

## **Coventry – North East 1 Cluster Children’s Centre**

c/o 454 Foleshill Road, Coventry CV6 5LB

### **Information about this review**

Michael Blakey, Chris Field and Karen Cooper undertook this review.

The review team visited both children’s centres that make up the North East 1 Cluster: Foleshill and Stoke Heath.

They observed a range of activities including: ‘Summer Fun’ and ‘Family Links Antenatal’ Programme.

The reviewers met with: the cluster manager and leadership team; the chair and members of the advisory board; representatives from the local authority including the data team; staff; parents; and a range of partners including midwives and health visitors.

The reviewers considered a range of documentation presented by the group and two reviewers looked in detail at a sample of case files and the systems for monitoring support for vulnerable families. They also looked at children’s learning journeys – these related to children in the co-located nursery.

They evaluated the group’s safeguarding procedures, including training records and safe recruitment checks.

## Information about this children's centre group

Coventry - North East 1 Cluster is managed by the local authority. It includes two centres: Foleshill and Stoke Heath. The cluster manager was previously responsible for Foleshill Children's Centre at the time it was inspected as a stand-alone centre.

The group of centres offers family support, parenting, early learning activities and child and family health services.

The group serves an area that includes some of the most deprived localities in Coventry and England. Some of these areas experience high levels of domestic violence and crime. In these more deprived areas the number of children living in poverty, or in workless households is high.

The majority of families living in the reach area are of Asian origin, with smaller proportions of families from a wide range of other ethnic backgrounds.

Children's skills and knowledge when they start at nursery are typically below those expected for their age.

Foleshill was inspected on 8/11/2012, and judged satisfactory under the first framework and under the same leadership. Freddie's Pride, the co-located nursery was inspected on 11/02/2011 and judged to be outstanding under the previous framework. The reports can be found at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>

Stoke Heath was inspected 30/3/2011 and judged satisfactory under different leadership. The report can be found at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>

The group of centres has identified the following priority groups: children living in workless households; children with English as an additional language aged two to four in priority neighbourhoods; and children living in overcrowded households.

## Access to services by young children and families

### Strengths

- The senior leadership team know the area very well and have a strong desire to serve every single family living in the reach area. They recognise that this is a tall order and have begun to focus their work more closely on identified priority groups. (Note: Leaders have now identified that the main priority group going forwards will be two-year-old children eligible for free early education.)
- Families who are known to social care and those subject to Common Assessment.
- Framework processes are very well engaged in the work of the centres. This strong focus on early help and support to children stepping down from social care is a credit to the leadership team who have prioritised this approach.
- Partnerships and information sharing with midwives, health visitors, and children's social care are very good. The 'acting early' approach helps to ensure that families who are more vulnerable are identified early and provided with the joined up support they need. This aspect of work is not yet as strong in Stoke Heath.
- Almost all families with new children are consenting to share information with the children's centres, but it is too soon to see the impact of this on improving engagement levels. This does, however, bode well for the future and the group should monitor access by these families more closely going forwards.
- The group's outreach work is helping to improve access to services. Community walks, focused on improving access to free early education are helping to increase engagement of eligible two-year-olds for example.
- Although leaders do not fully analyse attendance data collected through parenting programmes, staff estimate that about 100 parents have accessed over the last twelve months. The new eight week long 'Family Links' antenatal programme, which has just started and is co-delivered with health, was well attended with ten parents including three fathers during the review.

### Aspects requiring improvement

- A minority of children currently access children's centre services. In the area served by Stoke Heath, only 39% access services. However, further analysis by the local authority suggests that the large majority of children are accessing an early childhood service, including free nursery provision, health services and social care. Although this may be very positive, the group is not able to clearly demonstrate:
  - the proportion of children from target groups who are registered and accessing early childhood services
  - the sustained engagement of target children and families in services.
- Data presented by the group on access rates by age show that approximately 50% of children aged under one are registered. However, only 73 of the 268 living in the Foleshill area have accessed a service (27%). In Stoke Heath only a very small minority of children (n=23/207) have accessed a service in the last twelve months

- 
- The overall picture of access is compounded further because attendances at activities which are delivered by partners in the community and supported by the centres, are not captured.
  - The proportion of two-year-olds accessing free early education, at around 52%, is not yet good.

- Clear targets around improving access to services are not set by the local authority or the partnership advisory board.

---

## Likely inspection judgement

3

---

## The quality of practice and services

### Strengths

- Activities and services are good quality, but not enough targeted families are yet engaging with children's centre services, particularly those aged under three and from priority groups, and this limits the impact of the group.
- The 'Summer Fun' activity, for example, helps children to learn and develop and staff act as positive role models for parents. Children learn new words such as 'squeaky' and important routines which help them to be ready to learn at school.
- The Nurture Programme is effectively evaluated and data are analysed by group staff. The most recent evaluation showed that 75% of parents completed the programme and that two thirds of these were from priority families. Evaluations clearly demonstrate that this programme has helped to improve their well-being.
- Provision to support parents to learn English is good and parents clearly engage in discussions about British culture and employment during sessions. However, the lack of a crèche limits the engagement of some families with young children.
- There are strong and effective partnerships in place to help to keep children safe with a wide range of partners, including children's social care and local voluntary organisations and churches supporting the work of the group.
- The 'Acting Early' approach is highly effective. New cases are discussed on a weekly basis and partners come to the meetings well prepared to share information in order to ensure families receive effective joined up support. Staff and partners clearly understand thresholds of need and refer cases to children's social care appropriately when this is required to protect children.
- The group provides some activities that support all families. However, its current programme is heavily biased towards those families that it has identified as needing help.
- Sessions for children are generally planned with clear links to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

### Aspects requiring improvement

- Leaders have recently developed a tool to monitor the quality of practice. However, they have not regularly observed activities and services to have a clear picture of the quality of practice over time. This includes services delivered by partners.
- Tracking processes are not sufficiently well joined up to enable leaders and managers to confidently show that target children make good or better progress as a result of attending children's centre services. However, appropriate systems are in place in the co-located nursery and staff intend to develop these systems for use in the children's centres.

