

WH1 Tenterfield Nursery and Children's Centre

Tenterfield Nursery School, London Road, Welwyn, AL6 9JF

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| Inspection dates | 5–6 November 2014 |
| Previous inspection date | Not applicable |

| Overall effectiveness | This inspection: | Outstanding | 1 |
|--|-------------------------|--------------------|----------|
| | Previous inspection: | 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.

- The centre has worked extremely hard to increase the number of families with young children that are registered with the centre. The overwhelming majority of families, including those from priority groups, are fully engaging with and benefitting from the high quality services provided.
- The centre has very effective partnerships with health, social care, education and early years' providers. They provide a wide range of excellent training opportunities for children and their families through joint working and network meetings.
- The centre collects high quality information about families that are seen. Through effective monitoring staff know that almost all children attending early years' provisions are making very good progress in being prepared for school as very confident learners.
- The very good professional development provided by the children's centre to the local network of early year's practitioners ensures parents have access to good and often outstanding settings.
- The governance by the advisory board is very strong and the targets set are challenging. Board members share a passion to provide a high quality service to children and families, and this together with excellent leadership and management, ensures the centre provides outstanding outcomes for those most in need.
- The centre is the hub of the community. All those spoken to by inspectors had high regard for the staff and the warm welcome that they receive. One parent described the centre as 'a life line and a sanctuary, somewhere I always feel comfortable'.
- Volunteering is one area of the children's centre work that has yet to be promoted fully to attract the same high take up as other activities. Despite good support for volunteers not all parents are aware of this opportunity or how volunteering can help to support their skills development.

What does the centre need to do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities to train volunteers at the centre by actively promoting volunteering. Strengthen the centre's provision by introducing a more formal induction and training programme that also encourages reflective practice.

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 centre staff, the centre manager and co-ordinator and the assistant head of the centre. They also met a representative of the local authority; members of the advisory board; parents and users of the centre; and health professionals who work in partnership with the centre.

The inspectors visited activities taking place in the centre. These included 'Baby massage' and 'Tums and tinies'. They also visited the Civic Hall to observe the baby clinic and observed one activity with the centre manager.

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

Inspection team

Deborah Sanders Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Nick Gadfield

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

Tenterfield Children's Centre opened in 2009 and is managed by Tenterfield Nursery School which is the lead agency on behalf of the local authority. The centre is based on the same site as the school. There is an advisory board comprising partners, governors, community members and parents. Tenterfield Nursery School (URN: 117078) is subject to a separate inspection. Its report can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk. This centre is one of three children centres in the locality and parents will often use more than one centre to access services. The centre works collaboratively with partners to provide a wide range of family support activities, with access to health, early education, parenting programmes, and adult training.

There are 428 children under five years of age who live in the centre's reach area, which covers the villages of Welwyn, Codicote, Digswell and the Ayots. The very large majority of families are of White British heritage. There are isolated pockets of deprivation and an increasing number of new-build affordable housing projects in an otherwise affluent area. The number of children under five years-old who live in families that have no adult in work is low. Children's skills and abilities on entry to early years provision vary but are generally typical, and sometimes above those expected for their age.

Leaders have identified priority groups of children and families in most need of support as; children subject to a child protection plan or identified as being in need; two year-olds eligible for free education; low income families; lone parents with no or limited family support; children under one years of age; mothers who have recently left full time employment/are on leave from full time employment or who have little or no local family/support network.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Outstanding

- All families with young children living in the area are registered with the centre. The centre staff know the families very well and are able to ensure they meet the needs of the overwhelming majority of priority children and families who regularly visit the centre. Children particularly benefit from a wide range of high-quality services offered from birth until they start school.
- The centre works very closely with the general practitioner and the health team to ensure expectant parents have access to the midwifery services and local ante-natal classes. The outreach team make initial contact with all new parents by sending out a card congratulating them on the birth of their child. They follow this up with a home visit and a baby pack and are able to encourage parents' early involvement in centre services.
- The outreach team are able to identify those families who are more reluctant to attend the centre because they know and have registered all of the families with children under five years in the reach. They make contact with every family that they have not seen at groups and are able to work with individual children and their parents in their own homes.
- Eligible two-year-olds are helped to take up their entitlement of free early education. The centre has a very good system in place to ensure that they know who these children are and they are able to track and monitor their progress each term. Those children identified as needing additional support with communication and language skills are identified quickly and there are excellent systems in place to ensure they get the support they need quickly.
- High numbers of three-and-four year-olds take up their free early years education, and the large majority make good or better progress in their learning and personal development.

