

Solihull - Kingshurst

Kingshurst Primary School, Birmingham, West Midlands, B37 6BN

Inspection dates	19–20 November 2014
Previous inspection date	Not previously inspected as a group

Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	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 group of centres requires improvement. It is not yet good because:

- While the majority of families from minority ethnic backgrounds and of children aged under one are registered with the centres, only a minority attend activities and use the centres' services.
- Social care partners, the job centre and the family information service do not give precise enough information to the centres about children with a care plan, workless families and two-year-olds eligible for a funded preschool place. As a result, while centres know about some of these families, they do not know where to target resources to register and engage those who are not attending.
- The centres have only just started to track the progress of children who attend the centres' groups. As a result, the centres cannot measure whether they are successfully helping children, especially those who take up a funded place at the age of two, to close any gaps in learning.
- Governance requires improvement. Although members of the partnership advisory board have an accurate understanding of the centres' strengths and areas requiring improvement, they do not sufficiently challenge and hold the centres' management to account for the centres' performance. There is no regular parent representative on the board.

It has the following strengths:

- Health partners share information about all new births with the centres and provide information about the centres' services and activities to all new parents. This has resulted in an increasing number of families registering and attending activities at all three centres over the last two years.
- Good care, guidance and support make a positive difference to the lives of families who need specific support from time to time. Most families continue to access services until their needs are met.
- Staff provide good role models when running activities to show parents how to develop children's learning by joining in with their play and asking questions to develop their talking and vocabulary.
- Adults have access to good-quality courses, and the large majority go on to become volunteers, enter further education or return to work. Teenage and young parents who take part in the family partnership program often return to education or employment.
- Supervision and performance management arrangements have ensured improvements to the delivery of services and groups so that those who attend make good progress.
- All three- and four-year-olds known to the local authority attend a preschool setting.

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

- Increase the proportion families from minority ethnic backgrounds and of children aged under one registering and regularly engaging with the centres' services.
- In order for the centres to know that adults and children from priority families are registered and using services, work with the local authority to develop protocols for sharing information from:
 - social care about families with children subject to a care plan
 - jobcentre plus about workless families
 - the family information service about two-year-old children known to be eligible for a funded nursery place.
- Improve procedures for tracking the progress of children who attend the centres' groups through preschool to the end of Reception, especially those who take up a funded place at the age of two, in order to measure the impact of the centres' work in reducing any gaps in learning.
- Strengthen governance by:
 - providing training to members in how to challenge the centres' management and hold them to account
 - increasing parents' participation in order to involve them in giving their views formally and shaping services.

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 three Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors held meetings with staff and volunteers; partners from schools, preschools, adult education, health and social care services; and representatives from the partnership advisory board, the local authority and The Children's Society charity. They had telephone conversations with the Family Nurse Partnership and parents.

The inspectors visited all three centres to observe two stay-and-play sessions, a baby clinic, a parenting course, a crèche session, and two-year-old provision in two local nurseries.

The inspection covered the following centres: Kingshurst Children's Centre, Yorkswood Children's Centre and Castle Bromwich Children's Centre.

They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation. They took into account 56 responses to the centres' most recent parent survey.

Inspection team

Georgina Beasley, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Judith Elderfield	Additional inspector
Karen Cooper	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about the centre group

Kingshurst Children's Centre, Yorkswood Children's Centre and Castle Bromwich Children's Centre that make up the centre group are three of 13 children's centres in Solihull. Kingshurst and Yorkswood were designated in 2006 and Castle Bromwich in 2008. The centres work from three different buildings and have developed together a range of services and groups that include family support, adult learning and health services.

Yorkswood Children's Centre is on the site of Yorkswood Primary School and Brambles Nursery School which also provides daycare. Kingshurst Children's Centre is on the same site as Kingshurst Primary School. Castle Bromwich Children's Centre has a linked nursery, Little Explorers. All of these schools and settings have been inspected separately and their reports can be found on www.ofsted.gov.uk.

