

Bramley Children's Centre

Fairfield Street, Fairfield Estate, Bramley, Leeds, LS13 3DT

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.

- Registration is high and the vast majority of families from the groups that the centre identifies as in most need of support engage in its activities.
- The large majority of two-year-olds and the vast majority of three- and four-year-old children take up their funded early education places. Strong links and effective support for early years providers in the area ensure good-quality early years provision. There is close attention to the development of children's communication, language, mathematical and social skills. Consequently, they are prepared well to start school.
- Health and social care partners work closely with centre staff to provide good-quality support and guidance for families most in need of help.
- Leaders, managers, governors and the local authority are ambitious for the centre and are accurate in their assessments of its performance. They strive with partners to continually improve the quality of practice and services the centre offers the local community and succeed in this.
- There is successful collaborative work with Hollybush Children's Centre. All staff are committed to meeting the needs of children and families, especially the most disadvantaged, to the very best of their abilities.
- The centre is well known and valued highly in the local community because it offers good-quality services. Parents typically say, 'The centre makes life better for our children.'

It is not outstanding because:

- Levels of breastfeeding at six-to-eight weeks after birth are lower than the national average. Rates of obesity in Reception-age children are above the national figures.
- Centre leaders do not make best use of the comprehensive data they and the local authority collect and analyse to support reflection on the centre's performance or on the measures of success within development planning.
- Although parents regularly offer suggestions to help shape services, systems are not in place to inform parents of the outcomes of their proposals.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- In partnership with health colleagues, increase the numbers of mothers who breastfeed their babies at six-to-eight weeks, and reduce obesity in children of Reception age.
- Strengthen self-evaluation and development planning by making more effective use of the good-quality data collected to support these important activities.
- Ensure parents receive feedback on their 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 one other children's centre, Hollybush Children's Centre, with which it works in collaboration.

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

The inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, representatives from the local authority, members of staff and partner professionals from other agencies. They also held discussions with centre staff, members of the advisory board and a number of parents. Inspectors visited activities that took place at the centre, Hollybush 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. Throughout the inspection, they also took the opportunity to talk with adult and child users of the centre.

Inspection team

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

Full report

Information about the centre

Bramley Children's Centre is sited on the Fairfield Estate, Bramley. It comprises three buildings: the main centre building accommodating childcare settings and counselling services; the Resource Centre accommodating sessional provision for funded two-year-olds, groups and courses for parents; the Community Centre where groups and activities run. The centre works in collaboration with Hollybush Children's Centre. Staff undertake family support work across the reach area. The centre is managed by the local authority. Since November 2013, one shared advisory board has held both centres to account. The other linked institutions were not part of this inspection but reports of their quality can be found at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

The centre offers services which include family activities, family support and parenting programmes. Health services are offered through Bramley clinic at the centres, community venues and in the home. Linked childcare is provided by private and voluntary early years organisations.

There are approximately 1,178 children aged under five years living in the locality. The centre covers mostly areas of high deprivation. Seven areas are in the lowest 30% in the country. Most families are of White British heritage. Approximately 5% of children live in workless households, although this does not reflect the transient nature of part of the reach. Most children's skills on entry to early years provision are well below typical for their age. The centre identifies children living in workless households and families experiencing the effects of domestic violence as those most in need of support.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Good

- Ready access to live birth data ensures that all children under five years of age register with the centre. This is because staff know exactly how they can contact these families. Staff target individuals and families precisely to ensure that provision supports those whom the centre identifies as most in need of its help. These are workless families and those who are affected by domestic violence. Contributory factors such as isolation and debt are also addressed well.
- Centre staff know all the families with children aged nought to five years as well as the expectant parents through close communication with health partners. The vast majority of families most in need of support engage in centre services.
- Well-established relationships with partners from schools, health, charities and social care ensure good-quality information sharing and effective referrals between partners. Efficient allocations of families in need to the most appropriate professional partner ensure their needs are met effectively and swiftly. This is particularly important in ensuring the engagement of those families who, otherwise, may be less likely to initiate it.
- All workless families attend sessions run by the centre and benefit from good advice and guidance from centre partners. For example, adults develop budgeting skills and begin to develop their employability skills through local 'Job Club' and community groups. These include 'Bramley and Rodley Community Action' group (BARCA) and 'Christians Against Poverty'.
- Family support workers provide good-quality services to families experiencing problems, including those linked to domestic violence. All of these families access help from centre services. This ensures children are kept safe from harm and that parents can start to rebuild their lives, develop self-confidence and ultimately improve their life chances.
- Most children aged three and four years take up their free entitlement to early education places, along with the large majority of two-year-olds. The number of places for two-year-old children has been limited in the past but, from Easter, more provision is available to ensure almost all of these youngest children can access free education places. These are mainly in local schools, although there is also new provision at the centre.

