

Birmingham - FAYS Group

419 Fox Hollies Road, Acocks Green, Birmingham, B27 7QA

Inspection dates	14–15 October 2014
Previous inspection date	Not previously inspected

Overall effectiveness	This inspection: Previous inspection:	Good	2
		Not applicable	
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 group of centres is good.

- Leaders, managers and governors have made rapid improvements to the group. Through the relentless pursuit of high standards, the group has increased engagement levels, improved the quality of services and had a strong impact on improving outcomes for families.
- Children develop good health and are well prepared for school; while parents improve their parenting skills substantially.
- Staff conduct exceptionally sound need analysis and assessment to identify all priority groups and offer early intervention and prompt support to protect them from harm.
- A stable and dedicated staff team, drawn from a rich mix of professions and cultures, work extremely well to provide closely targeted programmes and services to families.
- Partnerships between most agencies are very good. This results in seamless working to identify needs and meet the needs.
- Children's safety and safeguarding is a very high priority. Staff work exceedingly well with families to protect children and instil a culture of safe practices at home and in the centres.

It is not outstanding because:

- Governance has not yet had strong enough impact at providing challenge and support particularly in improving quality and impact on families on an on-going basis.
- Although in recent weeks, the majority of eligible two-year old children have begun to access free nursery education, good quality early years provision is in short supply locally.
- The provision for improving essential skills for seeking employment including English, mathematics and career advice and guidance for the adults is not yet good.

- Planning and evaluation of activities and programmes is no better than satisfactory. The managers do not use the findings from evaluations well to inform future planning and demonstrate long-term impact on children and families.

What does the group need to do to improve further?

- The local authority should strengthen further its governance arrangements to provide support and challenge to the group by setting specific interim targets for engagement against each target group categories and by setting targets to improve quality and impact on families.
- Improve the on-going planning and evaluation of the activities and programmes by:
 - making more analytical use of the available data on attendance, drop-out and retention rates to conduct a robust analysis of the provision and make appropriate changes
 - ensuring that staff plan sessions that have clear learning objectives for the adults as well as children, linking these to child development
 - conducting a systematic analysis of the impact of both targeted and universal services to influence future planning and accurately evidence continuous improvement of outcomes for families.
- Improve the availability of high quality nursery places and help to improve the quality of childcare in existing private voluntary institutions to engage a much higher percentage of two-year-old children by:
 - working closely with early years' consultants team of the local authority to develop a robust action plan identifying and prioritising needs of the providers in the area
 - staying focussed and accelerating Barnardo's ABC pathway programme to encourage more local families into becoming child-minders.
- Work closely with the local authority, adult learning service, other providers of learning and Jobcentre Plus to facilitate greater levels of adult learning, vocational skills, information, advice and guidance, volunteering and other services to prepare adults for employment.

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 of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors.

The inspection covered the following centres: Fox Hollies Children's Centre, Job Marston Children's Centre, Oaklands Park Children's Centre, Garretts Green Children's Centre and Hall Green Children's Centre.

The inspectors held meetings with local authority managers, representatives of the health authority to include a midwife and a health visitor, childminders, members of some early years' providers, members of the advisory board and representatives from the neighbouring Chinnbrook Children's centre and Job Marston Children's Centre, a member of Early Years Consultant team and private voluntary institution, a head teacher, a childminder, the coordinator for early help and brokerage service, and other partner agencies including a quality improvement partner.

Inspectors observed the full range of centres' work running during the week including at Gilbertstone Primary School, Gospel Oak Community Centre and Red Hill School.

They looked at a range of relevant documentation including self-evaluation form, delivery plan,

case-tracking, risk- assessments, notes of meetings, performance reports and parent satisfaction surveys.

Inspection team

Lead inspector Harmesh Manghra	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Susan Crawford	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Catharine Hairsine	Additional inspector
Karen Cooper	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about the group

Birmingham City Council established Fox Hollies, Acocks Green, Yardley and Sheldon (FAYS) Locality Children's Centres group in April 2012. It brought together six individual children's centres in East Birmingham. The centres work collaboratively and are based on a hub and spoke model where Barnardo's are commissioned as the lead body.

The locality has 5,898 children under five years of age living in the area. Some 30% of these children live in workless households. The small majority of families living in the area served by the locality are White British, with the remaining families being from a range of minority ethnic groups. The largest of these groups is Pakistani and is increasing in numbers.

Fox Hollies Children's Centre is the lead locality and fund holding hub. It is a purpose-built centre commissioned as a project to Barnardo's in July of 2007 by Birmingham City Council on the site of a previously derelict Special school. Parents of the children in the area helped design the centre. Job Marston and Hall Green Children's Centres are satellite services operating from this hub. Fox Hollies centre facilitates contact visits for parents and children. The group delivers services from many community venues closer to where parents live including from family homes. This team along with the integrated social work and 'Think' family teams, (national initiative for the troubled families) work from the base.

