

# Wembley Locality Team 1 Children's Centre

Alperton Children's Centre, South Building, Ealing Road, Wembley, HA0 4U2

<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 May 2014
Previous inspection date	Not previously inspected

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
	Previous inspection:	Not applicable	
Access to services by young children and families		<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
The quality of practice and services		<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management		<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>

## Summary of key findings for children and families

### This is a good centre.

- The centre knows about all the families with children under five in the area, and ensures that most benefit from its services, advice and support. This success is because the local authority is highly effective in sharing information with the centre.
- The centre manager leads the centre with great enthusiasm and determination, which has led to significant improvement. She is very well supported by a well-qualified, knowledgeable and highly committed staff and advisory board.
- The centre works very effectively with its partners in family solutions to support all the families in need of the most help to keep children free from harm.
- The centre provides high quality services with its partners to help parents to support children's early learning and development and to keep them safe and healthy.
- The centre helps parents to improve their confidence and skills through a very successful volunteering programme. This has enabled users to find employment and to enjoy greater financial stability.

### It is not outstanding because:

- There is a small minority of families with children under five who are not yet taking advantage of the activities and support the centre offers. This group includes some young parents and others in households where adults are not working.
- The centre's plans to track the impact of its work on children's education and development over time are at an early stage of development.
- Feedback from parents is not used as well as it could be to measure the long-term impact of the centre's services on the lives of families or to help shape services in the future.

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

- Find ways of working with even more families identified as needing help, particularly young parents and households where no adult is working.
- Develop systems to measure the impact of the centre's work on children's learning and development over time.
- Use the feedback provided by parents more effectively to measure the long-term effect of the centre's work on the lives of their families and to shape services in the future.

### 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 the centre leader, staff, members of the local advisory board, a representative from the local authority, parents and representatives of the centre's key partners.

The inspectors observed activities at the Alperton centre and at the Barham Park buildings.

They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation, including the centre's plans for improvement, feedback from parents, information about the area provided by Brent and records related to the safeguarding of children.

### Inspection team

Graham Lee, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Lesley Talbot-Strettle	Additional Inspector
Kath Beck	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about the centre

Wembley Locality Team 1 Children's Centre was created in April 2011 when Brent reorganised its children's centres into clusters. The Alperton Children's Centre is the hub of activities and serves as the main office for the locality team. This is a purpose-built facility within the grounds of Alperton Community School. The other centre is the Welcome Children's Centre in Wembley, which is located within the local health centre. Services are provided at both centres as well as at the Barham Park buildings. Wembley Locality Team 1 operates as a stand-alone centre under the direct management of the local authority. The centre provides early childhood services, parenting courses, health services, careers advice and adult education in conjunction with its key partners. It works with Brent Family Solutions to support families in most need. The centre also helps to put parents in touch with the right people for advice about issues such as benefits, debt and domestic violence.

The centre serves a densely populated part of Brent and there are currently approximately 3,973 families with children under five in the area. Most families in the location are of Asian origin and those of Indian heritage are easily the largest group. Other families come from a wide range of backgrounds, with Sri Lankan Tamil, Pakistani, and Somali backgrounds being the most prominent. There are areas of considerable hardship in the location. While the proportion of children living in families where no adults are working is relatively small, low income employment and a dependency on benefits is a feature of many households. Children enter early years settings with levels of skills and understanding which are often below those typical for their age, especially in language development. In collaboration with Brent, the centre has identified the groups requiring particular support as being households where no adult is working, young parents, families in difficulties, children in need of protection and families with children with disabilities or additional needs.

### Inspection judgements

#### Access to services by young children and families

**Good**

- The centre has a very strong partnership with the health authorities and Brent council which enables information about children living in the area to be shared effectively. This is particularly important as there are a significant number of families moving in and out of the area all the time. As a result, the centre has up-to-date information about all the families with children under five in the locality, and ensures that most benefit from its services, support and advice.
- The centre works closely with Family Solutions to ensure that all of the families in need of the most help receive support either directly from the centre or through social care. This includes all those children at risk of harm. The impact of this work shows clear improvement in the outcomes for families and children over time.
- Although the centre is very active in promoting the support it offers, there is still a small minority of families who do not participate in its activities. This includes a number of households where no adults are working, and young parents.
- The centre has been particularly successful in increasing the involvement of fathers and male carers in its work. A number were involved in the activities seen by inspectors and the imaginative ideas used by the centre, and in Brent more widely, are leading to rapidly increasing participation from this group.
- The centre offers services that are well balanced between the needs of all parents and those who have been identified as being in need of particular support. The centre manages the process of registration very well to ensure that most families get the help they need.

