

# Bush Hill Park and Ponders End Children's Centre

Main Avenue, Enfield, EN1 1DS

<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 September 2014
Previous inspection date	Not previously inspected

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b> Previous inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
		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 number of families registering with the centre from the most deprived communities is growing rapidly but is not yet at a good level.
- Leaders, governors and managers have focused on outreach without sufficient emphasis on developing systems for tracking the progress of children and adults. The centre does not track the progress of children rigorously enough as they move on to all schools.
- Low numbers take up their entitlement to funded early education.
- Some children, particularly boys, are not doing as well as other children in their age group by the time they start school.
- The staff have not received timely and sufficient guidance on working with the early help Single Point of Entry team on procedures relating to non-urgent concerns about a child.
- Only a minority of parents build on their progress by going on to further courses for speakers of English as an additional language which may help their chances of employment.
- The balance of the programme is limited as there are few sessions focused solely on targets such as reducing obesity or on promoting communication and language skills.

### It has the following strengths:

- The centre attracts families who have not previously taken up services and they attend regularly.
- Parents enjoy learning about their children's development. Those at an early stage of speaking English learn stories and rhymes enthusiastically alongside their children.
- The centre's welcoming, inclusive approach is a lifeline for isolated and new parents.
- Partnerships with midwives and health visitors are well established. Links with schools across the area are building up well to provide venues that families can get to easily.

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

- Work with partner organisations to help children, particularly boys, to achieve a good level of skill and knowledge by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly by:
  - promoting the take-up of funded early education
  - tracking the achievements of children in the centre and as they move on
  - using the tracking information to help plan activities for the groups of children and in the areas of learning that children need to develop most.
- Work with partner organisations to help parents gain access to places on more advanced courses in English as an additional language. Give guidance about courses and training that will help families improve their chances of employment.
- Work with the local authority and all partners to monitor the performance of the centre closely and sustain a balanced programme of universal and targeted services across the area.
- Work with the local authority to ensure that all staff and volunteers receive training updates and guidance on new procedures relevant to their roles. Ensure, in particular, that they are confident in procedures for consulting with early help services when concerns are not severe enough to make a child protection referral.

## 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 one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors.

The inspectors held meetings with the centre's leaders and managers, representatives of the governing body and advisory board, partner organisations and the local authority. Inspectors talked to staff, volunteers, parents and children and talked by telephone to representatives of partner organisations.

The inspectors visited the outreach venue at Ponders End.

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

## Inspection team

Christine Davies, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Marinette Bazin	Additional inspector
Libby Dickson	Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about the centre

The centre serves parts of Bush Hill Park and Ponders End. It was formed in June 2014 from two previously-opened centres. It is managed by the governing body of Bush Hill Park Primary School on behalf of the local authority. The centre coordinator is supported by a full-time outreach worker, a play worker and two part-time administrators. An advisory board is in place with representatives of the parents and volunteers forums.

No registered childcare is provided by the centre. The main full-time venue is located in the grounds of Bush Hill Park Primary School. Part-time outreach services are provided at Ponders End Children's Centre and in schools, libraries and health clinics across the area. Midwifery, child health-check and health visitor services are in clinics as part of the published children's centre timetable. The centre provides family support services, and family play and learning, including classes for those who speak English as an additional language. The centre provides support for parents to access employment and benefits advice, adult learning and specialist children's services.

The areas served are ethnically and linguistically very diverse. The area is densely populated and urban. The very large majority of the population is of Black or minority ethnic heritage. The largest groups are established Turkish communities and families of Somali, Ghanaian and Nigerian origin. About 14% of the population are White British. About 45 languages are spoken by families at the centre. The area is relatively deprived, with large areas of deprivation in the east around Ponders End and a small area in Bush Hill Park. Alma Estate is being regenerated and families have been moved into temporary accommodation in other Enfield areas, leaving one third of the estate unoccupied.

The centre identifies the following priority and target groups: those living in the 10%, 20% and 30% most deprived areas; families in need of family support referred through the Single Point of Entry team (SPOE); two-, three- and four-year-olds who have not taken up their entitlement to funded early education; those who are not achieving as well as the majority of their age group when they start school, particularly boys; and children who are obese or at risk of being obese. The centre assists with health targets to increase immunisations and the take-up of children's development checks. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage provision with skills and experience that are mostly below the expectations for their age.

### Inspection judgements

#### Access to services by young children and families

Requires improvement

- Too few families are registered with the centre despite recent increases. A concerted drive to reach out to families at the birth registration office, in schools, parks and supermarkets has doubled the proportion of families registered in some of the most deprived areas from 28% to 57% of families. This work is very recent.
- Low numbers of children take up their entitlement to funded early education. Although the centre has been highly successful at increasing uptake in the most deprived areas, only 49% of eligible two-year-olds and 85% of three- and four-year-olds took their places in the

2013/14 year. All children are in high quality provision in the community.

