

Carterhatch Children's Centre

Autumn Close, Enfield, EN1 4JY

Inspection date	21–22 April 2015	
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good 2
	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
Access to services by young children and families	Outstanding	1
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.

- The centre's extremely well-planned actions have increased the proportion of families registering and accessing services very significantly over the last 12 months. As a result, the very large majority of children and their families visit the centre regularly.
- The centre enables large numbers of families from priority groups to benefit from the right services at the right time to help meet their needs.
- The words of two of the many families who met inspectors sum up why the take-up of services is outstanding: 'the centre takes you from the bottom to the top' and 'staff are very open and friendly – they bring out the best in you'.
- A wide range of good quality services helps parents to build positive parenting skills and develop the readiness of their children for school.
- Well-organised volunteering opportunities enable parents, including those from priority groups, to enhance their confidence and work-based skills.
- Safeguarding and child protection are given high status. The support given by the link social worker is having a significant impact on raising the quality of case file recording to a good standard.
- The very strong leadership of the head of centre has set the centre on a rapidly improving course. Expectations are high and staff are rising to the challenges and new opportunities extremely well.
- There is good capacity for the centre to build for even better effectiveness.

It is not outstanding because:

- Opportunities for parents to build their learning and skills have been too limited, particularly for those who are workless or on low incomes.
- Tracking is not detailed enough to show the progress made by target children in the centre sessions they attend or how well they achieve by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The membership of the advisory board is not sufficiently representative of the centre's community partnerships and the board is currently without an independent chair.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Press ahead with the ongoing work with colleges and other partners such as Jobcentre Plus to ensure that parents, particularly those on low incomes or who are unemployed, have well-planned opportunities to extend their qualifications and skills. Agree what information about retention and success rates is captured, and use this information to plan each individual's next steps and the programme of future services.
- Strengthen the centre's progress tracking systems, and work with schools and early years partners across the area served by the centre to establish the proportion of children who access centre services achieving a good level of development by the time they are five.
- Review the terms of reference of the advisory board to ensure they are fit for purpose, and extend the board's membership in line with Sure Start children's centre guidance. Seek to elect an independent chairperson to promote rigour and objectivity in the board's decision-making.

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 headteacher of Carterhatch Infant School, the centre manager, children centre and school staff, local authority officers, partners, volunteers, parents and members of the governing body and advisory board.

The inspectors visited activities held in the centre and at Bell Lane. A 'Baby Stay and Play', 'Turkish Stay and Play' and a 'Toddles' session were observed jointly with centre leaders. A sample of case files were sampled with outreach workers. Centre leaders attended all team meetings.

Inspectors took into account parents' views as expressed directly to them during the inspection, as well as through their recorded evaluations about the centre's work.

Inspectors also looked at a wide range of documentation.

Inspection team

Christine Field, Lead Inspector	Additional Inspector
Libby Dickson	Additional Inspector
Rob Mottram	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

Carterhatch Children's Centre is one of 12 children's centres in Enfield. It is managed by the governing body of Carterhatch Infant School on behalf of the local authority. The centre first opened in 2008 on the same site as Carterhatch Infant School (URN 101983) and associated day care (EYR 376516). These are both subject to separate inspection arrangements, and reports can be found at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>. A satellite centre at Bell Lane, one mile away, combined its services with Carterhatch in 2013.

The headteacher of the school line-manages the work of the centre manager, who leads the small staff team of three outreach workers and two recently appointed play and communication workers. An advisory board assists governance. Services provided include activities to promote early learning, family support, child and family health, careers, adult learning and volunteering.

There are 2,114 children under the age of five years living in the area served by the centre. Families are from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. The main groups are White British, Black African, White Turkish and Black Caribbean. The area has the highest level of social and economic disadvantage seen in Enfield; 10 out of 13 of the local communities are amongst the nation's 10-30% most deprived communities. A third of children live in homes where no one is in paid work and three quarters of families are in receipt of the childcare element of Working Tax Credit. Though improving from a very low baseline, most children start nursery with skills and abilities below those typical for their age.

Priority target groups identified by the centre are: children and families living in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods; children from White British, Black African and White Turkish backgrounds in danger of underachieving; and children and families referred for targeted services through the single point of entry procedure, including those known to social care.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Outstanding

- At 94%, registrations are high; the large majority access what the centre has to offer. The very large majority of families who live in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods engage well with centre services.
- Leaders have set up a system known as 'Carter Starter' to capture reliable and accurate information about families living in the area served by the centre. This provides clear details about participation levels and enables speedy follow-up of those not in contact, including those who may be reluctant to engage. Information is now being used very successfully to extend the centre's reach.
- A raft of highly successful marketing and promotion activities has brought about a significant increase in the centre's engagement with children and families from priority groups. Between 89-95% of all priority groups have sustained contact with centre services over the last year.
- Very strong links with health partners help to overcome the problems caused by not routinely receiving live birth data. For example, antenatal clinics are held at the centre four days a week, which enables centre staff to make early contact with parents-to-be, to let them know what is available and to sign them up for services.
- Productive work with a range of partners, including social care, enables effective packages of support to be devised to help families most in need. Appropriate information to support families identified as needing specific help, particularly to reduce the risk of harm to children, is shared through regular 'Family Matters' meetings.
- In discussion with inspectors, one partner said: 'When we make a referral, we are confident that it will be dealt with quickly and well.' All children and families referred for targeted services through the single point of entry procedure, including those known to social care, are in close contact with

the centre.

