

Amesbury Children's Centre Group

Hubert Hamilton Road, Bulford, Wiltshire, SP4 9JY

Inspection date	10–11 December 2014
Previous inspection date	Not previously inspected

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 children's centre group is good.

- The centres and their partners ensure that all expectant families and those who move into the area know about the activities and services the centres offer. Most families are registered as a result.
- The large majority of families benefit from the centres' good quality services. Education, health and community partners work very well together to coordinate effective services for families.
- Parents play a full and active role in shaping the centres' services. The advisory board consults parents and children through feedback from groups, the parent forum and quarterly surveys to decide what activities to run, when and where.
- The centres give good support to priority families and those who experience difficulties, and ensure they remain engaged until their needs are met.
- Supervision and performance management arrangements have resulted in actions to improve services and activities. Governance is good. Members of the advisory board have a good knowledge of the centres' work, their strengths and what needs to improve.
- The local authority and advisory board challenge the centres' management to account for their performance. Challenging targets are agreed annually and reviewed every quarter to check that the centres are on track to achieve them. As a result, the centres are improving.

It is not outstanding because:

- The centres are not clear about how much progress children who attend centre groups make during nursery, pre-school and the first year in school, and so do not measure precisely how successful their work has been in raising attainment and closing any gaps in learning over time.
- Through reviews of case files, leaders and managers have picked up that staff do not always record the difference support makes to families' lives. They do not always check in subsequent supervision meetings that staff have made the improvements.

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

- Strengthen how the centres measure the contribution they make to children's attainment at the age of five by extending procedures for sharing information with partners about the progress children make in nursery, pre-school and Reception classes, especially in communication and language development.
- Ensure that leaders and managers check that staff have improved how they record in case files the difference being made to families' lives as a result of support and services.

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 centres that form part of this children's centre group are Bulford Children's Centre and Five Wishes Children's Centre.

This inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors held meetings with staff, parents, childminders and volunteers; representatives from the local authority, advisory board and Spurgeons charity; and partners from schools, pre-schools, the army welfare service, Homestart, adult education, health and social care services. They held telephone conversations with the army welfare officer and a representative from an organisation that supports people experiencing domestic violence.

The inspectors visited Bumps, Babes and More at both centres, baby clinic at Bulford Children's Centre and Stay and Play at Wyndham Hall.

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

Inspection team

Georgina Beasley, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Patricia Collis	Additional Inspector
Rob Mottram	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about the centre group

Bulford Children's Centre and Five Wishes Children's Centre, that make up the centre group, are two of 30 children's centres in Wiltshire. The centres work together to provide a range of services and groups that include family support, adult learning and health services.

Bulford Children's Centre is on the site of Kiwi Primary School and Five Wishes shares a site with Amesbury Primary School and a building with Smiley Face Nursery which provides day care. 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 on behalf of the local authority by Spurgeons children's charity, which took over the management in 2010. Governance is provided by a joint advisory board. The centres are managed by the centre services lead, in partnership with a centre services manager who oversees all children's centres in South Wiltshire managed by Spurgeons.

There are currently approximately 2,470 children under the age of five living in the two 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 8% are from a number of minority ethnic groups.

The proportion of children living in poverty, including workless households, is below the national average at 7%. Housing in the area is a mix of owner-occupied, privately rented and social housing. Much of the area served by both centres is rural. A large number of children live in army families and a high number move in and out of the area throughout the year.

The centre has identified its target groups as: children who live in an armed services family; vulnerable two-year-olds; families experiencing domestic violence or domestic abuse; children with parents who have mental health and/or drug and alcohol related problems; and rural families.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families Good

- Most families across the area are registered with the centres and a large majority use services and attend groups regularly. This includes families experiencing domestic abuse and children with parents who have mental health and/or drug and alcohol issues.
- The centres run groups at village locations and local schools. This has increased the registration and take up of services by families who live in rural areas.
- The centres get to know new families quickly through the receipt of new birth data from health services and about families moving into the area from other parents, health visitors, schools and the army welfare service. As a result, almost all expectant parents and new families from the armed services are registered.
- Most children take up a free pre-school place at the age of two, if eligible, and at three. All attend settings that provide a good or outstanding quality of education.
- Families who need specific and targeted support from time to time are identified quickly through referrals by schools, the army welfare service, health partners and social care workers. Assessments are carried out speedily, and subsequent actions ensure that families get the support that they need quickly. This is especially effective for children subject to a care plan and those who have experienced domestic violence. Staff attend all meetings that review assessments under the Common Assessment Framework.
- Adults have good access to adult education and parenting programmes provided through the centres, through the family learning service and other local providers. Parents' praise of the

parenting programmes that run regularly throughout the year reflects the varied range of parenting programmes available to meet the different needs of parents.