- The centre and partners do not provide activities focused on specific health targets, such as healthy cooking and eating sessions, to combat the very high levels of obesity among children. Healthy eating and lifestyles are supported incidentally in all activities.
- Support to breastfeeding mothers is strong and high numbers of parents sustain feeding for six to eight weeks. Parents of all cultures and language groups say in comments to the centre that the nurturing welcome in all stay-and-play groups improves their well-being.
- Families make good use of the linked midwifery and health visiting services throughout the area. Health services are timetabled into the centre's programme in nearby clinics. So families access a well-integrated programme through from antenatal appointments to parenting classes to child health checks. Health visitors quickly refer families for support when needs are discovered in children's two- and three-year-old health and development checks.
- All staff build good relationships with families referred by the Single Point of Entry (SPOE) once they take up the offer of services. They listen carefully to their views and go on offering support over long periods of time. Staff identify needs and make early referral to specialist services, particularly for children with speech problems or developmental needs.

### The quality of practice and services

Requires improvement

- The coordinator and outreach worker have not devised workable tracking systems so that they can evaluate their impact and plan for specific groups and needs. The centre does not track the progress of children rigorously enough as they move on to all schools. The little information the centre gather shows that children who attended regularly are more likely to reach a good level of development by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The proportion of children across the area working within age-related expectations when they start school rose steeply in 2013/14 to 58%. However, the gap between the achievement of boys and girls remains wide at up to 19 percentage points for some groups in the community. The centre does not plan activities purposefully enough to make a difference to boys' learning.
- The welcoming, inclusive approach of all staff ensures that children enjoy their play and learning in the crèches, 'Explorers' and 'Inventors', or stay-and-play activities. Satisfaction among families attending regularly is very high. Evaluations of targeted family learning programmes show that parents gain confidence in their understanding of their child's development and behaviour.
- The staff work knowledgeably alongside social workers for children on child protection plans and for children in need. Staff are sometimes unsure about the lines of communication to be followed when possible child protection concerns are not clear cut. This is because multi-agency early help services are bedding in and revised guidelines have not yet been passed to the centre.
- The centre's health partners and the SPOE team target families who receive sustained support. A new Enfield Early Help Form ensures a coordinated approach. Referrals on to children's services are timely but rare.
- The centre has increased the spread of stay-and-play, and story and rhyme time in the areas that partners identify as of greatest need where commissioned story and rhyme services in libraries have ceased. Sessions are located where families can easily reach them, making good use of available time and spaces offered in partner schools and clinics so that attendance is almost always at full capacity. The centre cannot meet parents' expectations

to put on a wide range of courses, for example healthy cook-and-eat sessions to combat obesity.

- Parents, particularly those who speak English as an additional language, become less isolated and their well-being improves. The very large majority of the parents who take up English classes for speakers of other languages (ESOL) complete them. There are no advanced ESOL courses with a crèche or other courses or training for parents to progress on to. The centre's guidance to parents on this is underdeveloped.
- Parents show increasing confidence in voicing their views. In questionnaires, evaluation of services and the parents' forums parent views have had a big influence on the locations where services are offered. The rate of volunteering is increasing, with 13 parents gaining valuable work skills as they help out across the centre and in schools.

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

Requires improvement

- The tracking of the achievements of children's and parents' achievements is not well developed. The centre does not use data about achievement in evaluating and planning services.
- A clear performance framework is in place as a basis of effective support and challenge by the local authority. The centre's self-evaluation accurately captures the extent of the work it carries out. However, the monitoring of services is not well developed and evaluation does not incorporate enough tracking of families' progress.
- Safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and are implemented. However, some early help procedures are not embedded; partnerships around multi-agency early help came into place in April 2014 and procedures are still evolving.
- Safe recruitment procedures are carried out for all paid staff and volunteers. Protocols with partners are in place. Centre staff carry out good risk assessments and model safe behaviour so that parents keep their children safe.
- The priorities for the centre are well defined. The overall programme and action plan are agreed by all partners and targets are based on sharply-focused data, for example Early Years Foundation Stage Profile data for each school area, supplied by the local authority.
- Leaders and managers have built on established partnerships in the Bush Hill Park sector of the area and are replicating some successful strategies in Ponders End. This has had notable impact on improving access for well over 200 families in the most deprived areas in a year. With a small team resource, the centre has used partnerships with schools well to increase the reach of services.
- The composition of the advisory board is good and its remit is clear but not all partners, including representatives from children's services, attend regularly to ensure consistent challenge. Governance arrangements have been widened to ensure that the interests of families in the Ponders End area are represented on the advisory board. Parents and volunteers meet in forum groups in local venues, with representatives linking to the advisory board.

## 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>	20519
<b>Local authority</b>	London Borough of Enfield
<b>Inspection number</b>	451827
<b>Managed by</b>	The governing body of Bush Hill Park Primary School on behalf of the local authority

<b>Approximate number of children under five in the reach area</b>	2148
<b>Centre leader</b>	Hyacinth Slowley
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8363 1949
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