

# City of Derby-Locality 1

Audrey Drive Children's Centre, 3 Audrey Drive, Chaddesden, Derby, DE21 4NP

<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–6 June 2014
Previous inspection date	Not previously inspected

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b> Previous inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
		Not previously inspected	
Access to services by young children and families		Requires improvement	3
The quality of practice and services		Requires improvement	3
The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for children and families

### This is a centre that requires improvement.

- Information from the local authority for leaders and managers to help them to plan and set measureable targets is not helpful. As a result, they do not have clear enough oversight of the impact of their work or how long families continue to use the centres in the group over time.
- A lack of baseline information means the group has not been able to set measureable targets to fully check their progress against health inequalities, children's achievement at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the number of adults progressing to further learning and development or the widening achievement gap.
- The annual review and target setting meeting record does not give local authority senior leaders or the advisory board sufficient detail about the group's strengths and weaknesses to challenge as robustly as they might. In addition, not enough parents take up the opportunity to join the advisory board or the sub groups.

### It has the following strengths:

- Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults are robust and meet requirements. Policies and procedures are well written. They are followed and understood by staff and managers. Staff are vigilant and parents understand the importance of adopting safe practices.
- The group's work with partners to identify, prioritise and work with families who are most in need of support is very strong. Families receive relevant and timely support and guidance.
- The majority of new families continue to use the group's services three months after they have registered and an increase in the number of young parents and families from the most deprived areas who use the centre is evident.
- Staff have worked hard to find the two-year-old children in the locality who are entitled to a funded nursery education place. As a result, most parents have taken up a nursery place for their child.

## What does the group need to do to improve further?

- Improve the governance of the group by:
  - developing the record of the annual performance meeting with the local authority so that senior managers and the advisory board have more detailed information to monitor and challenge the group against
  - increasing parental membership of the advisory board and the sub groups.
- Improve the quality and availability of data from the local authority and partners so that the group can more effectively monitor the impact of its work and engagement with target groups over time.
- Sharpen the development plan targets to speed up work to:
  - reduce health inequalities
  - improve the outcomes for children at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, including closing the achievement gap

and increase the number of adults that take up further learning and development opportunities.

## Information about this inspection

The inspection of this children's centre group was carried out under Part 3A of the Childcare Act 2006 as amended by the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009. The centres that form part of this children's centre group are Audrey Drive Children's Centre, Derwent Family Centre, Spondon Children's Centre, Meadow Lane Children's Centre and Oakwood Children's Centre.

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional inspectors.

The inspectors held meetings with leaders, managers and staff from the centre group and the local authority, parents, and representatives of partner agencies and the advisory board.

The inspectors visited Audrey Drive Children's Centre, Derwent Family Centre, Spondon Children's Centre, Meadow Lane Children's Centre, Oakwood Children's Centre, Beaufort Business Centre and West End Children's Centre.

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

## Inspection team

Joanne Smith Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Tim Vaughan

Her Majesty's Inspector

Alan Comerford-Dunbar

Additional inspector

Judith Elderfield

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about the group

City of Derby-locality 1 Children's Centre group operates from five main sites across Derby. Governance of the group is provided by the local authority. City of Derby-locality 1 Children's Centre group has operated the five centres in the area under one manager since 2012. The group serves an area with a varied range of communities in the top 30% of the most deprived areas in England, including some in the top 10% and more affluent areas.

The group is an integral part of the locality multi-agency team, which is a partnership for supporting children and young people aged 0-19 years. With partners the group delivers parenting advice and support, parent and child activity groups, adult learning, volunteering opportunities and health appointments alongside one to one work for families.

There are around 3543 children aged under five years living in the area served by City of Derby-locality 1 Children's Centre group and the large majority are from a White British background. Worklessness in the majority of the locality is higher than the local average. The number of families dependent on workless benefits is higher in the Chaddesden and Derwent wards than local averages. Spondon and Oakwood fall slightly below. Around 1185 children under five years live in households dependent on workless benefits. The group has identified families suffering domestic abuse and young parents as the main groups who need the most support in the area. However, each individual centre in the group has specific groups also identified.

Children enter school Early Years Foundation Stage provision with skills and knowledge that vary across the area served by the centre from in line with, to below those expected for their age.

### Inspection judgements

#### Access to services by young children and families

#### Requires improvement

- Children's centre staff are an established and integral part of the locality multi-agency early intervention team. The centre group receives good information about families in the area who are subject to child protection plans, child in need plans or early help assessments. The group works with many of these families for sustained periods of time with positive outcomes for the families.
- Leaders and managers have established clear target groups for each of the areas served by individual centres by making good use of the limited data they have and what they learn from partners. However, gaps in some of the data mean it has not been possible for the group to establish a baseline of exactly how many children are in some of the target groups, how many expectant parents they work with or for some of their health priorities. This means that leaders and managers struggle to track engagement with some families and the impact of its work over time.
- Through the tireless work of staff, leaders and managers know that they are successfully engaging a good proportion of young parents and families living in the more deprived areas in the locality. They also know that the majority of newly registered families

continue to engage with the centre for at least three months after registration.

