

Inspection report for Kay Rowe Children's Centre

Local authority	London Borough of Newham
Inspection number	362505
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Kath Beck

Centre governance	The governing body of Kaye Rowe Nursery School
Centre leader	Anne Kibuuka
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
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Linked school if applicable	Kay Rowe Nursery School
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	Not applicable

The inspection of this Sure Start Children's Centre was carried out under Part 3A of the Childcare Act 2006 as inserted by section 199 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009.

Introduction

The inspection addresses the centre's contribution to:

- facilitating access to early childhood services by parents, prospective parents and young children
- maximising the benefit of those services to parents, prospective parents and young children
- improving the well-being of young children.

The report is made to the local authority and a copy is sent to the children's centre. The local authority may send the report to such persons it considers appropriate and must arrange for an action plan to be produced in relation to the findings in this report.

An inspection of the maintained nursery was carried out at the same time as the inspection of the centre under Section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The report of this inspection is available on our website www.ofsted.gov.uk.

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors who held meetings with the centre manager, senior leadership team, front line staff, the local authority, representatives from the range of services offered, parents who are on the advisory board and members of the full governing body. They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

Information about the centre

Kay Rowe Children's Centre is situated in Forest Gate in the north west of the London Borough of Newham. It opened in 2006 as part of a local Sure Start programme. The governing body of the Nursery school has a service level agreement with the local authority to run the centre. The Centre Committee is an advisory body that includes representation from parents and carers. It reports to the full governing body. The centre provides the full core offer of childcare, family support and child and family services. Some services such as, speech and language development, ante and post natal classes, breast feeding advice, and other specific support groups run throughout the year on a rotating basis with other centres. Full time nursery children attend for 49 weeks per year on a flexible basis. The service is offered free to families in need, depending on capacity. The centre signposts users to health services and support for entry into work. Kay Rowe is within the 10 per cent most deprived areas in the country. The large majority of families come from diverse minority ethnic groups. The largest groups are from Asian, Black African or Black British Caribbean heritage. The area has a high birth rate. Housing includes bed and breakfast establishments, multi-occupancy houses, flats and hostels, many of which provide temporary accommodation for asylum seekers and refugees. Unemployment

rates and the number of families on benefits are higher than the national average. The nursery school that opens in term times only admits children from the age of three years. Care for children under three is provided by childminders. Initial assessments indicate that development when children first start in the Nursery school is lower than usually found.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

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

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

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

2

Main findings

Kay Rowe Children’s Centre plays an important role in improving the lives of young children and their parents and carers. It has the full confidence of the community because it provides exceptionally high levels of care, guidance and support. Individuals and their personal needs are well known so that parents and carers are directed to the most appropriate professionals to overcome the difficulties they face. The centre pays extremely close attention to keeping everyone safe. The safeguarding of all users while in the centre or out and about on trips or working in the community is central to its work. Risk assessments are robust and comprehensive and involve the views of service users.

Parents and carers particularly enjoy the many opportunities for them to have fun and play and learn with their children. Activities arranged on Saturdays, such as t-shirt painting or pottery, are popular as all the family can take part. Community events also arranged at the weekend or at holiday times are well attended, attract new users to the centre and provide introductions to a wide range of other services. Case studies show that the centre has given very good support to parents and carers in times of crisis. Parents and carers spoken to confirmed that the centre has been influential in developing their confidence as well as their social and parenting skills. After attending a course at the centre, one parent wrote, ‘I thought I knew everything as I have older children, that I wasn’t going to learn anything, but this programme has been brilliant, thank you.’ As a result of the centre’s provision, parents and carers have been empowered to make changes to their lifestyles and those of their children.

The centre values the close partnership it has with parents and carers. Their views are sought regularly and acted on. For example, the times of baby groups have been changed to suit needs more effectively and increase attendance. Along with other service partners, and members of the governing body, parents and carers play an active role on the Centre Committee that oversees the centre's performance. They have a clear view about the success of the centre and contribute their ideas for development. Currently members of the committee have been visiting other provisions to find the best way to improve the outside play area, not only for the centre, but also for the nursery. Plans have been drawn up and consultation about the proposed changes is underway.