The quality of practice and services**Good**

- The centre has built a well-deserved reputation locally as a source of good-quality provision, support and guidance. Relevant services aimed at all families as well as for those most in need have developed successfully as the centre has grown. In this way, the centre has helped to improve children's well-being and families' lives.
- Staff are well qualified to support the development of children with special educational needs. They identify need quickly and refer children to the relevant services, which is particularly helpful in terms of speedy access to speech and language therapy, for example.
- Information and support regarding how to lead a healthy lifestyle are starting to make a difference. The uptake of immunisations for babies and children is high. The proportion of mothers who smoke at delivery is well below the national figure and is reducing rapidly. Even so, centre staff are fully aware that too few mothers continue to breastfeed their babies up to six-to-eight weeks after delivery, even with the encouragement of breastfeeding peer supporters. Similarly, despite regular messages and opportunities to learn more about the benefits of healthy lifestyles, the proportion of Reception-age children who are obese is above the national average.
- Outcomes from the centre's tracking of the progress children make show the positive impact of centre services. When children start attending the centre, their development is well below that typical for their age. By the time they leave, their development is in line with expectations.
- Almost all early years settings across the reach offer provision judged as either good or outstanding. This means children get off to a good start in their education and well-being and are prepared well for learning in school. There is close attention to equality of opportunity so that any gaps in achievement such as between girls and boys or between children overall and the 20% most disadvantaged are closing by the end of Reception Year.
- Activities such as 'Rhyme Time' offer adults a chance to meet other parents and enjoy sharing nursery rhymes with their children. In one session observed, 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.
- Centre staff help parents to understand better how well their children are doing in the early years through the introduction of 'B Books'. Similarly, 'My Special Book' for the younger two-year-olds also enable their parents to appreciate how much their children learn through play during their time at the centre.
- Many of the parents most in need of help participate in a range of parenting programmes. Parents' evaluations of these courses confirm improved parenting skills in areas such as managing children's behaviour. Parents who spoke with inspectors about their experiences confirmed, 'Staff are open enough for you to come and have a meltdown at any time.'
- The centre provides a suitable range of adult learning courses for parents, along with opportunities for volunteering. They also have access to good-quality support such as through 'Job Club' and the Citizens Advice Bureau. Opportunities to develop self-confidence through art therapy and creative courses such as batik work also improve communication skills and motivate adults to learn. 'I discovered silk painting, printing and collage,' stated one parent.
- Adults attend courses regularly and staff check on this. Centre staff are also improving quickly how they track the rate of progress families make across all of the services on offer. This is particularly important for unemployed adults who need additional support to continue learning and to gain new life skills.

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

- Families recognise that the centre offers them a haven. It is seen by them as a source of good ideas and helpful guidance and advice. The long-serving leader is held in high regard by parents and partners alike.
- The local authority provides rigorous challenge to all aspects of the centre's work to reduce inequalities within the area. As a result, the registration and engagement of families, particularly

those that the centre has identified as needing the most support, is very successful. The local authority provides the centre with a good range of useful data, and centre staff also gather some of their own. However, these data are not used as well as they could be by the leadership to help reflect on the centre's performance, or to set challenging, measurable targets for improvement.

- The shared advisory board provides good-quality 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 advisory board are confident to challenge outcomes and management decision, including the management of staff performance. Professional partners take care to ensure that parent members understand and so play a full part in the board's deliberations. Parents put forward suggestions to the advisory board for consideration to help shape services. However, systems are not in place to inform parents and children of the outcomes of the decisions taken by the advisory board.
- The advisory board acts as an effective critical friend to both centres in the collaboration. Members are familiar with the local context and review the discussions held on the centres' performance with the local authority. They understand well the needs of the groups identified as most in need of support. Members challenge centre leaders, take an active role in centre self-evaluation and appreciate the good quality of practice and services on offer. The advisory board ensures that both centres provide good value for money. Members check that they use effectively all available resources to reduce inequalities and meet the needs of young children and families in the area.
- Staff have appropriate qualifications from a range of professional backgrounds. These meet local needs very effectively. All staff have access to continuous professional development. Along with regular case-file management, staff receive close supervision to ensure their work is highly effective.
- Safeguarding and the welfare of children are at the forefront of the centre's work; policies and procedure reflect this. Well-kept case files demonstrate that staff use the early help assessment and partnership working to very good effect to reduce the risk of harm to families. For instance, the centre reviews the data and information it routinely receives about children on child protection plans, children in need and looked-after children. Staff then make sure these families are involved in centre activities and receive the help they need to improve their families' circumstances.

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	20397
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	461370
Managed by	The local authority
Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	1,178
Centre manager	Angela Inskip
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0113 256 6354
Email address	angela.inskip@leeds.gov.uk

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