

Wilton Children's Centre

9 West Street, Wilton, Wiltshire, SP2 0DL

Inspection dates	29–31 July 2014
Previous inspection date	Not previously inspected

Overall effectiveness	This inspection: Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
		Not applicable	
Access to services by young children and families		Requires improvement	3
The quality of practice and services		Requires improvement	3
The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for children and families

This is a centre that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- The local authority and centre managers do not know why the attainment of some groups of Reception aged children is lower than others. They are not certain whether these groups include children from priority families, those who do not attend a pre-school setting and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Too few members regularly attend the advisory board meetings. They do not have enough information to ask probing questions about whether services and activities are making the planned difference to families' lives.
- The way information is captured means that staff cannot measure accurately the registration and engagement rates for all priority families.
- Systems to involve staff and partners in evaluating services lack rigour. Staff and partners are not involved in measuring the difference that they make to the lives of all families. Nor are they involved enough in checking the learning and progress of adults and children.

The centre has the following strengths:

- Support for disabled children and those who have special educational needs is good. Information is shared with early years settings to ensure children are well supported when they start school.
- Most families of eligible two-year-olds take up a funded pre-school place. Progress is tracked closely to ensure children receive the support they need in order to achieve well.
- Parents enjoy coming to the centre and are largely satisfied with what the centre provides. They play an active role in making decisions about services and groups. Positive relationships with staff ensure that they are confident to ask for advice, help and support if they need it. The overall quality of family support work is good.
- The centre provides well-planned training, support and guidance for volunteers. As a result, volunteers support the centre's work extremely well and develop a range of employability skills.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Improve the use of information by:
 - ensuring that systems used to collect and collate information on registration and engagement enable the centre to identify how well it is doing in relation to identified priority groups
 - tracking the progress of children in target groups, those who do not take up a free pre-school place and those known to be eligible for free school meals
 - planning activities that narrow achievement gaps at the end of the Reception year
 - checking the progress of adult learners more rigorously to assess the difference attendance has made to their lives.
- Develop the work of the advisory board by ensuring:
 - a wide range of partners, including parents and carers, attend meetings regularly
 - members have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities
 - members have the information they need in order to check the impact of services on families, and to provide greater challenge and drive improvement.
- Strengthen systems for involving all partners and staff in measuring the impact of services and the difference they make to families' lives.

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 who worked with two of Her Majesty's Inspectors leading on each of the other two simultaneous inspections.

The inspectors held meetings with centre staff, parents, health, education and community partners, and representatives of the parent and carer forum, the advisory board and the local authority. They took account of responses in the centre's recent parent survey and parents' feedback after groups.

The inspectors observed a health clinic and visited a Stay and Play session.

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

Inspection team

Georgina Beasley, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Graham Saltmarsh	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

Wilton Children's Centre serves a semi-rural population. It was designated in 2011. There are currently approximately 435 children under the age of five living in the community the centre serves. Almost all families are White British; around one in 10 are from a number of minority ethnic groups. Children enter school with skills, knowledge and abilities that match those typical for their age. There is no onsite childcare or pre-school provision.

The centre is governed and managed by 4Children on behalf of the local authority. The day-to-day running of the centre is carried out by a cluster manager, supported by the 4Children county manager and national team. The centre works in a cluster with Mere and Tisbury Children's Centres to provide a range of groups and services at the centres and at outreach venues. It has its own advisory board. The inspections of Mere Children's Centre and Tisbury Children's Centre took place at the same time and their inspection reports can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

The proportion of families on benefits and those from workless households is below average. Around 50 families have a lone parent. The number of looked after children and children subject to protection plans is low. Housing in the area is a mix of owner occupied, privately rented and social housing.

The centre has identified its priority groups as families with one parent, families reliant on benefits or low income and families with mental ill-health.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Requires improvement

- Systems are in place to monitor the registration and attendance of families in centre activities. However, the way that the centre collects this information means that it cannot measure the registration and engagement rates for all priority families accurately. For example, information on families suffering mental health issues is not collected separately.
- Overall registration and engagement rates are good. Centre staff use their local knowledge to identify priority groups and to plan a range of services. These include activities that take place in the community in order to meet the needs of families who live in the area. The large majority of families in priority groups are registered and engaging with services. However, lone parents do not use centre services regularly.
- Information sharing with children's social care requires improvement. The centre did not have until the start of the inspection a complete and regularly updated picture of the number of children in the council's care and subject to child protection and child in need plans.
- Overall, the number of families accessing the centre's services shows a trend of improvement over the last three years. This is despite reductions in funding and a high level of staff turnover and sickness. The sharing of live birth information with health partners is ensuring that new families are known to the centre.
- Most families of eligible two-year-olds are taking up their entitlement to funded early education. Importantly, all of these children are attending high quality early years

settings. However, in Wilton North, below average numbers of three- and four-year-olds are attending early education settings. The reasons for low attendance have not been explored. Consequently, the centre and local authority do not know whether these children are from priority families. Also, they do not know if the children are reaching the levels they should, by the end of the Reception year.