- Data on levels of children's achievement at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage are not sufficiently analysed to help identify which groups of children require additional support and to show that the work of the group is helping to narrow inequalities.
- The data provided by adult learning do not sufficiently identify whether parents of children aged under five attend some courses, such as English or mathematics to help them develop skills for employment. This therefore limits the group's ability to demonstrate whether parents are well engaged.

Likely inspection judgement

3

---

## The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

### Strengths

- The Partnership Advisory Board is highly supportive of the group.
- Information sharing with social care is effective and helps to safeguard children. The weekly 'acting early' meetings contribute to ensuring that vulnerable families receive help at the earliest possible opportunity.
- The local authority has driven improvements in the quality of family support work and early help, including the use of the Common Assessment Framework, very well. This successful approach to driving performance now needs to be applied to driving up access by target families and evidencing the impact of services.

### Aspects requiring improvement

- Progress has been made but systems and processes to monitor access to services by priority groups and to show the impact of services are not sufficiently well developed.
- Although the group has correctly identified some key priorities on which to focus its work, it does not have sufficiently clear outcome-based, specific, measurable targets.
- Because data on access to services have not yet been analysed sufficiently well the group is not able to effectively self-evaluate and plan activities to improve access to services, for example.
- The local authority's target setting and monitoring processes are not as robust as they need to be to ensure the group is on track to be judged as good or better. As a result the advisory board doesn't have a framework from which to challenge and support the group's leadership.
- Staff training records relating to safeguarding and child protection should be maintained in an easily accessible format so that leaders can be confident that everyone is trained to the required level including designated safeguarding leads.

### Likely inspection judgement

**3**

## Suggested improvements – the most important things to do

### Joint improvements between the LA and group

- Ensure that data are available and analysed to show the proportions of identified target group children accessing early childhood services, particularly those living in the most deprived target areas and for all target groups.
- Analyse data to show the proportions of children aged under three accessing early childhood services and the sustained engagement of target children and families in services.
- Use data on levels of children's achievement at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage to identify which groups require additional support and to show that strategies are narrowing inequalities.
- Ensure the development plan includes sufficiently clear outcome-based, specific, measurable targets.

### Centre specific improvements

- The self-evaluation form should be updated to include data on access by target groups and to better show the impact of services on narrowing inequalities.
- Ensure that involvement forms are fully completed and, if possible, review the information currently held on families to ensure that the centres have the best possible chance of demonstrating that they are reaching target families.
- Ensure that any attendances by families at activities which take place in the community are recorded and entered on the management system. If the group is supporting the quality of practice in these activities then these should be appropriately included. Likewise, ensure that the full programme of early childhood activities is made available to parents online.
- Build on the good work of the nursery to ensure that tracking processes are sufficiently well joined up to confidently show that target children make good or better progress as a result of attending activities and services provided by the group.
- Leaders and managers should observe activities and services more frequently to evidence the quality of practice over time, as they have done with the quality of case files.
- The group's safeguarding policy should be on the website and updated as and when the policy changes.

### Local authority specific improvements

- **MUST ensure that all designated safeguarding leads access appropriate training within the required timescales and that all other records of safeguarding training are easily accessible and clearly record that all staff access appropriate training as specified.**
- Set clear targets around improving access to services and monitor these regularly to ensure improvements are delivered at a good pace. (This will not be possible until the data issues, identified above, have been addressed).



- Set outcome-based targets around health outcomes, adult learning and early learning with the cluster manager, so that the local authority and PAB can monitor the group's progress and demonstrate effectiveness of services more easily.
- Work with adult learning to provide data to show the numbers of parents of children aged under five attending courses, such as English or mathematics from the reach area.

## **Coventry – North East 2 Cluster Children's Centre**

c/o Moat House Children's Centre, Deedmore Road, Coventry, CV2 1EQ

### **Information about this review**

Michael Blakey and Gemma Roberts undertook this review.

The review team visited all three children's centres that make up the North East 2 Cluster: Moat House, Bell Green and Richard Lee.

This was a focused review following up on the progress made since the group was inspected in December 2013. At the time, the group was judged to require improvement.

The reviewers observed a range of services and activities including an 'Acting Early Case Management Meeting', a 'Play and Learn' session at Richard Lee, 'Summer Fun' at Bell Green and 'Baby Massage' at Moat House.

The reviewers met with: the cluster manager and leadership team; members of the advisory board; a headteacher; staff including the partnership coordinator; parents; and a range of partners. They did not meet with local authority data team during this review but considered information provided by this team.

The reviewers considered a range of documentation presented by the group and looked in detail at a sample of case files and the systems for monitoring support for vulnerable families.

They evaluated the group's safeguarding procedures, including training records and safe recruitment checks.

At the time of the review the cluster manager was absent and did not return to work before leaving the local authority. The children's centre team leader very ably lead the review.

## Information about this children's centre group

Coventry – North East 2 is managed by the local authority. It includes three centres: Moat House, Bell Green and Richard Lee. It has shared services and leadership, governance and management and is therefore considered to be a group. Moat House Children's Centre and Richard Lee Children's Centre are situated on primary school sites.

The group offers family support, parenting, early learning activities and child and family health services.

The group serves an area that includes some of the top 30% most deprived localities in England and the large majority of children live in those localities.

4,302 children aged under five are estimated to live within the area served by the group. The large majority of families living in the reach area are of White British origin, with smaller proportions of families from a wide range of other ethnic backgrounds.

Children's skills and knowledge when they start at nursery are typical for their age.

This group of children's centres was inspected in 2013 and found to require improvement. The report can be found at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>

During the review the group tightened up its definitions of priority groups. These are now: children living in the six most deprived areas (based on IDACI); children aged two who are eligible for free early education; vulnerable children including all those subject to CAF, looked after children, children subject to child protection plans, those in need and children and families experiencing domestic violence.

