

Inspection report for Pine Ridge Sure Start Children's Centre

Local authority	Surrey County Council
Inspection number	383352
Inspection dates	12–13 January 2012
Reporting inspector	Jan Lloyd HMI

Centre leader	Paula Harris
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
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Linked school if applicable	Federation of Pine Ridge Infant and Nursery School and Lorraine Infant and Nursery School.
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	Little Acorns Nursery, Lorraine Nursery, Pine Ridge Nursery

The inspection of this Sure Start children's centre was carried out under Part 3A of the Childcare Act 2006 as inserted by section 199 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009.

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Introduction

The inspection addresses the centre's contribution to:

- facilitating access to early childhood services by parents, prospective parents and young children
- maximising the benefit of those services to parents, prospective parents and young children
- improving the well-being of young children.

The report is made to the local authority and a copy is sent to the children's centre. The local authority may send the report to such persons it considers appropriate and must arrange for an action plan to be produced in relation to the findings in this report.

An inspection of the registered early years provision at Lorraine Nursery was carried out at the same time as the inspection of the centre under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006. The report of this inspection is available on our website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

An inspection of the maintained nursery at Pine Ridge Infant and Nursery School was carried out at the same time as the inspection of the centre under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The report of this inspection is available on our website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

An inspection of the Federation of Pine Ridge Infant and Nursery School and Lorraine Infant and Nursery School was carried out at the same time as the inspection of the centre under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The reports of these inspections are available on our website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an early years inspector.

The inspectors held meetings with centre staff, advisory board members, a representative of the school's governing body, the headteacher, the nursery manager and representatives of the local authority, health services, Jobcentre Plus, other local organisations as well as parents and carers.

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

Information about the centre

Pine Ridge Sure Start Children’s Centre is located on the site of Pine Ridge Infant and Nursery School on the Old Dean estate. It is part of the Federation of Pine Ridge Infant and Nursery School and Lorraine Infant and Nursery School and is managed by the Federation’s governing body. The centre opened in March 2008 and is a phase two centre, one of five in Surrey Heath. The reach area covers the wards of Old Dean and St Paul’s and a small area in Camberley town centre. The Old Dean community has low GCSE attainment, a high percentage of workless households, a growing number of minority ethnic groups and a large number of families living in social housing. St Paul’s community has a low number of lone parents and workless households and a majority of privately owned houses. The area in the town centre has a high proportion of army families. The majority of children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage at a level below that expected at their age.

The centre is open 50 weeks of the year and provides child and family health services, family support, information and guidance, and outreach work. It has recently had major building work to add a reception area, small meeting room and access from the school drive. During the building work, the centre ran sessions in community venues but the number of families accessing services dropped. Numbers are beginning to increase. There is a full-time centre manager, two half-time outreach workers, a half-time advice, information and clerical receptionist, and a part-time temporary receptionist.

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

The effectiveness of the children’s centre in meeting the needs of and improving outcomes for families

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

The centre’s capacity for sustained improvement, including the quality of its leadership and management

2

Main findings

This is a good children’s centre with strong leadership and a highly motivated team. The centre provides a wide range of effective activities and services to meet the needs of the children and families in the local area. It is committed to providing an inclusive environment and the targeted work with vulnerable families is effectively narrowing the achievement gap. A very high priority is given to safeguarding and keeping children safe and protected.

Contact with families across the reach area is varied depending on the specific need within individual areas. However, contact with families within the two most deprived areas is good. Parents and children enjoy coming to the centre. Typical comments include: 'The staff are lovely and so easy to talk to. My kids clicked with them straight away.'; 'I can't fault the staff. They are part of my children's lives.'; and 'This is a friendly environment where I know my children are safe.'

The centre works very well with partners. Parents find the antenatal, postnatal and child health clinics really useful, especially the opportunity to ask questions when they have concerns. Breastfeeding figures for North Camberley are low at 27.9% but the centre is working hard with the health services to increase the awareness of the benefits of breastfeeding. Parents who have attended parenting courses report an improvement in their parenting skills, confidence and self-esteem. Children play well together and develop good relationships with other children.

The centre works closely with Jobcentre Plus and other organisations to provide information and advice on developing economic stability and independence. A new Work Club for unemployed people is due to open in mid-February. The centre has good working relationships with local training providers but, currently, there are no courses being offered to improve users' skills, although successful courses have taken place in the past. The centre works well with its partners to provide comprehensive care, guidance and support. Parents see the centre as a place they can turn to where staff give them time to discuss issues and concerns and can recommend specialist services when required.

Governance and accountability arrangements are clear and work well. The School Federation governing body manages the centre and the headteacher provides excellent performance management and supervision. The centre works closely with all the schools and nurseries within the federation. Advisory board meetings are well structured and review the work and forward planning of the centre but attendance from partners is low. The centre makes good use of data, evaluations, information from partners and feedback from users to develop its self-evaluation and the service delivery plan and make improvements to the activities and services. The 2011 satisfaction survey shows that 60% of users are very satisfied with the service and 27.5% are satisfied.