The centres are managed by The Children's Society, which took over the management in April 2012. Governance is provided by a joint partnership advisory board made up of representatives from the local authority, community, health and education professionals and staff. The local authority is planning to directly manage all of the centres in Solihull from June 2015.

There are currently approximately 1068 children under the age of five living in the three centres' reach areas. Children's skills, knowledge and abilities on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage are below those typical for children of the same age. The large majority of families are White British, and approximately 15% are from a number of minority ethnic groups.

The proportion of children living in poverty, including workless households, is above average at 33%. The large majority of these live in the Kingshurst and Yorkswood reach areas. Approximately 14% of the children under five live with a lone parent in Castle Bromwich and 35% in Kingshurst and Yorkswood which is above average. Housing in the area is a mix of owner-occupied, privately rented and social housing. A higher proportion of families live in social housing in Kingshurst and Yorkswood.

The centre has identified its target groups as: children assessed as living in poverty, workless families, minority ethnic families and disadvantaged two-year-olds.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Requires improvement

- The number of families registering and using the centres' services and attending groups is rising. Most families are now registered with the centres. Nevertheless, the proportion of families attending activities more than once every year is still not high enough. Just over half of families who live in the area regularly attend an activity at one of the three centres. The majority of priority families, including workless families, those assessed as living in poverty, and disadvantaged two-year-olds attend activities regularly.
- While the majority are registered, the proportion of families from minority ethnic groups and children under the age of one subsequently attending groups and accessing services remains in the minority at all three centres.
- The majority of eligible two-year-olds take up a funded place at nursery or preschool. However, the centres are not given information about who the children are or where they are placed to facilitate tracking of progress and to support settings. Crucially, centres do not know which children are not taking up a place, or have not been assigned a place because there are not enough places available in good or better settings. As a result, they are not able to offer support to these children in the interim.
- Partnership with the department of work and pensions and the job centre requires improvement because information about all workless families is not shared in a timely enough manner to enable the centres to target services to all adults wanting to access training to help them return to work.
- Partnership with social care requires improvement. Numbers of children subject to a care plan are shared with the centres. The family support team knows about some families because social care workers refer families they consider require additional support and some families refer themselves. However, centres are not told about other families to enable staff to target extra support to all families who may need it.
- The centres now receive information from health professionals about all new births in the area, and all expectant mothers and new parents receive information about the centres' services and groups. As a result, families know about the centres and what they offer and, crucially, centres now know which families are registering and not engaging with services so follow-up contact can be made.
- Families who need specific and targeted support from time to time are identified quickly through referrals by health partners and, sometimes, by social care workers. Staff attend weekly Early Help Multi-Agency Partnership (EHMAP) meetings, and subsequent assessments are completed speedily to ensure that families who request it get the support that they need quickly. This is especially effective for those referred to mental health services because they have experienced domestic violence, or suffer from depression or low mood. Most of these families are registered and continue to use services until their needs are met.
- All three- and four-year-olds known to the local authority attend a preschool setting.

The quality of practice and services

Requires improvement

- The centres provide a suitable range and quality of activities at all three centres and in a few local venues. Parents and children who attend activities are able to give their views and feedback about what the centres offer; these are used to reshape services. However, the lack of information about all families subject to a care plan, all two-year-olds eligible for a funded preschool place, and all workless families limits the ability of staff to consult all families who live in the reach in order to ensure groups

and services are relevant and matched to the needs of every family.

