

Haven Children's Centre

Harris Road, Gosport, PO13 0UY,

Inspection date 13–14 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
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 is a good centre.

- Most young children in the area are registered and the large majority of priority families are accessing the services provided. Good partnership working with health professionals ensures families in most need are identified. Increasing numbers of families are engaging with the centre.
- Careful consideration and consultation with parents ensure activities are held in locations that are convenient for families. The centre is a busy hub for the community and a large majority of lone and teenage parents and those in greatest need regularly use the services.
- Services are very well integrated with the early years services at the Haven site and with the Gosport cluster of children's centres. Families enjoy coming to activities and stay engaged until their needs are met. Families and grandparents report improvements to their lives.
- Most children from target groups take up their free entitlement to early education and attend good quality provision. Many of the children are placed in the Haven Nursery School and make good progress.
- Good leadership, management and governance mean the centre is in a strong position to continue to improve.

It is not outstanding because:

- Partnership working with social services is not good enough. The introduction of the 'early help hub' is improving working relationships, but it is too soon to see the difference this is making to families.
- Case file recording is too variable and not consistent. Effective supervision and training for staff are improving the quality of recording but, in a minority of cases, reviews and the views of families are not well recorded. This makes it difficult to see the difference case work makes.
- Breastfeeding rates and childhood obesity rates are not improving fast enough. The centre's initiatives to increase breastfeeding and reduce childhood obesity are not yet demonstrating enough impact.
- Systems to measure adequately the difference the centre is making are not developed. Evaluations of activities are not fully analysed or used to set targets for improvement.

What does the centre need to do to improve further

- Improve partnership working with social care by strengthening the monitoring to ensure the centre is able to provide help as early as possible.
- Improve case files so that:
 - the views of families and children are clearly and consistently recorded
 - reviews of casework include outcomes achieved and it is clear to see the difference being made to the lives young children and their families.
- Improve breastfeeding and reduce obesity rates by working more closely with health professionals to promote the benefits of leading a healthy lifestyle across all activities.
- Improve the systems to measure the quality of services and impact by:
 - analysing evaluations to measure effectively the difference the activities make to families
 - tracking the progress of all children eligible for funding for early years education and ensure they and their families get support so they are well prepared for school.

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 representatives from the local authority, the centre manager and the manager of the Haven Nursery School and day care provision. They also met health, education and social care partners, parents, staff, and representatives from the partnership board. Parents' and grandparents' views were taken into account through interviews and a review of the consultation file.

The inspectors visited Tree House and Little Waves, Haselbridge, Stubblee Hill and Rowner children's centres, that also offer families in the area a range of services, and were inspected at the same time. A joint observation was undertaken with the manager of the Stay and Play at Haven.

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

Inspection team

Penny Mathers, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Teresa Kiely	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

Haven is managed by the Local Authority. It is integrated with an onsite Maintained Nursery School that also provides other services including early years day care and provides services for children with special educational needs. These are all managed by the head of centre. Staff from the children's centre often work across the provision. The children's centre has its own manager and a partnership board accountable for the centre's services.

While Haven is a standalone centre, it works closely the Gosport Children's Centre Group that includes Tree House and Little Waves, Haselbridge, and Stubblee Hill. These are all managed by Action for Children.

There are 771 children under the age of five living in the community the centre serves. The centre has identified lone parents, teenage parents, and families living in workless households as priority groups. The centre offers a range of services including Stay and Play, a group for young parents, Tums to Mums, baby clinics, antenatal clinics, breastfeeding support, and early support for children with additional needs. Parenting courses, family support and adult learning are also part of the services available.

Haven centre includes the wards of Bridgemary North, Bridgemary South and Peel Common. Teenage pregnancy rates are high in Bridgemary North and Bridgemary South. A few children live in workless households. The centre works with a number of primary schools in the area, including Bedenham which is the nearest school. The day nursery and crèche were inspected in November 2011 and Haven Early Years Centre in January 2013. Reports for these services are available at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Most of the population are White British, with a smaller proportion being minority ethnic families. Most children start early years provision with skills slightly below what is typical for their age.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Good

- Engagement with the large majority of families is good and most families who live in the local area are registered with the centre. Information sharing with health visitors is particularly well established and this ensures families quickly access services when a need arises. However, health professionals do not share live birth data with the centre, so some families are not introduced to services at the earliest opportunity.
- Staff work closely with partners to identify priority families who would benefit from services, including those expecting children. As a result, involvement by lone parents, teenage parents and those living in workless households has increased over recent years. Services are tailored well to meet the needs of families so that they enjoy coming to the centre until their needs are met.
- The large majority of disadvantaged families with two-year-olds take up funded early education. Most of these children are placed in the on-site nursery or in high quality provision nearby. The centre works well with early years settings and the large majority are good or better. The large majority of families with three- and four-year-olds are now taking up their free entitlement to early education.
- Effective partnership working with health visitors ensures their checks on two-year-olds identify children in need of support with speech and language development. A specialist speech and language therapist is based at the centre and gives specialist support as well as running a Keep on Talking programme. Parents access effective help to promote speech development at home.
- The centre promotes access for all families well. Staff go out of their way to ensure families and children feel comfortable to attend the centre. Parents feel welcome and the centre has become a

hub of the community.

