

Kingswood Children's Centre

Woodland Road, Lambeth, London, SE19 1PA

Inspection dates	5–6 June 2014
Previous inspection date	Not previously inspected

Overall effectiveness	This inspection: Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
		Not applicable	
Access to services by young children and families		Outstanding	1
The quality of practice and services		Outstanding	1
The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for children and families

This is an outstanding centre.

- The pursuit of excellence is relentless at the centre. Governance by the advisory board is strong. Leaders, governors, managers and staff work in highly successful collaboration with partners to meet the diverse and changing needs so that inequalities for families are reducing rapidly.
- A range of high-quality services is planned, with parents' views and suggestions central to what is on offer. The very large majority of families in the area use the centre's services. Most families take part regularly enough to make a notable positive difference in their lives.
- The wealth of expertise offered establishes the centre at the heart of the community for young families. Parents are highly satisfied with the services. They greatly appreciate the exceptional care, guidance and support, and the extent to which the centre helps them to grow in confidence and improve their parenting skills.
- An extremely strong emphasis on partner agencies working together protects children and families most in need. Families are very well looked after, as a result. Partnerships with voluntary organisations and agencies such as social services give families access to high-quality support, advice and guidance.
- Staff use resources with great care to arrange enticing and exciting activities. The individual care and attention staff give, particularly in outreach, is exceptional. As a result, parents say they feel highly valued. Word of mouth builds up attendance, families keep on attending and their children thrive.
- Well-focused and detailed tracking shows that children who attend the centre are extremely well prepared for starting nursery classes or school. The needs of disabled children and those with special needs are very well met.
- Parents succeed in preparation for returning to work with advice and courses tailored to their needs. Although opportunities have been few, the parents who have been volunteers at the centre have flourished and gone on to their chosen careers.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Give parents more opportunities to volunteer at the centre and in the community to gain experience to develop their personal skills and confidence in a work environment in preparation for employment.

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. It was carried out at the same time as the inspection of Rosendale Children's Centre, which receives a separate inspection report.

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an additional inspector.

The inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, managers from the local authority and centre staff. They met health, social care and adult learning partners, headteachers, education and early years practitioners, centre staff and parents. They also met with representatives from the advisory board.

The inspectors visited services delivered at Kingswood Children's Centre and at an outreach venue in Paxton Primary School.

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

Inspection team

Christine Davies, Coordinating lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jane Neech, Lead inspector for simultaneous inspection

Her Majesty's Inspector

Lesley Talbot-Strettle, Team inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

Kingswood Children's Centre opened in 2009 and serves the Gipsy Hill ward of the London Borough of Lambeth. It is located adjacent to Paxton Primary School. The centre is governed by the governing body of The Gipsy Hill Federation and is managed by Kingswood Primary School on behalf of the local authority.

The centre's strategic manager is supported by five centre staff and other staff from time to time who work at other times in schools and another centre managed in the Gipsy Hill Federation. The advisory board is shared with Little Starz Children's Centre, as is the strategic manager. Kingswood Children's Centre is part of a cluster of five centres, which includes Rosendale Children's Centre, which was inspected at the same time. Rosendale and Little Starz children's centres, Kingswood Primary School and Paxton Primary school have each received their own inspection. Published reports for these settings are available at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

The population in the area served by the centre is diverse. Although some families are affluent, the majority of the area is within the 30% most deprived in the country. Housing is a mixture of owner-occupied accommodation alongside social and privately rented housing in blocks and estates. Approximately half of the families are of White British heritage. The remaining families are from a range of ethnic groups, with a majority who speak English as an additional language. The target groups identified by the centre include: disabled children and children with special educational needs; families in housing need; those in workless or low income households; young parents; those eligible for free school meals; and children of Black African and Black Caribbean ethnicity (particularly boys in this group). Children's skills and abilities on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage vary widely but are broadly in line with those expected for their age.

The centre works collaboratively with other centres in the cluster area and with a range of partners, including community learning providers and Jobcentre Plus, to provide family support, outreach work, stay-and-play family learning activities, breastfeeding support, child health clinics, outdoor activities, parents' support groups and parenting programmes. The centre has been involved in an early communication, language and literacy project. The centre and partners provide services that are open to all and specialist advice, guidance or activities at the main site and in outreach venues in the local park, pre-school groups, at schools and in health clinics.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Outstanding

- The very large majority of children in the area are registered with the centre and almost all families are known because of highly effective promotion and outreach strategies involving key partners.
- Leaders and managers set challenging targets to include groups and individuals, and exceeds these in most cases. The very large majority of families identified as most in need of services are accessing the centre so that the centre has successfully shifted its focus to increasing the amount of contact that families have. The registration and take-up rates for teenage parents, lone parents, families in housing need and others in priority groups is outstanding.
- Midwives let expectant parents know about services and there is seamless support from health visitors and the centre, particularly for vulnerable parents, when babies are born. The coherent pathway ensures early identification of children's needs and seamless access to nutrition and specialist health services such as speech and language and physiotherapy. A high proportion of children receive one-year and two-year developmental checks on time and most are up to date with their immunisations.
- The centre has extremely effective systems in place for tracking families' engagement and identifying any who stop attending services. This helps staff to sustain high levels of engagement, identify any trends and re-establish contact with any families who were initially reluctant to get involved. This ensures that the most vulnerable families are supported in staying safe.
- The expertise available to families through partner organisations is extensive and is greatly appreciated by families. There is high uptake of information, advice and guidance services to meet priority needs. These include cookery classes and breastfeeding support, Jobcentre Plus lone parent appointments, housing and legal advice sessions, and excellent services for young parents.
- Parents in most need access courses to improve their literacy and numeracy, learn English or discover their skills in preparation for work. Their children's needs are supported in high-quality crèche facilities. Staff signpost families to activities locally and in other centres, such as the expectant fathers programme, raising boys and parent gym.
- The centre establishes and maintains contact with all families promptly following a multi-agency team (MAT) or Common Assessment Framework (CAF) referral, including those who experience domestic violence. Highly effective outreach work ensures that families' needs continue to be assessed and that services are well coordinated. A highly systematic approach means that individual families are allocated promptly for targeted support and the centre's work starts without delay.
- The centre is highly successful at helping families who are eligible to take up their free entitlement to good-quality early years places. The centre sets aspirational targets, and these targets are regularly met and exceeded because of how closely the needs of very young children are checked. As a result, all two-year-olds with priority and 85% of three- and four-year-olds in the locality are taking up their places.

