

Riverview Sure Start Children's Centre

Riverview Church of England Primary and Nursery School, Riverview Road, Surrey, KT19 0JP

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.

- The centre is a warm and friendly place where families feel safe and valued.
- Registrations and attendance rates have risen steadily year on year, especially so for families living in the most deprived neighbourhoods so that access to services is now good.
- Most eligible two-, three- and four-year-olds take up their free early years education place.
- The quality of activities is overwhelmingly good.
- In 2014, the number of Reception-age children who achieved a good level of development was above the national average.
- Adults wishing to improve their education and employment chances receive good support from centre staff and partner organisations.
- Staff provide very good support for families in crisis and work well with colleagues from health and social care.
- The centre is well led by a confident and dedicated manager. She receives very good support from the headteacher at the primary school.
- The local authority provides detailed information to the centre about the area it serves. It also provides excellent support and advice to centre staff.

It is not outstanding because:

- Too few birth to one-year-old children are registered with or regularly attending the centre.
- Not enough adults are being encouraged to take part in volunteering programmes.
- The advisory board membership is not sufficiently broad to properly govern, challenge and support the centre.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- At a strategic level, build upon the good working relationships with midwives and health visitors to ensure that all new-born babies are registered with the centre, and that the large majority access and regularly attend services.
- Increase the number of adults completing volunteering programmes as a first step back to training and employment.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of the advisory board by;
 - increasing membership to include key local professionals such as police, Jobcentre Plus, housing, social care, Homestart and other voluntary and community organisations
 - ensuring all board members receive appropriate training to perform their duties.

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. It was carried out at the same time as that of another children's centre, Meadow Sure Start Children's Centre.

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

The inspectors held meetings with the centre manager and staff; parents and volunteers; partners in health, education, social care and community services; advisory board members; and representatives from the local authority.

The inspectors visited the centre, observed the centre's work and looked at a range of relevant documentation. Visits to activities such as speech and language clinics and 'Little Sports Stars' were undertaken. The inspectors looked at the centre's self-evaluation, action planning, a sample of case files, safeguarding practice, policy and procedures and a range of documentation.

Inspection team

Alan Comerford-Dunbar

Additional inspector, Lead inspector

Harmesh Manghra

Her Majesty's Inspector

Graham Saltmarsh

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

Riverview Sure Start Children's Centre serves a mixed socioeconomic area and was designated in 2009. There are 853 children under the age of five years living in the centre's reach area. The majority of families are of White British heritage, with about 30% from a number of minority ethnic heritage groups. Children enter school with skills, knowledge and abilities that are above the expected levels for their age. There is an onsite childcare provision which was inspected early in 2014; the report can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

The centre is located within the grounds of Riverview Church of England Primary and Nursery School (URN 131072) and is both governed and managed by the school on behalf of Surrey County Council. The day-to-day running of the centre is carried out by a centre manager, supported by the school headteacher. The centre works in collaboration with Meadow Sure Start Children's Centre (URN 21972) to provide a range of activities and services at the centres and at outreach venues. It has its own advisory board. The inspection of Meadow Children's Centre took place at the same time and the inspection report can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

The area covered by the centre is varied, with generally affluent housing but containing pockets of deprivation and some unemployment. Housing is mostly owner occupied, although the centre serves some areas of social housing. The number of looked after children and children subject to protection plans is low.

