

Braunstone Frith Sure Start Children's Centre

Cuffling Drive, off Liberty Road, Leicester, LE3 6NN

Inspection date

20–21 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for children and families

This is a centre that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- Whilst an increasing number of families are now accessing services the overall impact of services is limited as approximately four out of every ten families currently do not.
- Centre information received from the local authority with regard to the engagement of families is not robust enough. This prevents the centre from developing its services effectively to secure the sustained contact of a larger number of families and particularly those in most need.
- The progress of children who have accessed activities at the centre is not tracked and monitored effectively enough. Only a minority of children entitled to free early education at the age of two are taking up the offer. As a result children start school without the key skills they require for this next stage in their development.
- Health outcomes for families in the area are not yet good. Whilst there has been some positive impact on breastfeeding with more mothers continuing to breastfeed at six-to-eight weeks, health profiles are generally below national and local averages and are showing a decline.
- The analysis of information by centre leaders is not effective enough to monitor the impact of services on identified families, so that leaders have a full understanding of the effectiveness of the centre.

This centre has the following strengths:

- The leadership and management of the centre, during a period of significant change have continued to drive forward the recent improvements through a clear vision and high expectations, and the use of innovative community based approaches.
- The centre's system for identifying the most vulnerable children ensures that the needs of an increasing number of families in the area are accurately assessed and promotes an integrated approach to working with families. As a result families receive the correct support from the most appropriate agencies in a timely manner.
- The innovative way of working through community campaigns co-ordinated by the advisory board and involving all agencies working in the area are beginning to show significant impact.

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 leader, the integrated neighbourhood service manager, officers from the local authority, centre staff, parents, members of the advisory board, and a number of partners including health, education and early years providers.

The inspectors visited a number of sessions during the inspection including 'Stay and Play' and an adult education mathematics session. They visited New Parks children's centre, local primary schools and spoke over the phone with a private nursery provider.

They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation including the centre's self evaluation and the local authority's validation, parent evaluations, key policies and the centres safeguarding policies and procedures, as well as case files and children's learning journals.

Inspection team

Geoff Dorrity

Additional inspector

Ann Taylor

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

Braunstone Frith Children's Centre is a stand alone located on the west side of Leicester and situated on the outer edge of New Parks estate. The centre comprises two buildings and is based on the site of Braunstone Frith Primary School (URN 120031). This school is subject to a separate inspection and the report can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk

The centre is managed by Leicester City Council and works in a neighbourhood model with New Parks Children's Centre (URN 22105). Although established in 2009 the centre had a small number of staff and few activities based there until 2012. Neighbourhood staff are now based in both centres with the parent forum and Neighbourhood Advisory Board being shared. The children's centre leader manages the centre on a day-to-day basis and is line managed by the integrated service neighbourhood manager who is also children's centre leader for New Parks Children's Centre.

The centre offers a range of services to meet the core purpose including ante-natal care, family play sessions, healthy cooking, adult education and family outreach.

The area covered by Braunstone Frith Children's Centre includes the Braunstone Frith estate, Kirby Frith estate and Park Rise area. There is mixed social and private rented properties provided by Leicester City Council, a housing association and private landlords. The highest levels of deprivation seen in the city are within the area.

There are 858 children under the age of five living in the area the centre serves. The population is mainly White British. The principal issues facing the community are unemployment or low wages, declining health outcomes such as obesity rates in reception classes and low educational achievement, with most children entering school well below expected levels of development.

The centre has identified the following priority groups: children living workless households and households with a low income; lone parents; and children with multiple vulnerabilities.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Increase access to services by working with the local authority and partners:
 - to promote the children's centre so that a large majority of priority families are sustaining engagement with the centre
 - to ensure that most eligible two-year-olds access their free entitlement to early education.
- Work with key partners in the reach area to prioritise local health needs and in particular to improve the numbers of mothers initiating breastfeeding and to reduce obesity levels in children.
- Work with partners to close the gap between the lowest achieving children and the rest in order to increase the proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Ensure data is available in a timely fashion from the local authority and use this to:
 - effectively monitor the engagement of identified families and to show the impact of services, so that a more precise analysis of the centres performance is achieved and used to inform service planning
- Implement effective tracking and assessment systems that accurately measure the impact of the centre's services on:
 - Childrens' learning and achievement and their readiness for school
 - Adults' learning and development

