

# Newstead Children's Centre

1 Fallows Close, London N2 8LG

## Inspection dates

Previous inspection date

13–14 May 2015

Not previously inspected

Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Not applicable	
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.

- Most families are registered with the centre and a large majority of those identified as requiring additional support regularly use the centre until their needs are met
- As a result of its highly effective partnership work, the centre is able to offer a wide range of good quality services that are either open to all families or targeted at families with particular needs.
- The safety and well-being of families are a high priority for the centre. With the support of professionals from social care and other organisations, the centre helps to minimise the risk of harm to children.
- The monitoring and tracking of children's progress is effective. This shows that the centre has a very positive impact on the development and well-being of children and ensures they are well prepared for school.
- The centre is widely recognised as a hub of the community and is highly valued by both partner organisations and families.
- Leaders, managers and governance are effective in ensuring the centre's performance is continually monitored and that appropriate action is taken to respond to any areas for development. As a result, the centre has strong capacity to improve.

### It is not outstanding because:

- Not enough two-year-olds eligible for free early education are accessing their entitlement.
- The monitoring of the progress of parents who complete adult learning courses is not rigorous enough to demonstrate the full impact of the centre's work.
- The quality of case file recording is variable and information about the progress of families who receive support is not easily accessible.
- The quality of breastfeeding and obesity data provided to the centre is not good enough. This limits the centre's capacity to monitor impact and trends.

**What does the centre need to do to improve further?**

- Work with the local authority to ensure that most two-year-olds eligible for free early education access their entitlement.
- Work with adult learning providers to implement systems to ensure that there is routine and effective monitoring of the progress of parents who complete courses.
- Improve the quality of case files to ensure recording is robust enough to allow staff to easily monitor the progress of families who receive support.
- With the support of the local authority, obtain accurate data about breastfeeding and obesity rates for the area.

**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 representatives from a range of organisations that work with the centre including health, charities, schools, early years, social care and health. They also met with staff from the centre, the local authority and with parents. They also met members of the advisory board.

The inspectors visited an activity at Church End library and visited a local early years provider. They observed activities such as Stay and Play and 'SPLAT (speech and language therapy).

They observed the centre's work and looked at a range of relevant documentation including the self-evaluation report, case files, action plans and centre policies.

**Inspection team**

Priscilla McGuire, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Anthony Mundy	Additional inspector
Ann Janssen	Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about the centre

Newstead Children's Centre is a stand alone centre in East Finchley, London. The centre is in the East locality of Barnet. It is located within close range of two areas that fall within the most deprived in England and includes the Strawberry Vale and Grange housing estates. Other parts of the area are considered to be very affluent. Families in the area live in social housing, privately rented accommodation and privately owned houses.

The centre shares its site and accommodation with Newstead Children's Centre nursery (URN 1546113) which is separately inspected. Its report can be found at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>. The local authority directly manages the centre and is supported by an advisory board. The centre provides early childhood services, family support, health services, parenting courses, adult learning courses and guidance and advice.

Families in the area are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. An increasing number speak English as an additional language. There are approximately 2,017 children under five years of age living within the area served by the centre. Children enter early years provision with skills and knowledge that are below those that are typical for their age.

The centre has identified as its key priority group: families who live in the top three most deprived areas served by the centre.

## Inspection judgements

### Access to services by young children and families

Good

- As a result of its strong links within the community, the centre has successfully registered most families within the area. The provision of new birth data from the health service in recent years has enabled the centre to get to know new parents well.
- The centre provides effective support from midwives for expectant parents. In addition, staff visit health clinics to promote services. These activities ensure parents can access services and support at an early stage in the lives of their children.
- The large majority of families who live in the three most deprived areas make good and regular use of the centre until their needs are met.
- Staff recognise that, for various reasons, not all families can or want to access services directly at the centre. Therefore, services and support are offered through home visits for families with the most needs; for other families, activities are organised at venues within the community, such as libraries.
- As a result of the centre's highly effective and well established partnerships, the centre is able to provide a range of services that is well matched to the needs of families. Where these services cannot be provided directly by the centre, staff signpost or refer families to other services or professionals. This ensures families' needs are well matched to the most appropriate service.
- Most three- and four-year-olds access free early years places. However, the number of two-year-olds who access places is not as high. This is consistent with the fact that Barnet has one of the lowest take up rates for two-year-old places in the country. Nevertheless, the centre works collaboratively with the local authority to ensure families of two-year-olds receive the support they need to access good or outstanding quality provision.

