

Inspection report for The Grange Children's Centre

Local authority	London Borough of Ealing
Inspection number	365785
Inspection dates	20–21 July 2011
Reporting inspector	Nina Bee

Centre governance	London Borough of Ealing
Centre leader	Anita Jokun
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Centre address	Church Gardens Ealing London W54HN
Telephone number	0208 7992509
Fax number	Not applicable
Email address	ajokun@grange.ealing.sch.uk

Linked school if applicable	The Grange Primary School
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	The Grange Pre-School Aktiva Breakfast and after School Club.

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.

Published: August 2011



The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/100024.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

No. 100024

© Crown copyright 2011



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/childcare provision 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 co-located/partner primary 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.

This inspection was carried out by an additional inspector and an early years inspector.

The inspectors held meetings with the centre manager, the business manager, members of the local authority, partner agencies and members of the advisory board. Informal discussions were held with parents. The inspectors observed the work of the centre and looked at a range of centre documentation, which included key policies, parent satisfaction forms and data about the people who use the centre.

Inspection judgements

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

Information about the centre

The Grange Children's Centre was designated in 2008 and opened in 2010; it is a phase two centre which is open for 48 weeks each year. The centre provides family support, including advice and training, employability and benefits, child and family health services and outreach and home visiting. This is a culturally diverse area containing people from mixed socio-economic backgrounds and families from the

nearby Tree Estate. Most families come from White British or White Other backgrounds. A range of minority ethnic groups are also represented. Approximately 10% of children live in workless households. A centre manager is responsible for the day-to-day management and organisation of the centre, whilst the headteacher of the Grange Primary School oversees its work. The centre accommodation consists of three buildings. Facilities for staff from the health service and space for adults to receive training are situated in the main building. In the second building, there is space for stay and play sessions with an outdoor area. This building is also used by a private provider to run a breakfast and after-school club as well as holiday activities. Another private organisation offers early education and childcare in the third building. Staff who work at the centre signpost families to other nearby centres when appropriate. Governance is provided by the local authority. An advisory board, which includes three governors from the school governing body, has been appointed to monitor and evaluate the work of the centre. Children enter early years provision with levels of skill and knowledge that are below those expected for their ages.

Overall effectiveness

The effectiveness of the children’s centre in meeting the needs of and improving outcomes for users and the wider community

4

Capacity for sustained improvement

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

4

Main findings

The children’s centre is inadequate overall because of weaknesses in its leadership and management and in the systems for evaluating and improving its services. Despite this, there are many positive aspects of the centre’s work. It provides an appropriate range of services for users that have a satisfactory impact on many aspects of their lives. Parents and carers say they enjoy attending activities and courses that are put on for them and appreciate the advice and support they receive. Centre staff have adequate understanding, in some areas, of how well they are doing in relation to other children’s centres because they are given data collected by the local authority. For example, during the first quarter of 2011, the centre registered 200 new families which was more than any other children’s centre in Ealing. Leaders are aware of priorities the local authority is focusing on, such as reducing obesity and increasing immunization rates, but there is little documentation to show the centre’s impact in these areas.

Currently, data are not used effectively to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Self-evaluation is inaccurate because staff do not have a clear picture of the strengths and areas for improvement for their centre. Evaluations of the impact of services are not being collated effectively by staff nor by the centre’s partners to inform the advisory board and feed into future development planning. At present there is no strategic development plan to show how the centre is focusing on

priority areas and what actions are being taken to improve the impact of provision on outcomes for users. In addition, no stakeholders are represented on the advisory board and too few contribute to decision making and governance of the centre. As a result of these weaknesses, the satisfactory outcomes for users and provision cannot be guaranteed in the future and therefore the centre's capacity for sustained improvement is inadequate.

In the short time it has been open, good relationships have been developed between families who use the centre, the centre staff and other professionals who work with them. Effective working relationships have also been established between the primary school, the pre-school and the breakfast and after-school club staff who use the site. Everyone who enters the centre is made to feel welcome. As a result, the centre runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Adults and children are respectful of one another and the range of users generally reflects the ethnic and social diversity of the community it serves.

