

Sharlston Children's Centre

Hammer Lane, Sharlston Common, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF4 1DH

Inspection date 18–19 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	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 is a good centre.

- The centre has been very successful in registering most families within the community. A large majority of them participate well in activities and comment on the positive difference the centre makes to their lives.
- Families benefit well from the excellent support and care provided by the centre, particularly through the work of the parent support team. As a result, families overcome barriers and the centre is able to reduce the risk of harm they may face.
- Staff have very good relationships with a wide range of partners from schools, health, social care, charities and other organisations. This enables the centre to provide a wide range of good quality services that help families improve their general well-being, their health and increase their life chances.
- The quality of leadership, management and governance is good. Leaders and managers are highly competent and committed to doing their very best for families. As a result, the centre is continually improving its effectiveness and outcomes for families are also good and improving.

It is not outstanding because:

- Participation rates in one of the most deprived parts of the community are not as high as overall rates.
- The local authority does not use data well enough to set challenging and measurable targets to drive improvement at the centre.

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 two additional inspectors.

The inspectors held meetings with centre and school staff, leaders and managers, representatives of the local authority, governing body and partnership board. They met representatives from health, employment, education, early years and social care organisations. They also met parents and volunteers.

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

Inspection team

Priscilla McGuire	Additional Inspector, Lead Inspector
Rajinder Harrison	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

Sharlston Children's Centre is located in Wakefield. It is a stand-alone centre and was designated as a phase two centre in 2008. It shares its site with Sharlston Community School which is subject to separate inspection arrangements. The inspection report can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk. Sharlston is a semi-rural ex-mining community. The reach area consists of separate villages of Sharlston, Streethouse, Crofton, Nostell, Old Snydale and Snydale Villas. Public transport between the centre and some of the villages is limited and requires a two-bus journey. The reach area is one of mixed social characteristics with some areas of deprivation and some more affluent areas. The centre is situated within one of the 30% of areas of high deprivation. Most families are of White British heritage. There are high levels of unemployment in parts of the reach area. Children enter early years provision with skills and knowledge below those expected for their age.

Governance of the centre is managed on behalf of the local authority by the school's governing body. The partnership board which comprises school governors, parents and representatives of partner organisations, acts as the advisory board. Services offered include early years activities, adult learning courses, family support, health services and employment support.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Increase participation rates of families living in the most deprived part of the community by exploring different ways of attracting them to use centre services.
- The local authority to make better use of data to set challenging and measurable targets that will drive the centre to improve its overall effectiveness to outstanding.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Good

- Most families are registered with the centre and have access to good quality services. Staff make good use of display areas in the centre, of community activities and of the centre's newsletter, to publicise services and to signpost families to external sources of information, support and guidance.
- Staff know their community very well. They also build strong relationships with families. This enables them to plan services and activities that meet local needs and those of families who face common barriers such as social isolation that results from living in a rural location.
- Outreach work which includes home visits and the use of community venues to provide services, is mostly effective and improving. However, venues in one of the most deprived parts of the area are minimal and this limits the centre's ability to bring services into the area. Participation rates from families living in this particular location are not as good as other areas.
- Centre staff enjoy very good relationships with partners from schools, health, charities and social care organisations. As a result, the quality of information sharing and use of referrals between staff and their partners is good and the centre is able to identify most of the families in its reach area.
- As a result of good partnership work between the parent support worker team and other professionals, the centre is able to accurately identify families with the most needs. This enables staff to plan services to ensure these families are given the best possible support to overcome barriers, to stay safe and to improve their life chances.

The quality of practice and services

Good

- The centre offers a good balance of services that are available to all families and those that are more specific to the needs of particular families. The centre manager routinely monitors the range of services offered. This ensures that participation rates are good and that the centre can adapt services as required and offer what is most relevant to the needs of the community and families.
- Evidence from the centre's tracking of the progress children make, demonstrates that it has a positive impact on their development. When children start attending the centre, their development is not as good as it should be for their age but, by the time they leave, their development is in line with expectations. The proportion of children in the reach area who achieve a good level of development is good and the gap between those who do well and those who do not is narrowing.
- Families receive excellent support, care and guidance from parent support workers and other staff. This helps them overcome barriers and improves their life chances. The centre also does its best to provide practical support to families. This includes help with transport which ensures families living in the most rural parts of the community are not disadvantaged by their location.
- The centre actively promotes and encourages volunteering and provides good support to its volunteers. Parents make a good contribution to the centre's work through volunteering on the partnership board, the parents' forum, by participating in fundraising events and by producing the centre's newsletter. As a result, the centre is very much at the heart of the community and satisfaction rates from families are very high.
- A large majority of parents with the most needs benefit well from the excellent parenting training offered. One parent described the training as 'inspirational' and another said 'This course has been brilliant in opening my eyes up to different ways of dealing with things'. As a result of attending the training, parents improve their parenting skills and gain a better understanding of how best they can support their children's development.
- Through highly effective work with health professionals such as health visitors, a health trainer, oral health specialist and others, the centre plays a key role in improving the health of the community. This is evident from the reducing obesity rates which are in line with national rates, parents' improved understanding of oral health and improving breastfeeding rates which, at six-to-eight weeks, are above district levels.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- Centre staff are passionate about improving the lives of families and reducing inequalities particularly between those who live in the most rural parts of the community and other families. The success of the centre is reflected in the positive outcomes for families and the good quality services it offers.
- Arrangements for leadership, governance and management are effective. Good monitoring of the centre's performance by the centre manager, the partnership board, school governors and the local authority enables the centre to accurately evaluate its strengths and areas for development. The results of evaluation are used well to make improvements, to narrow the gap in life chances between families and to plan services that reflect the priorities of families and of the community.
- The local authority has strengthened the effectiveness of its monitoring role by reviewing the centre's progress on a quarterly basis instead of carrying out an annual review. However, it is not using data well enough to set challenging and measurable targets that are specific to the centre and which will enable it to progress from good to outstanding.
- Staff and partners actively promote safeguarding. Policies to reduce the risk of harm to families are well implemented. Staff use the Common Assessment Framework and other tools to reduce the risk of harm to families. The centre also uses the data and information it routinely receives about children on child protection plans, children in need and looked after children, to make sure these families are involved in centre activities and receive the help they need.
- Families are regularly consulted about their needs and interests and make an active and recognised contribution to the development of the centre. They are involved in key decision making at different

levels such as through their representation on the partnership board and also the parents' forum.

- Resources and services are good quality and very well managed to ensure families' needs and local priorities are well met.

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.

Children's centre details

Unique reference number	22675
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	421499
Managed by	The governing body of Sharlston Community School on behalf of the local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	614
Centre leader	Becky Price
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01924 303930
Email address	bprice@sharlston.wakefield.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

(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.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

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

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

