

Hollybush Children's Centre

c/o Hollybush Primary School, Broad Lane, Bramley, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS13 2JJ

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.

- Effective multi-agency working, particularly with social services, the Bramley cluster partnership and the collaboration with Bramley Children's Centre, means the centre knows each family's needs and enables them to access well-coordinated early support so that children and parents improve their well-being.
- Successful partnership work with health professionals is ensuring that all children under five years of age are known to the centre and are benefiting from services.
- Children and families who may be experiencing difficulties in their lives are very well supported by the centre staff's highly effective work.
- Good partnerships with schools and childcare providers has helped to establish good-quality childcare for families eligible for free early education entitlement for disadvantaged two-year-olds. As a result, the take-up is now high.
- Leaders, managers and governors of the collaboration know the area well, are managing change effectively and are improving the quality of practice and services offered by the centre. They are committed to meeting the needs of children and families, especially the most disadvantaged, to the very best of their abilities.

It is not outstanding because:

- Too few mothers continue to breastfeed their babies at six to eight weeks.
- Children attending some schools in the area do not have the skills that they need to engage fully in the learning environments.
- The centre does not make best use of the comprehensive data that it collects to determine the centre's priorities or help the centre to reflect on its performance.
- Although parents regularly offer suggestions to help shape services and attend the advisory board, systems are not in place to inform parents of the outcomes of their proposals.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of mothers who continue to breastfeed their babies for at least six to eight weeks in order to make the best contribution to their children's health.
- Build on the good partnerships with schools and childcare providers to ensure that more children are ready for school, and narrow the gaps between children who are likely to experience disadvantage in their learning and progress and others.
- Strengthen self-evaluation and action planning by making more effective use of the good data collected and to ensure that targets are focused on improving life chances.
- Ensure that the parents receive feedback on the views and suggestions that are presented to the advisory board.

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 the inspection of Bramley Children's Centre.

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

The inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, members of staff and partner professionals from other agencies. Discussions were held with members of the governing body, representatives from the advisory board, the local authority and parents. The inspectors visited activities that took place at the centre, Bramley Children's Centre and St Peter's Church Hall.

They observed the centre's work, looked at a range of relevant documentation and undertook a joint observation of an activity with a senior member of staff.

Inspection team

Janet Stacey, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Priscilla McGuire	Additional inspector
Jane Hughes	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

Hollybush Children's Centre is situated in Bramley, Leeds. The centre's hub site and annex are located in the grounds of Hollybush Primary School. The governing body of Hollybush Primary School became responsible for governance of the centre in December 2013. At this time, a new senior leadership structure was introduced and a new centre manager appointed. Led by the Bramley cluster, the centre works in partnership with its neighbouring centre, Bramley Children's Centre, and as such they are supported by a collaborative advisory board. The local authority retains management for the centre.

The centre offers a range of services which include family activities, family support and parenting programmes. Health services are offered through Bramley clinic at the centre, community venues and in the home. Linked childcare is provided by private and voluntary early years organisations in the local area. These provisions are subject to separate inspection arrangements and are available on the Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/ofsted. Local data indicate that, in general, children are starting school with skills and knowledge below those typical for their age.

There are approximately 1,276 children under five years of age living in the area. The predominant families living in the area are of White British heritage. Within this area, 40% of children live in long-term workless households; within this, 10% of families have never worked and 10% live in households that receive working family tax benefits. The centre has identified families with incidences of domestic abuse, families without work and families whose children are entitled to access free nursery provision for two-year-olds as those that need the most support.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Good

- Leaders were fully aware that, in the past, families' engagement with services was low. However, concerted efforts over the recent year to increase the numbers of families with young children that could benefit from the centre's services have proved highly successful. This means that a very large majority of those living in the most disadvantaged circumstances and those expecting children are now known to the centre.
- The centre works well with its key partners to identify and contact expectant families, children under one year of age, children moving into the area and families that are less likely to engage in services. Good information sharing enables leaders to plan precisely services and activities to meet families' needs.
- Most of those families that are unemployed or dependent on workless benefits attend sessions run by the centre and benefit from the good advice and guidance of its partners. For example, adults are helped to develop their budgeting skills and begin to develop their employability skills through local 'Job Club' and community groups, such as 'Bramley and Rodley Community Action' group (BARCA) and 'Christians Against Poverty'.
- Those who are suffering from domestic violence are very well supported, and most attend the centre or receive one-to-one support in their homes. This is due to the committed family support team who is dedicated to keeping children safe and providing adults with a service that meets their needs, builds their confidence and raises their self-esteem.
- Leaders recognise the importance of providing free nursery places for those two-year-olds that are eligible to take up the offer. However, in previous years places have not been available. Leaders, staff and early years partners have worked hard to create these places, with local schools now mainly providing this service. While some children have missed out on the offer, this concerted drive means that most children are now in good-quality childcare settings. In addition, a very large majority of children who are three and four take up their offer of free nursery education.

