

# Kingswinford and Wall Heath Children's Centre

Blanford Mere Primary School, Mimosa Walk, Kingswinford, DY6 7EA

<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 July 2014
Previous inspection date	Not previously inspected

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>Previous inspection:</b>	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.

- Outstanding leadership, governance and management ensures that all families, including those the centre has identified as most in need of its services and support, have excellent access to a wide range of children and adult services.
- The centre leader and her staff are highly ambitious for the community they serve and constantly strive to improve the quality and effectiveness of all the services it provides.
- Relationships between the children's centres and other services and organisations, including health and education, are excellent. Families, including those with disabled children and children with special educational needs, are much safer and healthier and their children are extremely well prepared for school, as a result of this.
- The centre provides high quality support and guidance to workless adults to help them improve their qualifications, especially in literacy and numeracy, to help them into employment. The centre is exploring ways to build on the very good procedures to track adults' success and ensure all aspects of their skills and development are promoted.
- Almost every child in the area who is eligible for two year old free early education takes up the offer and is provided with high quality learning opportunities.
- Staff are highly skilled and very well qualified because of the centre's constant commitment to further improve their professional development.
- Parents, including those in vulnerable and challenging circumstances, praise the support they receive from the centre staff and their professional partners. Typically they say that the centre 'has turned my life around' and 'I don't know how I would have managed without them'. Parents are delighted with the warm welcome they always receive and the staff's excellent recall of their names and circumstances even if they only met very briefly.

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

- Extend the already very good procedures to track and promote adult learning to include employability skills such as time keeping, prioritising and organisation.

## 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 leaders, managers and other centre staff. They met with representatives of the local authority, the local advisory board. They also held meetings with health service partners including health visitors, early years providers, a representative of Citizens Advice and adult learning representatives. The inspectors spoke to several parents throughout the inspection.

The inspectors visited the 'Village Bears Day Nursery' and 'Time for Tots Toddler Group', as well as meeting families from 'Tiny Stars Baby Group'

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

## Inspection team

Lead inspector, Andrew Clark

Additional inspector

Team Inspector, Peter Towner

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about the centre

Kingswinford and Wall Heath Children's Centre is led and managed by a centre leader and managed by the local authority. The centre is situated in the grounds of Blanford Mere Primary School (URN 103792). The management and leadership team also manage Wordsley Children's Centre (URN 23682), although this centre is designated as stand alone. The school and children's centre are subject to separate inspections and the report is available at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The centre provides a range of family support services, play and learning activities, adult learning and health promotion activities, and they signpost families to other relevant services. Many of the activities are delivered in the centre such as parenting and adult training services, Citizen's Advice, Jobcentre Plus, child health assessments services, baby and toddler sessions and crèche facilities. Sessions are also held within the local community including Wordsley Children's Centre where several of the staff also work.

The area includes two Traveller sites. A small proportion of families live in one of the 30 per cent most deprived areas in England. The proportion of children living in households where no one works is about average as is the proportion of families in receipt of benefits. The large majority of children are in white British families with a small, proportion of Traveller heritage.

There are around 675 children under the age of five living in the areas served by the centre. They generally enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with a range of skills and knowledge which typically as expected for their age.

The centre has identified the following families most in need of support: lone parents, teenage parents, children living in workless households and children in Travelling families.

## Inspection judgements

### Access to services by young children and families

### Outstanding

- Almost all the children and families in the area are registered with the centre and the large majority access the wide range of services that are offered. Extremely active involvement in the local community, including partnership work with ante-natal services and other health professionals, social care and schools ensures that the staff are made aware of families, including those expecting children, that are in the most need of their services.
- Staff work extremely hard to involve families who do not follow up from the initial contact or who do not participate regularly. There are rigorous procedures to ensure that no one slips through the net, particularly families who are identified as most needing the centre's support. This has resulted in rapidly increasing numbers of families accessing the services including lone parents, teenage parents, workless families and those of Traveller heritage.
- Staff are highly successful in ensuring families with disabled children and children with special educational needs are registered with the centres and make very good use of their services. The very close links with speech and language services make a particularly good contribution to the early development of these children.
- Families' needs are very accurately and speedily assessed. Multi-agency meetings and the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) are used extremely well to ensure support is carefully matched to meet families' needs. Work in the community is effective and involves a wide range of partners. For example, close partnership with local health partners, including the family nursing partnership and breastfeeding groups, has ensured that all teenagers who are expecting babies and other young expectant parents are visited by the centre's staff before the birth of their baby. All these parents take advantage of services the centre offers.
- Assessment at the age of two is used well to identify children and families who need additional support from family support workers or other agencies. Staff work well as a team to make sure that parents are aware of all the help which may be available to them including their children's entitlement to free early education when relevant.
- Arrangements for two-year old children to take up their free early education places in the locality are good and 95 per cent do so. Parents are signposted to local provision and almost all three- and four-year olds take up their free places. As a result, children leave the Early Years Foundation Stage at age five with standards, especially in their personal and social development and communication skills, which are above average and increasing. The gap between the standards reached by children eligible for a free school meal and other children is much closer than the national average and is a reflection of the centre's work in supporting such families.