The centre makes good use of the limited staff resources and accommodation and very effectively uses its work with partners to deliver additional services. The centre takes clear actions to overcome weaknesses and gaps in provision. The detailed service delivery plan clearly identifies the outcomes and activities required to deliver the performance indicators. Each activity has a measurable output and has a review date. Capacity for sustained improvement is therefore good.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- Provide opportunities for adults to participate in further education or training to develop employability skills including literacy, numeracy and language.
- Develop and implement strategies to improve attendance and participation at advisory board meetings.

How good are outcomes for families?

2

The partnership work with health services is excellent and a range of strategies are being used to securely improve the health of families in the reach area. To encourage more breastfeeding, there is a breastfeeding support group in the community, a drop-in facility with a midwife and a monthly weaning and sleep workshop. Parents can hire breast pumps from the centre for six months at a minimal charge and the use of these is increasing. Child obesity figures for the Old Dean estate are high for children in the Reception Year and the centre actively promotes healthy eating, has free fruit available, provides cook and eat lunchtime sessions for young mothers and encourages exercise through its activities and use of the outside area.

Children and families feel safe when accessing services at the centre. First aid courses, a road safety event and a fire safety event help parents to gain confidence and skills. The well-trained staff carry out daily risk assessments of both the inside and outside areas of the centre. The number of children on child protection plans is low but, where these have happened, appropriate support has been available, good working relationships have taken place with other agencies and recording is good.

Contact with families in the two most deprived areas is good and is effectively supported by the two outreach workers. Children and parents, mostly mothers, engage in and enjoy the activities at the centre. One parent said, 'It's a lifesaver. I so enjoy coming here.' All the parents spoken to by inspectors find the staff friendly, supportive, caring and always available to talk through any issues or concerns. Contact with fathers is improving and the centre is about to start a Saturday play session to encourage fathers to participate more. Activities such as 'play and learn', 'messy play' and 'sing and sign' help children develop their listening, communication and other skills for the future. Parents particularly like the 'messy play' sessions as this gives opportunities for children, which are not always available at home. Children who have attended the centre are well prepared for transition to nursery. The percentage of children who achieved a total of at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation Stage was 58% for 2011. The need for speech and language support for children who attend the centre is high but there is a long waiting list for the county council service. However, staff have received training in this area and integrate this support into the activities on offer.

Parents actively contribute to the development of activities at the centre. For

example, parents requested that there should be more activities at the end of the week and now there are additional sessions on a Friday. The 'messy play' sessions used to be mixed ages but, following feedback from the parents, they are now separated into different age groups and the parents find this works better. The centre is in the early stages of setting up a parents' forum and held an 'ideas exchange' where parents were able to come and share their views of the children's centre and their community. In the 2011 satisfaction survey, a very large majority were happy to use the services but did not want to get involved at the moment. The school has also found it difficult to involve parents formally and the centre is working hard to involve the parents where possible and encourage more of them to contribute their ideas.

Children living in households dependent on workless benefits make up 25% of the children seen at the centre. Jobcentre Plus sends through appropriate local vacancies weekly and these are put onto a large and bright noticeboard along with information about courses and other organisations. The centre, together with partner agencies, has had some success in improving the economic stability of some families in the reach area.

These are the grades for the outcomes for families

The extent to which children, including those from target groups, are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy and families have healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children are safe and protected, their welfare concerns are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them	2
The extent to which all children and parents, including those from target groups, enjoy and achieve educationally and in their personal and social development	2
The extent to which children engage in positive behaviour and develop positive relationships and parents, including those from target groups, contribute to decision-making and governance of the centre	2
The extent to which children are developing skills for the future and parents, including those from target groups, are developing economic stability and independence including access to training and employment	3

How good is the provision?

2

The good range of services and activities are well matched to local needs. The outreach workers use their time effectively in outreach work, running sessions at the centre and working in partnership with others. They are aware of key target areas and work closely with the health visitors to visit parents identified as requiring support. Contact with lone parents is improving. Teenage mothers attend specialist provision in the area but the centre also runs a well-attended lunchtime session specifically for young mothers. The centre supported a 10-week depression support course run by a partner organisation. One mother said that the centre is vital to her well-being and that her child can get out of her one-room flat and run around with

other children. Parents also said that they had developed better parenting skills and that this support was invaluable. The centre has become a place in the local community for parents to come to for information, advice and support, and to meet with other parents and make friends. One parent said, 'It's been a great way to get to know other mums and build support as well as taking part in fun activities with my daughter.'

The wide range of activities helps both children and parents to learn and develop new skills. These activities include music sessions, play-based learning to improve talking and interaction, activities for the whole family unit and termly first aid courses. The centre celebrates the achievements of children and adults by displaying work and photos and presenting certificates.

