

# Bewcastle Sure Start Children's Centre

Bewcastle Grove, Mowmacre Hill, Leicester, LE4 2JY

<b>Inspection date</b>	30 April–1 May 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	Good		2

## Summary of key findings for children and families

### This is a good centre.

- The centre is quick to identify and give effective outreach support to families and children who need specific help from time to time. As a result, these families improve quickly and successfully their personal and emotional well-being.
- The centre staff and partners make sure that parents know about what is happening at the centre, its partner centres and in the local area. As a result, the proportion of families registering with the centre is high, and most families regularly attend groups at one of the centres or outreach venues.
- Staff provide positive role models. Relationships are extremely positive. Families feel welcome and so, for most, the centre is the first port of call for help, advice and support.
- The 'preventative pathways' groups ensure most families and children identified by the centre as requiring the most support have their needs met well. A good range and quality of targeted and universal groups help parents learn how to play with their children and so help ensure that they make good progress in their learning and development.
- Effective partnerships with schools and pre-schools ensure the needs of children, especially disabled children and those with special educational needs, are met as soon as they start at their setting.
- All staff and partners follow the centre's procedures for ensuring the safety of families and children. Support for those experiencing domestic violence is particularly strong enabling families to feel safe.
- Parents and children have good opportunities to give their views about the centre and help make decisions about groups and services.

### It is not outstanding because:

- Staff do not use the information the centre has about learning and progress of adults and children effectively enough to pick up any dips in learning and identify whether their work is making a long-term difference to those who most need the centre's support, especially those who live in workless or low-income families.
- The proportion of mothers who smoke and the proportion of children of Reception age who are overweight or obese have increased again and are above local and national averages.

### **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 parents, centre staff, health, education and community partners, and representatives of the parent and carer forum, the advisory board and the local authority.

The inspectors observed a stay-and-play and crèche group. They visited three families at their homes, and The Tudor Centre to discuss adult education and family learning opportunities.

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

### **Inspection team**

Georgina Beasley	Additional inspector
Alison Cogher	Additional inspector
Deborah Sanders	Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about the centre

Bewcastle Children's Centre is a phase two centre designated in February 2008. It provides a range of services and groups including outreach for all families who live in the reach area and for families identified as most in need. There is no onsite childcare or school provision. There are currently approximately 1044 children under the age of five living in the centre's reach area. Children's skills, knowledge and abilities on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage are below those expected for their age.

The centre has been governed and managed directly by the local authority since October 2013. The centre services manager also has responsibility for Braunstone Sure Start Children's Centre.

The centre works together with but has no formal links with Avebury Meadows Children's Centre and with Beaumont Leys and Stocking Farm Children's Centre to provide shared services and to share resources and staff. Each centre has its own centre services manager. The three centres share one advisory board. The local authority has plans to group the three centres together in July 2014.

The proportion of families on benefits is above average; unemployment is above average and around a quarter of children live with a lone parent. The number of looked after children and children subject to protection plans is around the local authority average. Housing in the area is a mix of owner-occupied, privately rented and social housing.

The majority of families are White British; about 40% are from minority ethnic groups. A growing number are from Eastern European and African backgrounds.

The centre has identified its target groups as lone parents, workless families, teenage parents, families from minority ethnic backgrounds, children with a care plan, disabled children and those who have special educational needs.

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

- Increase the effectiveness with which staff question and use the information that the centre has about its families and children to:
  - identify and track the progress of adults who access adult education courses to evaluate the difference these are making to workless and low-income families
  - pick up any dips in the learning of different groups of children, including those who live in workless and low-income families.
- Work with health partners to decrease the proportion of mothers who smoke during pregnancy and the proportion of children of Reception age who are obese or overweight so that both figures are at least in line with national and local averages.

## Inspection judgements

### Access to services by young children and families

Good

- A high proportion of families are registered with the centre which is a significant increase over the last two years. Through clinics and groups such as 'Bumps to Babies', a very large majority of women access maternity services at 12 weeks into their pregnancy or less.
- A large majority of all families and children who live in the area use services and attend groups regularly. The centre has good procedures in place to identify families and groups that are most in need of their support, including teenage parents, workless families and lone parents, and ensure that a very large majority regularly use the centre's groups and services or attend health clinics.
- The centre works closely with its school, health and social care partners to identify families and children who are most in need and give them the support they need to make a difference to their lives. The services provided by the centre are well received by families, including the most vulnerable. Several parents experiencing domestic violence or postnatal depression made comments such as, 'I don't know what I would have done without the centre,' or 'The centre has been a lifeline for me and my family.'
- Assessments under the Common Assessment Framework are carried out in a timely manner to identify the needs of children at a young age and ensure effective early support can be put into place quickly. A high proportion of disabled children attend the centre's activities.
- A very large majority of families with three-year-old children have taken up a pre-school place this year. The centre is successful in finding out which two-year-old children are eligible for a free nursery place and in helping them to apply. As a result, all eligible two-year-olds have taken up their place this year.
- There are good facilities for families to access financial advice and adult education, including courses in English as a second language for adults new to the country. Families receiving benefits are fully aware of the support on offer so that those looking for work or further education are able to make informed choices.