## Access to services by young children and families

### Strengths

- Targeted families are well represented at activities which are delivered across the group's reach area.
- Although data show that a small minority of children aged under five living in the area access children's centre services, the actual proportion of children attending wider services may be considerably higher. This includes three- and four-year-olds attending free early education in line with the local authority's new reporting process.
- Families who are known to social care and those subject to Common Assessment Framework processes are very well engaged in the work of the centres. On average a full time worker holds fifteen cases. Cases are allocated at 'raise, share and review' meetings every two weeks.
- Families who are experiencing domestic violence are well engaged with the centres.
- Partnerships and information sharing with health visitors and midwives is improving. As a result, more parents are finding out about, and then accessing, the centres' services.
- The group has responded well to a previous inspection recommendation and is now providing more sessions for one- to two-year-olds.

### Aspects requiring improvement

- About half of the new births in the area are now registered at post-natal discharge clinics. However, involvement forms from other centres/clinics are not always entered onto the system so that the group knows where most of these children are. Registration rates are not yet good overall.
- The levels of children accessing services are often higher than the level recorded as 'involved' on the management information system. This is because some children appear on Capita One but are not yet registered (involved) with the centres. However, their attendance is recorded on the system. This contributes to a rather confused picture with regard to the actual numbers known and accessing.
- Although the majority of children living in the area currently access children's centre services the group is not yet able to clearly demonstrate:
  - the proportion of children from target groups who are registered and accessing early childhood services
  - the sustained engagement of target children and families in services.
- The proportion of two-year-olds accessing free early education is not high enough and it is likely that this situation will deteriorate in the coming twelve months.
- Clear targets around improving access to services are not set by the local authority or the partnership advisory board.

### Likely inspection judgement

**3**

## The quality of practice and services

### Strengths

- Partnerships with health services have developed well since the last inspection, when this aspect was identified as an area for improvement. The introduction of 'Acting Early' has contributed well to this.
- The group of centres, and its partners, deliver a good range of appropriate services, which are open to all families and those requiring additional support. The group has a clearly defined rationale for the services delivered.
- One-to-one family support work is a particular strength of the group; and leaders recognize that this group of families, including those with children subject to child protection plans and those subject to Common Assessment Framework processes, should be clearly identified as a key priority group, as a significant proportion of resources are rightly allocated to supporting these families.
- The quality of case recording is high and clearly demonstrates the impact of the group's family support work.
- Sessions for children are generally well planned with clear links to the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The centres have only very recently started to track children's progress. However, it is too early for leaders and managers to confidently show that target children make good or better progress as a result of attending children's centre services.

### Aspects requiring improvement

- Leaders have not regularly observed activities and services and so do not have a clear picture of the quality of practice over time. This includes services delivered by partners. However, all sessions are evaluated and learning is taken forward by staff. Leaders accurately judge the quality of services.
- Data on levels of children's achievement at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage are not sufficiently analysed to help identify which groups of children require additional support and to show that the work of the group is helping to narrow inequalities. However, as part of the review the cluster manager undertook this work and now has a clearer picture of where underachievement is occurring: for example near to the Moat House Children's Centre.
- The data provided by adult learning do not sufficiently identify whether parents of children aged under five attend some courses, such as English or mathematics to help them develop skills for employment. This therefore limits the group's ability to demonstrate whether or not parents are well engaged. This was an issue identified at the previous inspection.
- Data relating to obesity rates is only until the end of 2013.

### Likely inspection judgement

**3**

## The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

### Strengths

- The group has responded to some of the issues raised at the last inspection, particularly around the use of data to target services more effectively. However, some issues remain. For example, the 'evaluation of participation, attendance and quality improvement records in order to measure impact' requires further work so that this aspect is good.
- Staff are motivated and engaged but concerned about the future; particularly with the departure of the centre leader. The children's centre team leader ably supported the team through the review process and was very open to feedback to improve further.
- Information sharing with social care is effective and helps to safeguard children. The fortnightly 'raise, share and review' meetings contribute to ensuring that vulnerable families receive help at the earliest possible opportunity. Likewise, highly effective and regular supervision of staff helps to ensure families are effectively safeguarded.
- The local authority has driven improvements in the quality of family support work and early help, including the use of the Common Assessment Framework, very well. This successful approach to driving performance now needs to be applied to driving up access by target families and evidencing the impact of services.

### Aspects requiring improvement

- The group has correctly identified some key priorities on which to focus its work. However, it does not yet have sufficiently clear targets to further improve access so that the large majority of those targeted sustain contact with the centres.
- Systems to evidence the impact of services, particularly on children's progress are not yet effectively in place and it is therefore difficult for leaders to demonstrate the impact of the group's work in this area.
- The local authority's target setting and monitoring processes are not as robust as they need to be to ensure the group is on track to be judged as good or better. As a result the advisory board doesn't have an effective framework from which to challenge and support the group's leadership.
- The range of partners who attend the advisory board and contribute to the group's development through effective challenge and support is not sufficiently broad.

### Likely inspection judgement

**3**

---

## **Suggested improvements – the most important things to do**

### **Joint improvements between the LA and group**

- Ensure that data are available and analysed to show the proportions of identified target group children accessing early childhood services, particularly those living in the most deprived target areas and for all target groups.
- Analyse data to show the proportions of children aged under three accessing early childhood services and the sustained engagement of target children and families in services.
- Use data on levels of children's achievement at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage to identify which groups of children require additional support and to show that strategies are narrowing inequalities.
- Ensure the development plan includes sufficiently clear outcome-based, specific, measurable targets.

### **Centre specific improvements**

- The self-evaluation form should be updated to include the data on access by target groups and to better show the impact of services on narrowing inequalities.
- Implement tracking processes to demonstrate that target children make good or better progress as a result of attending activities and services provided by the group.
- Leaders and managers should observe activities and services more frequently to evidence the quality of practice over time, as they have done with the quality of case files.
- Widen the range of partners who attend the partnership advisory board and contribute to the group's development through effective challenge and support.