The level of care, guidance and support is good. Responses to families are timely and appropriate. Where centre staff are unable to help, they effectively signpost parents to other organisations. The partnerships with Jobcentre Plus, the Family Information Service, a debt management support group and local community groups provide independent support and information services.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The extent to which the range of services, activities and opportunities meet the needs of families, including those in target groups	2
The extent to which the centre promotes purposeful learning, development and enjoyment for all families, including those in target groups	2
The quality of care, guidance and support offered to families, including those in target groups	2

How effective are the leadership and management?

2

The effective leadership, experience, motivation and hard work of the team and good partnership working ensure that the centre is able to deliver its core offer well. Governance and accountability arrangements are clear and well understood and one of the School Federation governors is chair of the advisory board. Professional supervision arrangements are in place for the staff and the local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services is just starting a group supervision session for centre staff in Surrey Heath. Regular meetings with the county council monitor the performance of the centre. The county council has recently produced a very comprehensive set of data developed for individual centres to use for future evaluation and planning. Working relationships with partners are well planned with either a county council or local service level agreement.

Evaluation activities are thorough and involve all users of the centre. The 2011 satisfaction survey shows that the centre has made a tremendous difference to the lives and development of users. For parents, the biggest difference is that they get

quality time with their child. Children have had experiences they might not otherwise have had, their play has developed and they have gained in confidence. The staff team are looking at additional ways of developing new services and activities by working with partners and opening outside the current hours.

The centre has a commitment to providing an inclusive environment and removing barriers for all children including those with disabilities. The targeted work with vulnerable families and one-to-one support is effectively narrowing the achievement gap. Diversity is celebrated and the centre has a language of the month display specific to languages found on the estate. During the 'play and learn' sessions, the centre celebrates a wide range of festivals and celebrations. Currently, the centre has a low level of minority ethnic families attending activities but it has contact with them through the health services and outreach workers. The centre has successfully run English for speakers of other languages courses when required.

The very effective arrangements for safeguarding children underpin the work of the centre. The centre comes under the safeguarding arrangements of the School Federation. These fully meet statutory requirements and the centre manager acts as the nominated person when the headteacher is not on-site. Extended procedures include covering incidents at the local high category security hospital. Risk procedures are thorough and well recorded for work with partners, external venues and daily on-site risk assessments. All staff undertake comprehensive training, including child protection, which is well recorded. The centre works well with its partners to provide early intervention for families at risk. Effective support is available for victims of domestic violence.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The extent to which governance, accountability, professional supervision and day-to-day management arrangements are clear and understood	2
The effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secure improvement in outcomes	2
The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of families, including those in target groups	2
The extent to which equality is promoted and diversity celebrated, illegal or unlawful discrimination is tackled and the centre fulfils its statutory duties	2
The effectiveness of the centre's policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults	1
The extent to which partnerships with other agencies ensure the integrated delivery of the range of services provided by the centre to meet its core purpose	2

The extent to which the centre supports and encourages families in the reach area to engage with services and uses their views to develop the range of provision	2
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Any other information used to inform the judgements made during this inspection

The findings from the concurrent inspection of Pine Ridge Infant and Nursery School were used to inform the judgements.

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Summary for centre users

We inspected the Pine Ridge Sure Start Children's Centre on 12 and 13 January 2012. We judged the centre as good overall.

We would like to thank all of you whom we met for telling us about how much your centre helps you, your families and your children. You told us how much you and your children enjoy coming here, that you have made new friends at the centre and how friendly and supportive the staff are. The staff team enjoy working with you and are passionate about ensuring that the activities and services meet your needs. Many of you told us how useful it is to be able to meet with the midwife and health visitor at the centre. You also told us about the many activities at the centre and we were able to visit a small number of them. We could see how much you and your children enjoy coming here and we saw how much your children enjoyed the sticky rice in the 'messy play' session. Our discussions with you and the staff helped us to make the decision that this centre is good overall.

We like your new centre with its large entrance hall and new garden area. We know that it must have been difficult during the building works but we are pleased to see that many of you have now returned and there are also some new families. We hope you carry on telling the staff about what you like and what can be improved at the centre. The staff listen to what you say and now run more activities on a Friday and have split the 'messy play' sessions into different age groups as you requested. They have also run first aid training courses and you told us how useful these have been.

Your centre works with many other organisations to ensure that you have all the information, advice and guidance that you need. These include information from the Jobcentre about jobs that are available in your area. We have asked the centre manager to offer opportunities for you to gain additional skills such as jobsearch, reading, mathematics and skills to help your child when they go to school.

All of you told us how safe you feel in the centre and we saw the excellent systems that are in place to keep you and your children protected and safe. Every day, a member of staff goes round the centre and the outside area to check that everything is safe for you and your children. They also go to all the places you use outside the centre and carry out the same checks. They are meticulous about checking all the people who come through the front door and everyone has to sign in when they arrive.

Thank you for welcoming us into your centre and giving up time to talk with us. We are sorry that we could not meet more of you. We wish you, your families and the centre all the very best for the future.

The full report is available from your centre or on our website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.