The quality of practice and services**Good**

- The centre's work with families, both in their own home and in the centre or its outreach sites, is highly effective and makes a considerable difference to improving life chances and reducing inequalities. Parents state that the support has made a significant difference to their lives; a typical comment was, 'The support made me realise that I am a good parent.' Others report that having attended courses and activities, they are more confident in their parenting skills and in keeping their children safe from harm.
- The quality, range and relevance of the services provided are good, with the right balance between those available to all and those that support specific parents. Many parents spoke about how the activities help get them out of the house and socialise, and how groups such as 'Stay and Play' and 'Pitter Patter' are helping some children to gain confidence and skills before they start nursery.
- Swift support and very good partnership working between health and social services are available in times of crisis, particularly for those that the centre has identified as most in need, such as children living in workless households, vulnerable two-year-olds and children living in domestic abuse households. Case files record the good progress many of these families make to lead happier, safer lifestyles.
- While new initiatives are in place, such as 'Open Play' drop-in groups and the introduction of 'B Books' that are helping parents to track their children's progress, in some schools children are too far behind their peers at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage and do not have the key skills that they need to begin formal education.
- Information and support regarding how to lead a healthy lifestyle are starting to make a difference. For example, obesity levels are in line with the average level, as is the percentage of women smoking at delivery. However, while breastfeeding peer support is in place, the percentage of women choosing to breastfeed their babies is well below the national average.
- Activities such as 'Rhyme Time' offer adults a chance to meet other parents and enjoy sharing nursery rhymes with their children. In one session, children demonstrated how they understood and followed routines, with little support from adults. They joined in with enthusiasm and developed their language skills by repeating rhyming verses.
- Many of the parents most in need of help go on to take part in a range of parenting programmes. Parents record improvements in parenting skills in areas such as establishing routines and managing their children's behaviour. 'I am sticking to the rules and boundaries and my children are listening,' said one parent.
- The centre ensures that adults have access to a suitable range of adult learning courses, volunteering opportunities and access to support such as 'Job Club' and the Citizens Advice Bureau. Attendance at activities are well recorded and the centre is quickly improving its approach to tracking the level of progress that families make across all of its services, particularly those unemployed parents that need additional support to continue learning and gain new skills.

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

- The newly appointed centre manager, in conjunction with the Bramley cluster family service manager, has an excellent knowledge of the area and the issues affecting the families living in it. Together they have established some very good partnerships and are extremely creative, innovative and resourceful. Many parents and partners spoke positively of the rapid improvements that have been made to both the range of support and activities that are now available. Staff and the determined drive of leaders have successfully raised the profile of the centre in the community.
- The Bramley cluster and the local authority provide rigorous challenge and have carefully monitored the centre in regard to registration and engagement of families, particularly those that the centre has identified as needing the most support. Consequently, this aspect of the centre's performance has been extremely successful. However, while the local authority provides the centre with a good range of useful information, this is not used as well as it could be to help the centre reflect on its performance or to set challenging, measurable targets for improvements.

- The shared advisory board provides good governance. The board meets frequently and members, including parents, review regularly centre data. They have an accurate picture of how effective the centre is in closing the gap in achievement and in reducing inequalities for children and families within the area. Members of the board are confident to challenge outcomes and management decisions, including the management of staff performance.
- The highly skilled, dedicated team successfully focuses its efforts on having the maximum impact on reducing inequalities and improving the well-being of local families. The good range of professional partners on the collaborative advisory board contributes well to sharing pertinent information about the area and the support available.
- Performance management and supervision are well established and methodical. This includes direct observation of sessions and case recording. Staff training and appraisals are carefully linked to the needs of families in the area. Staff access a range of courses to continuously improve their skills and knowledge.
- Strong partnership working with a wide range of professionals enhances the centre's work to support families. This includes close working relationships between the manager and staff of the partner centre within the collaboration, which provides good flexibility regarding the use of resources.
- Safeguarding children is firmly at the forefront of the centre's work. Good relationships with health and social services ensure seamless provision for families in need, especially those that have been subject to a child protection plan, those that have been assessed under the Common Assessment Framework, looked-after children and children identified as in need. In many cases, the centre's intervention and support have resulted in improved home circumstances and a de-escalation from the highest levels of concern.
- Parents and children are fully involved in the refurbishment of the centre and the design of the new outdoor play area. In addition, they put forward suggestions and ideas to the advisory board for consideration to help shape services. However, systems are not yet in place to inform parents and children of the outcomes of the decisions taken by the board.

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	21533
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	453972
Managed by	The governing body of Hollybush Primary School on behalf of the local authority
Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	1,276
Centre leader	Keeley Coleby
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0113 386 2360
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