

Milton and Old Worle Children's Centre

Mendip Aveue, Worle, Western-Super-Mare, BS22 6HN

Inspection date 15–16 January 2014

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 effectively identifies children most in need of early help, including disabled children and those with special educational needs, and provides good individual support. Good information sharing and multi-agency work ensure young children and families most in need access the services and take up the free entitlement to early education.
- High-quality sessions are run from the centre. Parents and childminders particularly value the consistently good provision and this means that they and their children feel well supported, make friends and learn new skills. They look forward to coming to the centre and attend regularly.
- Staff are well qualified, highly skilled and enthusiastic. The centre manager encourages their continued development so that they receive a good level of training and are able to provide effective one-to-one support, and good sessions increase the well-being of children and their parents.
- The partnership board includes parents and provides strong leadership through effective challenge and support at meetings. Strong strategic leadership across the reach area of the three centres in the locality means that resources are used well and the centre is in a good position to improve further.

It is not outstanding because:

- There are not enough opportunities for adult learning and pathways to employment are not sufficiently promoted. Systems to record the impact of learning or progression to employment are still developing.
- Leaders understand the profile of the area and know the areas for improvement, but records of self-evaluation are too long and not always clear.
- Data from the local authority are too complex and not always well understood.

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. It was carried out at the same time as inspections of other children's centres, which were Castle Batch and Locking Castle and Locking.

This inspection was carried out by two Additional inspectors.

The inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, managers from the local authority and centre staff. They also met health, education and social care partners, parents, early years practitioners, volunteers and representatives from the partnership board.

The inspectors visited Milton and Old Worle Children's Centre. They had discussions with the parents' forum and representatives from Homestart, Jobcentre Plus and Adult Learning. They did an observation of the English as another language course jointly with the centre manager. They looked at the centre's self-evaluation, action planning, a survey of parents' views, a sample of case studies and safeguarding procedures.

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

Inspection team

Penny Mathers, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Joyce Cox	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

Milton and Old Worle Children's Centre is in the coastal town of Weston-Super-Mare in North Somerset. It is located a short distance from Mendip Green Primary School which is subject to separate inspection arrangements and the report can be found on www.ofsted.gov.uk. The children's centre is managed directly by the local authority and has its own partnership board. It works collaboratively with two other centres, Castle Batch Children's Centre and Locking Castle and Locking Children's Centre that together with Banwell, Winford and Sandford Children's Centre, in February 2014, will make up East Locality Children Centre group.

The centre serves 727 children under five years of age. It is not located in an area of deprivation but there are pockets of deprivation among areas that are more affluent. The population is mostly White British but with increasing numbers of families from minority ethnic heritage. Most children enter early years provision with good skills that are above levels typical for their age. There are several new housing estates in the area and the numbers of children are expected to rise.

Children centre staff are co-located with local authority social workers, education welfare, and business support. Opening hours are part time but services are offered collaboratively at the two other centres that are within walking distance for most of the community. The centre has identified work with children under the age of two who live in families most in need as a target group. Other target groups include young mums, lone parents, children from minority ethnic groups and those from workless households. The centre offers a range of services including support groups for childminders, parenting courses, courses for English as a second language, 'Boogie Time', activities to support speech and language development and play sessions. Child health clinics, 'one stop' family information service and breastfeeding support are also part of the services available. Parents are signposted to other groups available within the locality such as postnatal information, infant massage and weaning support.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- In partnership with learning skills providers and employment agencies, develop:
 - more opportunities for developing adults' personal skills and education
 - pathways to learning and employment that are clear and well promoted
 - systems to check and record adult achievement so that the centre can better analyse progress, plan future services and show evidence of the impact it is making.
- Ensure the self-evaluation report better analyses the differences services are making so that it is not too long, easy to read and clear on what steps are planned for future improvement.
- Together with the local authority develop user-friendly data that are well understood and able to be used to judge the difference the centre is making.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Good

- Most of the families and children who live in the local area are registered with the centre. High priority is given to working with children under the age of two living in the families with most need and their access to early years education is monitored; as a result a very large majority of these access services. Increasing numbers of young mums, lone parents, families from minority ethnic groups and those living in workless households are accessing services.
- Referrals from a wide range of agencies, discussions and assessments are used well to identify the needs of families in the area. Sharing of information between agencies when a family is in crisis leads to positive solutions. Staff work well with families, especially those who are most vulnerable,

to engage them and ensure they stay engaged until their needs are fully met.