The centre has identified its target groups as families with two-year-olds entitled to funded early education, children from referred families and those at risk of being in greatest need, lone parent families in workless households and children living in workless households.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Good

- As a result of a concerted effort by centre staff, especially with families in the most deprived neighbourhoods, registration rates rose significantly in the past year so that most families are now known to the centre. However, staff have correctly identified that they need to increase the number of families with new-born babies that access services.
- The large majority of families with two-year-olds entitled to funded early education, children from referred families and those at risk of being in greatest need regularly engage in the centre's activities. Increasing rapidly, the majority of lone parent families living in workless households and children living in workless households engage with services regularly.
- Most two-, three- and four-year-old children access their free entitlement to early education. Those families expecting children are accessing services well and enjoy attending clinics held at the centre. Health clinics held at the centre are well attended and highly valued by parents. As one mother said, 'It's so warm and friendly here.'
- Access to information, advice and guidance is good. The benefits of breastfeeding and other early childhood health promotion activities are constantly reinforced by staff, and a good range of literature is available to visitors.
- Families enjoy accessing the bright, welcoming centre where they feel safe, valued and cared for. Good use is made of wall space and displays to reinforce key messages. Of particular note is the space dedicated to celebrating the work produced by children and adult carers.

The quality of practice and services**Good**

- Families benefit from a good balance of services and activities open to everyone and those aimed at specific groups. The quality of activities is overwhelmingly good. Most courses are run to capacity and meet the needs of the local community. For example, a recently run paediatric first aid course was well attended and highly valued by adults as it helped them to keep their children safe.
- The centre listens and responds well to parents' needs in providing effective activities that promote their children's well-being and development. For example, sessions run by a speech and language professional were highly effective in helping children to improve their communication skills, a key aspect of school readiness.
- Centre staff promote and develop children's learning well and contributed to the large majority of Reception-age children achieving a good level of development in 2014. The centre is also effectively reducing inequalities for children, narrowing gaps and helping prepare children well for school and learning. Staff are effectively tracking the impact of their work for children who have attended the centre on a regular basis.
- Dedicated staff provide very good support for all families who use the centre, especially during times of crisis. Parenting courses are effective in improving parents' confidence in raising their children. All parents felt safe and valued at the centre and were able to express how their improved confidence had impacted positively on family life.
- Strategies to improve the healthy weight of Reception-age children are having a positive effect. Breast feeding at six to eight weeks and immunisation rates are positively above rates seen nationally. A major factor of this is the consistency of key messages both staff and health partners give to all families who attend centre activities.
- Centre staff and partner organisations work well with adults who wish to improve their education and employment chances. Good use is made by parents of the broad range of advice and guidance on offer within the centre. However, volunteering programmes are currently not used to full effect, which restricts opportunities for adults to build up their confidence and acquire work experience.

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

- Through the annual conversation and focused monitoring visits, the local authority knows the centre well. The local authority children's centre adviser, in partnership with centre staff, has collected very helpful information about the centre's performance. This information is used well to inform an accurate self-evaluation of the centre, and targets for improvement are challenging and relevant.
- The centre manager is highly regarded by both staff and parents. Well qualified and from a broad range of professional backgrounds, staff fully appreciate the manager's calm and confident approach to solving everyday problems. Likewise, staff are well supported by the school headteacher, whose skill and enthusiasm for improving life chances for families have been invaluable.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are robust and effective. All staff ensure that children who are looked after, those subject to child protection plans, and those deemed to be children in need and supported by the Early Help Assessment process are well supported. The centre leader has ensured that all staff are fully trained and that safer recruitment procedures for the appointment of staff are followed rigorously.
- The sharing of resources across the two centres is a strength and ensures that both centres are able to provide consistent service, which represents good value for money. Parents have many opportunities to express their views in helping to shape future services. For example, following feedback from parents, a 'dads-only' Saturday session was successfully changed to be an all-inclusive family event, which actually increased the attendance of male carers.
- Governance of the centre by the school governing body is good, although the advisory board membership is too narrow and requires expansion. Members of the board lack the necessary expertise to check all aspects of the centre's work. Additionally, new board members do not receive sufficient training to help prepare them for their role.

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	22527
Local authority	Surrey County Council
Inspection number	447577
Managed by	Riverview Church of England Primary School on behalf of the local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	853
Centre leader	Laura Devereux
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	020 8337 7310
Email address	laura.devereux@riverview.surrey.sch.uk

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