files and a range of relevant documentation. Inspectors observed two activities jointly with the centre manager.

Inspection team

Steve Nelson	Additional Inspector, Lead Inspector
Peter Towner	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

Park Lane Children's Centre is a phase two stand alone children's centre. It operates in the Fillongley, Galley Common/Kingswood wards and is based on the same site as Park Lane Primary School and Nursery. The nursery was inspected in April 2010 and the report can be found on www.ofsted.gov.uk.

The local authority has delegated responsibility for the governance of the children's centre to the governing body of Park Lane Primary School and Nursery. The centre also receives advice and guidance from an advisory board. The centre manager is responsible for the day-to-day running of the centre. The centre aims to fulfil its core purpose by providing a range of services for families, by commissioning services from a range of partners and by working in partnership with health visitors and midwives. Activities are planned with other local children's centres to ensure a full range of services are available to families.

The children's centre has 761 children under the age of five years living in its area. The vast majority of the families living in the area are from White British backgrounds. Four communities fall within the 10% to 40% most deprived areas nationally. About 17% of children and adults who live in the area come from homes that are dependent on benefits and where no-one is in work.

When they start early years provision, the majority of children have skills, knowledge and abilities that are lower than those expected for their age.

The main priority groups assessed in need of the centre services are children and families in workless households, lone parents, families living in the most deprived areas, disabled children and those with special educational needs.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Extend the opportunities for more adults particularly from workless homes, to improve their economic well-being by:
 - actively promoting volunteering so that a higher number of parents sign up
 - providing more chances for on-site literacy, numeracy and work related skills development
- Strengthen leadership and management by setting precise and measurable improvement targets to assist the monitoring and evaluation of the centre's effectiveness.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Good

- Nearly all families with young children including from workless households, those with disabled children and special educational needs, lone parents and families living in the most deprived areas are registered with the centre. The effective working with midwives increases access to services for expectant mothers who are encouraged to register with the centre at an early stage.
- The large majority of priority families engage in the services provided by the centre. As a result of the centre's effective work, health and learning outcomes are consistently improving, and this helps reduce any inequalities.
- Leaders know the area well, and have used the information they receive to deliver good quality services in the community. For example, weekly 'Stay and Play' sessions provided at the Corley Village Hall, are well attended by families from priority groups.
- Family support workers have a good knowledge of the various issues facing families in their community. Effective work with families in their own home ensures that many of those who are suffering from a range of difficulties are very well supported. The centre promotes information about its activities and other services of help and advice well to encourage those less likely to access services, particularly through the use of social media.
- Most eligible two-year-olds take up their early years place because of the centre's successful partnership with schools and early years providers in the area. The vast majority of three-year-olds have taken up their free early years education, which supports improved learning and development.
- The centre works in close partnership with health and other professionals to prioritise families most in need of support. For example, the centre holds regular speech and language drop-in sessions. Effective partnership working enables early identification of children's specific needs such as communication delay.

The quality of practice and services

Good

- Good-quality services, based on a thorough assessment of needs and good local knowledge, meet the needs of children and families who access services well. The centre provides a good balance of services open to everyone with those to support individual children and families. Parents make a valuable contribution to shaping services, for example, they deliver a weekly 'Stay and Play' session at the centre.
- The centre's work with partners to keep families healthy and safe has a positive impact on children and families' well-being. Adults that have completed the first aid qualification say that they are more confident about keeping their families safe at home and know what to do in an emergency. The proportion of mothers, including those from priority groups that continue to breastfeed their children, is higher than the local authority average. Child obesity rates are falling.
- Parents report improvement in their children's behaviour as a result using effective strategies they learn on the parenting courses. Parents who have been identified to receive individual support at home are equally enthusiastic and make very good progress in improving their parenting skills. The centre is effective in assisting workless and lone parents to deal with housing and benefits issues, sort out debt problems and overcome feelings of isolation.

- The centre provides high levels of care, guidance and support, particularly to vulnerable families in times of crisis. Well maintained case files, are kept up-to-date, and are of a good standard. The files show how well the centre works with other agencies and partners to provide very effective targeted help that improves families' lives.
- There are good opportunities for parents, childminders and children to play and learn together in sessions such as 'Butterflies' that offer new play ideas that develop children's confidence and independence. The stimulating range of learning and play activities in sessions such as play dough and painting ensures that enjoyment is high. Consequently, children make good progress in their personal, physical and communication development.
- The impact of centre services on families' economic well-being is not well-developed. There are examples where individuals have volunteered in the centre or have been supported back into work. However insufficient families, particularly from workless households, have been helped to take up training that enhances their skills, employability and life chances.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- The headteacher provides clear strategic direction. The centre is led and managed successfully on a day-to-day basis by the centre manager. The governors, advisory board and local authority have effective oversight of the centre's performance and hold it to account through effective monitoring. Staff are enthusiastic and support the centre's drive for improvement. These features result in improved outcomes for children and families.
- Effective leadership has created a committed team that works together well to provide an attractive and welcoming environment for children and parents. The outdoor facilities and environment are used very well to promote children's development, and to help parents appreciate how to use the outdoor area to provide purposeful and engaging activities for their children.
- Staff are supported effectively by the centre manager through supervision and appraisals and they are appropriately challenged about their performance. They are well qualified, keep abreast of practise and undertake useful training to extend their already good expertise. This ensures that high quality work with families is maintained.
- Leaders work well with key partners and this enables them to respond effectively and with flexibility in meeting the needs of families. The partnership between the centre, school and nursery on site is seamless. As a result, children, including those with disabilities or special educational needs, are prepared well for the next step in their learning.
- Self-evaluation appropriately identifies the centre's strengths and weaknesses. Key priorities are identified and the centre has a suitable development plan that includes clear intentions. However, there are insufficient quantifiable targets for improvement to enable the centre to fully check its effectiveness.
- Parents' responses to surveys help shape services. The parents' forum, and parents representation on the governing body and advisory board ensures they formally contribute to the centre's decision making about its future development.
- The safeguarding of children and their families is of the highest priority for all staff. Procedures and policies for safeguarding are fully in place and understood by all. The centre works

successfully with its key partners to reduce the risk of harm to children subject to child protection plans. There is effective intervention for children in need, those children supported by the Common Assessment Framework procedures, including looked after children.

- The quality and provision of resources and services to meet families' needs is good. Resources are used effectively and efficiently to enable the centre to move forward and improve outcomes for those most in need. The shared use of services and activities with neighbour centres reduces costs and ensures there is a good balance of universal and targeted services to meet the needs of children and families in the 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.

Children's Centre

Unique reference number	22315
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	442895
Managed by	The governing body of Park Lane Primary School and Nursery

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	761
Centre Manager	Nikki Surtees
Date of previous inspection	Not Previously Inspected
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