The Pre-school Learning Alliance operate a 50 place day-care facility within the building, which offers places for both fee paying parents, children's centre families and those in need of family support placements. This provision is subject to a separate inspection and the report is available at www.ofsted.gov.uk

Oakland's Park is a purpose built children's centre. It leads the universal and outreach services team including Early Years' Workers, New Birth Team and Community Development Team. South Yardley and Garretts' Green Children's Centres are the satellite provision operating from this hub. This building hosts a 40 place nursery run by Birmingham City Council that offers places for fee paying parents, children's centre families and those in need of family support placements.

The locality offers a range of services to meet its core purpose including family support, early intervention, adult learning and health services. Within the locality there are 34 private and voluntary institutions and 72 childminders. Some 40% of the staff are from minority ethnic groups and speak various languages spoken by the user families. All staff teams share office space, joint training away days as well as resources.

Governance is through the Assistant Director of Children's Services of Barnardo's and the Area Manager for Birmingham City Council. A Locality Strategic Group, an Advisory Board, the Hub Integrated Meeting made up of strategic partners including health, education and police, supports them. The advisory board is made of key partners including community, health, education and parents.

Children enter early years' provision above the Birmingham and national average. The target groups in the locality are children living in the 10% to 20% most deprived areas, disabled

children under five years of age, black and minority ethnic children, children in workless households, pregnant and new mums and children subject to child protection intervention.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families **Good**

- Access to services by young children and families is good as the large majority of families, including a sizeable number from the neighbouring localities, benefit from universal and targeted programmes. Access to early childhood services and to programmes for parents to develop their parenting skills is good.
- Engagement levels with health services are high. The large majority of families take part in a broad range of health services and activities which include exercise and healthy eating to reduce obesity levels and promote healthy lifestyles. The centre staff work extremely well to reach a high number of rapidly increasing expectant mums and new births in the locality. Most families take advantage of immunisation programme to protect their children. The take-up of breastfeeding among mothers remains high.
- The take-up and needs assessment of children under three-years old in the area is good. The staff have assessed a large majority of children and families and provided necessary support. The very large majority of three and four year olds are attending good quality childcare or early years' provision. However, the uptake of places by two-year-olds is not high enough.
- Staff work very efficiently with most partners to identify and meet families from target groups including those who are reluctant to engage. The staff know all parents including those from the priority groups. Staff see all family support cases promptly and as a result no families are on the waiting list.
- Children's centres are conveniently located and are easily accessible by public transport. The environment at Fox Hollies Children's Centre is excellent and good at all other centres including the satellite centres. The centres are truly the hub for the local communities where children and families feel very welcome and safe. Centres provide facilities and services at times convenient to parents including at home and holiday activities.
- Parents contribute well to the development of programmes and services. They participate well in programmes designed to raise their awareness of accidents in the house and on the road. Accidents and emergency admissions to hospitals are decreasing.
- The engagement in programmes to improve the employment prospects for parents requires improvement. In recent months the take-up of English and mathematics classes has gone down; however the centre has been successful at increasing the provision of English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and computing classes. Adults use a variety of online and helpful web-based resources to develop their curriculum vitae. The centre group has run a successful programme to enable parents to become child minders.
- The cluster targets and provides family support to most vulnerable children including those suffering domestic abuse, neglect, physical abuse, on child protection orders, with insecure parenting routines, major housing problems, mental health issues, disabilities and learning difficulties.

The quality of practice and services**Good**

- The group provides a very broad range of universal and targeted activities and programmes that are designed after strong needs analysis, assessment and knowledge of the locality secured through very strong partnerships. The centre provides good quality services, across the hub and elsewhere, to help parents improve the outcomes for their families. These are constantly monitored and reviewed to ensure that they are meeting the needs of families, especially those who need particular support.
- Staff reinforce the role of the parents as the first educators of their child well. Children develop well in preparation for school and this is on par with the national averages and slightly above the Birmingham average. Children's centre staff contribute well to reducing inequalities. Effective work is enabling the lowest attaining children to catch up with their peers by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Through attending various programmes and activities, parents regain their confidence, overcome isolation and make friends. Some have gained jobs after attending invaluable child-minders course. ESOL programmes offer essential skills for the newly arrived parents to deal with their daily life more effectively.
- Parents and children benefit from a wide range of parenting programmes that are tailored to the specific needs of first-time and experienced parents. High quality and high impact parenting programmes help parents to develop their knowledge of child development and parenting skills well. They learn hints and tips to manage children's behaviour and provide activities to stimulate their children's development and language and speech. As a result children achieve good level of development and are well prepared for learning at school.
- The 'THINK family' team has made strong impact on families that face multiple challenges by working closely with schools and families. Parents feel in control and make sustainable changes to manage their children. These are reflected in improved school attendance, better behaviour and reduction in repeat referrals.
- The quality of help for single parents and others facing challenging circumstances is exceptional. This has helped many to put their 'life back on track'. Parents work very effectively to ensure that their children come off the child protection plans as soon as possible. They trust their support workers highly and refer themselves to seek support when they most need it.
- Children's safety and safeguarding is paramount in the locality. Staff ensure that they keep their focus always on the child. They understand the professional boundaries of their role and yet provide support in a friendly manner. Strong partnership with the Fire service has led to assessment of homes in the locality and subsequent installation of safety equipment such as smoke/carbon monoxide detectors.
- Tracking of adults' progress towards obtaining jobs through learning need further development. Managers collect detailed information on engagement into learning for monitoring purposes however they do not evaluate the impact of drop-outs and progression. It is not possible to get an accurate account of the adults' progress.
- Good quality programmes help parents to develop awareness of the long-term damage of