### **Local authority specific improvements**

- Review how families are registered (recorded as an involvement) to better demonstrate the higher levels of children who are known and actually on the system. This will be important to be able to demonstrate 'known', 'registered' and 'accessing'. It is important to define 'accessing' and 'sustained contact'.
- Consider re-opening provision to increase the proportion of two-year-olds accessing free early education, so that most have access to good or better services. In the short term, the group should consider other ways to meet their needs.
- Set clear targets around improving access to services and monitor these regularly to ensure improvements are delivered at a good pace.
- Set outcome-based targets around health outcomes, adult learning and early learning with the cluster manager, so that the local authority and PAB can monitor the centres' progress and demonstrate effectiveness of services more easily.
- Work with adult learning to provide data to show the numbers of parents of children aged under five attending courses, such as English or mathematics from the reach area.

## **Coventry – North West 1 Cluster Children’s Centre**

c/o Radford Children Centre, Lawrence Saunders Road, Radford, Coventry CV5 1HD

### **Information about this review**

Michael Blakey, Karen Cooper and Gemma Roberts undertook this review.

The review team visited all three children’s centres that make up the North West 1 Cluster: Radford, Spon Gate and St Augustine’s.

This was a focused review following up on the progress made since the group was inspected in November 2013. At the time, the group was judged to require improvement.

The reviewers observed a range of activities including ‘Family First’, an ‘English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)’ course and the crèche.

The reviewers met with: the cluster manager and leadership team; members of the advisory board; staff including the partnership coordinator; parents; and a range of partners. They did not meet with local authority data team during this review but considered information provided by this team.

The reviewers considered a range of documentation presented by the group, and two reviewers looked in detail at a sample of case files and the systems for monitoring support for vulnerable families.

They evaluated the group’s safeguarding procedures, including training records and safe recruitment checks.



## Information about this children's centre group

Coventry – North West 1 is managed by the local authority. It includes three centres: Radford, Spon Gate and St Augustine's. It has shared services and leadership, governance and management and is therefore considered to be a group.

The group of centres offers family support, parenting, early learning activities and child and family health services.

The group serves an area that includes four of the top 10% most deprived localities in England and five more in the 11-30% most deprived. The rest of the area is relatively more affluent.

4,216 children aged under five are estimated to live within the area served by the group. The large majority of families living in the reach area are of White British origin, with smaller proportions of families from a wide range of other ethnic backgrounds.

Children's skills and knowledge when they start at nursery are typical for their age.

This group of centres was inspected in 2013 and found to require improvement. The report can be found at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>

During the review the group tightened up its definitions of priority groups. These are now: children living in the top 10% most deprived areas; children aged two who are eligible for free early education; vulnerable children including all those subject to CAF, looked after children, children subject to child protection plans, those in need and children and families experiencing domestic violence.

## Access to services by young children and families

### Strengths

- A highly skilled administrator supports the capable, reflective and driven leaders and managers very well with regards to the analysis of data. Leaders therefore have access to comprehensive reports on attendance at activities by children. As a result, this group of centres is able to clearly tell the good story of their overall improvement journey from July 2014.
- The group has almost tripled the number of children registered (involved) from 431 children in July 2014 to 1,242 in May 2015. This level of sustained improvement demonstrates good capacity to improve, particularly as leaders are tracking this progress in detail and further changes to the way in which children are registered are already being implemented.
- The majority (54%) of children aged under five living in the area access children's centre services. Analysis of attendance by individual children since April 2014 shows that 256 families have attended a postnatal clinic at Spon Gate; 483 attended a drop in session at St Augustine's; and 75 attended a 'Family First' group at Radford for example. The actual proportion of children attending wider services may be considerably higher, particularly if three- and four-year-olds attending free early education are included in line with the local authority's new reporting mechanisms.
- In the most deprived area that the centres serve (SPON1) only 49% of children are registered, however 57% of children are known to access services. Two thirds of these children attend the centres or a service one to three times and one third sustain their contact with centre (in this instance, four times or more). However, the group has yet to do this level of analysis to show access by other target groups.
- Families who are known to social care and those subject to Common Assessment Framework processes are very well engaged in the work of the centres. On average a full time worker holds fifteen cases. Cases are allocated at 'raise, share and review' meetings every two weeks. Over the last twelve months 20 cases have been stepped down from children's social care. Over 40 referrals from health partners were received in the same period, clearly demonstrating that families who need additional support are identified early.
- Partnerships and information sharing with health visitors and midwives is very good. This is despite the fact that this area was not, at the time of the review, an 'acting early site.' The proposed move to become an 'acting early site' will further strengthen support to families. Midwives report positively that so far no parent has refused to register with the children's centres at a post-natal clinic.

### Aspects requiring improvement

- It became apparent during the review that the levels of children accessing services were often higher than the level recorded as 'involved' on the management information system. This is because some children appear on Capita One but are not yet registered (involved) with the centres. However, their attendance is recorded on the system. This contributes to a rather confused picture with regard to the actual numbers known and the numbers accessing.

- Although the majority of children living in the area currently access children's centre services the group is not yet able to clearly demonstrate:
  - the proportion of children from target groups who are registered and accessing early childhood services
  - the sustained engagement of target children and families in services.
    - The proportion of two-year-olds accessing free early education is not good and a number of providers are due to close, compounding the situation.
    - Clear targets around improving access to services are not set by the local authority or the partnership advisory board.

**Likely inspection judgement**

**3**

## The quality of practice and services

### Strengths

- The group of centres, and its partners, deliver a wide range of appropriate services, which are open to all families and those requiring additional support. The group has a clearly defined rationale for the services delivered.
- One-to-one family support work is a particular strength of the group; and leaders recognise that this group of families, including those with children subject to child protection plans and those subject to Common Assessment Framework processes, should be clearly identified as a key priority group, as a significant proportion of resources are rightly allocated to supporting these families.
- The quality of case recording is very high and clearly demonstrates the impact of the group's family support work.
- Partnership working with the Child and Family First Team CAF level 3 workers is very good. Staff and their partners have a very good understanding of evidence-based approaches to supporting more vulnerable families and often jointly support families well, particularly at times of transition.
- Families who are subject to domestic violence are well supported through a range of services including the 'Wings Group' at Radford and 'Just for Me'. The group, as part of the review, rightly recognised that these vulnerable families should also be clearly identified as priority group; whilst acknowledging that no baseline is possible.
- Activities and services are generally good quality, but data do not clearly show whether enough targeted families are yet engaging with children's centre services, particularly those aged under three and from priority groups, and this limits the impact of the group.
- Sessions for children are generally planned with clear links to the Early Years Foundation Stage. Data across the reach areas show that the proportion of children achieving a good level of development is above the level seen nationally and across the city.
- The ESOL programme is good quality and teaching is effective. Parents make good progress as a result of attending this.

