

# Little Hayes Nursery School & Children's Centre

Frenchay Road, Downend, Bristol, BS16 2QS

**Inspection date** 12–13 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:		
		Inadequate	4
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		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for children and families

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

- Systems to track the progress of all children over time are not established. Consequently, the centre cannot plan the activities and support necessary to ensure that more children reach a good level of development at the end of the Reception year or that the gap between the most disadvantaged children and other children closes at a faster rate.
- Links with Jobcentre Plus and adult education providers do not provide sufficient opportunities to improve adults' education and employability prospects.
- The centre does not receive enough up-to-date data at a sufficiently local level to enable staff to identify and track all target families within the centre's priority groups accurately.

### This children's centre has the following strengths:

- Good care, guidance and support, especially for target families, ensure that actions taken make a positive difference to those families' lives.
- Families and children who attend centre groups, access centre services and take up a funded pre-school place benefit from a broad range of good quality activities that meets their needs well.
- Leadership, management and governance are strong. The local authority and the board of governors have provided high levels of support and challenge to the senior leadership team, who has introduced a number of improvements since the last inspection, resulting in much improved levels of registration and engagement from families in the reach area.

**What does the centre need to do to improve further?**

- Working with the local authority, introduce effective systems for tracking attainment across the Early Years Foundation Stage which will enable the centre to monitor closely the progress of all children from birth to the end of the Reception year.
- Working with the local authority ensure that the centre receives Department of Work and Pensions and any other relevant data at a sufficiently local level to identify all the families with young children living in the reach area, and particularly those who are eligible for free preschool places.
- Develop productive links with Jobcentre Plus and identify and establish partnerships with additional adult learning providers, such as the local further education college, in order to offer a range of accredited courses designed to improve parents' employability.

**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 head of centre, staff, officers from the local authority, partners, members of the board of governors and the advisory board, childminders and parents. They observed several activities including some in outreach venues.

Inspectors looked at the centre's self-evaluation, improvement plan, a sample of case studies, safeguarding policies and procedures, and a range of other relevant documentation.

**Inspection team**

Cliff Rose	Her Majesty's Inspector, Lead Inspector
Georgina Beasley	Additional Inspector
Susan Metcalfe	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about the centre

The centre, designated in 2008 and previously known as Oldbury Court Children's Centre, opened in its present form in September 2012 following its amalgamation with Little Hayes Nursery School. The headteacher of the nursery school is also the head of the children's centre. Both elements of the organisation share a single board of governors. At inspection in September 2012 and January 2014, the nursery school provision was judged to be good. A joint advisory board for Little Hayes and two other children's centres in the east central area of Bristol was established earlier this year. Little Hayes offers a combined education and family support service from its two sites in Frenchay Road and Symington Road. Activities and events are also held at a variety of other locations.

According to the data, 1,122 children under the age of five years live in the reach area, which is socially and economically mixed with pockets of significant disadvantage. Nearly a quarter of families are in receipt of out- of-work benefits, a fifth is eligible for the childcare element of Working Tax Credit, and over half of children are assessed as living in income-deprived homes. Most housing comprises a mix of detached and semi-detached houses and privately rented flats and bedsits used for temporary accommodation for families. A safe house, a rehabilitation centre and Eden House, supporting women in the criminal justice system, are also located within the reach area.

Most families are of White British heritage, with a rising number from other ethnic groups. When starting in early years provision, children's skills and knowledge vary, but are typically below the level expected for their age.

Target groups identified by the centre currently are teenage mothers, lone parents, children living in workless households, children from Black or minority ethnic backgrounds, disabled children, disabled parents and fathers.

## Inspection judgements

### Access to services by young children and families

Requires improvement

- The centre does not receive information from the local authority in a timely manner to help it identify all families with preschool children. In particular, staff are not able to identify and support those particular families who may be eligible, but do not apply, for funded pre-school places. The number of two-year-olds taking up such places has increased, so that most currently take up a place. The proportion of three- and four-year-olds taking up a place has also increased, so that most attend a pre-school setting.
- Good partnership working with health services enables centre staff to identify families with young children and those expecting children. A large majority of target families are registered with the centre. As a result of well-targeted outreach work, this includes most of those living in the area of highest deprivation.
- Following the last inspection, the centre set challenging targets to increase engagement from each of its target groups. Although it has yet to achieve the targets, it has made very good progress towards doing so, and the percentages of teenage mothers, lone parents, children living in workless households, children from Black or minority ethnic backgrounds, disabled children, disabled parents and fathers have all increased markedly. The centre's current data are based on engagement only since 1 April 2014, when the local authority altered the boundaries of the reach area.
- The family support workers know the needs of the families referred to the centre and provide them with good support. They carry out assessments in a timely manner and action plans focus on need. This is particularly so for families with children subject to a care plan.
- The centre responds well to the needs of different groups. For example, a thorough analysis of low birth weight data and other local information showed the centre that there was an unusually high incidence of multiple births in the area. The centre therefore helped set up a parent-led multiple

birth support group. It also supports a skills for life group set up to meet the needs of isolated women, which is led by members of the group.

- The delivery of 'Stay and Play and Rhyme, Song and Story sessions at community venues has increased access by groups who would otherwise find travel to the two main sites difficult.

