

White Horse Children's Centre

Eden Vale Road, Westbury, Wiltshire, BA13 3NY

Inspection dates	16–17 July 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		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.

- Almost all local families with a child under five years old are registered with the centre. The centre is highly popular and a large majority of families benefit from the good range of effective services.
- A very high proportion of families identified as those that need the most support are known to the centre and benefit from the high-quality support, activities and courses.
- A very large majority of families eligible for free education for two-year-olds take up the offer.
- The centre staff work very effectively with health partners and volunteers to ensure that breastfeeding rates continue to increase and that obesity rates decrease.
- The staff successfully ensure that inequalities are reduced. They help all parents and carers to understand the many different ways they are able to support their children's learning and development.
- The centre and its partners make sure that children have a good start to school life. They quickly identify where extra support is required and work effectively to provide it.
- The staff use their good skills and experience very effectively to support local families. Training courses for adults, such as Learning to Care for Children, make a real difference for those who attend.
- Staff visit families at home, providing good support for those most in need and those who might not otherwise use the centre's services. This successfully encourages parents to get involved in activities and helps to increase their self-confidence and improve their parenting skills.
- The centre leaders set high standards and monitor the centre's performance very effectively. They have a good understanding of the needs of local families. Governance arrangements are effective.
- Everyone involved in running the centre wants the very best for all of the families in the area. As a result, the centre continually increases the effectiveness of the services it provides so that the lives of local families continue to improve.

It is not outstanding because:

- Staff do not do enough to monitor the progress made by parents who attend adult education classes so that they can help them plan the next steps in their learning.
- Arrangements to monitor children's progress to show the impact of the centre's work on children's development are at an early stage. This limits the centre's understanding of what needs to be done to increase children's attainment even further.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Monitor the progress made by parents who attend adult education classes and ensure they receive effective support and encouragement so that they continue with their studies and become successful learners.
- The centre should work more effectively with its partners and the local authority to gather detailed information about children's attainment at the end of Reception. Managers should then use this information to help evaluate the centre's impact on raising children's achievement.

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 conducted at the same time as the inspection of the neighbouring Happy Feet Children's Centre in Warminster, which has a separate report that can be found on the Ofsted website at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

This inspection was carried out by two Additional inspectors.

The inspectors held meetings with parents, centre staff, sub-contractors, the manager of the linked nursery, volunteers, senior managers from the local authority and 4Children, members of the advisory board, and the centre's social worker, health visitor and teacher.

The inspectors visited activities taking place in the centre. Sessions visited included the 'Baby Steps' group for young parents.

They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

Inspection team

Dan Grant, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Megan Dauksta

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

White Horse Children's Centre opened in 2008 as a stand-alone children's centre. It is one of 16 centres in Wiltshire managed by 4Children on behalf of the local authority. White Horse Children's Centre collaborates with one other children's centre in the west of the county: Happy Feet Children's Centre in Warminster, which is being inspected at the same time as White Horse. The two centres have the same team of staff and one management post that is shared by two part-time managers.

White Horse Children's Centre has on-site childcare operated by Bright Stars Nursery. The centre is based on the same site as Westbury Infants School. The school and nursery are inspected under separate arrangements. Reports can be found at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

The centre is supported by its own advisory board and parents' forum. Services provided include outreach family support, activities to promote early learning, child and family health, careers, adult learning and volunteering.

There are 1,295 children under the age of five years living in the area served by the centre. The area has several small pockets of social and economic disadvantage. The proportion of families receiving workless benefits is low. Extensive new housing development is taking place and this is seeing a rapidly increasing number of children in need of services. Almost all of the children in the area are of White British heritage with approximately 7% from other different ethnic groups, mainly Eastern European backgrounds. Children enter early education provision at levels typical for their age.

Priority target groups identified by the centre are: two-year-old children eligible for free education, workless households, children of teenage parents, lone parents and families experiencing domestic violence.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Outstanding