neglect on their children. These give them the skills to help their child develop emotional resilience to grow up healthily and become emotionally mature children and adults. This contributes substantially to deal with one of the major issues for the city.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- The leaders and managers are highly knowledgeable, caring and committed individuals who enable staff to take personal accountability for their work. They have high ambitions for the local children and families. The managers are extremely proactive and set high standards to improve engagement and provision. Professional supervision and appraisals are good with significant emphasis on personal development.
- Staff are well qualified and experienced within a wide range of disciplines such as youth work, careers, nurseries, education, social work and health. They sharpen their practice through learning from each other, sharing information and professional discussions. They benefit from good range and level of on-going training to become truly multi-disciplinary teams. They develop expertise from a range of sources and develop good knowledge of broad ranging issues including 'preventing violent extremism' (PVE), 'female genital mutilation' (FGM) and 'child sexual exploitation' (CSE).
- Leaders and managers are well aware of the gaps in the provision and the high levels of needs in the area such as emotional behaviour, well-being, domestic violence and mental health. They are working well to develop services and programmes and to recruit new staff to meet the needs. Managers share resources across the locality and adjoining localities to avoid duplication of services and provide good value for money.
- Managers conduct self-evaluation of the provision by using a broad range of evidence to produce an accurate account of the strengths and areas for improvement. The delivery plan is focussed on appropriate priorities. However, managers do not conduct analysis of the performance of different ethnic groups to show how much of a difference they are making to the groups and what they need to do further.
- The local authority has set a clear strategic direction for children's centres for integrated working to provide the right services at the right time, as the families can gain access services from many delivery points. The newly established safeguarding hubs across the city, works well in the locality to intervene early to prevent harm to the children and families. The service specifications and standards are detailed. Arrangements for sharing best practice and monitoring for aspects are good.
- The support for 30 private and voluntary institutions providing childcare is good. This has helped children achieve a good level of development; although this cannot be validated as the institutions are not yet due for an inspection.
- Governance systems are robust and the local authority has provided adequate challenge in the transition period, but the arrangements are not yet fully effective. The local authority has only required the locality to increase engagement levels and did not identify the need to develop evaluation and quality improvement further, as most aspects were considered green in their ratings. The local authority does not evaluate the impact of

actions to support and challenge the group further.

- Action to reduce poverty and to target effective support at children in workless households requires improvement. The links with the Jobcentre Plus are not as strong or regular. In the absence of accurate and timely data and support from Jobcentre Plus, leaders and managers are not as effective at targeting their efforts to these groups.
- Barnardo's gives a very high priority to safeguarding. The group has established robust arrangements for detailed records of case files that managers check regularly to ensure that the case files stand the highest level of scrutiny. Advisory board members from various fields make good contributions to develop the provision and identify needs. Parents also contribute well to the discussions of the advisory group; however involving them on a regular basis remains a challenge.
- The centre group meets the statutory safeguarding requirements. All staff, including volunteers, are appropriately vetted for suitability. They have good awareness of safeguarding including e-safety. As a result of the serious case review, managers have put together a robust action plan to establish safeguarding culture in all children's centres. Staff use the Common Assessment Framework very effectively with various agencies to support children in need or who are subject to child protection plans.

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.

Group details

Unique reference number	80135
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	447623
Managed by	The Barnardos on behalf of the local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	5,898
Group manager	Michelle Dougan
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0121-675-5472
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This group consists of the following children's centres:

- 21209 Fox Hollies Children's centre
- 21243 Garretts Green Children's Centre
- 22231 Oaklands Park Children's Centre
- 22785 South Yardley Children's Centre
- 21627 Job Marston Children's Centre
- 21278 Hall Green Children's Centre

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