- Staff work well with early years partners to support families who are eligible for free entitlement to early education. As a result, most two- to four-year olds take up a place in good or better quality early years settings.

The quality of practice and services

Good

- The quality, range and relevance of services are good. A sensible balance has been achieved between providing services to meet specific priorities and those which are open to everyone. Good and improving work with partners enhances the resources available to the centre in meeting diverse local needs and improving the well-being of children and families.
- Staff are good role models in their interactions with one another and with parents, and this sets the ethos and tone for the well-attended sessions. Parents hold the centre in extremely high regard and say how welcoming it is. They appreciate the staff's non-judgemental approach and enjoy making new friends from many different cultural backgrounds.
- Through sessions such as 'Baby Massage' and 'Twenties for Tots,' parents from priority groups are supported in building confident parenting skills and build positive relationships with their children. The 'Talking Together' programme promotes the successful language development of those who are invited to participate, who are predominantly Turkish families.
- Sessions open to everyone, such as 'Stay and Play' and 'Toddles', engage children in positive learning experiences. Making cupcakes, experimenting with foam and jelly and measuring how many small cups it takes to fill a larger container with water all foster curiosity, imagination and creativity and help prepare children for the next stage of education.
- Profile information shows that the gap in Reception-aged children's achievement is reducing more quickly than seen nationally in the co-located infant school, but this is not the case across the area served by the centre as a whole. The centre is working proactively to reduce inequalities and uses profile information to make changes to activities, for example by making sure resources are appealing to boys. However, not enough attention is given to recording progress made by target children from their starting points, planning their next steps or finding out how well they achieve over time.
- The centre pays close attention to promoting families' awareness about the importance of home safety and healthy lifestyles. Parents learn how to ensure their child's well-being, such as using the internet safely and wearing sun hats when it is hot outside, because of the good guidance they receive. The link social worker is helping the centre to develop good quality case file recording to chart the impact of targeted services on families most in need.
- Good relationships with the Enfield Counselling Service and the Citizens Advice Bureau result in a high number of priority families improving their economic well-being because of the advice about benefit entitlement, help with housing problems and money management support they receive.
- Well-organised volunteering opportunities enable parents, including those from priority groups, to enhance their confidence and work-based skills. Ten volunteers are active currently and four more are about to be involved. Many volunteers have moved into paid work as a result of their experiences and the centre's support.
- Despite a significant level of demand, too few parents are accessing English as additional language courses, and the level of take-up of further education or skills-based courses is not high enough. These problems are recognised and solutions are being pursued in partnership with colleges and Jobcentre Plus. However, more work is required in terms of planning a clear pathway to help those who are out of work or on low incomes to improve their life chances and choices.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- Last year, the head of centre took a hard look at what was working well and what needed improvement in the centre. He instigated a rigorous pursuit of the shared vision of: 'The best start in life for all our children – no excuses – no compromise' with staff. Rapid and sustained improvements have subsequently been made, as is clearly reflected in the good quality services now

provided and the significantly increased levels of engagement by priority families. Resources are being used very effectively to continue to improve the outcomes for children and families most in need of support.

- Staff have visited outstanding centres in nearby authorities to see the very best practice. Robust action planning and highly effective appraisal, supervision and staff development arrangements underpin the positive changes being made. Good levels of challenge by the local authority, supported by external reviews with a clear focus on setting smart targets, have further enhanced the centre's good capacity to continue to drive forward further improvements.
- Those responsible for governance are well informed about the performance of the centre. Advisory board members who are also governors use their expertise well to undertake 'learning walks' that help them keep check on what is happening in the centre at first hand. However, only health partners attend meetings alongside school and centre staff. There is no current involvement of other partners such as other schools, nurseries, social care, colleges or Jobcentre Plus. The centre manager has taken the chair for the last two meetings, which is a less than ideal situation.
- Safeguarding is given high status in the staff's work with children and families. Policies, practice and procedures meet current requirements. Good attention is given to 'disqualification by association checks' as part of the robust staff vetting.
- Good collaboration with social care, particularly in respect of the referrals made through the Single Point of Entry, results in a strong safety net of support for children in need, including those subject to a child protection plan.
- Feedback from users of the centre is very positive. Parent representatives on the advisory board are very much a part of the life and development of the centre and canvass centre-users' views about the impact of the services they receive. All activities are evaluated and any suggested areas for improvement are identified and assessed. Changes to the timings and content of sessions at Bell Lane are a direct result of parents' suggestions.

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	20575
Local authority	Enfield
Inspection number	455039
Managed by	The governing body of Carterhatch Infant School on behalf of the local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	2,114
Head of Centre	Andrew Boyes
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0208 211 2201
Email address	aboyes@carterhatch-inf.enfield.sch.uk

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