

# Robert Owen Children's Centre

43 Commerell Street, Greenwich, London, SE10 0EA

<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 July 2014
<b>Previous inspection date</b>	Not previously inspected

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b> Previous inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- A very large majority of families in the area are registered with the centre and have good access to the range of services, information and guidance it provides. They also benefit from the welcoming and inclusive culture that is actively promoted at the centre.
- The quality of assessment of families' needs is good. Staff use tools such as the 'Early Help' and 'Well Being' assessments to identify families' strengths, concerns and needs. As a result, families are well matched to services, support is offered early when needed and overall outcomes for families are good.
- Parents benefit well from the wide range of formal and informal adult learning and training opportunities offered. These include courses such as parenting, the 'Discover Me' course and craft sessions such as jewellery making.
- Evidence and tracking show that attendance at the centre helps older children who attend the centre to be well prepared for their transition to school.
- The quality of leadership, governance and management is good. Managers from the local authority and the centre work collaboratively with a strong advisory board to ensure the centre provides a good service for families. Leaders and managers focus their energies on implementing strategies that ensure the centre continually improves both the quality and impact of its work.

### It is not outstanding because:

- Not enough parents from workless households, one of the centre's key priority groups, participate in courses or training that will increase their chances of employment.
- Tracking of the progress of younger children who attend sessions such as 'Stay and Play' has not been fully implemented. This limits the centre's ability to demonstrate fully the impact of all its work.

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

- Increase the proportion of families from workless households who access courses and training that will increase their chances of employment.
- Extend the existing and successful tracking systems for older children to younger children who attend sessions such as 'Stay and Play', to ensure that the centre can more fully demonstrate the impact of its work with these children.

## 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 managers and staff from the centre, leaders and managers from the local authority. They held meetings with parents and met partners representing health, social care, schools, nurseries and charities. They also met members of the advisory board and parents' forum.

The inspectors visited services and observed activities delivered at the Robert Owen Children's Centre.

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

## Inspection team

Priscilla McGuire, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Jameel Hassan

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about the centre/group

Robert Owen Children's Centre offers services as part of the integrated provision offered by the Robert Owen Early Years Centre in East Greenwich, London. The centre is managed by Robert Owen Nursery School on behalf of the local authority. The nursery is subject to a separate inspection, the report for which is available at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). The headteacher of the nursery school is also the manager of the centre.

The centre is located within a short bus ride of key national landmarks such as the 'Cutty Sark' and the Greenwich Maritime Museum. Working in conjunction with its partners, the centre provides a range of services which include health clinics, family support services, parenting training, adult learning courses, employment support and early years education.

The population in the area is very diverse. There are both areas of high affluence and areas of deprivation. Housing is a mixture of owner-occupied housing, social housing and privately rented properties. Around 29% of families live in privately rented accommodation, which is higher than the Greenwich rate of 18%. The majority of families are of White British heritage but there are an increasing number of families from Black and minority ethnic groups. The priority groups identified by the centre are families from workless households, lone parents, Black and minority ethnic groups and families identified as vulnerable because of their circumstances. The proportion of families identified as economically inactive in the most recently available data is around 23%, which is lower than the Greenwich rate of 29%. Around 20% of children live in workless households dependent on benefits.

Children's skills and abilities on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage are lower than those expected for their age.

### Inspection judgements

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

- The very large majority of families are registered and have good access to the range of services, information and guidance the centre provides. Families registered include those with children and those expecting children. Registration rates of families from the centre's key priority groups, which include lone parents and workless households, are also good and continually improving.
- To ensure registrations continually increase, centre staff go out into the local community to promote services. For example, they make scheduled visits to local clinics and also make home visits to families. They also organise community events such as summer fairs.
- Parents value the welcoming and inclusive environment at the centre. They find staff approachable and feel valued. This all ensures that once engaged with the centre, parents continue to use it until their needs are met.
- The quality of information sharing between the centre and partner organisations such as those involved in health, education and social care work is good. The key priority groups identified by the centre, which are Black and Minority ethnic groups, lone parents, workless households and those identified as vulnerable, accurately reflect those families in the community who are known to have the most needs.

- Centre staff thoroughly and accurately assess the needs of families, using tools such as the Common Assessment Framework and the 'Well Being' and 'Early Help' assessments. Staff also use their strong links with a range of professionals such as social care staff, early years practitioners, midwives and health visitors, to ensure that once families' needs have been assessed, they are matched to the most appropriate service and receive help at the earliest opportunity.
- By carefully and frequently scrutinising participation and attendance data, centre staff are able to identify which families have yet to register or engage with the centre. Staff make good use of the 'outreach impact analysis' and 'registered but not seen' reports to identify strategies, and the effectiveness of those strategies, to increase families' participation in activities.
- Take-up rates of free early years education are excellent. Families with two-, three- and four-year-olds benefit from being able to access good or outstanding quality provision for their children.

