

# Malden's & Coombe Children's Centre Group

Lawrence Avenue, Old Malden, London, KT3 5NB

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

| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>                               | <b>This inspection:</b> | <b>Good</b>              | <b>2</b> |
|--|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------|
|  | 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.

- The group works particularly well with a wide range of partners such as health professionals to make sure that children and families who need extra help are identified and supported well. Regular meetings between professionals help to make sure the right families are getting the right service in a timely manner.
- Leaders use data and information particularly well to plan and deliver a range of good quality services. These engage and benefit many of the centre's hard-to-reach target groups.
- At 77%, the large majority of families who live locally have registered with the group and have access to good quality support and advice.
- Strong partnership work with the two adjacent schools results in children making good progress in their learning and development and achieving well.
- There is currently 100% take-up of funded education places by two year olds. This is the result of the hard work and determination of enthusiastic and committed staff.
- Safeguarding practice is well established, ensuring that the safety of children is prioritised well.
- Leadership and management are good. The shared ambition for the group by the leaders, those responsible for governance and the local authority helps to drive continuous improvement, including the quality of practice, services and outcomes.

### It is not outstanding because:

- Although contact has doubled, too few families from the Sheephouse Way estate and those from Black and minority ethnic groups are attending the centres on a sustained basis.
- Too few workless parents and those from the Old Malden and New Malden Children's Centres' target groups are engaging in education and training that prepare them for employment.

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

- Find ways to further improve families' sustained attendance at the good quality activities the centre provides, in particular those from the Sheephouse Way estate and those from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Together with key partners, extend the opportunities available to ensure that the large majority of:
  - parents from target groups engage in education and training that prepare them for employment
  - workless parents of young children enhance their readiness for gaining employment and move into paid work.

## 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. The centres that form part of this children's centre group are Old Malden Children's Centre and New Malden Children's Centre.

This inspection was carried out by three Additional inspectors.

The inspectors held meetings with the hub manager, the children's centres service manager, family support and outreach workers, senior officers from the local authority and partners from health, education, social services and early years. They also met parents and representatives of the advisory board.

The inspectors involved the hub and service manager in all team meetings, and the hub manager in joint observations of a 'Stay and Play' and 'Twin's Stay and Play sessions at Old Malden Children's Centre. The health visitors drop in clinic and breastfeeding support drop in were also observed at the New Malden site.

Inspectors observed the group's work and looked at a range of relevant documentation, for example self-evaluation and development planning, target group data from the local authority, a sample of case studies, safeguarding procedures, and parental satisfaction surveys.

## Inspection team

|                            |                      |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Nasim Butt, Lead inspector | Additional Inspector |
| Elizabeth Dickson          | Additional Inspector |
| David Baber                | Additional Inspector |

## Full report

### Information about the group

In September 2013, the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames realigned its children's centres into four locality areas and the governance and management transferred to the local authority. Previous to this, the centres were managed by the headteachers of the co-located schools. The local authority works in partnership with the London Borough of Richmond to offer services, including at children's centres.

Malden's & Coombe is a group of two centres. Old Malden Children's Centre is the hub centre for the group. The centre is adjacent to the Malden Manor Primary School and is in a mixed area of some affluence and pockets of high deprivation, for example the local Sheephouse Way estate. New Malden Children's Centre is situated adjacent to the Burlington Nursery and Infant School. There are a large number of Korean families who live in its reach area and, more recently, Tamil families. Schools and registered early years provision are subject to separate inspection arrangements and their reports can be found at <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk>.

The children's centre hub manager is responsible for the day-to-day running of the two centres in the group and is based at Old Malden, the hub centre. A spoke manager has been appointed who will be based at the New Malden site and takes up her post in September. The local authority has created a Children's Centre Partnership Board which works at a strategic level across Richmond and Kingston Upon Thames and has wide representation. At a local level, an advisory board oversees the centre group and holds it to account. The group delivers services for children and families from the two centres. Services include family support, play and learning and opportunities for adult learning. A range of health services is offered from both of the centres in the group.

There are a total of 2,138 children under five years living in the reach area. The area is ethnically, socially and economically diverse with mixed levels of deprivation around both centres. Five point four per cent of children in the combined reach area for the group are living in households dependant on workless benefits. Just over 50% of the population is White British with almost 40% of families from Black and minority ethnic groups, and this includes some families who speak English as an additional language. Children's skills and understanding on entry to early years provision are, on average, below typical levels for their age.

Key target groups include: families living on the Sheephouse Way estate, lone parents, children subject to safeguarding, and children from families in the Black and minority ethnic communities (which includes Korean and Tamil families).

