

Shooters Grove Children's Centre

Shooters Grove Primary School, Wood Lane, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S6 5HN

Inspection dates	24–25 February 2015
Previous inspection date	Not previously inspected

Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
Access to services by young children and families		Good	2
The quality of practice and services		Requires improvement	3
The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for children and families

This is a centre that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- There are not enough opportunities for adults to take up parenting programmes, family learning courses, adult-learning programmes or volunteering to help to improve their long-term employability. The progress of children and adults who access courses or programmes is not tracked carefully enough.
- Recording in case files is not of a sufficiently high quality and does not show clearly the impact support is having in helping some children and families to move forwards.
- Monitoring of services by leadership, governance and management lacks a sufficiently rigorous check on how well the centre and its partners contribute to improving outcomes for families identified as in most need of support. As a result, leaders, managers and governors do not always identify or follow up on weaknesses quickly enough to ensure the rapid improvement that is required to drive the centre forwards.
- Parents are not sufficiently involved in developing the centre; they are under-represented on the stakeholder forum and no parents' forum is currently running.

This centre has the following strengths:

- Strong partnerships with health professionals have resulted in most local families being registered with the centre. The large majority regularly access its services, including those identified as in most need of support.
- Parents feel welcomed at the centre. They speak highly of centre staff who treat them with respect. Parents consider the centre to be a place where they are able to drop in at any time for friendship and support.
- Health outcomes are good. A majority of mothers breastfeed their babies and low numbers of mothers smoke in pregnancy. Obesity rates for children entering Reception Year are low.
- The centre works very well with childminders, providers of childcare and local schools to ensure that these settings offer good-quality provision. As a result, the majority of two-year-olds and the very large majority of three- and four-year-olds take up early years funded places.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Improve the impact of centre practice and services for children and families by:
 - increasing the promotion and participation of adults, particularly the unemployed, in parenting programmes, family learning courses, adult-learning programmes and volunteering to aid progression into further education and employment
 - developing tracking systems to monitor how well children and adults make progress when they access courses or programmes and using data gathered to help plan future services.
- The local authority should work more effectively with centre leaders, the stakeholders' forum and the multi-agency support team to improve the monitoring and evaluation of the centre's work by:
 - monitoring more rigorously the impact that the centre and its partners' services have on improving outcomes for families identified as in most need of support and on reducing inequalities
 - ensuring all family case files consistently demonstrate best practice in assessment and recording, and that actions are evaluated fully and monitored for impact
 - involving parents more in strategic decision making, for example by establishing a parents' forum and ensuring their voices are heard in the stakeholders' forum.

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 three additional inspectors.

The inspectors held meetings with the children centre's interim manager, children's centre coordinators and a local authority representative. They also held meetings with centre staff, parents, members of the stakeholders' forum and a number of partners, including health, education and children's social care professionals.

The inspectors visited a number of sessions during the inspection, including 'Midwifery Clinic', 'Baby Massage' and 'Breastfeeding Drop-In'. They involved the children's centre interim manager, coordinators and local authority representative in all team meetings.

They observed the centre's work and looked at a range of relevant documentation, such as the centre's self-evaluation, action plan, a sample of case studies, parent evaluations, key policies and the equality and safeguarding procedures. Throughout the inspection, they also took the opportunity to talk with adult and child users of the centre.

Inspection team

Tara Street, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Daniel Grant	Additional inspector
Jackie Hughes	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

Shooters Grove Children's Centre is a standalone centre which is co-located on the site of Shooters Grove Primary School. It offers a range of services which include child health services, family play sessions, parenting programmes, adult education, and family outreach services. The centre serves the areas of Hillsborough, Middlewood, Wadsley, Wisewood, Oughtibridge and Stannington.

There are approximately 2,125 children under five years living within the area, of whom 17% live in the 0% to 30% most deprived areas in the country. The families that the centre has identified in most need of its support are families living in the most deprived areas of the community and lone parents. Most families are from White British backgrounds with a small, mixed minority ethnic community at 11.5%. Housing in this relatively affluent area is mostly owner occupied and privately rented with three pockets of social housing. Levels of unemployment are low, with 8.9% of children living in households dependent upon workless benefits. Most children enter early years provision with knowledge and skills that are in line with those typical for their age. There are links to the nine local primary schools and childcare provision is delivered by a range of providers in the area. These are subject to separate inspection arrangements and the reports are available on the Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/ofsted

Governance of the centre is provided by Sheffield local authority, in conjunction with a stakeholders' forum that includes providers, delivery partners, members of the local community and users who attend the centre.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Good

