

Derbyshire - Birdholme Group

Church Street South, Birdholme, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S40 2TF

Inspection dates 14–15 October 2014

| Overall effectiveness | This inspection: Previous inspection: | Good | 2 |
|--|---|--------------------------|----------|
| | | Not previously inspected | |
| 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 children's centre group is good.

- Strong partnerships have had a very positive impact on the large number of families from priority groups accessing and benefiting from a wide range of effective and targeted services.
- Support and guidance, including in the home, are very good and help to improve families' circumstances, particularly for those experiencing difficulties.
- Health outcomes are good. Improving childhood obesity levels and an increasing number of mothers who continue breastfeeding reflect the centre's effective targeted work and very strong relationships with the health team.
- Children are making good progress overall. They are well-prepared for school and a vast majority of them take up free education places.
- Adults have good opportunities for volunteering to extend their learning and improve parenting and employability skills.
- Strong leadership, management and governance have resulted in improvement to services and good outcomes for families. The centre has very robust systems for checking on its performance and setting priorities for future improvement.
- Hardworking, enthusiastic and skilled staff, managers and partners work really well together as a team. They are all strongly committed to improving centre services and outcomes for the families they are supporting.

It is not outstanding because:

- The group of centres has not yet developed good links with some schools, nurseries and pre-schools.
- There is insufficient formal involvement of parents in shaping services, through the parents' forum or as representatives of the advisory board.

What does the centre/group need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality and practice of the group's work to support children to achieve a good level of development by working closely with those schools, nurseries and pre-schools where children are not reaching their full potential.
- Ensure effective representation of parents on the advisory board and in parent forums in order to shape centre services and inform decision making.

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: a local authority manager; representatives from the advisory board; parents; volunteers; and centre staff. Inspectors also met with: early years providers; headteachers; citizen's advice bureau advisors; members of the health team; staff from Hunloke Adult Community Education Services; and a number of other partners including the Multi-Agency Team (MAT).

The inspectors observed: 'Positive Parents', 'PEEPs' and 'Stay and Play' sessions.

The inspection covered the following centres: Birdholme Children's Centre and Hasland Children's Centre.

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

Inspection team

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Qaisra Shahraz, Lead inspector | Additional Inspector |
| Deborah Sanders | Additional Inspector |
| Judith Elderfield | Additional Inspector |

Full report

Information about the group

Birdholme Children's Centre is on the same site as Spire Infant and Nursery School (URN 112660). Hasland Children's Centre shares a site with the Pupil Referral Unit (URN CIR1111). Both of these settings are subject to separate inspection arrangements. Their reports can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk. These two centres formed as a group in 2013. The centres are managed and delivered by the local authority. An advisory board is in place.

The group's reach area includes Chesterfield Central and Chesterfield South. Birdholme Children's Centre covers Rother, Walton and West wards, and Hasland Children's Centre covers Hasland and St Leonards wards. Overall, the centres serve a demographically diverse population with some pockets of high deprivation. The Birdholme Children's Centre is predominantly within the top 30% most deprived in England.

The main target groups identified by the group are: children from workless families, those experiencing mental health issues and teenage parents. Most families are of White British origin. A few families come from minority ethnic groups. About 24% of families are dependent on work-related benefits.

The Birdholme Group delivers services from the two children's centres and other community venues. They work in partnerships with a wide range of organisations to deliver services including open access and targeted group sessions, family support, health services, adult education and counselling support.

There are 1568 children under five years of age living in the area. Children's skills, knowledge and abilities on entry to early years provision are either below or generally typical for their age.

The centre manager is responsible for the day-to-day running of the two centres in the group. There is a multi-agency team manager who oversees the running of the services from each of the two children's centres.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families **Good**

- Very strong partnerships with health professionals and the effective use of live birth data are helping to increase the number of families registered with the centre.
- Approximately 88% of families are registered and a large majority of families regularly accesses services, including those expecting children and those living in the most deprived areas. At 85%, contact with teenage parents is very positive. Similarly, at 67%, a large majority of families living in workless households are engaged in meaningful activities with the centre.
- Families benefit from a wide range of universal and targeted services which match their

needs. The very proactive family support workers know the community well. Combined with their strong partnerships with the health, education and social care teams, staff target support and advice effectively to meet individual families' needs, including for those teenage parents feeling isolated and those parents who are unemployed.