The quality of practice and services

Good

- The centres provide a varied range of relevant and good quality services and activities at both centres and in local venues around the area, for priority families, and sessions that any parent can attend.
- Parents and children have good opportunities to say what they like about services and the centres act on their views. All parents who respond to quarterly surveys say that they are happy or very happy with what the centres provide, and that they would recommend the centres to others. Children add smiley faces to pictures of activities during groups, which staff use to plan the following week's activities.
- Relationships are positive. Parents report friendships that have blossomed since meeting at the centres' activities, especially important for armed services families who move in and out of the area at short notice. Parents confirm that the centres are a hub of the communities in which they live.
- The children's centre group provides good care, guidance and support to all parents, and particularly to its priority families. Family support outreach workers give good support to families in the home and help them to access services and agencies within the community to improve their lives. Support for families experiencing domestic violence and whose children are subject to a care plan is particularly effective and successful.
- Effective one-to-one support, parenting programmes and specific courses help parents to build their self-confidence, support their children's learning and development, and respond positively to any challenging behaviour.
- Adults have good opportunities to study English and mathematics and attend courses that improve the skills that they need to find work. Most adults finish a course once started and many go on to further education, training, employment or volunteering.
- The centres are successful in reducing the levels of obesity in children at the end of Reception, which is below the national average. Although numbers fell in the Five Wishes area last year, the proportion of mothers who breastfeed their babies is in line with the local levels average across the area.
- Following an analysis of information about children's learning and development, the centres and partners have focused on improving children's communication and language development. Gaps in the learning of different groups of children are reducing. Centre staff track children's progress during groups and use the information to plan what the children need to learn next.
- Strong partnerships with pre-schools and schools support a smooth transition when children start school. Information about the progress of children who have attended the centres' activities is not shared through to the end of the Reception year. As a result, the centres do not have the information they need to measure the contribution that they make to children's progress overtime.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- Parents play a full and active role in shaping the centres' services. Parent champions and volunteers gather parents' views during groups. These and feedback from groups, surveys and the parents' forum are discussed at every advisory board meeting to inform decisions about service delivery.
- Governance is good. Representatives from all partner agencies attend regularly and so members learn from each other considerable detail about the areas' needs and services available. This enables professionals to target services to need effectively. Minutes of meetings disclose robust discussions about issues and that challenge each other to improve services for priority groups and families.
- The quality of services and activities for those families who attend the centres has improved. The lead agency has established policies and procedures to ensure that staff and partners provide

consistent and well-coordinated support. The centre services leader and centre services manager monitor the performance of staff and partners closely, and identify and action any necessary improvements to services and quality to ensure families benefit from good quality support.

- The management of money and resources is good. The centres deploy staff effectively to provide services across the area that meet the needs of families. The centres use the accommodation and a varied range of good quality resources and toys to support the learning of those families who attend effectively.
- The local authority ensures the centres receive the information they need about the families who live in the reach area to enable the centres to agree challenging targets for improvement. Annual and quarterly meetings between local authority officers and the centres' leader and manager monitor performance effectively. New targets are set if the centres are on track to reach them early or the needs of the areas have changed.
- The centres constantly review and evaluate performance. Staff, parents and partners are involved and everyone has an accurate picture of what is working well and what needs to improve.
- Safeguarding arrangements are robust. The identities, suitability and employment and education histories of staff and volunteers are checked before being employed. Health and safety reviews, including assessments of risk, take place regularly and any issues are rectified swiftly. As a result, parents say that they feel safe and that they know how to keep their children safe.
- The centre services leader and centre services manager have good oversight of case files. They ensure records are up to date and include enough information to plan ongoing services that effectively meet families' needs. They do not always check that staff improve the recording of the difference services make to families' lives.

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 Group details

Unique reference number	80059
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	451336
Managed by	Spurgeons on behalf of the local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	2,470
Centre leader	Lucy Thorne
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected as a group
Telephone number	01980 632660
Email address	lthorne@spurgeons.org

This group consists of the following children's centres:

- Bulford Children's Centre
- Five Wishes Children's Centre

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