

Kentmere Children's Centre

Kentmere Avenue, Seacroft, Leeds, LS14 1BN

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

Overall effectiveness	This inspection: Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Access to services by young children and families	Good		2
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 good because:

- The centre and partner organisations are not making enough difference to children being ready for primary school.
- The centre does not track improvements in the lives of children and families in enough detail to be certain that services are working as well as they should.
- Reviews by leaders of the centre's work do not make enough use of information about health and education to show the difference that services are making to the lives of children and families over a period of years.
- Files written about families do not present information clearly about plans, targets or the workers linked to the family.
- Too few workers from outside of the centre are members of the centre advisory board. This is limiting the ability of the board to ensure that improvements in services are good enough.

This centre has the following strengths:

- The centre is used well by local children and families accessing services, including those from groups that are in greatest need.
- Links with other local services and community groups are good. This means that the centre is not duplicating the work of others and is making good use of its resources.
- The quality of groups provided for children and parents at the centre is good.
- The new management team are providing clear leadership to the centre, and services are improving. Those working in the centre have a detailed knowledge of the Kentmere area and the challenges facing local families.
- Local parents feel consulted, listened to and able to challenge the centre through the parent forum, and the advisory board.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality and impact of services by:
 - working closely with other local organisations and workers to narrow the gaps in educational progress between groups of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage
 - tracking the progress of all children and adults who use the centre in more detail to show the difference being made to their lives.
- Improve leadership, governance and management by:
 - making full use of data about outcomes for children and adults within self-evaluation and planning
 - increasing the representation from partner organisations on the centre advisory board
 - improving the recording of planning, target setting and key contacts in case files.

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 one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector.

The inspectors held meetings with staff, managers, members of the advisory board and parents forum, and the local authority. They spoke informally with parents, observed the centre's work, visited the daycare, and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

Inspection team

Tim Vaughan, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Dave Ellwand

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

Kentmere is a stand-alone children's centre in the Seacroft area of Leeds. The premises opened in 1989 as an Early Years Centre. It was designated as a children's centre in July 2007. The centre offers a range of activities including family support, outreach work, activities for families and parenting programmes.

Kentmere Children's Centre is managed by the local authority and has an advisory board. It links closely with four other centres: Crossgates Children's Centre; Parklands Children's Centre; Seacroft Children's Centre; and Swarcliffe Children's Centre. It is also linked with Grange Farm Primary School, Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Primary School, and Kentmere Children's Centre Daycare. These are subject to separate inspections and their reports can be accessed at www.ofsted.gov.uk

The centre serves a community of 455 children under five years of age living within four super output areas. Each of these areas are ranked in the top 10% poorest areas in the country. The proportion of young children affected by unemployment and/or low income is 41%. There are 17% of families within the area claiming the childcare element of Working Family Tax Credit. Most families are White British with the remainder from a range of minority ethnic groups. Children's skills and knowledge on entry to early years provision are below the level typical for their age. Target groups have been identified as: families with children subject to a Child Protection Plan or looked after; young parents; lone parents; and parents on low incomes.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Good

- The number of families, who register and use the centre, is good and increasing. Early contact is made with expectant mothers and results in good engagement by target groups, including young parents and lone parents. Leaders track participation in detail and information is used well to analyse needs, develop services and increase attendance. Consequently, parents, including those on low incomes, feel valued and included and make good use of services.
- Centre staff and leaders make full use of their detailed knowledge of the local area when planning services. They link well to partner organisations to identify target groups of children and families for their work. Leaders are clear about the gaps in local provision for families. Consequently, the centre is adding to what is available for families in the area rather than competing or duplicating what is already being provided.
- There is a high level of contact between health visitors and families which enables good promotion of the children's centre. This is because health and children's centres are organised into an Early Start service. This leads to valuable, face-to face discussions between workers each week about families in need of early intervention and support. Good information sharing by social care means that all local young children subject to a child protection plan, children in need and children looked after are known to the centre.
- An increasing number of local two-, three- and four-year-olds are accessing free, early years education. Good use is made of data to find those families who have yet to use these opportunities. Clear steps are underway to provide more places and encourage more reluctant parents to access other activities alongside their children, as an introduction to leaving them in a setting.