- Local partnership networks are used well to learn about new families to the area. At the instigation of the children's centre services manager information from health teams, neighbourhood teams and Derby Housing now includes a brief summary of the family and any needs they may have. This is used well to prioritise the level of initial contact with the family so that those most in need of support receive the help they need as soon as possible.

### **The quality of practice and services**

### **Requires improvement**

- When they are in times of crisis families receive relevant and appropriate care, guidance and support from the centre group. Those who are most in need of help, for example suffering from domestic abuse, are particularly well supported because the group is a well-established member of a multi-agency team with social care partners. This means that early help work with families is swift, highly relevant and helps to maintain children's safety and welfare.
- Many interesting and good quality activities are offered in an attempt by the group to reduce health and educational inequalities. 'Walkabout Wednesday', for example, is a targeted joint initiative with health partners to help to address social isolation and low mood in new mothers and increase physical activity. As with other relatively new, targeted activities, however, the impact of 'Walkabout Wednesday' is not yet measureable.
- Families who attend parenting courses enjoy learning about topics such as handling children's behaviour. They can see the progress they are making from the good quality tracking charts they use on the course. Parents gain confidence and see positive improvements in their home and family life because they continue to use the strategies they learn.
- Worklessness in the locality is high and adult literacy and numeracy is low. The group works well with its adult learning partner to identify courses to successfully engage adults in learning and development courses. Popular courses such as cookery, story sacks and first aid have life and employability skills built into them and retention and completion rates are adequate. The group is unclear, however, what progress adults make on courses run by partners or how many adults progress onto higher level courses despite good levels of publicity and signposting to them.
- Data about children's skills and knowledge at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage across the locality does not show rapid enough improvement and gaps between groups of children are not narrowing quickly enough. The group has recognised this and in response strengthened links with schools and created clear plans for more joint work. However, links between the school improvement team and the group to jointly support the improvement of early years provision is still at an early stage of development.

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

### **Requires improvement**

- The advisory board receives relevant information about how many families are using

services and issues in the locality. They use the information appropriately to plan what the different centres in the group deliver and use their network well to supplement the group's work so that resources are used effectively. They challenge and question leaders and managers using the information they have but do not have enough information to do this as effectively as possible, for example, by having quarter by quarter information to compare alongside an annual picture.

- Parents are reluctant to join the advisory board. Two parents attend the sub group meetings at which there is a specific focus, for example, the keeping children safe sub group. In attending these groups parents are more able to contribute and be heard. The group has also adopted appropriate methods to consult with parents so that their views and needs are helping to influence what the group offers to families. Never-the-less, not enough are involved at the higher locality level.
- The annual conversation process is not as rigorous as it needs to be to ensure the group is moving forward as swiftly as possible. The peer review annual process is useful, but the resulting report and actions do not give the group enough to build on or provide the local authority with a clear enough picture how the group is progressing towards targets so that they can be certain of the value for money provided by the centre.
- Information technology systems are not fit for purpose and do little to support the group's work. For example, too much has to be done by members of staff using manual processes to count and check attendance and registration of families. This in turn hinders leaders and managers in their monitoring of the effectiveness of the services and activities they are delivering in the locality and the engagement of families.
- Staff receive regular, supportive and challenging supervision with their managers. Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare is a standard agenda item at these meetings. Discussions about families are well recorded and show that highly relevant discussion and review takes place so that families who are at their most vulnerable receive timely help and support. The staff training programme has clear links to the local authority and locality priorities, but is also influenced by individual training needs identified through the supervision process.
- The development plan is large and complex and success criteria are not clear enough in all areas especially where it has not been possible to establish a baseline. However, positively the plan is an amalgamation of the sub group plans which are formed from a good range of professional meetings and data reviews highlighting the needs of the local area.

## 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.

## Group details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	80099
<b>Local authority</b>	City of Derby
<b>Inspection number</b>	442701
<b>Managed by</b>	The local authority
<b>Approximate number of children under five in the reach area</b>	3,543
<b>Centre leader</b>	Stephanie Scarborough
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01332642205
<b>Email address</b>	Stephanie.scarborough@derby.gov.uk

### This group consists of the following children's centres:

- 20949 Derwent Family Centre
- 22166 Audrey Drive Children's Centre
- 22234 Oakwood Children's Centre
- 20615 Meadow Lane Children's Centre
- 22813 Spondon Children's Centre

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