Parents, children and other adults who use the centre enthusiastically take part in the wide range of activities which focus on early education and childcare, parenting, and child and family services, some of which help adults to improve their skills and enable them to think about returning to work. Parents, carers and their children were seen interacting well with each other and enjoying themselves, for example during stay and play sessions and when they took part in sessions which catered for mothers and young babies. Participation rates are generally satisfactory, but stay and play sessions and the baby clinic, which are held at the centre, are often well attended. Parents say they appreciate all the support and help they receive whilst bringing up babies and toddlers. There are secure, well developed links with the on-site pre-school, which eases transition when children move on. Centre staff and partners focus satisfactorily on developing families' awareness of healthy lifestyles and the need to be safe, and these are soundly promoted in the activities which the centre provides. Procedures and policies for safeguarding are satisfactory. The centre meets all safeguarding requirements and staff ensure it is a safe environment both inside and out, for adults and children. Outreach support workers liaise effectively with families in crisis and link parents up with appropriate external agencies when necessary. Adults have satisfactory opportunities to improve their basic skills in English, mathematics and their use of computers.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- Work closely with the local authority to analyse data that is specific to the centre, so that areas for improvement can be accurately identified and then focused on by centre staff and partners.
- Produce a written plan to outline the centre's strategic development which includes:
 - clearly identified priorities for improving outcomes and provision
 - criteria by which the managers can demonstrate the impact of their

- actions
- details of how and when progress will be evaluated
- contributions from partners and stakeholders.
- Improve the effectiveness of the advisory board by:
 - ensuring that partners and stakeholders are better represented
 - providing greater challenge to the centre by reviewing the progress made towards the priorities for improvement and evaluating the impact of actions taken on outcomes for users.
- Work more closely with all partners so that:
 - evaluations of the services they provide are shared more readily with the centre manager, feed into the centre’s strategic plan and are discussed and reviewed by the advisory board
 - families are more effectively engaged in contributing to the management of the centre and in developing and evaluating provision.

How good are outcomes for users?

3

Overall, most outcomes are satisfactory for users as a result of the sound day to day running of the centre and the range of activities introduced by the centre manager. The centre currently has a satisfactory impact on helping families to adopt healthy lifestyles. Parents and children learn about dental hygiene when dental specialists are invited into the centre. There is a clear focus on tackling obesity in sessions such as Sticky Fingers, which promotes healthy living. Many activities observed by inspectors at stay and play sessions encourage healthy lifestyles. Babies exercise as they are stimulated to move when placed in well resourced, safe environments such as baby gyms. Children exercise as they dance when playing with musical instruments and freely use the wheeled vehicles or climbing apparatus when outside in the secure playing area. When mothers bring their babies to clinics at the centre, they are provided with information about keeping their babies fit and healthy. Parents say they appreciate the support they receive in these clinics and a recent parents’ satisfaction survey showed that out of 50 returns an overwhelming majority were entirely satisfied. The centre has identified very few vulnerable children. There are no children who are identified as having special education needs and/or disabilities and no children with child protection plans. Outreach workers keep detailed documentation for children with specific needs, such as those who are undergoing Common Assessment Framework (CAF) monitoring.

The centre is a safe and secure place to be and, when asked, parents agree. The importance of being safe at home is highlighted in initial registration packs. However, the centre has not yet analysed the impact of this initiative. Families enjoy using the centre and inspectors observed children learning through play as they explored the resources and outdoor facilities. They are well behaved and parents and children treat each other with respect and consideration at all times. Although outcomes are satisfactory, they are not well evaluated to feed back into advisory board meetings in order to shape future planning. However, parents’ satisfaction forms are overwhelmingly positive about the activities which are on offer and how they have

benefitted from them.