### The quality of practice and services

Good

- The centre offers good quality and a relevant range of services for families. These promote the health and well-being of children and improve the lives of families. Some of these are open to all

families and others are targeted at specific families. These include services such as Stay and Play and more specialised services, such as SPLAT which is provided for children with speech and language development needs.

- Monitoring and tracking of children's progress from their starting points at the centre are effective. Staff work hard to ensure children are well prepared for school. They use a traffic light system to identify which individual children need particular support. Information from the local authority shows that children who attend the centre do better at the end of Reception than those who do not access services.
- The centre views the safety of families as a key priority. This is shown in high quality sessions, such as Safer Families, which are provided to meet the needs of families whose lives are affected by domestic abuse. Through these well organised sessions, parents learn what actions they can take to keep themselves and their children safe.
- Through its links with local further education colleges, the centre provides an appropriate range of adult learning opportunities for parents. These help to improve the life chances of parents. However, not enough is done to track and monitor the progress of adults who complete courses.
- The centre promotes healthy eating for families and also promotes breastfeeding well. Through its own research and collection of data, the centre can demonstrate that it has been very successful in helping mothers to continue breastfeeding at six to eight weeks. However, the centre does not yet receive any breastfeeding data for the whole of its catchment area and the obesity data it receives are not reliable.
- Staff use both manual and computerised case file systems to record families' needs and progress. However, the quality of recording is variable and not consistent enough to enable staff to easily track the progress of families who receive support.
- The centre is a real hub of the community and its work is highly valued by families. The centre's strong reputation is a direct result of the conscientious work of the manager and other staff to get to know the community served by the centre.

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

Good

- Arrangements for governance, leadership and management are effective. The centre is managed well by a competent manager who, over the years, has established very productive links with the local community. Good governance from the local authority and the advisory board complements her work.
- A wide range of partners representing different organisations sits on the advisory board. Parents are also well represented on the board and are actively involved in decision making. The work of the board is actively promoted through a display in the centre. This ensures that families can easily identify board members and access minutes of board meetings.
- The local authority continually strengthens its arrangements for monitoring both the performance of the centre and the performance of staff. This ensures that those responsible for the centre's governance remain constantly aware of the impact the centre has on the lives of families. They also have an accurate understanding of what it needs to do to improve.
- As part of its effective arrangements for monitoring the centre, the local authority's quality improvement board rigorously scrutinises the centre's work. This, along with the centre's rigorous self-evaluation, quality improvement audit and the annual review, provides the information and data that are needed by leaders and managers.
- By closely monitoring the centre's work and scrutinising local data, leaders and managers are well informed of the centre's success in helping to reduce inequalities for children and families. For example, through activities like the Open Door sessions which are targeted at specific families, the centre actively promotes inclusion for parents with children who have additional needs. During these sessions, parents are able to access support and guidance from specialist workers.
- Safeguarding policies are implemented well and staff are appropriately trained in a range of safeguarding topics. The centre's information sharing agreement with social care staff ensures that relevant information and data are routinely shared. These include, for example, information about

children subject to child protection plans, looked after children and children in need.

- Staff use the Common Assessment Framework appropriately to ensure families receive the appropriate levels of intervention and support from the most appropriate professionals. This is of particular benefit to families within the centre's priority group who have the most needs.
- As a result of its extensive and well established partnership arrangements, the centre offers a good range of services and resources to meet the diverse needs of families. Accommodation and other resources at the centre are of a high quality and well maintained.

## 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.

**Centre details**

<b>Unique reference number</b>	22129
<b>Local authority</b>	Barnet
<b>Inspection number</b>	455028
<b>Managed by</b>	The local authority
<b>Approximate number of children under five in the reach area</b>	2017
<b>Centre leader</b>	Sajni Sharma
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	020359 3460
<b>Email address</b>	newstead@barnet.gov.uk

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