Good leadership and management, along with high aspirations for the community, result in good outcomes, especially for the children. Leaders ensure that everyone using the centre is fully included in what it has to offer. Senior leaders and managers pursue ambitious strategies to remove barriers to access to services. For example, there are few opportunities for users to meet with Job Centre Plus and health visitors at the centre and they have to travel further away. To support users in enhancing their economic well-being, staff are trained in giving tax and benefits advice and seek support from other employment agencies. These factors, together with clear long-term and medium-term plans that set out realistic developments based on thorough self-evaluation processes, underpin a good capacity to improve. In-depth data about the immediate locality and the impact the centre is having is not currently available. Data collected relates mostly to attendance at the courses or uptake of services that the centre offers. It is not used to analyse the impact of the centre. From rigorous self-evaluation, senior leaders rightly are also aware their skills in understanding and using data are not well developed. To resolve matters with regard to the availability of data and training senior leaders have approached the local authority to assist them. This is to support them in ensuring that the centre is making provision for the full breadth of needs in the area and to check its impact in the longer term and wider community.

Strong partnerships with childminders in the area are enhancing significantly the quality of childcare for the youngest children. This, together with provision in the centre, gives children a firm foundation for learning which they build on in the nursery. Children transfer easily because they already know many of the staff who work in both the centre and the nursery. In its recent inspection, the nursery was judged good and children were seen to make good progress.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- In conjunction with the local authority, establish clear data that will help senior leaders to develop a clear understanding of the reach in order to identify fully the breadth of needs within the area.
- Use data collected to show the success of the centre in meeting needs in the longer term and across the wider community.

- In partnership with the local authority, plan and arrange health visitor and Jobcentre Plus services that can be accessed more easily.

How good are outcomes for users?

2

The centre has clear policies that promote good opportunities to enable families to acquire physically, mentally and emotionally healthy lifestyles. Regular training is provided for childminders to understand these policies and contribute fully to good outcomes achieved within the centre.

In response to requests for guidance on healthy family meals and snacks, the centre commissioned a 'Cook and eat' project. Parents and carers learned simple healthy recipes for family meals. Children, together with their parent or carer, grow salad and vegetables in the popular gardening club and make healthy food in toddler sessions. Children who remain in the nursery all day enjoy nutritious meals at lunchtime as well as in the breakfast and after-school clubs. In a recent survey, almost all parents and carers reported a change in their eating habits as a result of this provision. However, the data are not available to show the longer term impact.

To promote good levels of mental health, courses such as baby yoga, messy play and the positive parent programme develop the emotional bond between parent and child. Trips to places of local interest, including the park, the Olympic site and museums enable families to gain confidence in travelling on public transport and reduce their sense of isolation. On these trips children, parents and carers are taught how to keep safe when out in the community. Regular health and well-being days that offer advice on smoking cessation and drug and alcohol abuse are well attended.

All who work at the centre view keeping safe and the well-being of users and their families as their prime success. Relationships are trusting and enable early intervention. Case studies show that outreach workers, community nurses and good links with other services, such as those to prevent domestic violence, are bringing about improvements to the lives of children, parents and carers. The Common Assessment Framework, child protection plans and Every Child Matters meetings are used effectively to coordinate support for children, especially those at risk of harm within the family. All the parents and carers responding to a recent survey confirmed their confidence that the centre keeps them and their children safe. They also say they are well supported. One said, 'I feel confident that both myself and my children are safe in Kay Rowe. If for any reason I didn't feel safe here, there are always staff members around, including the headteacher.'

Children, parents and carers make good progress educationally and in their personal and social development, economic stability and independence. Adults are taking courses to learn English, improve their skills in literacy and numeracy and gain valuable qualifications. Free or low cost places in the nursery or crèche enable them

to achieve further qualifications and take up work. The emphasis on promoting children’s communication skills, through pictures, signing, the Every Child a Talker project, and sessions called ‘Let’s Communicate’ enhances children’s enjoyment in their play activities as their oral frustration is reduced. Parents and carers are advised how to ‘dump the dummy’ to promote good talking. ‘Chatterbox’ sessions enable parents and carers to meet with a speech therapist to resolve anxieties or seek help with speech difficulties. These factors are having a positive impact on children’s learning and narrowing the gap in attainment in the Early Years Foundation Stage profile.