Satisfactory opportunities are given to adults to gain confidence and access further learning in English, mathematics and computer skills. As a result, they are able to support their children better when they start school. A group of adults has recently been successful in achieving an English qualification and are currently working on one for mathematics. Others are taking a qualification to improve their computer skills. There are one or two isolated cases where the views of adults who use the centre have been used to shape services, such as the development of the outside area for children to play, but these are too few. No parents or carers are currently on the advisory board and facilities to encourage user participation in governance such as a parents' forum have not yet been established.

These are the grades for the outcomes for users

The extent to which children, including those from vulnerable groups, are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy and families have healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children are safe and protected, and their welfare concerns are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them	3
The extent to which all users enjoy and achieve educationally and in their personal and social development	3
The extent to which children engage in positive behaviour and develop positive relationships and users contribute to decision-making and governance of the centre	4
The extent to which children are developing skills for the future and parents are developing economic stability and independence including access to training and employment	3

How good is the provision?

3

At the time of the inspection the needs of parents and children are satisfactorily identified and the centre currently provides a wide range of services which are becoming increasingly well attended as the centre becomes established. The needs of individual children and adults who use the centre are accurately assessed through discussion and observation. Users' feedback on the sessions they attend also helps staff to ensure their needs are met. There are sound procedures for identifying children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The children who need more detailed assessments, for example through the Common Assessment Framework, are identified and the information gathered is used well to address their needs. Outreach workers make a notable difference as they work in the homes of families who need extra support and advice. These families are also effectively signposted to a range of external agencies for additional advice and support. When families have real difficulties, the centre supports them effectively and this is really appreciated by individuals. Learning is purposeful and there is evidence of improvement in outcomes, particularly for families in crisis. The centre provides

popular sessions that focus on developing parenting skills and parents express high levels of satisfaction with the support and advice they receive at baby clinics. Parents also speak highly of the stay and play sessions which are effectively resourced with good quality equipment and enable children to develop new skills. Courses for adults are helping them to gain more confidence as they develop basic English, mathematics and computer skills. One drawback is that there are no crèche facilities to help mothers with young children who may want to attend one of these courses.

The care, guidance and support which the families, children and other adults who use the centre receive are at least satisfactory and good in some respects. Informative leaflets are available for all centre users and people who work at the centre are good at signposting families to other centres or services when necessary. As a result, users have access to information on many issues, such as the dangers of smoking and alcohol and drug misuse, how to claim benefits and what jobs are available in the area. However, there is little recorded evidence to show the impact of this work. There is some evidence of services being adapted well to meet particular needs. For example, a small Polish group requested its own stay and play session with an adult who spoke English and Polish. This has been addressed and is much appreciated by the Polish community. However, the centre is at a very early stage of analysing its impact on the different groups who use its services.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The effectiveness of the assessment of the needs of children, parents and other users	3
The extent to which the centre promotes purposeful learning, development and enjoyment for all users	3
The extent to which the range of services, activities and opportunities meet the needs of users and the wider community	3
The quality of care, guidance and support offered to users within the centre and the wider community	3

How effective are the leadership and management?

4

The centre is provided with data, from the local authority, some of which is specific to its reach and some of which focuses on the wider context of the local authority. There is little evidence to show that this is being used to shape services. The headteacher of the primary school and a member of the local authority are members of the advisory board but it does not include parent representatives or partners, including the health service, who deliver sessions in the centre. There is no strategic development plan in place that identifies priorities for improvement and no indication of how the advisory board is evaluating and monitoring the work of the centre. Evaluations of sessions run by partner organisations are not shared with the centre manager and so are not used effectively to shape future courses. As a result, self-evaluation is inaccurate. Centre staff, partners and the advisory board do not have a sufficiently accurate picture of how well the centre is doing. This is limiting their

ability to adapt and tailor services more effectively to meet users' needs more effectively in the future and does not ensure that provision and outcomes for users will continue to be a least satisfactory.