- The centre has established a strong reputation with local families and partners for its highly effective support and very good range of services. The vast majority of local families with a child under five years old are registered with the centre. A very high proportion of families attend regularly because they recognise the benefits of the good range of activities.
- A very large majority of the families eligible for free, high-quality early education for two-year-olds take up the offer. Consequently, these children are receiving high-quality support in the prime areas of early development, including communication, social and physical skills. The centre also works effectively to ensure a large majority of three- and four-year-old children eligible for funded places take up the offer.
- Families who are most in need of services, including those expecting a baby and teenage parents, receive very well coordinated support. Staff skilfully prioritise families assessed as living in the most disadvantaged areas, those from workless households and lone parents. Consequently, these families receive important help to overcome problems and reduce the impact of inequalities.
- Staff use community outreach and home visits particularly effectively to engage those who may be reluctant to access the centre's services. Almost all of the families known to local authority social care workers receive effective support from the centre's outreach staff.
- Staff ensure that families referred for specific help, such as those experiencing domestic violence, have good access to support and services which are very well matched to meeting their needs.
- An increasing proportion of parents benefit from attendance at well-structured courses. This helps them develop greater self-confidence, improve their job prospects and increase their understanding of some of the rewards and challenges of being parents. The ABC Cook and Caring for Children sessions, for example, are very well attended. Parents use these as an opportunity to learn new

skills.

- The centre provides home visits, family 'fundays' and also delivers services from the local community centre. This ensures all families understand what the centre has to offer and encourages them to get involved.

The quality of practice and services

Good

- The work of the centre makes a positive difference to the community because it improves the lives of local families. The centre's services are very effective and match the needs of families very well.
- Staff respond quickly to requests to provide family support and the impact of their work on improving family life is recorded well in case files and progress journals. Families identified as belonging to priority target groups benefit from the high-quality courses, activities and support provided by the centre and its partners.
- Very well-qualified and experienced staff and volunteers work successfully with health and other key partners to provide good support for breastfeeding mothers. The centre provides a good range of information and advice which contribute well to increasing the proportion of mothers who continue breastfeeding and to lowering the rate of childhood obesity.
- The centre provides a wide range of activities which support children's learning and development well. The centre contributes significantly to increasing the proportion of children who reach a good level of development in the area at the end of the Reception Year. Staff meet regularly with other early years professionals, including schools, to ensure all children, particularly those most in need, are prepared well for starting school.
- A good range of effective specialist services, such as access to the local food bank and welfare benefits advice, is available to parents. This helps them overcome specific issues that staff cannot resolve. Particularly effective work takes place with those suffering from domestic abuse. As a result, parents increase their self-confidence and improve their ability to cope with problems.
- The centre provides a good range of courses for adults, including parenting classes and accredited childcare courses. These groups are very well attended and provide good opportunities for parents to increase their knowledge and skills. A few parents have moved on to higher level courses, secured voluntary work and found paid employment.
- The centre does not do enough to monitor the progress made by parents attending adult education courses such as mathematics and English. Staff are not well informed about how well some parents are doing. As a result, support and encouragement do not always reflect parents' individual needs, so progress is not always as rapid as it could be.
- The centre does not yet have a thorough understanding of the full extent of its impact on raising children's achievement. Arrangements for tracking children's progress are not fully developed.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- White Horse Children's Centre has good leadership, governance and management. The centre managers and the advisory board have a thorough understanding of the needs of local families. Effective plans, informed by accurate self-evaluation, are in place to sustain on-going improvements.
- The performance of the centre and the quality of services are monitored closely by senior leaders, the advisory group and the local authority. The centre managers use information about families in the area very well to help plan and review the effectiveness of services. Trends in performance help leaders to ensure all families receive a good range of relevant services. As a consequence, the centre's work continues to have a positive impact on reducing inequalities for children and families. The centre works effectively to narrow the gaps in the achievement of different groups of children.
- Managers ensure there are good arrangements for involving parents, including those from priority groups, in running the centre. Parents are represented well on the advisory board. The parents' forum group is very active and meets regularly to review services, provide frequent and thorough

evaluation of services and contribute new ideas. The centre has a good reputation for listening to parents and making changes in response to their feedback and suggestions.

- Thorough leadership support by 4Children helps promote the highly effective teamwork. The centre managers have high expectations of their staff and they support the staff team very well. They make sure that staff are well trained and that their performance is managed thoroughly. Policies and procedures are effective and are understood by all. The centre has a good range of stimulating resources which ensures families benefit from the services they receive.
- The centre works very effectively with partners to ensure local families remain safe. Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding policies and procedures and staff vetting checks meet current requirements. Priority is given to helping children identified as in need, those subject to child protection plans and looked after children. The staff make good use of the Common Assessment Framework to ensure families receive well-planned, timely support.
- The centre receives effective support from the local authority, which monitors the performance of the centre and facilitates strong partnerships to benefit local families. However, the local authority does not provide the centre with sufficiently detailed information about children's attainment at the end of Reception.

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 well-being 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

Unique reference number	23577
Local authority	Wiltshire County Council
Inspection number	455114
Managed by	4Children on behalf of the local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	1,295
Centre leaders	Ruth Brooks-Martin and Kerry Morgan
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