Parents and carers make important contributions to decision-making in the centre. Through their representation on the Centre Committee, they play an effective part in deciding and supporting the centre’s development. Ideas and suggestions, often provided informally, bring about changes to the content and timing of courses and events as the centre works to meet the needs of the community. Parents and carers also act as volunteers and organise fund-raising.

Children attending sessions at the centre are well behaved as they have interesting things to do. The youngest children as well as those in the nursery are developing good skills for the future as they make choices about what they want to do, and play happily together. Members of staff are knowledgeable and support parents in claiming the benefits to which they are entitled, resolving issues related to housing and signposting them to employment agencies. Links with colleges nearby are enabling staff, parents and carers to access accredited courses.

The extent to which children, including those from vulnerable groups, are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy and families have healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children are safe and protected, their welfare concerns are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them	1
The extent to which all users enjoy and achieve educationally and in their personal and social development	2
The extent to which children engage in positive behaviour and develop positive relationships and users contribute to decision-making and governance of the centre	2
The extent to which children are developing skills for the future and parents are developing economic stability and independence including access to training	2

How good is the provision?

2

Good assessment procedures enable the centre to devise programmes that meet most users’ welfare, health and social needs well. These stem from senior leaders’ personal knowledge of the area, rather than in-depth analysis of data. Monitoring and evaluation that takes into account comments made by users about the services

ensures that where needs are not being met, arrangements are made to try to meet requirements. In some cases where there are gaps, such as the engagement of Jobcentre Plus and health visitors on site, the centre has asked for the assistance of the local authority to resolve matters. Through its own evaluation, the centre has been targeting, successfully, families who live in small flats and are reluctant to leave their homes. They work to improve parenting skills, provide opportunities for families to enjoy activities together and promote children's language development. Consequently, the programme includes trips out and enjoyable activities that cannot be undertaken in the home, and that, as far as possible, involve the whole family. One parent wrote in an evaluation that 'The range of activities is very good and so is the outdoor space. We both benefit from activities we can't do at home.' The inspection of the nursery found that the assessment of children's progress is good. Training for childminders in carrying out observations of the progress of children in their care has brought about improvements in outcomes for the children, as well as improving the effectiveness of childminding as a whole.

The centre works closely with other professionals, parents and carers to ensure that assessments, including those carried out under the Common Assessment Framework are robust and well informed. Regular Every Child Matters meetings with representatives from a range of services and the centre identify new cases or review progress so that support continues to be personalised to meet individual needs. In this way, the close partnerships with multi-agency teams are enhancing the safety and well-being for children and young people, including those with special educational needs.

Adult achievements are celebrated by staff from the centre attending award ceremonies at the colleges where users have acquired their qualifications. Free or low-fee places in the nursery and crèche facilities support training, education and volunteer opportunities for users. These have resulted in users changing careers and acquiring qualifications to work in childcare and teaching, enhancing their economic viability. The centre's engagement with teenage parents includes developing their parenting skills. To capture their interest the centre teacher worked with them on a camera project. The young parents were given digital cameras and helped to take photos on outings and to make books on matters of interest to them. The high quality work involving the training and support for childminders has been celebrated and shared nationally on the Department for Education website.

The centre provides a range of drop-in services that include provisions that users attend on a first-come first-served basis. As they prove popular, more sessions are added to the programme. These include childcare, family support, and child and family services. Users can access services in other nearby provisions and are signposted to health and employment services elsewhere in the borough. The centre is successful in engaging hard to reach families, lone parents and teenage parents, especially through its community days. Comments about these days include, 'A very community-centred event that makes me proud to be a part of it. Can't wait until the next one.' Outreach workers sustain the most vulnerable groups and enable them to get the help they need and improve their lives. A sensory room is used by families

with children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Two new sessions have been introduced specifically for these families to provide and establish a network of support. The impact of the programmes is monitored carefully and the centre is clear about the impact of its provision in the short-term. Limited availability of data as well as skills in its use means data is not used sufficiently as a way of checking the impact of the provision over time or in the wider community. Case studies, reviews of courses and children’s progress records, however, give a clear picture about good and improved outcomes for parents, carers and children.

