

Menston and Burley Children's Centre

Main Street, Menston, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS29 6LG

Inspection dates

Previous inspection date

18–19 November 2014

Not previously inspected

Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Not applicable	
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 families are registered with the centre. They have good access to the services and activities it provides and a large majority of families regularly use services.
- Centre staff know their community very well. Rather than just rely on existing data which paint a positive picture of the community, staff have used local knowledge and their partnership links to identify which groups of families have the most needs.
- Leadership, governance and management are highly effective in monitoring the centre's performance. As a result, the centre continually improves the quality of its work and outcomes for families.
- The centre works very well with the local authority to promote free early years education access places. As a result, take-up rates for children from families with the most needs are very good.
- Parents' involvement in decision making at the centre is exemplary. They are well represented on the advisory board but are also involved in selecting new members of staff.

It is not outstanding because:

- Monitoring and tracking of children's progress are still in the early stages of implementation. This limits the centre's ability to fully reflect the impact of all its work with children.
- Systems to evaluate the impact of the work of partner organisations that provide services are not formal enough and are too reliant on parents' evaluation.

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

- Further develop tracking systems to ensure that from their starting points at the centre, children's progress can be monitored and the centre can, as a result, more fully reflect the impact of its work.
- Strengthen and improve evaluation methods, by ensuring staff formally evaluate and record evaluations of all activities provided by external partner organisations.

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 centre staff, local authority managers and officers, parents, staff from partner organisations such as health, early years providers, adult learning, schools and the local library. They also met members of the advisory board. Parents' views were taken into account from discussions with them and from analysis of their evaluations.

The inspectors visited Menston Library and Kirklands Community Centre.

They observed the centre's work and activities such as 'Let's Play' and 'Rhythm time', and looked at a range of relevant documentation including the self-evaluation report and improvement plans.

Inspection team

Priscilla McGuire, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Cathryn Parry

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

This part-time centre serves the communities of Burley and Menston in Bradford. Parts of the area served by the centre are on the border with Leeds, therefore some health services are delivered by professionals from Leeds. The centre shares its site with Kirklands Community Centre and Menston Library. At the time of this inspection, the centre was in a stage of transition as all centres in Bradford are to be restructured.

The local authority, which is supported by an advisory board, manages the centre. The advisory board has two joint Chairs who share responsibility for leadership of the board. Day-to-day management of the centre is the responsibility of a centre manager who also manages Little Lane Children's Centre and Baildon Children's Centre. Staff from Menston and Burley work across all three centres. Services offered at the centre and at venues across the area include health services, early years activities, adult learning and family support.

The centre serves two village communities which both have higher levels of prosperity and lower levels of disadvantage than the rest of Bradford. Both Menston and Burley are based around traditional villages and most families in the area live in privately owned houses. There have been significant developments in housing over the past 20 years, much of which caters for professional commuting families.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation data (IMD) 2014 indicates there are no children living in the top 50% of the most deprived households. However, local knowledge indicates that some families in the area live in poverty. The proportion of parents who are unemployed is low compared to the rest of Bradford, as is the proportion of children who live in households dependent on workless benefits. A high percentage of adults in the area have good levels of education. Most families are of White British heritage. There are around 470 children under the age of five living in the area. Most children enter early years education with knowledge and skills expected for their age.

Priority groups identified by the centre are: grandparents, families on low income and mothers with maternal mental health support needs.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families Good

- Most families are registered with the centre and have good access to the services it provides. A large majority of families regularly participate in activities. Centre staff make good use of the display areas in the centre, of the centre's website and social media to keep families and the wider community well informed about events, activities and services.
- Through the antenatal clinics and services provided by midwives, the needs of families expecting children are also well met. For example, the antenatal 'Family Links' and 'Coping with crying' sessions are effectively organised to meet the support needs of both prospective and new parents.
- Centre staff know their community well and have worked hard to identify those with the most needs within an area that is mostly affluent. Data about the community suggest that most families are well educated, healthy and employed. However, staff do not rely solely on data. They make good use of their strong links with community organisations, such as neighbourhood forums and also with health professionals, to identify priority groups of families.
- Staff make good use of home visits and different venues within the area to provide 'outreach' services to families who, for various reasons, cannot access the main centre in Menston. For example, 'Play in the Home' sessions are offered to families with priority needs. These activities

contribute to the continually improving registration and participation rates.