### The quality of practice and services

### Outstanding

- Families, who find themselves in complex and chaotic situations, receive excellent attention from centre staff. Family support workers work very closely with key agencies and organisations to effectively provide early help and support to families in times of need.
- The centre also provides strong support in helping parents to overcome domestic violence through the close work undertaken with other agencies. Several parents commented very powerfully about the positive impact this work had had on their well-being. For example, 'I feel a lot more positive that I am going in the right direction and could not have done it without their support and guidance.'
- Case files are maintained to a very high standard and centre staff keep excellent records of their work with families. The child's views plays an increasing role in planning the type of support given to a family. This means that early help has the maximum impact on the well-being of young children.

- The centre provides an outstanding range of training and guidance on health issues. Positive messages about breastfeeding are reinforced through weekly groups, health visits and the work of volunteers. As a result, the proportion of mothers who continue breastfeeding at 6 to 8 weeks is well above the national average. Very well planned courses in leading healthy lifestyles also contribute to improve the well-being of families. The proportion of children who are overweight or obese is much lower than the national average.
- Parents and children play together in enjoyable and exceptionally well-planned sessions such as 'Tiny Stars Baby Group' and 'Time for Tots Toddler Group' which enable children to make excellent progress in their social and language development. They very closely monitor children's progress even if they only attend very occasionally. Parents are thrilled by the beautifully presented 'Learning Journeys' which present a photographic and written account of their children's experiences.
- Parents benefit well from parenting courses, gaining an improved understanding of how to manage their children's behaviour and promote their children's well-being. The centre successfully ensures that a high proportion of families identified as needing support take advantage of this training.
- There has been almost a hundred percent success rate in a good proportion of workless parents completing literacy and numeracy courses supported by the centre. The centre has very good procedures to track the progress these adults make particularly in academic areas and to involve them in volunteering. They are further developing procedures to make sure that all adults skills, such as organisation or time keeping, are recognised and promoted to give the best chance for employment.

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

### **Outstanding**

- The centre leader has very high aspirations and leads by example. She is well supported by very effective staff because they are fully involved in decision making and in setting the strategic direction of the centre. They receive excellent support from the local authority.
- Performance management and supervision are extremely well-established and methodical. They include direct observation of sessions and regular training days. Staff training and the appraisal process are linked to the centre's priorities for development. Staff are very well qualified and their roles are closely matched to their skills and experience.
- The skilled workforce successfully focuses its efforts on having the maximum impact on reducing inequalities, tackling discrimination and improving the well being of the whole community, but especially those families identified as most in need of support. The professional discussions that occur between members of the local advisory board also contribute extremely well to improving outcomes.
- Staff take their duties relating to safeguarding very seriously. Policies and procedures are thorough and the CAF processes are used well to assess need and to reduce levels of risk. The centre provides very good support for looked after children, their carers as well as children who have been identified as being in need or who are subject to a child protection plan.
- Members of the advisory board have a clear view of centre priorities and where improvement is needed. They have regular access to training, so understand their role in supporting and challenging the centres. Members recognise that staff are very well led and know how staff performance is managed. They know that the centres make very good provision to meet the needs of families most in need of support.
- Leaders are well aware of the few areas for further development. They work very successfully with the local authority to set ambitious goals and this has resulted in a high proportion of families most in need of support access services. The success of the centre is rigorously monitored by the local authority.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	21700
<b>Local authority</b>	Dudley
<b>Inspection number</b>	450403
<b>Managed by</b>	The local authority
<b>Approximate number of children under five in the reach area</b>	675
<b>Centre leader</b>	Teresa McNally
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 817180
<b>Email address</b>	tmcnally@Belle-View.dudley.gov.uk

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