The care, guidance and support offered to parents, carers and children is high quality. Support from a wide range of services is very well-coordinated. Staff and outreach workers empower those who are in crisis or wishing to make significant changes to their lives to gain confidence and raise their self-esteem. Among the many positive comments about the centre was, ‘The outreach worker is always very supportive and helpful with any question or problem I have.’ Support for users is personalised so that they develop the well-being of their families across all the outcomes. Sessions that parents and carers attend with their children provide high quality information, advice and guidance across a very wide range of issues. General and specific personal advice is provided to reduce smoking, alcohol and drug abuse. Outreach and other staff working in the centre have the expertise to provide advice about applying for a job and attending interviews to support them into work.

The effectiveness of the assessment of the needs of children, parents and other users	2
The extent to which the centre promotes purposeful learning, development and enjoyment for all users	2
The extent to which the range of services, activities and opportunities meet the needs of users and the wider community	2
The quality of care, guidance and support offered to users within the centre and the wider community	2

How effective are the leadership and management?

2

Governance and accountability arrangements, underpinned by the service level agreement, are understood well by senior leaders, the Centre Committee and governing body. The Centre Committee is made up of parents, childminders, representatives of the governing body of the school and other users. Their active involvement in the centre and monitoring of the centre’s development plan gives them a clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Everyone involved in the leadership of the centre is keen to extend the availability of local data and develop their skills in understanding and analysing it to ensure the centre fully meets the needs of users in the area. All staff, including teachers, work in both the nursery and the centre at different times, enabling them to work in close partnership. This, together with regular training, checks on the quality of provision, and good

performance management, enhances their skills. As a result, the good provision found in the nursery during its recent inspection is mirrored in the centre. A teacher and a childminding network coordinator provide very good support to the childminders, including training on a weekly basis to raise their expertise. One said, 'I attended The Importance of Play course, which was useful as a parent and a childminder.' This well-coordinated approach allows the effective sharing of information and the seamless integration of services to benefit children and other users. The centre's long-term and medium-term development is supported by regular discussions with the local authority.

Senior leaders communicate their high expectations to all staff and users successfully. Currently the new strategic aims and vision for the future, intended to raise the quality of provision further, are subject to consultation with all users and services. These aims set out clearly what children and users are to achieve in their attitudes to life, learning and personal development, as well as the ways in which the centre and nursery will support their achievement. Development planning sets out realistic targets to improve the centre over the year. The centre's participation in projects such as 'Making a Big Difference', and in enabling all children to communicate effectively, demonstrates its determination to narrow the gap for the most disadvantaged.

Safeguarding is central to the work of the centre and it exemplifies high quality practice. Everyone in the centre has been subject to an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check and to safer recruitment procedures. Staff not employed by the centre supply evidence of their suitability to work unsupervised with children. All users going out on trips are fully involved in the risk assessment procedures. Staff and childminders receive regular training in safeguarding and child protection so that there is comprehensive understanding of these issues. Protocols and practice for making referrals and sharing information between the relevant professionals working within and outside the centre are well known and thorough. Frequent Every Child Matters meetings that include the centre and professionals from a range of services underpin this high quality practice, to protect children and vulnerable adults. Outreach workers give active support to those who are subject to domestic violence.

Users' views, effective evaluations of provision, personal knowledge of the area and national initiatives guide the programme and the centre's priorities, but without the underpinning of robust data. The inclusion of all children, their families and other users is promoted effectively and discrimination tackled rigorously. Outreach services and links with local schools and other centres ensure that users can access a wider range of provision. Sign-a-long, picture cues, language courses, such as English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and translation by multi-lingual staff ensure that all users can communicate effectively within the centre. The flexible deployment of staff and the variable use of the building, which is easily accessible to those with disabilities, means resources are managed well. Community days held at the weekends provide more opportunities for local people to access the centre's services. To summarise the importance of Kay Rowe Children's Centre to the community, one user said, 'I cannot imagine it if this centre was not here, it would be such a loss. It

offers so much to the families in the community.’ The centre fulfils all its statutory duties and provides good value for money.

The extent to which governance, accountability, professional supervision and day to day management arrangements are clear and understood	2
The extent to which ambitious targets drive improvement, provision is integrated and there are high expectations for users and the wider community	2
The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of users and the wider community	2
The extent to which equality is promoted and diversity celebrated, illegal or unlawful discrimination is tackled and the centre fulfils its statutory duties	2
The effectiveness of the centre’s policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults	1
The extent to which evaluation is used to shape and improve services and activities	2
The extent to which partnerships with other agencies ensure the integrated delivery of the range of services the centre has been commissioned to provide	2
The extent to which the centre supports and encourages the wider community to engage with services and uses their views to develop the range of provision	2

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

Information from the inspection of Kay Rowe Nursery School that was inspected at the same time as the centre.