- Highly effective liaison with health partners ensures that the centre knows very quickly about expectant mothers and all new births within the area. This means key partners and the centre gain a good understanding of the needs of individual families. As a result, most families are registered with the centre and a large majority of families identified as in most need of support regularly access services. This includes those families and children living in the most deprived areas and lone parents. Very good support is provided for teenage parents through joint work with the Family Nurse Partnership.
- Staff work hard to ensure the centre provides a warm and welcoming atmosphere. This ensures that those less likely to engage feel comfortable coming to the centre to access services and activities. Typical comments from parents and health partners include: 'The centre was a safe haven for me and my children when I was experiencing difficulties at home' and 'Once people come to the centre they are usually impressed and are happy to participate.'
- Prevention workers provide effective support for families, which ensures that help is on hand when they need it most. One-to-one support delivered in family homes increases access to learning for some of the families most in need of support and those isolated families.
- At 97%, the very large majority of three- and four-year-olds and 62% of eligible two-year-olds are accessing their funded early education place in the range of good and better early years provision in the area. This is due to the concerted effort of centre staff and local authority partners to encourage and support families to take up their place.

The quality of practice and services

Requires improvement

- Centre leaders do not carry out any tracking and monitoring of the progress made by children who access centre services. As a result, leaders are unable to demonstrate effectively the impact of the

centre's work on improving outcomes for children and on reducing inequalities.

- There are not enough parenting courses, family learning programmes, adult education, training and volunteering opportunities to help parents to improve their English, mathematics and computer skills. This limits their progress towards paid work and their ability to support their children's learning. There are no systems in place to track adults' progress towards learning and employment. As a result, the centre is unable to provide clear evidence of its impact on increasing the economic well-being of families and improving their life chances.
- Families who access the centre benefit from an appropriate range of good-quality services. Some are open to all and others are specifically designed for those identified as in most need of support. These sessions, such as 'Breastfeeding Drop-in', 'Baby Yoga', 'Head Start' and 'Messy Play' have a positive impact on improving families' health and overall well-being.
- Prevention workers based in the centre are knowledgeable and demonstrate good levels of professional expertise. They listen carefully to parents and analyse their needs to ensure they provide sensitive encouragement and guidance. These help parents to take charge of improving their lives. As a result, parents enjoy an appropriate range of opportunities to extend their parenting skills and knowledge of how to deal with issues such as domestic violence and managing their children's behaviour.
- The centre's early years quality team works well with local schools and early years providers. There is a trend of improvement in Early Years Foundation Stage profile scores across the area. These are above both the local and national averages, including for those children living in the most deprived areas. The achievement gap is narrowing well.
- Highly effective partnerships with a range of health professionals have helped the centre to promote healthy lifestyles for families. For instance, health partners describe the centre as a 'hub for the maternity and child services in the area'. There is a particularly strong commitment to the promotion of breastfeeding. As a result, the proportion of mothers who continue to breastfeed is higher than seen nationally. In addition, the proportion of mothers who smoke in pregnancy and the number of children identified as obese in Reception Year are reducing and below both the local and national averages.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have tried hard to maintain an appropriate range of services despite ongoing cuts and staff shortages. Managers, staff and health partners have maintained a clear commitment to providing good-quality services for families and the centre has continued to increase the registration and participation of families.
- Leaders, governors and managers use the good range of data and local information provided by the local authority appropriately. As a result, they have a clear knowledge of most of the strengths and weaknesses of the centre, and the priorities to develop to close the gap and reduce inequalities for children and families. Managers work well with the local authority, stakeholders' forum and partner professionals to set precise and measurable performance targets.
- However, the monitoring of the quality of services and performance by leadership, governance and management lacks a sufficiently rigorous check on how well the centre and its partners contribute to improving the outcomes for families identified as in most need of support. As a result, they do not always identify or follow up on weaknesses quickly enough to ensure the rapid improvement that is required to drive the centre forwards.
- The new interim centre manager, newly appointed centre coordinator and the prevention worker team are well qualified and ambitious to improve. They work well together and ensure that available resources and services appropriately meet the needs of young children and their families.
- Some parents' opinions are sought and are used appropriately to monitor and make changes, for example to the day and times of activity groups. However, there are not enough opportunities for parents to contribute to shaping the future direction of the centre. For example, too little has been done to establish a parents' forum or to ensure that parents' voices are heard in the stakeholders'

forum group.

- Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. Staff are safely recruited and vetted. Close partnership working with health services and referral to the multi-agency support team, where intervention workers are based, ensure that children and families receive appropriate early help. Staff are appropriately qualified and have good access to training and support from managers through regular professional supervision. However, case files do not all provide clear details of the positive impact of the intervention work in helping families to get back on track. Additionally, the quality of record keeping, including ensuring records and action plans are updated in a timely manner, requires improvement.
- Intervention workers based in the multi-agency support team make effective use of the Common Assessment Framework to safeguard children subject to a child protection plan, looked after children or those who are identified as in most need. This has a positive impact on their well-being.

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	22709
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	454020
Managed by	The local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	2,125
Centre leader	Helen Iwan
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
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