

Woodmansterne Children's Centre

Stockport Road, London, SW16 5XE

Inspection date 16–17 June 2015

| Overall effectiveness | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
|--|----------------------|------|---|
| | Previous inspection: | | |
| 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.

- Good 'local intelligence' enables staff to know their community well. As a result, most families are registered and the large majority, including those from priority groups, attend the centre regularly.
- The centre manager provides effective leadership to her dedicated and enthusiastic staff team. She is ably supported by the headteacher of the primary school. All staff are highly regarded.
- Successful partnership work with health professionals has resulted in positive and improving health outcomes for families.
- Most families of three- and four-year-old children take up their free early years place.
- In 2014, 60% of children at the end of Reception achieved a good level of development, which is similar to the national picture.
- Case files are exemplary. They demonstrate how skilful actions by centre staff have enabled families with complex needs to make improvements in their lives.
- Governance is effective. Members are knowledgeable about the centre's work and are increasingly confident in challenging leaders to make further improvements.
- The local authority provides effective support by providing regular information about the centre's performance.

It is not outstanding because:

- Just under two thirds of eligible two-year-olds do not take up their funded education place.
- There are few opportunities for adults who are out of work or on low incomes to improve their economic stability. Volunteer numbers are low. Although there is a comprehensive system to track adults who attend courses, this is not analysed in depth to plan for future services.
- Targets set by the local authority reviews, in the development plan and other centre documents are not always linked, or easy to measure. They do not always relate closely enough to improving the lives of families in most need of support.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that most eligible two-year-olds take up their free early education place.
- Build stronger links with Jobcentre Plus and other partners to extend the opportunities to support parents back to work or to better paid employment. Analyse tracking information more rigorously to identify which services the centre can offer to support these families. Increase the number of volunteers in the centre to enable them to use this as a stepping stone to employment.
- Ensure there is closer link between targets set by the local authority annual review and those in other documents such as the development plan. Sharpen the targets so that they are easier to measure to show the impact of the centre's work especially on those who need it most.

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.

It was carried out at the same time as Streatham Hub Children's Centre (URN 22959) with whom it works in collaboration. Some meetings with staff and partners were held jointly to avoid duplication.

The inspectors held meetings with the centre manager, staff, the headteacher, Chair of Governors and another governor from Woodmansterne Primary School and representatives from the local authority. They also met partners from health and early years education, parents, and representatives from the advisory board. The manager and representatives from the local authority attended all meetings of the inspection team.

Visits to activities, such as the Get Ready Club and Confident Parent Confident Child, were undertaken. The inspectors looked at the centre's self-evaluation and action planning, a sample of case files, safeguarding practice, policies and procedures, and a range of other documentation, including evaluations of parents' views.

Inspection team

David Scott, Lead Inspector

Additional Inspector

Barbara Saltmarsh

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

Woodmansterne Children's Centre was designated in October 2008 as a stand-alone centre. It delivers a range of services including health, parenting classes, Play and Learn sessions, adult learning and family support.

The centre is based in the south west locality of Lambeth and is within the Streatham South ward. The centre operates on the site of Woodmansterne Primary School (URN 100590). This is subject to a separate inspection and the report can be found at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

The centre is managed by the governing body of Woodmansterne Primary School on behalf of the local authority. Governance is provided by the advisory board, which comprises parents and key partners. There is also a Parent Voice forum.

The centre works in collaboration with Streatham Hub Children's Centre (URN 22959), sharing leadership, some services and data. It also works within a cluster to provide shared services with Crown Lane Children's Centre.

The number of children under five years of age living in the area served by the centre is 957. The surrounding area has both pockets of high deprivation and relative affluence. Almost two thirds of children live in an area which is amongst the least advantaged nationally. Information shows that just under a third of children live in households where no adult is working. Just over a half of all families speak English as an additional language.

One in 10 families is of White British heritage, with one in five being from other White origin, of whom a growing proportion is Polish. Almost two thirds of families are from minority ethnic groups. The largest groups are from Pakistani, Black or Black British heritages. Children's skills and abilities on entry to early education are below the levels expected for their age.