### The quality of practice and services

Good

- A wide range of good-quality groups and outreach services ensure families and children, especially those identified by the centre as being most in need, make good progress in gaining the skills that they need to ensure their safety and improve their well-being. Relationships are extremely positive so families are confident to ask for help and support. The centre tracks the progress of individual families and children with whom they work directly, including teenage parents, to ensure continued support is making a positive difference to their lives.
- The structured programme of group activities through the 'preventative pathways' route, such as 'Tiny Fingers, Tiny Toes', 'Talking Toddlers' and 'Movers and Explorers', ensures children follow a pathway adapted to their needs and that they develop their speaking, listening, physical and personal skills well. Staff give parents clear guidance on how to develop their children's learning through play. Adults' and children's learning is celebrated through the presentation of certificates.
- Effective partnerships with schools and pre-schools ensure children are ready for school. Attendance at groups held at local schools for children and parents of children due to start nursery has increased the involvement and confidence of parents and carers in getting their children ready for

school. As a result, schools report children are familiar with the school and staff, and settle much more quickly than previously. Parents and carers are confident to support their children's learning at home and improve their readiness for school.

- Staff constantly talk to parents about how to keep themselves and their children safe including when using internet networking sites. The fire service conducts home visits with staff and attends groups to talk about dangers in the home. There are fewer accidents in the home, and the proportion of house fires in the area has fallen by 40%.
- Data from schools indicate that children who attend the centre do better than others by the end of Reception in communication and language, personal, social and emotional development, and physical development. While the gap is closing, the proportion of children who live in the most deprived areas and reach expected levels is lower than that of other children.
- The centre is good at giving adults information about adult education and training. They are not so good at checking whether courses have been taken up and completed. While a large majority of those taking parenting courses or courses to support those experiencing domestic violence complete them, the centre's information shows that only a small minority complete adult learning courses or programmes aimed at improving their chances of finding employment or a better job.
- The centre provides healthy snacks during all group activities and promotes the importance of healthy diet and regular exercise through groups such as 'Jumping Beans' and home visits. Despite this, the proportion of Reception-aged children who are overweight or obese rose to above average levels last year.
- Midwives and health visitors talk to all prospective parents about the dangers of smoking during pregnancy and around children. Nevertheless, the proportion of mothers who smoke during pregnancy and after delivery remains above the local average.

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

Good

- The local authority and centre services manager know the centre's strengths and areas for improvement well. Information about the centre's groups and services and relevant data are shared at regular meetings of the advisory board so that partners and parents understand what is going well, and why, and what needs to be improved. The information is used well to ensure that resources are deployed efficiently to improve the lives of those living in the area
- The advisory board works closely with the local authority to set relevant and challenging improvement targets in the centre's annual development plan. Centre managers, advisory board members and the local authority meet quarterly to check that resources are used effectively and efficiently to meet agreed local priorities, to see whether the centre is on track to reach its targets and to determine what changes are needed if it is not.
- Parents are encouraged to give their views at the end of every group and/or course and through the parent carer forum. This ensures they contribute to decisions about which groups and services to run and have a say in any changes to make to those currently running. The provision of crèche facilities ensures that parents who do not have childcare arrangements are able to attend the centre's activities.
- Arrangements for managing the performance of staff are good. Staff have regular discussions with managers to ensure that the quality of services and groups for families and children who attend are

good. The local authority links targets for managers to those in the centre's development plan so that performance can be measured by outcome.

- Managers have good oversight of case files through the monthly and sometimes weekly checks of all visits and families' progress in groups. All cases assessed under the Common Assessment Framework are discussed fully, and detailed reasons are given for both opening and closing cases. Families receive the early help that they need so that disabled children, those who have special educational needs and those subject to a care plan are well supported by the centre and its partners.
- There are robust systems for ensuring that staff know and follow consistently the policies and procedures for safeguarding children and adults both on and off the premises. Supervision is robust for this aspect of the centre's work.
- Regular evaluation processes ensure that the progress of individuals is discussed and further relevant learning planned. This ensures groups and services are tailored to the needs of the individual. However, staff do not always use the information to evaluate the difference their work is making to the lives of workless families and especially in evaluating whether they have the skills and expertise required to help them find work.

**What inspection judgements mean**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Judgement</b>	<b>Description</b>
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>	20289
<b>Local authority</b>	Leicester
<b>Inspection number</b>	442861
<b>Managed by</b>	The local authority

<b>Approximate number of children under five in the reach area</b>	1044
<b>Centre leader</b>	Kim Harris
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	0116 2211199
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