

Ardsley and Tingley Children's Centre

c/o Blackgates Primary School, Smithy Lane, Tingley, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF3 1QQ

Inspection dates	24–25 March 2015
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 is a good centre.

- A very large majority of families, including those living in the most disadvantaged circumstances and those expecting children, regularly attend services and benefit from the activities provided by the centre.
- The centre provides a welcoming, purposeful environment which has been thoughtfully created to inspire adults and children to want to learn. Activities are of very high quality and cater well for families' varying needs so that they build their confidence and skills. This is because their views, including those of their children, are taken into good account. It is also because staff plan sessions carefully, based on their observations of previous activities.
- Most eligible local children benefit from access to free early education. They are increasingly well prepared for transition into school and their attainment at the end of Reception Year is rising.
- Children and families who may be experiencing difficulties in their lives are very well supported by family outreach workers effective work, both in the centre and in families' homes.
- Leadership, governance and management of the centre are effective in most aspects. The centre knows its strengths and weaknesses. The effective centre leader is highly motivated and dedicated to improving families' lives. As a result, the quality of practice and services is continually improving.

It is not outstanding because:

- The centre has not succeeded in improving health outcomes relating to breastfeeding or obesity for young children.
- Not enough workless adults participate in further education, training or volunteering opportunities to improve their chances of employment.
- The centre does not always set sufficiently sharp or measurable locally defined targets with clear timescales to achieve these by in its service delivery plan. As a result, not everyone can understand what the centre needs to do to improve further.
- The advisory board, whilst supportive, does not yet provide the centre with sufficient challenge about its effectiveness.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Improve health outcomes for children and families by working more closely with health partners to:
 - increase the number of mothers who sustain breastfeeding for at least six-to-eight weeks
 - reduce obesity levels in young children.
- Increase the opportunities for adults, particularly those from workless and low income homes, to develop their skills through accredited learning, volunteering and enhance their chances of employment by building stronger links with adult learning and training providers.
- Improve the quality of leadership, governance and management by:
 - strengthening the rigour with which the advisory board challenges the centre and holds it to account for its work
 - further improve the centre's service delivery plan so that all targets are precise to the reach area, measurable and include clear timescales to achieve them by.

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 the children's centre manager and local authority representatives. They also held meetings with centre staff, parents, members of the advisory board and a number of partners, including health, education and children's social care professionals.

The inspectors visited a number of sessions including, 'Little Learners', 'Baby Massage' and 'Baby Clinic'.

They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation, such as the centre's self-evaluation document, service delivery plan, a sample of case studies, parent evaluations, key policies and the centre's 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

Qaisra Shahraz Ahmad

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

Ardsley and Tingley Children's Centre is a stand alone centre situated within the grounds of Blackgates Primary School in Leeds. It offers a range of services which include child health services, family play sessions, parenting programmes, adult learning and family outreach services.

There are approximately 897 children aged under five years living within the area, of whom 207 live in the 0-30% most deprived areas in the country. Almost all families served by the centre are of White British heritage with a small but growing Eastern European community. Levels of unemployment are low, with 3.3% of children living in households dependent upon workless benefits. Most children enter early years provision with knowledge and skills that are inline those typical for their age. There are links to the four 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.

The centre has identified lone parents, Eastern European families, school readiness for two and three-year-olds, families identified as in greatest need and children in workless and low income households as those most in need of its support.

Governance of the centre is provided by Blackgates Primary School on behalf of Leeds local authority, in conjunction with a joint consultative committee and advisory board that includes providers, delivery partners, members of the local community and parents that attend the centre.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Good

- Almost all families are registered at the centre and have access to very good-quality services, information and guidance. Activities such as, 'Stepping Stones' and 'Pregnancy, Birth and Beyond' sessions are effective at engaging expectant parents and those families who may be reluctant to do so.
- The centre staff know the community well and offer a good level of support to some families whose circumstances make them vulnerable. They target support and advice appropriately and effectively to meet the needs of these families, particularly those in need of intensive support. As a result, a very large majority of families identified as in greatest need of support, lone parents, children in workless and low income households, Eastern European families and two- and three- year-olds, are accessing the centre's services.
- The centre provides a very warm, welcoming atmosphere which puts families at ease and encourages them to participate in activities. Families have good access to a wide range of important information. These are carefully displayed around the centre to offer just the right amount of guidance to support families.
- Weekly allocation meetings between centre and health staff ensure that support for families is well focused, with a team approach. Through this, those identified as needing extra support gain swift access to effective help.
- The centre actively promotes free early years education for two, three-and four-year-olds and most children who are entitled to, take up places. In addition, the recently introduced 'Little Learners' sessions are well regarded. Local teachers and nursery providers confirm that those children, who have benefited from funded early education, and the centre's own activities, are increasingly ready to settle, confident and make good progress at school.