- The centre is very active in encouraging eligible families to take up their free entitlement to early education. As a result, a large majority of children have been helped to find places in good quality nursery provision.

### **The quality of practice and services**

**Good**

- The centre provides good quality and very popular services, such as the 'Stay and Play' sessions, to help parents to support their children's early learning and development. This helps prepare children for school and contributes to the above average proportion reaching a good level of development by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This work is also complemented well by the centre's very strong support for local childminders.
- Nevertheless, the gap between the lowest attaining 20% of children and the rest is larger than it is nationally. In order to address this, the centre is working effectively in partnership with speech and language therapists, through activities such as 'Time and Rhyme', to develop children's language and communication skills, particularly for families in most need. The tracking of children's progress to show the impact of this work is at an early stage of development.
- There are a number of children in the area with disabilities and special educational needs. Many of these have benefitted from the Special Needs Groups run at the centre. This provision is enhanced as parents have access to a fully trained special needs coordinator for support and advice.
- Wembley Locality Team 1 works very closely with other centres in Brent to provide a range of parenting courses, such as 'Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities'. These are aimed particularly at those families which are identified as most in need. The evaluations of these courses are very positive. However, the centre is not using this information as effectively as it might, to chart the longer-term impact on the lives of families.
- The centre is aware that abusive relationships and domestic violence are issues for a significant number of women in the area. In response, they have run the 'Power to Change' programme which has been very successful in developing confidence and helping women to deal with their situations more effectively.
- A particular success of the centre is its strong volunteering programme, which has developed the confidence and skills of many parents. There are numerous examples where parents have gone on to further training and employment both in the centre and elsewhere. This has enabled them to improve the economic stability of their families.
- Similarly, the centre works well with its partners in adult education to provide language courses which enable parents to prepare their children more effectively for school and often lead on to further training.
- A significant number of parents come through the doors of the children's centre to take advantage of the pre- and ante-natal clinics. As a result of the very good partnerships with health professionals, many go on to access the services run by the centre.
- Inspectors were told frequently how important the centre is to the community. Parents unanimously praised the warm welcome and high levels of care, guidance and support they receive from everybody connected with the centre.

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

**Good**

- The centre manager leads the locality team with great enthusiasm and determination, supported effectively by staff members. Together they have a very clear focus on the centre's drive to meet the needs of the community, to reduce inequality and tackle discrimination. As a result, the centre is improving and increasingly more families are benefitting from its services.
- The local authority oversees the work of the centre carefully and supportively while ensuring, with its key partners, that the lives of families in the area, are improved.
- Similarly, the local advisory board is widely representative of parents and key partners. They are

fiercely supportive of the centre, have a very good understanding of its work and are increasingly holding the leader to account for its progress. They understand the information provided about families in the area and how inequalities are being reduced for the groups most in need. They also understand how the management of performance is being used to drive improvement.

- The centre leader has a very clear and realistic understanding of the centre's strengths and what needs to be done to bring about further improvement. Although this is not always clear in the lengthy self-evaluation document, it is reflected in ambitious plans for improvement.
- The centre leader has high expectations of staff and this is reflected in the rigorous systems of supervision and setting targets for staff. This is allied to thorough induction, effective support and plentiful opportunities to participate in training. As a result, staff are well qualified and very effective in their various roles.
- The centre takes the views of children into account when planning its services. A particularly innovative approach to capturing their views was the recent project involving children using disposable cameras to record their likes and dislikes.
- Parents have the opportunity to express their views and contribute to the running of the centre through the 'Parents' Voice' group and through their representation on the local advisory board. Parental surveys show high levels of satisfaction. However, the centre is not making full use of these evaluations to track the long-term impact of services on families or to shape future services.
- The centre has very effective policies and procedures in place to ensure the welfare and safeguarding of young children. This is a high priority for everyone connected with the centre. Working with Family Solutions, there are strong systems in place to support children who are looked after and those identified as being in need, as well as those subject to a child protection plan and the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) procedures.
- The centre manages its resources well. It makes flexible use of its various premises to meet the needs of families through the area. Staff are used effectively, utilising their considerable strengths well. The provision at Alperton is well resourced and the delightful and recently created outside area really enhances children's learning and sense of well-being.

**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.

**Centre details**

<b>Unique reference number</b>	80375
<b>Local authority</b>	Brent
<b>Inspection number</b>	442825
<b>Managed by</b>	The local authority

<b>Approximate number of children under five in the reach area</b>	3973
<b>Centre leader</b>	Juliana Lewin
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	0208 937 3860
<b>Email address</b>	Juliana.lewin@brent.gov.uk

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