The quality of practice and services

Requires improvement

- Gaps in the attainment of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are not narrowing well over time. However, rates of breastfeeding initiation and continuation at six to eight weeks are improving well because of the work of the centre and its partners.
- Improvements in the lives of each child and family who use the children's centre are not tracked in enough detail. As a consequence, it is difficult to show the full impact of the children's centre. Tracking of children's development in Kentmere Children's Centre Daycare is starting to highlight those nursery children requiring intervention, but it is too early to see impact upon children's progress over time.
- Children and parents enjoy good quality activities at the centre which has a positive effect on their self-esteem and confidence. This in turn is starting to reduce inequality and improve their life chances. Many parents access a wide range of activities within the centre and at home to improve their parenting skills. Discrimination is not tolerated and different groups of people mix well together. Evaluations of activities and courses show high levels of satisfaction, and positive changes in the well-being of families.
- The quality of the nursery at the children's centre is good. Children's learning and progress are recognised and celebrated in excellent displays throughout the children's centre and through nursery progress records that are shared frequently with parents. The role of the new, qualified teacher is being used well in the centre to support staff, lead development and identify issues for improvement across the locality.
- Centre users comment on the trusted help provided by the centre in times of crisis, as well as welcoming the non-judgemental support which helps them move towards greater independence. A typical parental comment was, 'The centre has been part of a massive change in my life, and I've really found my way to who I am.'
- Adults have good support from the centre and partner organisations to return to learning, gain qualifications and go on to employment or further training. As a result, centre users make full use of internet resources for jobs, have guidance and support about learning opportunities and funding as well as adequate opportunities for work experience.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Requires improvement

- Although centre leaders have an accurate knowledge of the key strengths, weaknesses and priorities of the centre, they do not make enough use of health and education data to check the full impact of the centre over a period of years.
- Safeguarding policies, procedures and practice meet minimum requirements, and in terms of training and supervision are of high quality. The Common Assessment Framework is used well across services. However, recording in case files by centre staff requires improvement to allow easier identification of planning, targets and key contacts.
- While the centre plans and reviews priorities for the locality fully with local community organisations, the centre has struggled to draw in enough representatives from those bodies to meet separately as a centre advisory board. Consequently, the challenge that the board gives to the centre is adequate but not yet good. Nevertheless, parents feel fully involved and consulted about the work of the centre through the parents forum, and through the advisory board. For example, one parent said, 'It feels like it's our centre'.
- Over a long period, the children's centre has been through significant upheaval including several changes of staffing. Following the appointment of a new, experienced centre leader and senior management team in November 2013, there is now increased stability and drive to improve services. The new centre leader has brought clarity of vision and ambition to the work of the centre. He has got to know the work of staff and partners, local families and the wider community rapidly. He is showing good leadership by focussing upon the key issues facing children and families in the Kentmere area and is determined to see improvement.
- The centre budget is adequate to meet the needs of the community. It is enhanced by the close links with other services in planning development, thereby ensuring the best value for money.
- Restructures of staff at local authority level have resulted in changes in which the locality manager links to the centre. However, there is a clear and accurate understanding of the centre's strengths and weaknesses and good challenge and support to help the new centre leaders develop further. The local authority monitors the performance of the centre well. Access to local authority support networks and training are good for the centre management team and staff.
- Because of the strengths of the new centre leaders and local authority oversight, and the value placed upon listening to parents, the centre is well-placed to improve further.

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	21651
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	430161
Managed by	The local authority
Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	455
Centre leader	Ian Ingle
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0113 3782679
Email address	ian.ingle@leeds.gov.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

This template is available at www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/130186.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

No. 130186

© Crown copyright 2014