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

Summary for centre users

We inspected the Kay Rowe centre on 8-9 December 2010. We judged the centre as good overall.

Thank you for the help you gave us when we inspected Kay Rowe Children's Centre recently. Those of you we spoke to told us that the centre plays an important role in improving your lives and the children you care for. You told us it has your full confidence because it provides you with exceptionally high levels of care, guidance and support. You said that your individual and personal needs are well known and you appreciate being directed to the most appropriate professionals, to help you overcome the difficulties you face. We found that the centre pays very close attention to keeping everyone safe. The safeguarding of all users while in the centre or out and about on trips or working in the community is central to its work. One of you wrote, 'I feel confident that both myself and my children are safe in Kay Rowe, if for any reason I didn't feel safe here, there are always staff members around including the headteacher.' You contribute to keeping everyone safe by giving your ideas on what to look out for, before you go out on trips with children and staff from the centre.

You mentioned how much parents and carers enjoy the many opportunities for you to have fun, play and learn with your children. Activities arranged on Saturdays, such as t-shirt painting or pottery, are popular as all the family can take part. Community events also arranged at the weekend or at holiday times are well attended, attract new users to the centre and provide introductions to a wide range of other services. Information provided by the centre showed us that it has given very good support to you in times of crisis. Those of you we spoke to confirmed that the centre has been influential in developing your confidence as well as your social and parenting skills. After attending a course at the centre, one of you wrote, 'I thought I knew everything as I have older children, that I wasn't going to learn anything, but this programme has been brilliant, thank you.' As a result of the centre's provision, we believe many of you have gained the skills to make changes to your lifestyles and those of your children, particularly in eating healthy food.

We know that the centre values the close partnership it has with you. Your views are sought regularly and acted on. For example, the times of baby groups have been changed to suit your needs, and events on Saturdays mean all the family can learn together. Along with other service partners, and members of the governing body, some of you play an active role on the Centre Committee that oversees the centre's work. Those of you serving on this committee have a clear view about the success of the centre and contribute your ideas for development. Currently members of the committee have been visiting other provisions to find the best way to improve the outside play area, not only for the centre, but also for the nursery. Plans have been drawn up and displayed in the entrance, so that you too can give your opinion. In addition, you are being asked for your thoughts on the new aims for the centre with regard to what it and the community want the children to achieve.

Good leadership and management, along with high aspirations for your community, are resulting in good outcomes, especially for the children. They ensure that everyone using the centre is fully included in what it has to offer. Senior leaders and managers pursue ambitious strategies to remove barriers so that you can access the services you need. For example, there are not enough opportunities for you to meet

with Jobcentre Plus and health visitors at the centre and so you have to travel further away. In place of this and to assist you in gaining the help you may need, staff are trained in giving tax and benefits advice, and they seek support for you from other employment agencies. Leaders and managers often reflect on what needs to be improved to make things better for those living within their community. In-depth data about the immediate locality and the impact the centre is having is not currently available. From rigorous self-evaluation, senior leaders rightly are also aware their skills in understanding and using data are not well developed. To resolve matters with regard to the availability of data and training, senior leaders have approached the local authority to assist them. This is to support them in ensuring that the centre is making provision for the full breadth of your needs and to check how successful it is over time and in the wider community.

The strong partnerships with childminders in the area are enhancing significantly the quality of childcare for the youngest children. This, together with the varied programmes on offer in the centre, gives children a firm foundation for learning that they build on in the nursery. Children transfer easily because they already know many of the staff who work in both the centre and the nursery. In its recent inspection, the nursery was judged good and children were seen to make good progress. To summarise the importance of Kay Rowe Children's Centre to the community, one user said, 'I cannot imagine it if this centre was not here, it would be such a loss. It offers so much to the families in the community.'

We have asked the centre to work together with the local authority to:

- work with the local authority, to establish clear data that will help senior leaders to develop a clear understanding of the reach in order to identify fully the breadth of needs within the area.
- Use data collected to show the success of the centre in meeting needs in the longer term and across the wider community.
- plan and arrange health visitor and Jobcentre Plus services so that you can meet with them more easily.

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