## Inspection judgements

### Access to services by young children and families

Good

- Leaders and staff use data and local knowledge very effectively to target families from the most deprived areas and those hardest to reach or less likely to engage with activities, for example the Korean families living in the New Malden reach area. As a result, the number of children and families accessing services from target groups is increasing, including lone parents and children from the Black and minority ethnic communities.
- Staff have worked particularly hard at engaging many families living in the Sheephouse Way estate, the most deprived part of the Old Malden reach area. Focused work with these families, for example by providing quality services for families expecting children, has resulted in a doubling of the numbers who are engaged with the centre over the past two years.
- Registrations and engagement from identified target groups have both increased over time. The children centre group has registered the large majority of local children under five years of age. Leaders recognise, however, that a sustained contact figure of around 40% for two of its priority groups, families living on the Sheephouse Way estate and children from families in the Black and minority ethnic communities, is still not high enough. Effective strategies are in place, for example the use of a Korean link worker across the locality, to improve the engagement of many hard-to-reach families.
- The centres work extremely well to promote the take-up of education funding for those in most need of support. As a result, all eligible two year olds are now accessing the funding. Close tracking and strong partnerships with private childcare providers ensure children attend good quality provision regularly. As a consequence, most children with whom the centre has worked are starting school more ready to engage in learning.
- The local authority's Single Point of Access (SPA) combined with the successful multi-agency approach to referral and assessment of need ensures families are provided with the right professional support. As a result, families enjoy good improvements in lifestyles and circumstances. This is particularly so for families with children subject to a child protection plan where structured support has a strong, positive impact over time.
- Outreach provision is well developed across both centres' communities and is used flexibly to engage families. There is a good balance between services open to all families and those targeted at key priority groups such as children known to the safeguarding team. The group provides a good range of early childhood services and activities that have a positive impact on improving families' safety and life chances.

### The quality of practice and services

Good

- Working effectively with early years leaders, the centre group closely tracks children's achievement and uses the outcomes of this to further improve children's learning experiences. Consequently, a similar proportion of children living in the area achieve a good level of development by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, as seen nationally.
- Health outcomes are good. For example, the uptake of immunisation is high and the proportion of reception-age children who are obese has decreased and is now below the national average. The popular breastfeeding drop-in sessions run regularly by the Infant Feeding Team and midwives dispense good quality advice and guidance. As a result, the proportion of mothers continuing to breastfeed at six-to-eight weeks is above the national average.
- Partnership working with health is strong. Health partners have specific targets and a good understanding of health issues in the reach area. Currently, discussions are happening at a strategic level on how to share live birth data with the centre group so it can further increase its reach of target families.
- Evaluations show that children living with lone parents and those from the Black and minority ethnic communities, which include Tamil and Korean families, benefit from the range of good quality services provided. These include the very well-attended 'Stay and Play' sessions held at both centres, 'Messy Play' and 'Baby Massage'. One parent commented on how fortunate she was

to have access to quality learning experiences for her child and very helpful advice and guidance on money management for herself.

- Planning, observation and assessments of progress are effective and demonstrate a clear focus on improving outcomes and reducing inequalities for young children and targeted families. Clear procedures are in place to track children's progress and tackle any identified issues that could delay their good learning and development.
- The upkeep of case files and support for individual children and their families are of good quality. The involvement and impact of other professionals' work is clear in the case files' records. Effective use of the new electronic systems ensures the centres' work is properly captured.
- Parents benefit from a good range of well-organised activities to help them improve their own skills. A large majority of adults from the centres' target groups have successfully completed a range of parenting courses, family learning, literacy, mathematics and English language courses. However, there are too few job-specific courses for adults from workless households to prepare them for employment. As a result, too few workless adults are gaining the qualifications they need to help them find employment.

### The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- The service manager and hub manager are both effective leaders. Together they have set high aspirations and motivated staff to achieve good and improving outcomes for families. By constantly searching for ways to extend the engagement of target groups, leaders have successfully created a culture of continuous improvement.
- Lines of accountability are clearly defined and understood. The local authority officer carries out a robust annual conversation which leads to specific, agreed targets being set. These targets have effectively assisted driving up the number of registered families and the proportion of children and families from target groups in contact with both centres.
- The Children's Centre Partnership Board sets very clear expectations for children and families living in all areas across the authority. The local advisory board holds the Malden's and Coombe Children's Centre group to account and scrutinises its work effectively using the good data provided on a quarterly basis by the local authority.
- Key partners, including parents, are well represented on the advisory board. They are enthusiastic and use their good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the group to help drive its improvement.
- Leaders and the local authority work well together to identify specific priorities based on a very good understanding of the locality needs and those of the two centres in the group. All are very clear about their next step: to further improve the attendance of all target groups so that at least the very large majority benefit from the good services provided.
- Reducing the risk of harm to children and families is embedded in all aspects of the centres' work. Safeguarding procedures are rigorously applied and understood by all who work with children and their families.
- Children who are subject to child protection plans, children in need and looked after children are all known to the centre group and together form a key priority group: 'Children known to safeguarding'. The focused work of staff who make good use of the expertise provided by the appropriate agencies has resulted in the needs of so many of these families being well met.
- Effective partnerships are carefully nurtured by centre leaders and staff. Resources, including staffing, are used effectively across the locality and finances are managed well to provide the best value for money.
- Parents report a high level of satisfaction with the work of the centre group. They are consulted about their needs, and services are designed and developed in response to their requirements. Leaders are actively working to ensure that parents' views are fed into the advisory board more effectively.

## 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 well-being 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 Group details

|  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>                                     | 80647                            |
| <b>Local authority</b>   | Kingston Upon Thames             |
| <b>Inspection number</b>   | 442835                           |
| <b>Managed by</b>  | The local authority              |
| <b>Approximate number of children under five in the reach area</b> | 2,138                            |
| <b>Centre leader</b>   | Aneta Kubiak                     |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>                                 | Not previously inspected         |
| <b>Telephone number</b>  | 020 8337 9620                    |
| <b>Email address</b>   | oldmaldenc@aldenmanor.rbksch.org |

### This group consists of the following children's centres:

- URN 22246 – Old Malden Children's Centre
- URN 22102 – New Malden Children's Centre

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