- Assessments of families' needs are thorough and appropriately matched to services provided directly by the centre, such as family support, or by partner organisations it works with from health or other organisations.
- Free early years education places are actively and well promoted by the centre in conjunction with the 'Family Information Services' department within the local authority. As a result, all two-, three- and four-year-old children who are eligible to do so, access free early years education in good or outstanding providers and inequalities are being reduced.

The quality of practice and services

Good

- The quality, range and balance of services and activities offered by the centre and its partners are good. They include activities that are open to all families and those that are targeted at particular groups. Activities and services are also well matched to the needs of priority groups and help to improve their well-being. For example, the 'My Airedale Midwife' clinics help to meet the needs of women with maternal mental health support needs.
- Grandparents, who are also one of the centre's priority groups, highly value activities such as 'Let's Play'. These help to refresh and update their knowledge about how children learn and develop. One grandparent, whose experience was typical of others, explained how she and her grandchild also benefit greatly from opportunities they have to socialise with other families.
- Health outcomes for families are good. Obesity rates are lower than national rates and sustained breastfeeding rates at six-to-eight weeks are higher. However, the centre is not complacent and continues to use the expertise and skills of trained breastfeeding mentors to encourage even more mothers to continue breastfeeding.
- By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, a high proportion of children achieve a good level of development (GLD). The centre contributes to this by working in conjunction with early years providers, with schools and the local library to ensure children are well prepared for school. However, tracking of children's progress is still in its early stages. This limits the centre's ability to demonstrate the full extent of the impact of its work with children.
- Case study evidence, personal testimony from parents and case files demonstrate that the centre provides good-quality support to families, particularly during times of crisis. As a result, families overcome barriers, improve their parenting skills, and their overall health, well-being and life chances get better.
- The centre is a hub for the local community and works well with the co-located community centre and library to be a focal point for the community. As a result, the centre is highly valued by families. This was particularly evident from the highly effective support parents demonstrated for the centre during the local authority's consultation about changes to children's centres.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- The quality of leadership, governance and management is good. The local authority routinely and effectively monitors the performance of the centre against ambitious targets. Through quarterly meetings, regular reports and the 'annual conversation', the impact of the centre's work is regularly scrutinised and areas for improvement are accurately identified. Plans to ensure the centre continually improves are detailed and effective.
- The centre manager makes good use of data and the self-evaluation report to monitor the quality and impact of activities and services. At all levels, leaders and managers have a good understanding of the centre's key strengths and areas for improvement and are able to monitor the centre's effectiveness in reducing inequalities, particularly for families on a low income.
- Evaluations from parents are routinely carried out and help the centre gauge the impact of activities. However, evaluations from partner organisations about the impact of their work with the centre tend to be informal and also too reliant on parents' evaluations. This limits the centre's ability

to accurately assess the quality of all aspects of its work.

- The advisory board provides highly effective support and challenge to the centre. Representation from community organisations on the board is strong and this enables the centre to keep abreast of local priorities. In addition, through a display board in the centre, a 'We Want You' leaflet inviting parents to join the board and through the visits of the joint Chairs of the advisory board to different groups, the advisory board actively promotes its work and has built up a strong relationship with parents.
- Safeguarding and safer recruitment arrangements are well established and effective. Policies and procedures to promote families' safety and also the safety of staff are comprehensive. At the time of this inspection, no children in the area are currently subject to child protection plans and none identified as children in need. Nevertheless, links with social care teams are strong and staff have a good understanding of safeguarding procedures.
- When appropriate, staff use the Common Assessment Framework to ensure families with the most needs receive effective, early support and help. Staff also make good use of the 'Stay Safe' display board in the centre to reinforce key messages about home safety, e-safety, road safety and other topics that help parents understand what actions they can take to keep their families safe.
- Parents' views are highly valued and actively sought. Parents are well represented on the advisory board and they are involved in key decisions about the centre and its work. For example, through their roles on 'parent panels', parents are involved in the recruitment and selection process. They conduct interviews with job candidates and their assessments contribute to the appointment of new staff.
- Resources are of good quality and used well to meet the needs of families. Staff are well trained and well supervised. The centre manager has recognised the impact that uncertainty about the centre's future has on staff and uses strategies such as 'stress management action plans' to ensure staff receive the support they need.

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 well-being 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	21714
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	447475
Managed by	The local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	470
Centre leader	Lizzie Hughes
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