- The skills of the outreach team who work with families in their own home are exceptional. Their knowledge of the area and the families means they are able to react quickly in times of crisis. Parents who use the services in such times express high praise about the impact the support has on their lives.
- Leaders know the area extremely well, and have used the information they receive to deliver high quality services in the community. For example, the range of events over the school holidays provided at the nursery and the civic hall, were very well attended by all families particularly those from priority groups. The most popular activities were oversubscribed and the centre is already planning for next summer to increase the number of available places. Parents said this was 'a life line' in the holidays.

The quality of practice and services

Outstanding

- The centre provides a range of excellent services that are well balanced between those available to all parents and those that are aimed at those families in greatest need. Resources are used extremely well to meet local needs. For example, new mothers and lone parents receive valuable support to deal with feelings of isolation and help to develop a peer support group.
- The centre has been extremely successful in contacting families with children under the age of one. The very large majority have been seen at the centre through a range of well thought out groups, including 'Baby massage' and 'Tum's and tinies'. Parents also have the opportunity to discuss a range of parenting issues with the additional support from outreach workers and health professionals which they value highly.
- Children benefit from a range of activities that prepare them confidently for starting school. They build their personal, social and emotional development, physical development and communication and language skills successfully from their different starting points and achieve well.
- High levels of care, guidance and support are provided by the centre for those families in most need and particularly in times of crisis. The detailed files provide examples of close working relationships between social care services, health and education, and the targeted support that families receive to ensure that their needs are fully met. As a result, the gaps in equality are closing and the centre is actively improving families' well-being.
- There are exceptionally strong partnerships with schools, early years' providers and childminders in the area. Attendance is high at network meetings where there is a strong emphasis on sharing good practice and enabling access to high quality training materials. Children who are in need of additional support particularly in language and communication skills are quickly identified and a very effective package of support is put in place.
- A wide range of adult training including 'About boys', Makaton sign language, creativity and thinking critically, 'Cook in the box' and parenting programmes are very well attended. Parents say that they value the positive relationships they have with staff and identify that the advice and support they receive has significantly improved their confidence and skills.
- A number of parents have successfully volunteered in the centre and gone on to further training or employment. However, there is no continuous programme to encourage more parents to take up volunteering and not enough parents know about the programme.

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

- Tenterfield Children's Centre is extremely well led. The manager and the centre coordinator have excellent relationships with local families and are therefore well informed of where resources are required. As a result children and parents living locally have access to a wide range of high-quality services that encourage them to make a positive change to their lives and that of their children.
- Governance arrangements are extremely effective and the centre has made significant improvements. The local authority provides regular termly visits that support, monitor and review the agreed targets. As a result, all of the families with children under five years of age are now registered and most are engaging in meaningful activities.
- The advisory board is representative of the community the centre serves. Members provide a voice for the parents and listen carefully to the views of all those who use the services. They contribute and challenge decision-making through the self-evaluation process and the development plan where clear actions and precise time lines are set.
- High priority is given to safeguarding: policies and procedures including staff vetting checks are appropriately in place. Close working arrangements with social care and health staff ensure families remain safe through effective intervention for children subject to child protection plans, in need or are being helped through by Common Assessment Framework procedures.
- Staff supervision and performance management systems are well embedded into the day-to-day management of the centre. Effective one-to-one sessions monitor the performance and development of staff skills. Staff have attended a good range of training courses which in turn have enabled them to run courses for parents without the need to commission these services.
- There are extremely strong partnerships with health professionals. This is because the centre management team has worked very hard to involve the local general practitioner. They hold regular family matters network meetings where resources for the area can be shared and those children with complex additional needs, expectant mothers and new parents receive a coherent, integrated service.

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

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| Unique reference number | 23556 |
| Local authority | Hertfordshire |
| Inspection number | 452342 |
| Managed by | Tenterfield Nursery School on behalf of the local authority |

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|--|-------------------------------|
| Approximate number of children under five in the reach area | 428 |
| Centre leader | Hannah Isher |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Telephone number | 01438 714564 |
| Email address | head@tenterfield.herts.sch.uk |

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