- The needs of disabled children and those who have special educational needs are accurately identified to ensure early support is put into place quickly.

The quality of practice and services

Requires improvement

- The centre gathers, collates and records a range of information about children's and adults' learning. However, systems do not always reliably track their progress. Some comments about children's learning and progress focus on the activities undertaken rather than the skills and knowledge the children have learned.
- The centre monitors attendance and non attendance of individual adults at a range of adult learning and parenting courses. However, it does not routinely check attendance and success rates or follow up outcomes of adults signposted on to other programmes.
- The proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of Reception fell in 2014 from above average levels nationally in 2013. This was as a result of fewer children reaching expected levels for their age in communication and language and physical development. Also, the gap between the attainment of the lowest attaining children and the rest widened this year.
- Gaps in the learning and progress of different groups are not closing fast enough. This is because the local authority and centre leaders have not checked thoroughly enough whether children from priority families are reaching expected levels. Neither have they checked whether children not accessing a pre-school place and those eligible for free school meals are making enough progress.
- The quality of work in the community and case recording to support families is good. This leads to improved outcomes for most of the families referred and receiving this support, although numbers are low. Staff engage fully in joint work with children's social care and team around the family colleagues, when requested. Referrals are made appropriately to children's social care when concerns escalate.
- All settings track closely the progress of two-year-olds who take up their funded place. Those who currently attend are making good progress. Arrangements for sharing information with early years settings are effective. These ensure that children with additional needs are given the support they need in learning and progress as soon as they start.
- The centre and community venues provide a welcoming place for families to enjoy a wide range of activities for everyone and those from priority families. Those who attend are largely satisfied with the services they receive. Positive relationships between staff and families ensure parents are confident to ask for help and support if they need it.
- The centre provides well-planned training, support and guidance for volunteers. As a result, volunteers support the centre's work extremely well and develop a range of employability skills. Several have progressed to further and higher education, or in to employment.
- Centre staff work well with health partners to maintain good health outcomes in the area. The weekly clinic ensures families learn about the range of services available to them and enhances joint working and information sharing between agencies. Healthy eating programmes and workshops delivered by the community dietician maintain the strong focus on reducing obesity. Trained breastfeeding peer support volunteers provide effective care, help and information for the small number of mothers that attend the

drop-in service.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Requires improvement

- The local authority has strengthened the cycle for setting targets for staff to ensure continued improvement. Local authority monitoring has been taking place, but this has been based on the centre's own priorities for improvement. Following a more rigorous and challenging annual review this year, measurable and precise targets have been agreed between the local authority and the centre. However, these targets have yet to be incorporated into one manageable and succinct development plan.
- Governance requires improvement. Although members of the advisory board meet regularly and share important information, not enough partners, including parents, regularly attend meetings. Although members receive registration and engagement information, they do not receive sufficient details regarding the difference services are making to families' lives. This limits the ability of the advisory board to challenge centre staff about their work and so drive improvement.
- The centre's self-evaluation is up to date and detailed, but is overly optimistic. It does not provide sufficient evidence of the difference that services are making to the lives of the families in the area. Staff, parents and advisory board members are not sufficiently involved in the self-evaluation process.
- Although professional supervision is carried out regularly, it is somewhat task focused. While there are clear links between the centre's priorities and individual staff targets, there is less focus on the wider development of staff.
- 4Children's leadership and management processes are firmly established and demonstrate high expectations. The cluster manager is well supported by the county manager and national leads within the organisation, who bring expertise and experience.
- Centre staff, together with the health visiting team, share relevant information both at strategic and individual level, and demonstrate effective partnership working. However, some partnerships, including those with midwifery, housing and adult mental health services, are underdeveloped.
- All family support cases are discussed fully and detailed actions planned to ensure continued good support. However, staff do not work flexibly enough across centres and services. As a result, this has impacted on the availability and continuity of family support for a small number of families in the area.
- Safeguarding policies and procedures meet current requirements. An annual safeguarding audit is completed and monitored by the local authority. The high priority given to safeguarding is demonstrated through its inclusion as a standing item on the agenda of all meetings, including those of the advisory board. All staff, including volunteers, have received the required training and understand their responsibilities with regard to the protection of children. Risk assessments are completed and regularly updated.
- Parents are regularly consulted on their views of the centre. The centre has used various methods in order to gauge opinion, including meetings and questionnaires, which are also sent to those who do not attend regularly. The centre has been responsive to parents' comments, for example involving them in planning activities for the summer programme.
- Centre staff ensure that resources, including space, materials and toys, are effectively deployed. The indoor and outside areas ensure that children and their parents enjoy a range of relevant and enjoyable learning activities.

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	23607
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	444743
Managed by	4Children on behalf of the local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	435
Centre manager	Tara Vallance
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01722 743364
Email address	WiltonChildrensCentre@4Children.org.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

This template is available at www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/130186.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

No. 130186

© Crown copyright 2014