- Outreach work is a particular strength and helps a number of families to get through times of crisis. Families receive excellent support and guidance in their home such as help with budgeting, children's routines, learning about cooking healthy meals or keeping families safe. One grateful parent said: 'Staff are brilliant. They help us so much, giving their very best and all problems are soon resolved.'
- A vast majority of children aged two, three and four years take up their funded early education places. This is the result of the centre's active engagement with a wide range of partners to identify children missing out on this entitlement.
- The group places a strong emphasis on providing services for the development of social, emotional and personal skills. Hence one of its key target groups is families who are facing difficult emotional issues such as post-natal depression or those isolated at home. The 'Perinatal Mental Health' programme, for instance, helps new mothers to bond with their babies and feel less isolated.
- The group provides a wide range of information for families in all aspects of early childhood and parenting. Vibrant displays and posters provided inside the centre signpost families to a good range of services, including those for families requiring specialist support.

The quality of practice and services

Good

- Both children's centres are highly regarded as hubs of the community by families and partners. In the words of one partner: 'Such a welcoming centre with a good range of services. Staff are so friendly, supportive, and knowledgeable and families love them and keep coming.'
- Parents have good opportunities to become volunteers and to access a wide range of courses, including functional skills at the co-located Hunloke Adult Education Centre. This has led to many undertaking further accredited and parenting courses like 'Positive Parents'. The 'Kickstart your family life' programmes have greatly enhanced parents' self-esteem and confidence.
- Through the onsite good quality advice and guidance provided by the citizen advice bureau advisors at Birdholme centre, parents are well supported on benefit matters and into employment.
- Health outcomes are good and improving. The proportion of mothers who continue breastfeeding at six-to-eight weeks is rising. Levels of smoking in pregnancy and of obesity for children entering Reception class are lower than those seen nationally. The centre places a strong emphasis on adopting a healthy lifestyle with the support of an onsite health trainer and initiatives like selling bags of fresh fruit and vegetables to families at a low cost and the 'HENRY' cookery programme.
- Well-planned and high quality targeted children's sessions such as the 'Stay and Play',

'PEEPs' and 'Getting Ready for School' help to boost children's development, and have a good impact on improving their skills and school readiness. Borrowing of story sacks supports parents to help their children to learn at home.

- There is a trend of improvement in Early Years Foundation Stage profile scores across the reach area and the achievement gap between the lowest achieving children and their peers is narrowing. However, the centre group recognises the need to strengthen further its links with those schools, nurseries and pre-schools where children are not reaching their full potential to see what more they could do to help more children reach a good level of development by the end of Reception.
- Family case files are maintained to a high standard by staff. They are securely audited and clearly record positive improvements in mental health, economic stability and the safety of families.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- Those responsible for leadership and governance have effectively driven improvements in services so that outcomes for children and families are good. Everyone is ambitious to improve outcomes further.
- In partnership with local authority officers, challenging and measurable targets are set and managers have an accurate view of how well the centre is doing and make good use of all available information to plan further improvements.
- The centre receives effective support and challenge from the local authority, governing body and the advisory board. The advisory board members have an accurate knowledge of how well the centre is doing, particularly in terms of how it is reducing inequalities. Parents are represented on the advisory body. However, the involvement of adults in shaping centre services, for example through the parents' forum or as representatives of the advisory board, is currently limited.
- Performance management processes are well embedded and rigorous. This includes the monitoring of the quality of services through regular meetings, observations, supervision sessions, and 'unannounced challenge day' monitoring visits undertaken by Senior Management Team within CAYA (Children and Younger Adults) department.
- The centre manager and her team are enthusiastic, highly qualified, skilled, and have detailed knowledge about the local communities. Staff feel valued, well supported and confident in their specialist 'championship' roles. They benefit from a wide ranging programme of appropriate professional development opportunities. Resources are of good quality and are deployed very appropriately. Accommodation is excellent.
- Safeguarding of families is at the heart of the centre's work. This includes promotion of e-safety and safety in the home. Information sharing and strong multi-agency working result in the centre staff being fully involved in the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) processes and effectively able to support families at risk of harm. They effectively support children in need, those subject to child protection plans and looked after children.

- Staff demonstrate a strong commitment to ensuring that everyone is included, and to reducing barriers for vulnerable families including those experiencing mental health problems. Parents speak highly of how the centre services have improved their lives, including their emotional well-being. 'The centre staff have been my rock,' are the words of one delighted user. Diversity is well celebrated through the use of positive images in centre displays of families from around the world and choices of toys.

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/Group details

| | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Unique reference number | 80037 |
| Local authority | Derbyshire |
| Inspection number | 447657 |
| Managed by | The local authority |
| Approximate number of children under five in the reach area | 1568 |
| Centre leader | Michelle Trolley |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Telephone number | 01246 276764 |
| Email address | michelle.trolley@derbyshire.gov.uk |

This group consists of the following children's centres:

- 20310 Birdholme Children's Centre
- 21396 Hasland Children's Centre

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