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Requires improvement

- Through its partnerships with health professionals, the centre has been successful in registering most of the families in its area including those expecting children. Whilst there has been a rapid increase in families using the centre's services and attending activities, the large majority of families are not yet engaging regularly.
- The centre has an effective way of identifying the most vulnerable children and families in its area, and most of these are registered and a large majority regularly attend, or are contacted by the outreach workers if they do not. However, attendance at some targeted activities, particularly those based at the partner centre, is not sustained and so, for these families, the centre cannot ensure they are effectively meeting their needs.
- Regular management meetings are held where individual children's needs are discussed and the most appropriate service is agreed. Furthermore, meetings are held with other agencies, for example through the local health forum, to ensure that families are receiving the right support by the most effective means.
- The take up of early education places when children are three and four years old is good with the overwhelming majority attending either private nurseries or school. However, the take up of the two-year-old offer is exceptionally low with only a minority accessing their entitlement, which means that children enter school well below expected levels of development.
- Innovative community campaigns are initiated and co-ordinated by the advisory board in response to the needs of the area. These effectively involve all agencies including the police and housing through the neighbourhood network. Using outreach principles these campaigns are aimed at changing hearts and minds. The two most recent 'Keep Calm and Carry on Breastfeeding', aimed at increasing awareness of mothers regarding the importance of breastfeeding, and 'Earning and Learning' aimed at raising awareness of routes into employment through education. They have successfully increased the use of support activities for sustaining breastfeeding, and adult education classes now have waiting lists. However, the rates of engagement are still low.
- The recent co-location of health visitors in the centre has meant that parents and prospective parents have not had to travel to the partner centre to access services. This has had a positive impact on the numbers of mothers accessing maternity services with all appointments full, and an increase in those who drop in for advice guidance and support on an informal basis.

The quality of practice and services

Requires improvement

- A growing range of good quality activities are being delivered from the children's centre by staff and partners. Parents who attend groups clearly benefit from their experience, particularly in terms of improving their skills and confidence. However, the numbers accessing these opportunities is too low, restricting the impact the centre has on the lives of local families.
- Most health outcomes for the reach area continue to show a declining trend particularly in those mothers who start to breastfeed their babies and healthy weight in children aged five.
- A range of different sessions at the centre, such as 'Movers and Explorers' and 'Messy Mondays' are carefully planned, skilfully delivered and meaningfully evaluated. Learning journals are highly valued and well used by parents and staff, providing a clear and memorable record of how well children

are progressing. As a result, parents are gaining a better understanding about how their children are learning and are taking ideas away to use at home. However, staff are only beginning to implement systems to track and monitor this in the longer term. This limits the centres ability to demonstrate its impact on achievement at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

- Where children attend school or early years provision the majority make good progress from low starting points. The children's centre continues to work with target children in these settings to support them further. However, the assessment at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage shows that despite this many do not achieve a good level of development, although predictions for this current cohort would show some improvement on previous years.
- Support towards employment is provided through partnership working on site. Parents are finding adult education easier to access and are beginning to show sustained engagement. With the impact of the community campaign, there are now waiting lists. Those who are attending are demonstrating progress in achievement of entry level basic skills.
- Jobcentre plus advisors are on hand at the partner site for drop in advice and guidance alongside the more formal appointments and checks. Volunteering is in its infancy, but parents are encouraged to volunteer across the range of activities and roles, for instance in administration. However, there is no tracking and monitoring of these parents once they move on from the centre based sessions and so the centre finds it difficult to demonstrate the impact of its work.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Requires improvement

- The strong leadership of the recently appointed management team is beginning to have an impact on the effectiveness of the centre. There is a clarity of vision and high expectations, which has driven forward improvements. However, the effectiveness of leadership and management is not yet good because the centre is not yet having a good impact on outcomes for enough local families and children.
- The data available from the local authority regarding the engagement of families with the centre is not robust enough for the centre to be secure in its analysis. This restricts the centre's ability to both confidently show the difference it makes and accurately monitor its performance, and means that data is not being used as effectively and efficiently as it could be to inform future planning.
- The priorities identified in the centres development plan are accurate and measurable, based on the self evaluation, the challenge set by the local authority through the external validation process, and the advisory board.
- Staff are well qualified and knowledgeable. Opportunities for professional development are encouraged. An effective supervision and appraisal process further supports staff development.
- The complementary work of partners is used well to support the key challenges of the area such as poor health outcomes and worklessness through the initiation of the innovative community campaigns by the advisory board, and the participation in clinical forums with health. This ensures the effective and efficient use of resources, reduces the risk of duplication, and is testament to both the senior leadership team and the advisory board in their commitment to continually improving services and outcomes for the community they serve.
- Duties relating to safeguarding are taken seriously. Policies and procedures are thorough and the Common Assessment Framework processes are used appropriately to reduce risk. Case files and

records are maintained to a high standard and reflect the views of families and the involvement of other professionals. Children who are subject to child protection plans, children in need and looked after children are all known and well supported by the centre.

- Parents are well supported to ensure the safety of their children, through activities such as home safety assessments on every outreach visit, leaflets and information sessions on how to recognise bullying and keeping your child safe on the internet.
- The centre undertakes a broad range of parental surveys. The annual parent satisfaction survey demonstrated that regular users are happy with the services they receive and that the centre is having a positive impact on their lives. As part of a recent Big Lottery bid the centre participated in a neighbourhood consultation. One of the outcomes of this was that the centre revamped the Let's Get Cooking sessions to combine it with a growing theme and the It's Your Neighbourhood campaign led by the Royal Horticultural Society.

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

Unique reference number	20403
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	442862
Managed by	The local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	858
Centre leader	Sue Lyall
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0116 2298750
Email address	sue.lyall@leicester.gov.uk

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