

West Worthing Group

Durrington Children's centre, Salvington Road, Worthing, BN13 2JD

Inspection dates	21–23 October 2014
Previous inspection date	Not previously inspected

Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Not applicable	
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 group of children's centres requires improvement. It is not good because:

- Children and families from some priority groups are not using the centres often enough. The centres do not have enough information about some of the priority groups in the local area.
- Links with adult learning providers are not well developed and not enough families are attending courses to help them improve their skills and qualifications.
- Boys, and children from poorer backgrounds, do not achieve as well as other children in the area. Local primary schools are not working in partnership with the centres to ensure children are ready for school and that their progress is tracked. Some group sessions are not making the most of opportunities to support children's learning and development.
- The Centre Partnership Group (CPG) is not provided with all of the information it needs to provide strong challenge to the centres. Not enough parents or education partners attend meetings and members are not given training or an induction in their roles.
- Not all of the centres' various plans are up to date or clearly linked. This makes it hard for staff, CPG members and partners to understand the centres' priority areas for improvement and the progress that the centres have made over time.

It has the following strengths:

- The new manager is well qualified and experienced. Recent improvements, such as increases in the number of families registered, mean that capacity to improve is good.
- Staff are committed and passionate in their work. Parents and expectant parents using the centres, including those of children with additional needs, feel safe and welcome.
- Family outreach work is making a positive difference. Staff work closely with health, social care and early help teams to provide effective support.
- Well-organised opportunities are available to those wishing to volunteer in the centres.

What does the group need to do to improve further?

- Improve the identification, registration and sustained engagement of priority families by:
 - gathering further information regarding children from low-income groups and those with English as an additional language
 - reviewing the large number of priority groups currently identified by the centre
 - continuing to make sure information held by the centre is correct and up to date
 - ensuring all partners take every opportunity to register new families.
- Ensure all children are ready for starting school by:
 - providing focused activities to ensure a greater number of boys, and children from poorer backgrounds, make good progress and achieve a good level of development at the end of their Reception year
 - improving partnership arrangements with local schools and early years settings to support children's learning and track their progress
 - making greater use of information provided by the local authority to ensure all play sessions support children's learning needs
 - improving the quality of all play and learn sessions to make sure staff help parents understand how to support children's learning and development.
- Provide more opportunities for adults to improve their skills and qualifications by building partnerships with local adult education providers and tracking their progress.
- Improve the governance of the centres by:
 - ensuring the CPG has all of the information it requires to provide strong challenge to the centres
 - providing training and formal induction for members
 - increasing the range of partners attending the CPG, including parent and education representatives.

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.

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

The inspectors held meetings with representatives from the local authority, the team manager and the interim team manager. They also met members of the CPG, parents and volunteers and partners from health, education, early help and community and voluntary agencies.

The inspection covered Durrington, Maybridge and Findon Children and Family Centres. The inspectors visited all three centres in the group, as well as community venues in Durrington and Findon.

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

Inspection team

Penny Fisher, Lead Inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Joanne Caswell	Her Majesty's Inspector
Helen Hutchings	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about the group

Durrington, Maybridge and Findon Children and Family Centres are part of the West Worthing group. The group is managed by a team manager, on behalf of the local authority, who has only been in post since 1 September 2014. Her arrival follows a period of some turbulence in the management of the centres, due to sickness. There is one advisory board, known as the CPG in West Worthing. Further changes in the way centres are grouped are expected in January 2015.

The three centres serve approximately 2,680 children under the age of five. The Findon centre shares a site with The Vale First and Middle School and Jo-Jo's early years provision. The Durrington centre is adjacent to Durrington Primary School. Separate inspection reports for these settings can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk. The Maybridge Centre is based in Maybridge Community Church. The group provides a range of services for families in the area, both in the centres and at outreach venues. Staff work across all three centres.

The very large majority of families in the area are White British. Although the county is generally affluent, Worthing is ranked as the second most deprived area in West Sussex. More deprived areas include Northbrook and Salvington wards in Durrington and the Castle ward in Maybridge. The proportion of children living in poverty in the Durrington area is above the county average. Children's skills on entry to school vary across the area, but are well below those typical for their age in the more deprived parts of West Worthing.

Target groups, identified in the group's self-evaluation document, are children living in most deprived areas, teenage mothers, lone parents, children from low income backgrounds, children with a disability, children from minority ethnic groups, children and parents with English as an additional language, and children that are the subject of a child protection plan.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Requires improvement

- The centres have identified a large number of priority groups. However, not enough is known about the needs of some of these, such as children and parents with English as an additional language and those from low income families. This means the centres cannot be sure they are reaching enough families from these groups.
- The large majority of all children have accessed services at least once this year. However, not enough lone parents from the whole area and teenage parents in the Maybridge area have used children's centre services.
- The group is linking with the community in order to reach those in the more deprived wards such as Northbrook, where a session runs in a community centre. The large majority of children from the most deprived parts of the reach area are accessing services, but only the minority sustain their engagement. This is also the case for children from minority ethnic backgrounds in the area and children with disabilities in Durrington.
- The group has not reached some of the local authority's targets for the number of families registered at the centres. However, there have been recent rapid improvements. Most children in the area are now registered with the group. Effective joint work with midwives, the Family Nurse Partnership and health visitors ensures expectant mothers that would benefit from services are introduced to the centres.
- The group is engaging well with children that are looked after and those who are the subject of child protection plans, but only the minority of child in need families are registered with the Durrington centre.