### Aspects requiring improvement

- The crèche, which is delivered to support the ESOL course, requires improvement. Children attend this activity regularly and opportunities to closely track their progress, and plan for their individual needs, are missed.
- Leaders have not regularly observed activities and services and so do not have a clear picture of the quality of practice over time. This includes services delivered by partners. However, all sessions are evaluated and learning is taken forward by staff.
- The centres have tried several methods of tracking children's processes since the last inspection but a consistent approach has not yet been adopted. Leaders and managers are not therefore able to confidently show that target children make good or better progress as a result of attending children's centre services.
- Data on levels of children's achievement at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage are not sufficiently analysed to help identify which groups of children require

---

additional support and to show that the work of the group is helping to narrow inequalities.

- The data provided by adult learning do not sufficiently identify whether parents of children aged under five attend some courses, such as English or mathematics to help them develop skills for employment. This therefore limits the group's ability to demonstrate whether or not parents are well engaged. This was an issue identified at the previous inspection.
- Obesity rates are above levels seen across the city and nationally, but data relates only until the end of 2013.

**Likely inspection judgement**

**3**

## The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

### Strengths

- At the time of the last inspection, inspectors commented that it was too early to see the impact of new leadership. This is now clearly evident. Leaders have made good progress in improving access to services, particularly as evidenced in the number of children registered (involved) and the appropriate range of services on offer.
- Leaders have responded very well to most of the issues raised at the last inspection, particularly around the use of data to target services more effectively. Some issues remain – although many of these require a strategic focus guided by the local authority.
- Leaders are committed, determined and open to challenge and support; they have created an effective culture of self-evaluation and improvement and as a result this group of centres is improving well. Staff are motivated and engaged.
- Information sharing with social care is effective and helps to safeguard children. The fortnightly 'raise, share and review' meetings contribute to ensuring that vulnerable families receive help at the earliest possible opportunity. Likewise, highly effective and regular supervision of staff helps to ensure families are effectively safeguarded.
- The local authority has driven improvements in the quality of family support work and early help, including the use of the Common Assessment Framework, very well. This successful approach to driving performance now needs to be applied to driving up access by target families and evidencing the impact of services.

### Aspects requiring improvement

- The group has correctly identified some key priorities on which to focus its work. However, it does not yet have sufficiently clear targets to further improve access so that the large majority of those targeted sustain contact with the centres.
- Systems to evidence the impact of services, particularly on children's progress are not yet effectively in place and it is therefore difficult for leaders to demonstrate the impact of the group's work in this area.
- The local authority's target setting and monitoring processes are not as robust as they need to be to ensure the group is on track to be judged as good or better. As a result the advisory board doesn't have an effective framework from which to challenge and support the group's leadership.
- Staff training records relating to safeguarding and child protection are not maintained in an easily accessible format so that leaders can be confident that everyone is trained to the required level.
- The range of partners who attend the advisory board and contribute to the group's development through effective challenge and support is not sufficiently broad.

### Likely inspection judgement

**3**

## Suggested improvements – the most important things to do

### Joint improvements between the LA and group

- Build on the good work already started at a group level to ensure that data are available and analysed to show the proportions of identified target group children accessing early childhood services, particularly those living in the most deprived target areas and for all target groups.
- Analyse data to show the proportions of children aged under three accessing early childhood services and the sustained engagement of target children and families in services.
- Use data on levels of children's achievement at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage to identify which groups of children require additional support and to show that strategies are narrowing inequalities.
- Ensure the development plan includes sufficiently clear outcome-based, specific, measurable targets.

### Centre specific improvements

- The self-evaluation form should be updated to include the data on access by target groups and to better show the impact of services on narrowing inequalities.
- Implement tracking processes to demonstrate that target children make good or better progress as a result of attending activities and services provided by the group.
- Leaders and managers should observe activities and services more frequently to evidence the quality of practice over time, as they have done with the quality of case files.
- Widen the range of partners who attend the partnership advisory board and contribute to the group's development through effective challenge and support.

### Local authority specific improvements

- **MUST ensure that all safeguarding training is clearly recorded to demonstrate that all staff have received appropriate training in line with statutory guidance.**
- Review how families are registered (recorded as an involvement) to better demonstrate the higher levels of children who are known and actually on the system. This will be important to be able to demonstrate 'known', 'registered' and 'accessing'. It is important to define 'accessing' and 'sustained contact'.
- Consider re-opening provision to increase the proportion of two-year-olds accessing free early education, so that most have access to good or better services. In the short term, the group should consider other ways to meet their needs.
- Set clear targets around improving access to services and monitor these regularly to ensure improvements are delivered at a good pace.
- Set outcome-based targets around health outcomes, adult learning and early learning with the cluster manager, so that the local authority and PAB can monitor the group's progress and demonstrate effectiveness of services more easily.

- Work with adult learning to provide data to show the numbers of parents of children aged under five attending courses, such as English or mathematics from the reach area.



## Coventry – South East Cluster Children’s Centre

c/o Humber Avenue, Stoke, Coventry CV1 2SF

### **Information about this review**

Michael Blakey and Karen Cooper undertook this review. The review team visited all three children’s centres that make up the South East Cluster: Barley Lea, Gosford Park and Middle Ride.

They observed a range of activities including English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), crèche, ‘Family First’, ‘Baby First’ and ‘Cheylesmore Learning Together.’ They undertook two joint observations with members of the group’s leadership team.

The reviewers met with: the centre manager; chair of the advisory board; representatives from the local authority including the data team; a childminder; two partnership coordinators; a childcare quality regulations advisor; the headteacher of Gosford Park Primary School; midwives; a health visitor, a representative of family learning; and an early years provider.

