

Clayton Brook Children's Centre

Great Greens Lane, Clayton Brook, Bamber Bridge, Lancashire, PR5 8HL

Inspection dates	19–20 June 2014
Previous inspection date	Not previously inspected

Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- At 92%, registration of families in the area is high and, of those families who have been identified as most in need, all are registered and 77% remain engaged in services.
- The centre's careful analysis of need over the last 12 months has resulted in good, focused provision to engage the target groups, such as lone parents, teenage parents, families of Polish heritage and to support children with speech and language delay.
- Children attending the centre's sessions make good progress from their starting points and a high percentage of children in the area achieve a good level of development at the end of Reception Year.
- The new manager has successfully re-focused the centre's work and the monitoring of practice is robust. This has resulted in an experienced and dedicated staff team whose members work extremely well together to meet the needs of families in the area.
- Families who use the centre services greatly benefit, from attending the activities and parenting programmes, and through the outreach support they receive in their homes. In addition, the strong partnership working with a wide range of partners results in better outcomes for families who are in most need of support.

It is not outstanding because:

- The range of adult learning courses is too narrow and they are not promoted well enough. The tracking of adult learning and volunteering opportunities are both under-developed.
- There are more families in the area, who are not yet engaged, that would benefit from the centre's services.
- Staff do not make the most of the observations and assessment system which is in place, to help parents become more fully involved in their children's learning.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Improve the promotion and tracking of adult learning and provide further opportunities for accredited learning, training and volunteering roles in order to enable adults to develop the skills that they need to help them gain employment.
- Build on the existing good practice to increase further the engagement of target families in the area.
- Extend further the use of observation and assessment in sessions, to help parents become more fully involved in their children's learning.

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 centre parents, staff, members of the advisory board, volunteers and representatives from professional partners including health, early years and education, as well as officers from the local authority.

The inspectors visited the linked onsite school.

They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation. Inspectors took into account parents' views as expressed during the inspection, as well as through recorded evaluations of the centre's work.

Inspection team

Parm Sansoyer, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Anne Mackay	Additional inspector
Ken Fisher	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

Clayton Brook Children's Centre opened in 2008. This stand-alone centre is attached to Clayton Brook Primary School. A range of services, including health services, family play sessions, parenting programmes, adult education and outreach services, is offered. Services are mainly delivered onsite with some delivery at Manor Road and Lancaster Lane Primary Schools and Clayton Brook Community Centre. The centre manager took up post in March 2013.

Two of the wards served by the centre are in the 30% most deprived areas in the country. The area is economically diverse with a large majority of the area being relatively affluent. There are approximately 1,130 families with children aged under five years living in the area. The latest data show that 12.5% of local children are living in households dependent upon workless benefits. Over half of the houses in the area are privately owned and the remainder are private rental and social housing. The large majority of housing in the 30% most deprived areas is social housing. The very large majority of families are of White British heritage with a small, increasing, number of Polish families. Most local children enter early years provision with knowledge and skills in line with or slightly below the levels typical for their age. The centre has identified families living in the most deprived areas, lone parents, teenage parents, families of Polish heritage and children with speech and language delay as the main target groups.

The linked school is subject to a separate inspection and the report is available at www.ofsted.gov.uk. Governance of the centre is provided by the Governing Body of Clayton Brook Primary school in conjunction with the advisory board.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Good

- The very large majority of families in the area are registered with the centre. This provides centre staff with a firm base to work from, to help them identify and analyse local need and target their services and work. Consequently, the large majority of target groups attend regularly and greatly benefit from the provision. However, as acknowledged by the centre, there are more families in the area, that are not yet engaged, that would also benefit from the centre's services.
- The centre has placed a clear focus on supporting those families who have been identified as most in need. The centre manager has refocused the centre's work and incorporated more targeted sessions. This results in high engagement from lone parents, teenage parents, families of Polish heritage and children with speech and language delay. This, in turn, is helping to reduce inequalities between different groups.
- By placing a greater emphasis on working with health partners, the centre has significantly increased registration, by making early contact with expectant mothers. This results in very high engagement from mothers after their baby is born and, in particular, from those who are less likely to take advantage of the available early childhood services available.
- The universal and targeted sessions are popular and well attended by families, especially those who are most in need of support. They clearly report the improvements that they have seen in their children's behaviour and development and how they have increased their own confidence in parenting.
- Home visits form part of the effective outreach support that assists families who are most in need. Staff target support and advice effectively, in particular, for those families in crisis.