- Procedures for tracking the progress of children who attend groups has only just started. The proportion of children who reach levels typical for their age at the end of Reception is rising and is above average at Castle Bromwich but below average at Kingshurst and Yorkswold. Although gaps in attainment at the end of the Reception Year between disadvantaged children and others are closing, lack of information from schools and nurseries makes it difficult for the centres to ascertain what impact their provision has had on children's progress.
- The centres provide a varied range of relevant groups for priority families and sessions that any parent can attend. The quality of learning and development in sessions at all three centres is good. Staff provide good role models by showing parents how to ask questions and talk to children to develop vocabulary, and how praising good behaviour raises children's self-esteem and helps them to behave well.
- Relationships with staff are positive, and so families who access the centres are confident to ask advice, support and help if they need it. All parents who responded to a recent survey said that they are happy or very happy with what the centres provide and that they would recommend the centres to others.
- The children's centre group provides good care, guidance and support to all parents, particularly those who need it most. Effective one-to-one support, parenting programmes and specific courses help parents to build their self-confidence, support their children and deal with their challenging behaviour.
- Parents have access to good-quality adult education opportunities including courses in first aid, English, mathematics, cookery, jewellery making and Christmas crafts. Tracking information shows a large majority of adults go on to further education, volunteering or employment. A very large majority of teenagers and young mothers who attend the family nurse partnership programme return to education or employment within two years of having their babies.
- The centres are on track to reach health targets set for the end of 2015 to raise the proportion of mothers who breastfeed their babies at six to eight weeks, and reduce levels of obesity in children at the end of Reception to the national average.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Requires improvement

- Governance requires improvement because members of the partnership advisory board are not yet using the information from monitoring and review to challenge managers about the centres' performance. Although board members receive feedback about parents' views to help shape activities and services, there are no parent representatives on the board.
- The centres receive information from Early Help assessments for children with a disability or with special educational needs so that staff can target services if necessary. Staff are invited to meetings with social care workers only if they are already involved with the family or if social care partners feel that they have a role to play. While the centres are informed of the numbers of children subject to a child protection or child in need plan, they are given no further details to enable them to offer or target support to those families concerned.
- The centres use the small number of staff effectively to provide services that meet the needs of families who regularly use their services. However, the lack of information about all families subject to a care plan, all two-year-olds eligible for a funded preschool place, and all workless families limits the

centres' ability to target staffing resources effectively and efficiently. The centre uses the accommodation and a varied range of good-quality resources and toys effectively to support the learning of those families who attend.

- The local authority has given good support over the last year to share the information it has about families who live in the reach area to enable the centres to agree challenging targets for improvement. The targets in the centres' improvement plan now include measures against which to evaluate success of actions. Quarterly reviews of data and annual meetings between local authority officers and the centres' leaders monitor performance and set new targets. While service level agreements are established for sharing information with schools, preschools and health partners, the local authority has not been successful in agreeing the same level of protocols with social care, the job centre and its own family information service.
- Capacity to improve is good. Self-evaluation is accurate and targets from this link closely to measurable targets in the centres' improvement plans. There has been good improvement in the numbers of families registering and using the centres' services over the last two years. The centres' leader has good oversight of case files and ensures records are kept to a high standard. The quality of services and activities for those families who do attend the centres has improved.
- Regular supervision and performance management arrangements set clear expectations for staff performance. The centre leader regularly carries out observations of group sessions and provides clear feedback about what is going well and what needs to be improved. Checks are made to ensure agreed action points are acted upon by staff. A training plan identifies courses all staff must complete to support the centres' improvement priorities and training relevant to their jobs.
- Safeguarding policies and procedures meet requirements. All staff, including volunteers, have received the required training and understand their responsibilities in regard to the protection of children. Access to the buildings is closely monitored, and all visitors are checked. Risk assessments are completed and updated regularly.

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 Group details

Unique reference number	80411
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	451705
Managed by	The Children's Society on behalf of the local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	1068
Centre leader	Pamela O'Brien
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected as a group
Telephone number	0121 248 7659
Email address	SolihullCCAdminShared@childrenssociety.org.uk

This group consists of the following children's centres:

- 21686 Kingshurst Children's Centre
- 23718 Yorkswood Children's Centre
- 20580 Castle Bromwich Children's Centre

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