- Services are well promoted across the local area. Families report they get to know about services in all three centres and they are routinely accessing services across all three centres. Over a three-year period most children from the local area were seen at one or other of the centres.
- Close working with other agencies and good information sharing ensures that almost all two-year-olds from families most in need are identified. The large majority of these families take up their entitlement to free education and the children are placed in high-quality provision. Very rigorous monitoring is in place to check their progress.

The quality of practice and services

Good

- Good quality services are provided and families are signposted to equally good services at other centres nearby. The range of services is wide and provides a good balance between services for all and services for those most in need, which allows sessions to be well matched to the needs of the families. All are welcome at the centre and any discrimination is appropriately tackled.
- Sessions provided by the centre are of a high quality with clear objectives and evaluation. Parents and children enjoy attending and parents report that they increase their ability to play with their children and manage their behaviour.
- Safety is a priority for the centre and is promoted by all staff who reinforce safety during sessions and in risk assessments during home visits. Parents develop greater understanding of the dangers of poisoning, choking and burns and learn how to protect themselves and their children. The number of emergency admissions of children under five years old in the East Locality area has fallen from 41 to 34 over the last year.
- Adult and community learning is available and parents grow in confidence and undertake courses to help them back to employment and to improve their English. The range of opportunities for learning and pathways to employment is not wide enough or well promoted. Effective checking and tracking of progress are undertaken for some adults, but further development of this would enable better planning of future services and enable the centre to better show evidence of the difference it is making.
- The majority of children in the area reach a good level of development by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the achievement gaps between groups of children are closing. Good quality activities provided by the centre alongside good quality early years education are contributing well to these results. A good programme to support children moving into school enables children to settle well and make good progress.
- Partnerships with health are good and developing well. Families are well supported in achieving healthy lifestyles, including effective support for breastfeeding and weaning. Children who have delays in speech and language are identified quickly and linked to the services they need.
- Very close working with social work staff ensures those who are most in need are getting the right help at the right time. Social workers and their managers are confident in the skills of the family support workers to protect the most vulnerable children and secure improved well-being. One-to-one support ensures parents improve their parenting skills and children are protected.
- Effective care, guidance and support are provided to a wide range of families both through targeted one-to-one support and through signposting to services available to all families. Parents speak highly of the support they have received and the difference it makes to their lives.
- The centre actively encourages volunteering and has been successful in involving parents in the work of the partnership board. A number of organisations, including Homestart and Springboard, work with the centre and a good number of volunteers are available to provide early support to those families who need it.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- Strategic leadership is strong, leaders know the centre well and have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development. However, the self-evaluation report is overly descriptive and does not fully evaluate the impact of the services. It is too long and not clear enough to enable leaders to identify what has been achieved.
 - The local authority checks how well the children's centre is doing through an annual review where priorities and areas for improvement are identified. Development plans are focused well on those areas that will make the biggest difference. The three centres in the locality have common priorities and support them working together and sharing resources and expertise.
 - A comprehensive range of policies and procedures that are understood well underpins very effective leadership. The centre manager is close to her staff and uses regular supervision and observation of sessions well to develop them, set targets and give helpful feedback. Staff value the support, are highly committed and make good progress in their careers.
 - Safeguarding is central to the work of the centre. Clear procedures ensure all the necessary recruitment checks are undertaken and risk assessments are routinely undertaken on all activities and resources used. Staff have good awareness of safeguarding policies and know to whom they should report any concerns they may have.
- How well the most vulnerable families access services is checked, but the data provided by the local authority are not easy to understand or use. Not all the available data are used in an organised way to hold centres to account for improving the well-being of children and families and it is not easy to judge the difference the centre makes.
 - The views of parents and children are valued, they are listened to and changes are often made as a result of their feedback. Parents are keen to contribute to the running of the centre and attend the partnership board and parents' forum, confidently contributing to a good level of challenge. The information parents provide is used well to develop the services.
 - Resources are used well across the locality to ensure sessions are not duplicated and are value for money. Staff are well qualified, work flexibly and are skilled at working with families to support them and improve their quality of life. Families who have accessed the centre and benefited are keen to encourage other families to use the centre's services.

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 well-being 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	22023
Local authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	430166
Managed by	The local authority
Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	727
Centre leader	Tracey Lewis
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
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