### The quality of practice and services

Good

- Parents benefit well from the variety of good quality learning and training opportunities available at the centre. Many enjoy and benefit from the 'Discover Me' course, which combines personal development and parenting topics. The impact of the course is reflected in parents' views, such as 'It helped me to start believing in myself' and 'It truly changed my life; I'm more positive, in control, happier and for once I feel free.' However, not enough parents from workless households access the type of courses, such as accredited or formal adult learning courses, that will increase their employability.
- The participation rates of priority groups are good and the centre has a good balance of universal and targeted services to meet their needs. For example, specialist services such as those offered by the 'Best Beginnings' midwife ensure that even before children are born, support is offered for those families identified as in most need.
- Careful tracking of children's progress shows that the centre helps them make a successful transition to nursery and school. However, although staff use observations to monitor the progress of younger children, tracking and recording of the progress of these children who attend sessions such as 'Stay and Play' is not systematic. This limits the centre's ability to fully demonstrate the impact of its work with these children.
- By attending structured and good quality parenting courses, parents, particularly those from priority groups such as lone parents and those in most need, improve their parenting skills. The success of these courses is demonstrated well in the reflective and highly positive comments from parents about the way parenting training helps them improve their skills in managing their children's behaviour.
- A first-rate example of the impact of the centre's targeted work to promote safety to its key priority groups is its work with Black and minority ethnic families. For example, by participating in a workshop on fire safety targeted at Travellers and which was held at a Traveller site, families learned for the first time how to identify fire hazards in their trailers, such as plastic covers on cushions and location of gas canisters.
- Obesity rates in the area are low and breastfeeding rates are high. However, the centre is not complacent about this and, to ensure rates remain good, staff organise activities such as 'Eat Better Start Better' and breastfeeding support groups in conjunction with health partners.

## The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- The centre is well led and managed by a highly competent management team. The centre manager and her deputy are determined to do their very best for families and lead by example. They know their centre well and have accurately identified its strengths and areas for improvement. Centre staff work well together as a cohesive and highly competent team and work productively with their colleagues from the nursery.
- The local authority sets ambitious objectives for the centre. It sets measurable targets to motivate staff to be aiming for excellence at all times. To ensure the centre receives the support it needs to improve continually, the local authority arranges regular 'improvement visits'. During these visits, the centre's performance is monitored and actions for improvement are agreed. As a result, data show that there is a year-on-year increase in the number of families who register and use the centre, and good outcomes for families are maintained or continually improving.
- The centre's advisory board is highly effective and offers both support and challenge to the centre. By participating in activities such as regular reviews of performance data, scrutiny of the self-evaluation report and direct observation of activities, members of the board are actively involved in driving improvement at the centre.
- The centre has strong and productive partnership links with organisations such as nurseries, childminders, charities, health organisations and social care teams. As a result, families receive good quality care and, when appropriate, access to specialist services.
- Safeguarding is a key priority of the centre's work. Safeguarding and safer recruitment procedures are implemented well. Swift action is taken to reduce any risk or perceived risk of harm. Through effective partnership work with social care teams and other professionals, the centre is engaged with all the families whose children are subject to child protection plans and provides appropriate support for families with children identified as in need, subject to the Common Assessment Framework or who are looked after.
- Through their roles on the advisory board and parents' forum, parents make a good contribution to decision-making at the centre. As a result, satisfaction rates from families are very high. In addition, because of the impact the centre has had on their lives, families often feel motivated to volunteer their time and skills to support centre activities such as the annual summer fair.
- Financial and staffing resources are managed and used well. Through the integrated nature of its work as an early years centre, resources are shared well across the nursery and children's centre. Staff also make good use of the excellent range of historical resources in Greenwich. For example, through its partnership work with the Old Royal Naval College, staff have been able to expose families to new experiences through visiting the college and also through staff from the college attending sessions at the centre to share their skills, expertise and resources.

## 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 group details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	22531
<b>Local authority</b>	Greenwich
<b>Inspection number</b>	442853
<b>Managed by</b>	Robert Owen Nursery School
<b>Approximate number of children under five in the reach area</b>	970
<b>Centre leader</b>	Fiona Kemp
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8858 0529
<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@robertowen.greenwich.sch.uk

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