The centre manager has herself focused effectively on developing the full range of activities that the centre is commissioned to offer and has successfully gained the trust of the families who attend sessions and the partners who come into the centre to run them. She is responsible for the good relationships that have developed between everyone involved in the centre and the welcoming environment which is offered to all, including those who use the centre and the many partners who work in it. In less than a year, the number of children and adults who have come through the doors is impressive. Approximately one third of the families in its reach area have, at least, visited the centre and filled in registration forms. The centre soundly promotes the inclusion of all groups of users. All people who use the centre get on well with each other and no issues related to equality have been identified. Families from minority ethnic backgrounds use the centre as widely as those from the ethnic majority. Satisfactory procedures are in place to address the needs of individuals who have specific difficulties, including special educational needs and/or disabilities, but none have yet been identified. At the time of the inspection, safeguarding arrangements were secure. All people who work in the centre are appropriately vetted to ensure that users are safe and all staff are suitably trained.

There is evidence from case studies to show that the outreach workers are making a difference to families' lives. Users' satisfaction forms show positive responses. Parents and carers and other adults who use the centre are happy with the support, help and advice they receive at the centre. Despite the weaknesses in leadership and management, the centre is providing satisfactory value for money as it is having a positive impact on the lives of an increasing number of families in its reach area.

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	4
The extent to which ambitious targets drive improvement, provision is integrated and there are high expectations for users and the wider community	4
The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of users and the wider community	3
The extent to which equality is promoted and diversity celebrated, illegal or unlawful discrimination is tackled and the centre fulfils its statutory duties	3
The effectiveness of the centre's policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults	3
The extent to which evaluation is used to shape and improve services	4

and activities	
The extent to which partnerships with other agencies ensure the integrated delivery of the range of services the centre has been commissioned to provide	3
The extent to which the centre supports and encourages the wider community to engage with services and uses their views to develop the range of provision	4

Any other information used to inform the judgements made during this inspection

None.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance *Complaining about inspections*, which is available from our website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like us to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Summary for centre users

We inspected The Grange Children’s Centre on 20 and 21 July 2010. We judged the centre as inadequate overall because of weaknesses in its leadership and management, but we agree with you that there are many positive aspects of the centre’s work.

We saw a few activities and also spoke to a small number of you. From the satisfaction forms you have filled in we could see that you enjoy the activities on offer and are pleased with the support and help you receive. Families who need that bit of extra support are effectively supported by outreach staff. The centre manager has worked hard to create a wide range of services for you. People who use the centre are now better at staying safe and healthy. Courses, such as ‘Sticky Fingers’, have made many of you more aware of the need to eat healthily and your children have lots of opportunities to exercise when they run about outside and use the climbing apparatus or the wheeled toys during stay and play sessions. The centre is safe and secure and those of you who we asked think the same.

It was great to see so many of you and your babies at the baby clinic held in the centre. You are well supported by health specialists and so are able to deal with issues relating to your young children. If you wish, you have sound opportunities to learn more English, mathematics and computer skills. Congratulations to those of you who have recently completed an English course and are now working on a mathematics one. A few others are improving their computer skills. The centre gives you satisfactory advice and support if you wish to take other courses, such as those at college.

The centre runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. However, the leadership and management of the centre are currently not effective enough at all levels to ensure

improvement. The way staff have evaluated the work of the centre is not accurate which shows they do not have a clear idea of the strengths and areas for improvement. As a result, the group of people called the advisory board, who provide support and challenge in the centre, are unable to fulfil their duties in evaluating the centre's effectiveness. There is no clear development plan, at present, to show how well the centre is improving its services and tackling identified priorities. In addition, you, as users of the centre, are not sufficiently involved in the governance of the centre or in evaluating provision. We have asked those who run the centre to improve all of these aspects of its leadership, management and governance. Perhaps, after reading this, you may feel that you would like to go and volunteer your services. The centre manager would be very happy to talk with you about this and explain what would be involved.

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