

Meadow Sure Start Children's Centre

Sparrow Farm Road, Stoneleigh, Epsom, Surrey KT17 2LW

Inspection date 3–4 December 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.

- Centre staff have created a warm and friendly place where families feel safe and valued.
- During the last year, as a result of a concerted effort by staff, the number of children and families known to the centre and accessing services has risen dramatically.
- Governors are extremely supportive of the centre. They know its strengths and the areas to be improved. Using their experience and skills, they are becoming increasingly confident in challenging centre leaders and holding them to account to drive further improvements.
- The centre is very well led by an innovative and dedicated centre manager. She receives very good support from the headteacher at the primary school.
- Staff know the community well, and always look for ways to remove barriers to ensure families receive the support they need.
- The local authority provides excellent support and advice to centre staff.
- Partnerships with key professionals, particularly health and social care, are a strength of the centre.
- In 2014, the number of Reception-age children who achieved a good level of development was above the national average.

It is not outstanding because:

- Only a half of all eligible two year olds are taking up their funded place.
- Not enough adults are being encouraged to take part in parenting and volunteering programmes.
- Information on the centre's performance is not always analysed rigorously enough to ensure all staff and governors know how well it is doing.

What does the group need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that most eligible two-year-old children access their free entitlement to early education.
- Increase the number of adults completing parenting and volunteering programmes, as a first step back into training and employment.
- Strengthen the use and analysis of information so that all staff and governors are able to monitor the centre’s performance more rigorously.

Information about this inspection

The inspection of this children’s centre group was carried out under Part 3A of the Childcare Act 2006 as amended by the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009.

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors and one of Her Majesty’s Inspectors.

The inspectors held meetings with the centre leader, senior leaders from Meadow Primary School, and representatives from the local authority. They also met partners from health, early years education, parents, and representatives from the advisory board and parents’ forum. The centre leader, headteacher from the primary school and a representative from the local authority attended all meetings of the inspection team.

Visits to activities, such as ‘Jo Jingles’, baby clinics, and ‘Stay and Play’, were undertaken. The inspectors looked at the centre’s self-evaluation, action planning, a sample of case files, safeguarding practice, policies and procedures and a range of documentation.

Inspection team

David Scott, Lead Inspector

Additional Inspector

Harmesh Manghra

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Graham Saltmarsh

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about the group

Meadow Children's Centre was designated in September 2010 as a stand-alone centre. It delivers a range of services including health, parenting classes, 'Stay and Play' sessions, adult learning and family support. The centre is located on the site of Meadow Primary School (URN 135383) which is subject to a separate inspection. The inspection report can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk. The centre is managed by the governing body of Meadow Primary School, on behalf of the local authority. There is also an advisory board, which comprises of parents and key partners, and a parents' forum.

Strategic leadership of the centre is provided by the headteacher of Meadow Primary School. The centre works in collaboration with Riverview Children's Centre (URN 22527) and in partnership with St Martin's (URN 22866) and Epsom (URN 21107) children's centres, sharing services and data.

The number of children under five years of age is 796.

The centre serves a community that is relatively affluent, with only one in six children living in slightly less advantaged areas. Information shows that very few children live in households where no one is working. The majority of parents have been educated to university level.

Three quarters of families are of White British heritage, with a quarter being from minority ethnic groups. Children's skills and abilities on entry to early education are above the levels expected for their age.

The centre has identified referred families in need of intensive support and 0–2 year old children as its main priority groups.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Good

- Last year as a result of a concerted effort by staff, the number of families who were registered with the centre increased by 16 percentage points. The large majority of families, including those expecting children, are now registered with the centre and accessing services.
- Since the centre opened, levels of engagement of families have risen steadily. However, in the last year they rose dramatically by 31 percentage points. This was partly due to centre staff visiting pre-school settings and health clinics being based at the centre. As a result, most families deemed to be in need of intensive support, and the large majority of 0–2 year olds, regularly engage in the centre's activities.
- Close partnership work with other key professionals has enabled centre staff to engage families well. On-site midwife and baby clinics are run in tandem with good quality 'Stay and Play' sessions. This has enabled more families to be registered with the centre, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, while accessing advice on their child's learning and welfare.
- Most three-and four-year old children access their funded education place. However, only half of all eligible two-year-olds take up their free early years place. The centre manager has already identified this as an area for improvement and taken steps to find out which children are eligible and where they live. The centre has then sent them a welcoming letter and followed this up by an email or telephone call.