The quality of practice and services

Outstanding

- Early intervention work in partnership with other agencies and centres is exceptional. Children's health, social and developmental needs are identified at an early stage and services are astutely matched to provide the help that is needed. Vigilant staff and partners recognise changes in families' needs, and good record keeping and excellent

- communication between agencies ensure that services are adapted.
- Staff are highly skilled, build trusting relationships and work at a superb level with a wealth of different partners, including social care, housing, and speech and language therapists, to improve children's well-being and reduce inequalities. Parents and children adopt the excellent strategies modelled by staff, for example embracing the healthy eating message of the week, 'use low salt and sugar', and weaving it into their play with food.
 - Parents successfully attend parenting courses or receive a masterful level of one-to-one support to improve their parenting skills. Support for those on child protection plans, children in need and those supported through the Common Assessment Framework is very good and caters for a wide range of needs. Families 'step down' from intensive support and get back on their feet with changes for the better in their lives.
 - The large majority of parents become more confident following family learning sessions and first aid courses. All families are helped to make their homes safer through assessments and some are eligible for equipment loans. Teenage parents and young parents up to the age of 25 blossom with their children as they get specialist support in groups and from St Michael's fellowship.
 - Early years practitioners plan activities carefully, especially to suit the needs of children who are not doing so well in their learning and development. Staff skilfully explain children's learning to parents while they communicate and play with children. The gap in achievement between children who speak English as an additional language and others in their age group has closed because of this strategy. The centre's own tracking, recorded in learning profiles, shows that Black African children and Black Caribbean boys are also beginning to make good progress.
 - Because of their very low starting points, not all children start school with a good level of development, but their readiness to join in is fantastic because of 'Stepping Stones to Nursery' and sessions in schools. Tracking with partner schools shows that children who have attended the centre go on making more rapid progress than others in their age group up to Key Stage 2.
 - Children and families are improving their knowledge of healthy lifestyles extremely well. In parents and children embrace the message of the week, to take less salt and sugar in food, and incorporate it in their play ideas. Sessions such as 'Toddler adventure gym' and 'Little Boppers' provide an excellent opportunity for families to keep fit together. Cookery courses and breastfeeding support from midwives in nearby centres are popular, although the available data does not demonstrate whether these strategies are having the desired effect on reducing obesity in the longer term.
 - Case tracking shows highly effective use of individuals' existing skills and interests, motivating them to raise aspirations, confidence and skill levels. Adults highly value the advice, guidance training support, for instance through the 'Develop your potential' course, so that completion rates are extremely high and most adults go on to employment or further training. A few parents have successfully volunteered in the centre, although there is no continuous programme to encourage more parents to take this route.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Outstanding

- Kingswood Children's Centre is exceptionally well led and managed. Management by the Gypsy Hill Federation drives the pursuit of excellence so that ambitious targets are met and inequalities are reducing. With strong leadership and management, the centre puts inclusion at the forefront of strategies

- The advisory board gives voice to parents' views and draws on a wealth of detailed data and relevant research from partners to challenge the centre and shape its priorities. All partners contribute to the useful working self-evaluation records so that the centre knows at all times how well it is closing any gaps.
- The local authority's strategic direction is clear and well understood. Central commissioning and subsequent evaluation of some key services, enabling tracking of outcomes for children as they move on in schools, have a significant impact on supporting families. The local authority and partners make continuous improvement in securing and sharing data to reduce inequalities further.
- The effectiveness of supervision and monitoring is outstanding on all levels. Work is planned and evaluated in great detail, particularly to close gaps in the achievement of different groups of children and priority groups. Staff are absolutely clear about their roles and responsibilities. Continuous development comes through excellent access to training through the local authority and the Gipsy Hill Federation.
- Safeguarding is given exceptionally high priority. Policies and procedures are robust, and staff are well qualified and highly trained, including in the use of the Common Assessment Framework and to spot and act on any concerns. Excellent information exchange between professionals and multi-agency teams means that the families in greatest need are safeguarded extremely well.
- Exemplary safe recruitment processes are in place for staff and volunteers. Comprehensive policies and procedures are implemented for health, safety, security and safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. All venues are kept safe by the thorough risk assessments carried out, and parents learn to keep their families and homes safe through the centre's excellent example. Visitors and contractors are identified and tracked in and out of venues to keep families secure.
- The centre provides excellent value for money. The main building and community venues in a park, the library, clinics and partner schools are used intensively. Collaboration with other centres in the locality means that work to meet all needs is routinely programmed in. Exemplary partnerships add value and contribute to the high participation rates and the impressive improvements families make to their lives.

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	21828
Local authority	London Borough of Lambeth
Inspection number	444732
Managed by	The governing body of the Gipsy Hill Federation on behalf of the local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	1,073
Centre leader	Hilary Marinnan
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
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