The reviewers considered a wide range of documentation presented by the group and looked in detail at a range of case files and the systems for monitoring support for vulnerable families.

They also evaluated the group’s safeguarding procedures, including training records and safe recruitment checks.

## Information about this children's centre group

Coventry - South East Cluster is managed by the local authority. It includes three centres: Middle Ride, Barley Lea and Gosford Park Centre. The cluster manager has been in post since September 2013.

Barley Lea and Middle Ride Children Centres were previously Sure Start Local Programmes and offer nursery provision, family support and child and family health services. Gosford Park Children's Centre offers early education opportunities, family support and child and family health services on the Gosford Park Primary School site.

The group of centres serves an area that includes some of the most deprived localities in Coventry and England. Some of these areas experience high levels of domestic violence and crime. In these more deprived areas the number of children living in poverty, or in workless households is high.

Middle Ride Children Centre was inspected on 25/05/11, and judged satisfactory; Barley Lea was inspected on 2/02/12, and judged good. Gosford Park has not yet been inspected, and as a result the cluster of three centres will be inspected as a group. The school and the early years provision are all subject to inspections, which would be separate to the inspection of the group. The reports can be found at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>

The majority of families living in the reach area of White British origin, with smaller proportions of families from a wide range of other ethnic backgrounds. Accurate data are not available to show the proportion of children for whom English is an additional language but local intelligence suggests that the number is rising.

Children's skills and knowledge when they start at nursery are typically below those expected for their age.

The group has identified the following priority groups: children living in poverty and workless households, primarily in the most deprived LSOAs; children and families experiencing domestic violence and abuse; teenage parents; and those identified as more vulnerable including children subject to child protection plans, those in need, and children who are subject to Common Assessment Framework processes.

## Access to services by young children and families

### Strengths

- The local authority has made good progress in brokering the sharing of information on births from health services. This is shortly to be shared with centres to help staff to more effectively identify and register a greater proportion of young children.
- Information sharing and partnership working with midwives is a strength and helps to ensure that most families expecting children, and those with young babies, know of the group and its services.
- The local authority is building well on the new management information system to provide more reliable data on families accessing services.
- The new reporting by the local authority clearly demonstrates that the large majority (67%) of children access an early childhood service including early education, children's centre, social care or health service. This information is reliable because the local authority has developed a process to ensure that no child can be counted more than once.
- The cluster manager's work to demonstrate that target families access services clearly shows that, of those families that access the centres, high proportions are from target groups.
- Target groups are identified based on a wide range of information including the most recent data available and local intelligence.
- Families for whom English is an additional language, although not specifically identified as a target group by the group of centres, are well served.
- Some family learning programmes, such as the seasonal fun activities, are well attended.

### Aspects requiring improvement

- Leaders are not able to show that the large majority of children from some key target groups (particularly by deprived LSOA) access services because the data available from the local authority are not analysed as well as the overall picture to clearly demonstrate:
  - the proportion of children from target groups who are registered and accessing early childhood services
  - the proportion of children aged under three accessing early childhood services
  - the sustained engagement of target children and families in services.
- Children's centre involvement forms are not always completed fully and therefore leave gaps in the information held on the management information system.
- The proportion of two-year-olds accessing free early education, at 65%, is not yet good even though the group has been very effective at improving the quality and range of provision locally.
- Clear targets around improving access to services are not set by the local authority or the partnership advisory board.

### Likely inspection judgement

**3**

## The quality of practice and services

### Strengths

- The group provides a good balance of activities that support all families and those it has identified as needing particular help. Many parents told the inspectors that they find the centres very welcoming and the staff approachable and helpful. It is clear that the centres provide strong care, guidance and support for parents and their children and access to a wide range of helpful information, including on domestic violence, hate crime and language development for example.
- There is a wide range of information around the centres to help to ensure that children are health and safe. For example, there are many notices reminding parents why mobile phones should not be used to take photographs.
- The quality of some activities is good, and occasionally very good, and families rightly enjoy attending the centres. Activities such as 'Family first - learning together' rightly focus on helping children to develop their language and number skills. Children who attend these activities clearly develop good routines, which help to prepare them for school. At these sessions families are often given appropriate fun activities to take home and encouraged to borrow books to read.
- The centres regularly accept children's clothing from families and help to share this with other parents who may need support through the 'love me again' scheme.
- Evaluations, such as those of 'Autumn Fun', clearly demonstrate the impact of services on those families that attend. For example, one parent stated: 'I want to help my daughter to mingle with other children and learn new words.' At the end of the term, she went on to say: 'Her talking has improved so much and she's really come out of her shell since coming. It has helped her so much and she loves it.'
- Breastfeeding rates in the Middle Ride area are improving well as a result of targeted multi-agency working. Obesity rates are broadly in line with levels seen nationally. However, the group has correctly identified that at 23% the proportion of children who are not of a healthy weight is too high in Middle Ride. A wide range of activities is therefore delivered to support the promotion of healthy living across the whole area.
- Support for children who are subject to child protection plans, those in need, and those subject to Common Assessment Framework process is good. This is clearly demonstrated in the case files, which record very carefully contact with children and parents. The 'raise, share and review' processes helps to ensure that managers keep a very close watch on work with these more vulnerable families.
- Data on achievement, at a school level, are used to identify need and plan services where they are needed, and sometimes in collaboration with partners such as family learning.
- Support to early years providers is a real strength of the group's work and is helping to contribute to improving overall levels of achievement in the reach area.

### Aspects requiring improvement

- The crèche, which is delivered to support the ESOL course, requires improvement. This is because activities are not planned or delivered sufficiently well to support the development of language, and an important opportunity therefore is missed for these children who attend for a few hours every week.
- Tracking processes are not sufficiently well joined up to enable leaders and managers to confidently show that target children make good or better progress.
- Data on levels of children’s achievement at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage are not sufficiently analysed to help identify which groups of children require additional support and to show that the work of the group is helping to narrow inequalities.
- The data provided by adult learning do not sufficiently identify whether parents of children aged under five attend some courses, such as English or mathematics to help them develop skills for employment. This therefore limits the group’s ability to demonstrate whether parents are well engaged.
- Leaders and managers have not observed activities and services frequently enough to have a clear picture of the quality of practice over time.