The quality of practice and services

Good

- A good balance of services is maintained between services available to all and those supporting specific families. Families value the good quality activities at Haven, but also attend across the Gosport Children's Centre Group where they are made to feel welcome. The needs of priority groups are well provided for and include antenatal sessions for teenage parents and a specific group for grandparents.
- The centre has not previously worked well with social care as part of early help services for families. The introduction of the 'early help hub' has improved practice, so that staff are now being involved in offering support to children in need. However, relationships with social care are not fully embedded to ensure staff receive timely information on children in need and child protection families.
- The good care, support and guidance have a positive impact on families' lives, especially at times of crisis. Parents and grandparents report the service has been life saving. Parents with poor mental health, lone parents and young parents feel well supported and many stay engaged for a long time. Staff work sensitively with parents, including those whose children have additional needs or who have experienced domestic violence, to ensure they receive timely help.
- A very good range of adult learning courses is provided and includes money management, numeracy and cake decorating. As a result, adults, including those in workless households, have good opportunities for learning. A large majority of adults most in need progress through learning programmes, complete them and improve their literacy and numeracy skills. They appreciate the positive impact the centre has on improving their self-esteem and in preparing them well for employment.
- Breastfeeding and healthy living are insufficiently promoted. Although there are plans to increase breastfeeding and reduce obesity rates, activities are not yet sufficiently promoted to ensure families are helped to lead a healthier lifestyle. As a result, rates are not improving fast enough.
- Good quality parenting programmes are well tailored to the needs of families. A large majority of those families who attend parenting programmes complete them and improve their parenting skills. They value the support and guidance they receive. Also, they learn the importance of having a consistent approach between parents, how to manage challenging behaviour and the importance of looking after themselves.
- Work with early years settings is very effective. Meetings are run to share good practice and, as a result, the quality of early years provision in the area has improved so that most is good. Childminders are also well supported and attend regularly at the centre.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- The local authority provides effective guidance and monitors the work of the centre regularly. Challenging targets are set to reduce inequalities and are largely met. Managers know the strengths and areas for improvement well and the development plan is focused clearly on areas that will make the biggest difference.
- Governance arrangements are clear and the partnership board is well run. Members of the board are very committed to the services provided and give a good level of challenge and support to the centre that drives improvements. Parents are members of the board and feel their voices are listened to well.
- Day-to-day running of the centre is good. The management team has a good understanding of what needs to be improved, has set suitable actions and monitors the implementation of plans. Staff and resources are used flexibly and effectively across the services at Haven. Families benefit from the wide range of resources available.
- Managers provide timely and effective supervision. Procedures for setting targets for staff are well understood. As a result, staff receive good training that links well to the centre's priorities, although

the current training plan lacks detail. Staff are dedicated and parents appreciate the way the staff are passionate about promoting early years development.

- Partnership working is mostly good and joint delivery of sessions between staff and partners is a key feature in many activities. Staff have devised a range of 'pathways' to maximise partnership involvement with several priority groups such as teenage parents. The partnership working with social care staff requires further strengthening, but social workers increasingly recognise the valuable services family support workers can offer.
- Safeguarding arrangements are good. Robust policies and procedures ensure the welfare of children remains at the core of the centre's work. All the required safer recruitment checks on staff are carried out and recorded well. Staff receive effective safeguarding training, which they use well to support children who are looked after, subject to child protection plans, and those deemed to be children in need.
- Recording in case files is inconsistent. The views of families and children are not clearly recorded and reviews of casework do not always include outcomes achieved. As a result, it is not clear what difference is being made to the lives of families and children.
- Systems for evaluating the services are not fully developed. Evaluations of activities are not checked to see if they have made a difference. Some tracking is undertaken, but not yet carried out for all aspects of the work or for all children. Not all two-year-olds eligible for funding are tracked, so that it is difficult to be sure families get adequate support to prepare children well for school.
- Good opportunities are available for parents to share their views. Surveys, evaluations of activities and social media are used to capture families' views. These views are valued and promptly acted upon and, as a result, parents feel a strong connection to the centre.

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

Unique reference number	21409
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	450874
Managed by	The local authority
Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	771
Centre leader	Julie Caldwell
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
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