The centre has identified the following priority groups as needing most support: parents who are out of work or on low incomes; families who speak English as an additional language; young children of other White origin; children from Black and minority ethnic groups; and, children who are being supervised by social care.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Good

- Highly effective work by staff in the community, including home visits, has ensured that most families, including those who are expecting children, are registered with the centre. Good 'local intelligence' enables staff to contact families moving into the area and tell them about the centre's services. As a result, the large majority of families, including those from priority groups, regularly attend a good range of activities, groups and clinics.
- Centre staff have established strong partnerships with early years settings, schools, health and social services. Consequently, they are able to gather important information about families needing the most support. These include: those who are new to learning English; of other White origin; from Black and minority ethnic groups; and, children supported by social care. Information about those who are out of work or on low incomes is more difficult to obtain, often because of social and cultural sensitivity. Staff work increasingly effectively with the Citizens Advice Bureau and Jobcentre Plus to signpost help and provide support for this priority group.
- Most families of three- and four-year-old children and just over a third of eligible two-year-olds take up their free early years place. All these early years settings are of good or better quality.
- The centre provides an integrated programme of health services and clinics, which include antenatal

appointments, parenting classes and child health checks. Health visitors play an important role in referring families swiftly when they are in need of support. Through their work, centre staff are making a strong contribution to helping reduce inequalities for families with the most needs.

The quality of practice and services

Good

- The centre provides a range of services and activities which are open to everyone, and those designed specifically to support priority groups that meet the needs of families well. The outcomes for children at the end of the early years have also led to some groups being deemed to need more support, such as Polish-speaking families or those adults new to speaking English.
- Following feedback from families, more parenting courses have been introduced, such as Confident Parent Confident Child and Family Learning. This has ensured that the large majority of families in priority groups keep up their engagement with the centre.
- Well planned sessions, such as the Get Ready Club, enable parents to bond with their child and support their development and learning, through storytelling and singing together. As a result, in 2014, by the end of Reception, 60% of children achieved a good level of development, which is similar to the national picture.
- Children who are eligible for free school meals now have outcomes similar to national figures, so that the gap is closing between those less likely to achieve well and their peers. Play and Learn and regular story and rhyme time sessions support children's learning well to achieve this outcome.
- Overall, health outcomes are positive. Support for improving breastfeeding is available through the weekly Milk Spots sessions. As a result of targeted support, breastfeeding rates at almost two months are well above national figures. Through a variety of initiatives, such as Cook and Eat and Fussy Eaters, childhood obesity rates are being reduced, so that they are now close to the national average.
- Information from the centre's comprehensive system to track courses and outcomes for adults, such as Supporting My Bilingual Child, is not being analysed rigorously enough. This is especially true for those priority families on benefits or not in employment. At the moment, the range of services for adults provided by the centre and its partners is too limited. There is only one volunteer working in the centre, although two are currently undergoing training. However, previous volunteers have used this as a successful springboard to employment.
- Case files are of very high quality. They demonstrate clearly the very successful actions centre staff have taken in supporting families with multiple and complex needs and achieving positive outcomes.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- The centre manager and her team have a good understanding of the community the centre serves. She is very well supported by the headteacher of Woodmansterne Primary School and, together, they are passionate and committed to making a difference to the lives of families who need help the most.
- Leaders have developed a multi-layered approach to governance, whereby the work of the governing body, the advisory board and parents' voice forum are interlinked. These groups, made up of key professionals, partners and parents, bring a range of valuable expertise and experience. They have a good understanding of the local community and the problems that affect its families. They are increasingly effective in challenging staff about the centre's performance.
- The local authority keeps a close eye on the centre's performance through regular monitoring visits. However, targets set in the annual review are not always aligned directly to those in the development plan and other documents. Sometimes the targets are not specific enough, for example in setting a target for the take-up of two-year-olds' free early education.
- Safeguarding is given the highest priority at the centre. Checks on the suitability of adults to work with children are rigorous. Close attention is given to 'disqualification by association checks' as part of the thorough vetting process. The safeguarding policy reflects the most recent guidance for keeping

children safe in education.

- Centre staff ensure that effective systems are in place for the early assessment of families in most need. As a result, children who are looked after, subject to child protection plans, and those deemed to be children in need, are well supported.
- Resources throughout the centre are of a very high quality. The centre is fortunate in being able to draw on the expertise of staff, and financial resources of the primary school. However, at times, staffing is stretched, so that staff feel that their capacity to make the greatest impact is reduced.
- Centre staff are responsive to the needs of families who attend the centre. The openness of staff, together with the Parent Voice forum, provides regular opportunities for families to give feedback on sessions, and shape future services. Centre staff are held in high esteem. Typical comments include, 'They really helped me when I felt so discriminated against.' and 'I love coming here and it is the only place I feel safe.'

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

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|--------------------------------|--|
| Unique reference number | 23663 |
| Local authority | London Borough of Lambeth |
| Inspection number | 453962 |
| Managed by | The governing body of Woodmansterne Primary School, on behalf of the local authority |

| | |
|--|--|
| Approximate number of children under five in the reach area | 957 |
| Centre leader | Pamela Holmes |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Telephone number | 020 8764 5102 |
| Email address | childrenscentre@woodmansterne.lambeth.sch.uk |

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