### Likely inspection judgement

**3**

## The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

### Strengths

- The cluster manager is a highly skilled and competent children's services leader, who has made a discernable positive difference to the way the three centres have operated since taking up post in late 2013. Access to services and the quality and impact of services have improved well as a result of her leadership. She is very ably supported by a capable and dedicated senior leadership team and a well-informed community leader, who chairs the advisory board.
- Information sharing with social care is effective and helps to safeguard children and young people living in the reach area. The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub effectively shares information on families who are experiencing domestic violence in the group's reach area so that staff can provide support. Likewise, leaders attend the local Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference. The weekly 'acting early' meetings contribute to ensuring that vulnerable families receive help at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Leaders have good access to the social care information system, Protocol, and regularly check if children are known to social care or not when they have concerns about a family. This again contributes well to the coordinated sharing of appropriate information to help to keep children safe.
- The local authority has driven improvements in the quality of family support work and early help, including the use of the Common Assessment Framework, very well. This successful approach to driving performance now needs to be applied to driving up access by target families and evidencing the impact of services.
- The Partnership Advisory Board Chairperson has a clear view about what the board needs to do to drive further improvements in access and quality of services. The board is becoming more challenging, although this is not clearly evident from the meeting minutes.

### Aspects requiring improvement

- Although the group has correctly identified some key priorities on which to focus its work, it does not have a sufficiently clear outcome-based, specific, measurable targets.
- Because data on access to services have not yet been analysed sufficiently well the group is not able to effectively self-evaluate and plan activities to improve access to services, for example.
- The local authority's target setting and monitoring processes are not as robust as they need to be to ensure the group is on track to be judged as good or better. As a result the advisory board doesn't have a framework from which to challenge and support the group's leadership.

### Likely inspection judgement

**3**

## **Suggested improvements – the most important things to do**

### **Joint improvements between the LA and group**

- Ensure that data are available and analysed to show the proportions of identified target group children accessing early childhood services, particularly those living in the most deprived target areas including children living in workless households and those in poverty.
- Analyse data to show the proportions of children aged under three accessing early childhood services and the sustained engagement of target children and families in services.
- Use data on levels of children's achievement at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage to identify which groups require additional support and to show that strategies are narrowing inequalities.
- Ensure that activities in the ESOL crèche are good quality, planned and delivered to support the development of language, and that children's language development is tracked effectively by building on the good practice in other activities.
- Ensure the development plan includes sufficiently clear outcome-based, specific, measurable targets.

### **Centre specific improvements**

- Ensure that involvement forms are fully completed and, if possible, review the information currently held on families to ensure that the centres have the best possible chance of demonstrating that they are reaching target families.
- Ensure that tracking processes are sufficiently well joined up to confidently show that target children make good or better progress as a result of attending activities and services provided by the group.
- Leaders and managers should observe activities and services more frequently to evidence the quality of practice over time, as they have done with the quality of case files.
- The self-evaluation form should be updated to include data on access by target groups and to better show the impact of services on narrowing inequalities.
- The group's safeguarding policy should be on the website and updated as and when the policy changes.

### **Local authority specific improvements**

- Set clear targets around improving access to services and monitor these regularly to ensure improvements are delivered at a good pace. (This will not be possible until the data issues, identified above, have been addressed).
- Set outcome-based targets around health outcomes, adult learning and early learning with the cluster manager, so that the local authority and PAB can monitor the group's progress and demonstrate effectiveness of services more easily.
- Work with adult learning to provide data to show the numbers of parents of children aged under five attending courses, such as English or mathematics from the reach area.

- Consider re-opening provision to increase the proportion of two-year-olds accessing free early education, so that most have access to good or better services. In the short term, the group should consider other ways to meet their needs.



## Coventry – South West 2 Cluster Children's Centre

c/o Tile Hill Children's Centre, Jardine Crescent, Coventry CV4 9PL

### Information about this review

Michael Blakey and Gemma Roberts undertook this review. Angela Harley and Amanda Reynolds joined the review team until 1200 on Day 2.

The review team visited both children's centres that make up the South West 2 Cluster: Tile Hill and Canley.

Tile Hill Children's Centre was inspected in 2010 and judged to be good. Canley Children's Centre was inspected in 2012 and also judged to be good. Both centres were inspected under the first children's centre framework and have not been subject to an inspection under the current arrangements.

The reviewers observed a range of activities including a wildlife walk, baby massage and a health visitor clinic.

The reviewers met with: the acting managers and leadership team, members of the advisory board, staff, parents, and a range of partners. They did not meet with the local authority data team during this review but considered information provided by this team.

The reviewers considered a range of documentation presented by the group and looked in detail at a sample of case files and the systems for monitoring support for vulnerable families.

They evaluated the group's safeguarding procedures, including training records and safe recruitment checks.

At the time of the review the cluster manager was absent but she joined the meetings at the end of each day.

## Information about this children's centre group

Coventry – South West 2 is managed by the local authority. It includes two centres: Tile Hill and Canley. It has shared services and leadership, governance and management and is therefore considered to be a group by Ofsted. Canley Children's Centre is situated on a primary school site (Charter School). Tile Hill Children's Centre is situated close to a library and health centre.

The group offers family support, parenting, early learning activities and child and family health services.

The group serves an area that includes seven of the top 30% most deprived localities in England. About one third of the total number of children in the reach area live in these more deprived localities.

3,353 children aged under five are estimated to live within the area served by the group. Most of the families living in the reach area are of White British origin, with smaller proportions of families from a wide range of other ethnic backgrounds.

Children's skills and knowledge when they start at nursery are typical for their age.

The group has identified the following priority groups of families: children living in the eight most deprived areas (based on IDACI / IMD); children aged two who are eligible for free early education; vulnerable children including all those subject to Common Assessment Framework processes, looked after children, children subject to child protection or child in need plans and children and families experiencing domestic violence.