### The quality of practice and services

Requires improvement

- Links with Jobcentre Plus and providers of adult education do not provide sufficient opportunities for parents to improve their education or employability skills. The centre is exploring wider links for the provision of accredited provision to develop employability skills, but these require further development.
- Children who access a funded pre-school place at two and three years attend a setting that is judged good or better.
- Despite some improvement in 2014, the proportion of children who reach the levels they should for their age at the end of Reception is below the national average. The gap between the lowest 20% and other children is wider than nationally in England and is not closing fast enough.
- Systems to track the progress of two-year-olds who take up a funded place and who attend the settings linked to the centre are good. However, they do not yet extend to tracking the progress of every child across the reach, who either attends other pre-school settings or groups run by the centre. This is because assessment systems are too new and protocols with schools are only just being developed to share progress data about children who have attended groups and pre-school settings.
- Health targets are met. A higher proportion than nationally continues to breastfeed at six to eight weeks. While not reducing, the numbers of children classified as overweight or obese at the end of Reception are close to national figures. The numbers of admissions to hospital for accidents is below local figures.
- Effective partnerships provide a good range of services to improve parents' knowledge of children's safety, well-being and budgeting skills. Courses, such as first aid, first time parents, nurturing courses and play, cook and eat, develop parenting skills. Parents state they have increased confidence in home safety and as parents. The centre encourages budgeting skills through its partnerships with Pennywise for Savvy shopping, and the centre encourages parents to save and budget to pay for summer trips. Parents are actively involved and consulted regarding the range of courses.
- Volunteers improve their employability skills well. The centre employs volunteers successfully in childcare settings, administrative roles and running sessions such as the multiple births group for other parents. Such activities provide valuable work experience for parents working towards qualifications, such as classroom support, as well as improving their employability. After only a short period, one volunteer has gained permanent employment at the centre in the crèche.
- Parents receive good support from centre staff, encouraging their attendance at courses, for example through the provision of a crèche and in some instances transport. Family support workers accompany parents to the first sessions of courses to help develop their confidence. They also provide support to parents by accompanying them to doctor's appointments, encourage use of the centre, assist in resolving domestic issues and break down barriers regarding cultural perceptions of the services of the children's centre in an Asian community.
- Good use of outreach work has increased the range of provision for vulnerable groups in the judicial system and parents experiencing domestic violence. Effective partnership working has improved. A new service level agreement has resulted in benefits for increased services for children and parents by further crèche provision at Eden House. Centre staff are treated as part of the probation team there and attend some of the same training. This benefits children and their parents through staff's increased knowledge of the judicial system and its effects on families.

### The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- The centre benefits from the additional level of support and challenge supplied by the board of governors since its amalgamation with the nursery school in 2012. Both the board and the local authority improvement officer hold the senior leadership team to account for the centre's progress. They have monitored the centre's progress against its post inspection action plan, closely following the inspection in December 2013 when the provision was judged inadequate.
- The action plan sought to address all the recommendations made by inspectors at the last inspection. Apart from developing links with Jobcentre Plus, the centre has carried out all the recommendations successfully. Although the local authority has a service level agreement at strategic level, and despite repeated attempts by centre leaders, the relationship between the centre and Jobcentre Plus has not progressed.
- Senior leaders visited children's centres in other areas in order to identify and adopt best practice to improve the provision. This was reflected in the robust and challenging post inspection action plan. Improvements introduced include weekly analysis of performance data, a better understanding and use of data in the setting, and monitoring of progress towards targets, and a greater emphasis on raising the profile of the centre and promoting its services to the community and particularly to members of the priority groups.
- Safeguarding policies are thorough and procedures to ensure the safety of staff, and adults and children who visit the centre, are robust. Control of access is good with signing in and out procedures observed conscientiously at all sites. Checks to ensure the accommodation and resources are safe are carried out prior to the start of each group session, including Forest School activities. Suitability checks are carried out for all staff, governors and volunteers and logged in detail.
- The head of the centre, the deputy head of the nursery school and the family services manager are all appropriately trained as designated persons for child protection. All family service staff have a good awareness of safeguarding issues. They work closely with other agencies in the use of the Common Assessment Framework and the provision of appropriate levels of support for children in need or subject to child protection plans. Case files are kept to a good standard and there is management oversight, but this is not always formally recorded.
- Health partners share reach-specific information about children's health and welfare and highlight clearly what targets are met and what the next set of targets need to be. However, data protection issues have prevented the local authority from sharing data from the Department of Work and Pensions with the centre in sufficiently local detail. The local authority has included the centre, as one adept in the use of data, in a pilot to utilise reach level data from general practitioners.
- The board of governors and senior managers are exploring opportunities for more efficient working. The joint advisory board, shared with two nearby children's centres and established this year, reduces the number of meetings their common partners need to attend and is facilitating more collaboration between the centres, with a shared approach to the issues faced in this part of the city. It is, however, too early to judge the full impact.

**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.

**Children's centre details**

<b>Unique reference number</b>	22255
<b>Local authority</b>	Bristol
<b>Inspection number</b>	447538
<b>Managed by</b>	The local authority
<b>Approximate number of children under five in the reach area</b>	1,122
<b>Centre leader</b>	Shirley Doveton
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	3–4 December 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	0117 9030411
<b>Email address</b>	head.little.hayes.n@bristol-schools.uk

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