The quality of practice and services

Good

- Families, including expectant parents, benefit from a good range of services intended for all, and those aimed at the needs of specific families.

- As part of its work in the community, home visits are made to help families who may find it difficult to attend centre activities, including parents who may feel isolated and those families who are in need of intensive support.
- The centre listens and responds well to parents' needs in providing effective activities that promote their child's well-being and development. For example, in the very well-attended 'Jo Jingles' session, children took great delight in dancing, singing and playing musical instruments. This helped them to develop their listening and speaking skills, as well as socialising with their families and other children. They thoroughly enjoyed the bubbles and music, and had great fun learning.
- Centre staff promote and develop children's learning well. In 2014, the large majority of Reception-aged children achieved a good level of development. This was above national levels and demonstrates that the centres are contributing to ensuring that children are ready for school and learning.
- The centre has very few families who are not in work with the majority being university educated. As a result, the promotion of adult learning, training and employment has not needed to be a priority. However, at their initial interview, parents' employability aspirations are not routinely considered in terms of gauging future career aspirations, guidance and progression.
- The centre has successfully supported a few individuals through volunteering to secure a place at university. However, overall, volunteering as a first step to employment or a career change is not actively promoted.
- Parenting courses such as 'Family Links', and those for dads, are well attended. Last year, 67 parents successfully completed first-aid courses, with three quarters being from priority families.
- Centre staff have developed positive relationships with the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) which have helped families to secure prompt appointments. This reduces their feelings of anxiety and isolation regarding financial issues.
- Strategies to improve the healthy weight of Reception-age children are having a positive effect. As a result, levels are improving and just above the national level. Breastfeeding rates at six to eight weeks and immunisation rates are significantly above national figures.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- The well-qualified centre manager is highly regarded, both by parents and staff. A number of parents commented: 'I feel that staff really care about me', 'My children really love it here' and 'The centre staff always give sound advice and information'.
- Governance is good. The work of the governing body, the advisory board and parents' forum are carefully woven together, so that communication between them is effective. Members bring a range of expertise and experience to the role and are increasingly confident in challenging the performance of the centre and holding leaders to account.
- Through the annual conversation and focused monitoring visits the local authority knows the centre very well. The local authority's adviser for children's centres, in partnership with centre staff, has provided very helpful data about the centre's performance. However, this is not routinely shared with all staff and governors, so that they can fully understand how well the centre is performing, in order to provide further challenge.
- The centre leader has recently developed a new system for tracking children's progress. She has been well supported by the deputy headteacher from the primary school, whose skill, expertise and enthusiasm for data management has been invaluable.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are robust and effective. All staff ensure that children who are looked after, subject to child protection plans, and those deemed to be in need are well supported. The centre leader has ensured all staff are fully trained and that safer recruitment procedures for the appointment of staff are followed.
- The headteacher provides highly effective professional supervision for the centre leader, which ensures the centre runs smoothly. Arrangements for setting targets for staff are the same as those for staff in the primary school.
- The sharing of resources across the two centres is a strength, and ensures that both centres are

able to provide a consistent service, which represents good value for money.

- Parents have many opportunities to express their views in helping to shape future services. For example, they requested to have more sessions involving music and outside activities.

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

Unique reference number	21972
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	447576
Managed by	The governing body of Meadow Primary School, on behalf of the local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	796
Centre leader	Tracey Robbins
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	020 8393 9320
Email address	childrenscentre@meadow.surrey.sch.uk

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.

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

© Crown copyright 2014