## Access to services by young children and families

### Strengths

- The 'acting early' partnership with health services is exceptional and a model of very good practice nationally. This approach has contributed very well to the increasing number of families expecting children and those with young babies being known to early childhood services. The recent provision of live birth data, following learning from previous reviews, has strengthened information sharing further and as a result the group is well on track to ensure that it knows where almost all children aged under one are.
- The uptake of free early education by two-year-olds is good as a direct result of the group's work with families, including going out into the community and knocking on the doors of families.
- Access to services is improving strongly. In the Tile Hill area 93% of under ones are registered and 84% are registered in the Canley area. There is, however, a significant difference between the proportions sustaining contact. 50% access three times or more in Tile Hill and only 33% in Canley. This may reflect, again, the positive impact of the 'acting early' pilot in Tile Hill.

### Aspects requiring improvement

- Data analysis is overly complicated and restricts the otherwise good efforts of managers to use data meaningfully to plan services. Leaders have not, therefore, been able to accurately analyse attendance of all priority families.
- The majority of children living in the area are registered and access children's centre services at least once (55% overall). However, the group is not yet able to clearly demonstrate the sustained engagement of all target children and families, particularly those living in the most deprived areas and those under the age of three.
- There is variation in the proportions of families known and registered between Canley and Tile Hill. In the Canley area the minority of children are currently registered and accessing services and this aspect requires improvement.
- The large majority of children living in the eight most deprived areas are not yet registered and accessing services. The picture is better when the group attempts to remove some of the four year olds from its data but this complicates the picture and is not a true representation of the 0-5s in the reach. It would be more appropriate to improve information sharing so that all three- and four-year-olds known to the centres and those accessing early education are accurately included in the overall engagement of children aged 0-5.

## Likely inspection judgement

**3**

---

## The quality of practice and services

### Strengths

- The group of centres, and its partners, deliver a good range of appropriate services, which are open to all families and those requiring additional support. The group has a clearly defined rationale for the services delivered.
- One-to-one family support work is a particular strength of the group. Families, including those who have experienced domestic abuse or are subject to child protection plans are well supported.
- The 'acting early' meetings help to ensure that very young children are known to a wide range of services and their needs are discussed and met in a joined up way.
- Leaders accurately judge the quality of services, which are typically good. Parents are very happy with the quality of support they receive.
- The centres provide good support to help improve the quality of early years services across the reach area.
- The partnership with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust is good and helps to engage significant numbers of families in outdoor learning. This helps to promote healthy lifestyles, develop a love of nature and promote personal and social development.
- Opportunities for parents to volunteer are very good. Many parents help to deliver services and shape provision through the Partnership Advisory Board. Significant numbers of parents go on to further training and employment.
- Obesity rates are generally low across the reach area.
- The co-located nursery has recently been inspected and judged to be outstanding. The impact of this provision on the wider group has not yet been fully realised, particularly in terms of sharing practice about tracking children's outcomes.

### Aspects requiring improvement

- Systems to track the progress of targeted children are not well developed and data are not analysed sufficiently well to demonstrate that priority children make good or better progress overall.
- Data on levels of children's achievement at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage are not sufficiently analysed to help identify which groups of children require additional support and to show that the work of the group is helping to narrow inequalities.
- The data provided by adult learning do not sufficiently identify whether parents of children aged under five attend some courses, such as English for Speakers of Other Languages, to help them develop skills for employment. This therefore limits the group's ability to demonstrate whether or not parents are well engaged.
- The quality of case file recording is variable and quality assurance processes are not clearly evident on files.

### Likely inspection judgement

**3**

## The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

### Strengths

- Information sharing with social care is effective and helps to safeguard children. The 'raise, share and review' and 'acting early' meetings contribute to ensuring that vulnerable families receive help at the earliest possible opportunity. Likewise, highly effective and regular supervision of staff helps to ensure families are effectively safeguarded.
- The local authority has driven improvements in the quality of family support work and early help, including the use of the Common Assessment Framework, very well. This successful approach to driving performance now needs to be applied to driving up access by target families and evidencing the impact of services.
- The range of partners who attend the advisory board and contribute to the group's development is good.

### Aspects requiring improvement

- The group has correctly identified some key priorities on which to focus its work. However, it does not yet have sufficiently clear targets to further improve access so that the large majority of those targeted sustain contact with the centres.
- Effective systems to evidence the impact of services, particularly on children's progress, are not yet in place and it is therefore difficult for leaders to demonstrate the impact of the group's work in this area.
- The local authority's target setting and monitoring processes are not robust enough to ensure the group is on track to be judged as good or better. As a result the advisory board does not have an effective framework from which to challenge and support the group's leadership.
- Leaders should more regularly and consistently review the quality of case file recording to identify gaps and ensure that all files are consistently good.
- Designated safeguarding lead(s) should undertake updated training in line with the requirements set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015.

## Likely inspection judgement

**3**

## **Suggested improvements – the most important things to do**

### **Joint improvements between the LA and group**

- Ensure that data are available and analysed to show the proportions of identified target group children accessing early childhood services, including those living in the most deprived target areas and for all target groups
- Analyse data to show the proportions of children aged under three accessing early childhood services and the sustained engagement of target children and families in services.
- Use data on levels of children's achievement at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage to identify which groups of children require additional support and to show that strategies are narrowing inequalities.
- Ensure the development plan includes sufficiently clear outcome-based, specific, measurable targets.

### **Centre specific improvements**

- Ensure that the large majority of priority families sustain contact with the centres.
- Improve access to services for families living in the Canley area.
- Update the self-evaluation form to include the data on access by target groups and to better show the impact of services on narrowing inequalities.
- Strengthen tracking processes to demonstrate that target children make good or better progress as a result of attending activities and services provided by the group.

### **Local authority specific improvements**

- Set clear targets around improving access to services and monitor these regularly to ensure improvements are delivered at a good pace.
- Set outcome-based targets around health outcomes, adult learning and early learning with the centre manager, so that the local authority and PAB can monitor the group's progress and demonstrate effectiveness of services more easily.
- Work with adult learning to provide data to show the numbers of parents of children aged under five from the reach area attending courses, such as English or mathematics.