- Working agreements with health partners are in place to ensure all families are registered, but these are not consistently implemented. Information sharing protocols support the identification of families in the reach area in need of support well. For example, the group receives new birth data and shares social care case management systems.
- The group is in the process of checking all of the information it has about the families that are registered to ensure it is up to date and gives a full picture of the needs of families.
- The centres support families with two-year-olds to take-up their entitlement to free early years education very effectively. All eligible two-year-olds are accessing funded early years provision and the vast majority are attending settings that are good or better.

The quality of practice and services

Requires improvement

- Unvalidated Early Years Foundation Stage results show overall improvement in 2014. However, insufficient action has been taken to address continuing and significant under achievement of some groups of children, particularly boys, and those from poorer backgrounds. Links with local schools are under developed. This means that opportunities to promote children's readiness for school and to track their progress are lost.
- Some Play and Learn sessions require improvement. Staff and parents do not always make the most of opportunities to enrich children's language development. Not all parents are engaged in their children's learning during the sessions.
- While centre staff provide parents with information about adult education opportunities, links with providers of courses are not well developed. The centres are currently unable to show how many parents have attended or completed courses to help them improve their skills and qualifications.
- The tracking system in place means the group has started to track families' progress and show how the work of the centres has made a positive difference to families' lives. However, it does not yet show the full impact of the centres' services, for example whether families sustain improvements in the longer term.
- Enthusiastic and committed family outreach workers provide sensitive and effective support for families, including young parents. Outcomes for families are positive. The case management system enables good information sharing in respect of individual families. There is effective joint working with the early help team and children's social care. Case recording is up to date and action planning is outcome focused.
- The centres provide warm and comfortable environments for families. Staff ensure that centres are inclusive by providing a friendly welcome to all. Parents that spoke to inspectors, including parents of children with additional needs, said they felt safe within the centres.
- The volunteering programme is well organised, effective and promotes community cohesion well. Volunteers praise the opportunities offered by the group. One volunteer told inspectors, 'It just changed my life.' Of the 24 volunteers over last 18 months, three quarters have gone into employment, some within the centres.
- Antenatal and postnatal services are delivered within centres, which provide good opportunities for expectant and new parents to be introduced to other services provided by the centres. Across the group, information shows the vast majority of children are in good or very good health and breastfeeding rates are above the national average.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Requires improvement

- Members of the CPG, including the parent chair, are enthusiastic and committed to their community. They receive information regarding registration and engagement data and priority groups. However, they do not receive the financial information they need to provide robust challenge and ensure best use of resources across the group.
- Representation from education partners and parents on the CPG is low. New terms of reference are

in place and the board has self-assessed and developed an action plan, although progress is rather slow. The board members have not received induction or training, although those that spoke to inspectors understood their role as 'critical friend'.

- The group's self-assessment requires updating, but is realistic in identifying areas for development. However, unhelpfully, the group's business plan is not up to date and does not clearly link to the group's improvement plan. This plan requires amendment to ensure priorities for the centre are clear; progress is measurable and actions regularly reviewed.
- The quality of the data presented to the centres by the local authority continues to improve. Clear information regarding registration, access and sustained engagement figures is shared regularly. The centres receive reliable baseline data for most target groups, but work is continuing to ensure more detailed information is available to centres about some groups such as low income families.
- The local authority's performance framework is effective. The annual conversation and regular reviews ensure that areas for development are clearly identified in an improvement plan and progress against targets is monitored. Managers find the performance framework supportive and helpful in identifying their performance and progress.
- Parents give their views about the offer made by centres in a number of ways, including evaluations of programmes and at parent forum meetings. They are pleased to give their time to contribute because it is 'our centre' and know that their views are valued and used to plan future activities. Centres are inclusive and well resourced, with a good range of specialist equipment available for children with additional needs.
- Safeguarding policies and procedures meet requirements. However, the hot drinks policy is not implemented consistently across all venues. All staff are suitably checked and trained. The staff understand how to report concerns and make referrals, which are well supported by managers. The family outreach workers carry out joint work to support children subject to child protection plans, those in need, and those subject to early help plans effectively.
- The new manager is well qualified and experienced in the role due to working in other areas of the county. Capacity to improve is good, as demonstrated by the increase in registrations and funding for two-year-olds in recent months.
- The staff are enthusiastic and dedicated; they have continued to deliver services through periods of great change, with minimum impact on the families the centre serves. Supervision and appraisals take place regularly and staff feel well supported. They have accessed a good range of training opportunities.

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

Unique reference number	80312
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	447639
Managed by	The local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	2,680
Centre leader	Emma Bruton
Telephone number	07720 848139
Email address	Emma.bruton@westsussex.gov.uk

This group consists of the following children's centres:

- 20999 Durrington Children and Family Centre
- 21168 Findon Children and Family Centre
- 21960 Maybridge Children and Family Centre

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