The quality of practice and services

Good

- Relationships with midwives, health visitors and social care workers are well established. This enables staff at the centre to share information regarding families and to ensure that they receive early help. In addition, case studies show that targeted intervention, prevention and early help have

a good impact on improving the well-being of individual children and their families.

- Strong collaborative working with health professionals results in shared priorities. For example, the prevalence of high dental decay within the area has been targeted very well and is having a demonstrable impact on families in the area, in improving their children's oral hygiene. In addition, there are clear, shared strategies in place to continue to increase breastfeeding rates, reduce obesity and the number of mothers smoking at delivery, in the area.
- The centre has identified that there are a significant number of children within the area with speech and language delay. As a result, the staff work closely with speech and language therapists, local schools and childcare providers. For example, targeted sessions, such as 'Chatterbox', are provided and are successful in supporting such children before they enter school, to help narrow the achievement gap between them and other children.
- Centre staff place a strong emphasis on ensuring that the sessions they offer include a clear focus on teaching and modelling to parents, how they can support their children's learning in readiness for school and nursery. However, staff do not make best use of the observation and assessment that they use to track children's progress, to help parents become more fully involved in their children's learning.
- The centre offers good quality care, guidance and support, and parenting programmes have a good impact on children and their parents. For example, parents report that strategies to manage their children's behaviour have been particularly successful and improve the well-being of the whole family.
- Those adults who have trained as accredited volunteers report positively about the benefits to their confidence. Some have moved on to gain employment at the centre and others help to run sessions. Although, there are some good success stories, the numbers engaging in the volunteering opportunities remain low.
- Adults are keen to attend courses, such as paediatric first aid, accident prevention and fire awareness, to help secure the safety of their children and families. However, the centre does not promote and offer a broad enough range of adult training courses to engage more adults in improving their opportunities for employability. In addition, the systems to track learners' progress are under-developed. Therefore, not enough of the targeted families who are unemployed develop the skills they need to aid employment.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- The arrangements for governance, leadership and management of the centre are good. The local authority plays a strong strategic role in directing the centre's work, with clear key priorities for the centre. Consequently, the leadership team has made a significant difference for families in the area in a relatively short space of time by ensuring that these priorities have been met.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the centre's strengths and areas needing development, and use the information effectively to drive improvement. Detailed data about the target groups the centre has identified is used to focus resources, meet targets and improve outcomes for those most in need.
- Recent training for advisory board members, including parents, means that they are in an even stronger position to challenge the work of the centre. Key members, of whom most are also delivery partners, work closely with the centre. Therefore, not only do they understand the role the centre plays in the community, they also share many of the key targets and are in a good position to hold the centre to account.
- Close links with the safeguarding and social care teams ensure strong support for those families and children most at risk. Staff work closely with partners to give full support, including through the use of the Common Assessment Framework, to children that are subject to a child protection plan, or identified as 'in need' or in the care of the local authority. Staff have a good working knowledge of the policies and procedures in place to keep staff and families safe.
- Staff are well qualified and experienced, and staff recruitment and vetting systems are effective to secure the welfare of children. There are robust systems in place to manage any staff under-

performance and a tailored plan of training to ensure their continuous professional development. Staff are positive about the on-going monitoring of practice, auditing of case files and the supervision they receive. Those in governance have a good understanding of the procedures.

- The centre places a clear focus on reducing inequalities between the different target groups identified. For example, the Polish group, is used extremely well to help teach parents how they can support their children to learn English, to help narrow the gap in their children's learning before they start school.
- The centre provides good opportunities for families to give their feedback through their evaluations on the sessions and services they receive and attend. The recently rejuvenated parents' forum is enthusiastic about what contribution it can make to influence the centre's work 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.

Children's centre

Unique reference number	20750
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	442860
Managed by	Clayton Brook Primary School

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	1,130
Centre leader	Mrs Angela Braithwaite
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
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