The quality of practice and services

Good

- The quality, range and relevance of services and activities offered by the centre are good and the take-up of services by those most in need is high. As a result, the centre is having a positive impact on improving families' well-being and equality of opportunity. 'The centre is invaluable, it gives me something to focus on, something to look forward to' and 'it's lovely, really friendly and welcoming', are typical comments from parents.
- The centre's effective sharing of useful information about children's progress with schools and early years settings, and the emphasis placed on preparing children personally, socially and emotionally for school, are having a very positive impact. Children's attainment at the end of Reception Year, particularly for disadvantaged children is rising and is above both the local and national average. In addition, the gap between the lowest achieving children and the rest is closing.
- The centre supports children to make good progress in their learning and development. For instance, centre staff effectively assess and monitor children's starting points and the progress that they make while attending centre services. Parents and children play together in enjoyable well-planned sessions such as 'Stay and Play' and the 'Birth to Walking Group' which enable children to make good progress in their social and language development.
- Parents are effectively supported to take ownership and record their child's progress in their individual 'Learning Journey' and receive regular activity ideas to try at home with their children. Family outreach workers skilfully model language and questioning to support children's, and parents', vocabulary and understanding.
- The uptake of immunisations and child development checks is high, but not all of the centre's health-related aspirations are met. In particular, although increasing, the proportion of mothers who keep breastfeeding for at least six-to-eight weeks is below the local and national average. In addition, the number of children in Reception Year who are obese has increased.
- Regular contact with the small number of workless and low income families living in the area is maintained and there are good opportunities for them to access parenting and one day courses such as, first aid and story sack sessions. However, not enough adults access accredited courses, training or volunteering opportunities which could help improve their chances of finding employment or better paid work. Partnerships with adult learning and training providers are not as strong as with other partners which impacts on the centre's ability to plan future adult learning programmes effectively.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- Governance, leadership and management arrangements are clear, well understood and generally effective. The local authority supports the centre well through regular monitoring visits to check its performance. In addition, it provides a good range of management information and data to the centre. As a result, leaders have an accurate picture of the strengths of the centre and the areas for improvement. However, not all of the targets in the centre's service delivery plan are sufficiently precise to the area, or measurable with clear timescales to achieve these by. Consequently, the centre is not yet in a secure position to fully demonstrate that it is making a sufficient enough difference to the lives of families in the community.
- The advisory board is attended by a wide range of committed partners who share information to help meet the needs of families. They receive an appropriate range of information about the centre's work and how well the performance of staff is managed. However, some of its members are still developing their role, including the five parent representatives, and do not yet sufficiently challenge, or hold the centre to account for its work rigorously enough.
- The centre manager and the headteacher of Blackgates Primary School work very well together. Both are fully committed to improving the life chances and reducing inequalities for the children that live in the area. The centre manager has established some highly effective partnerships and has a good ability to 'think outside the box', despite limited resources and a very small staff team. For instance, she has been successful in securing external funding to run weekly counselling services to

help families with low mood and who have suffered bereavement. As a result, families have access to a good range of services and resources.

- The centre manager uses regular supervision, training and appraisals effectively to set goals, give constructive feedback and monitor the centre's performance. Very effective use is made of partner professional's expertise to monitor and undertake observations of the quality of the centre's services and provision for families. The small staff team are passionate about their work and have access to a good range of training opportunities to support their continuous professional development. Staff make highly effective use of the 'question of the month' to ensure good account is taken of adult's and children's views when developing services.
- Effective referral processes between partners and the centre ensure that the right support is provided swiftly to families, including those whose problems have been assessed using the Early Help Assessment process, those subject to a child protection plan, and looked after children. As a result, families speak highly of the support they receive, saying it has transformed their lives, helped develop their confidence and raised their self-esteem.

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	20105
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	461369
Managed by	Blackgates Primary School on behalf of the local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	897
Centre leader	Julie Prentice
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0113 252 6586
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