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Issued by:	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) Aviation House 125 Kingsway London WC2B 6SE
Responsible director:	Jean Humphrys
Statistician:	Steve Ball
Public enquiries:	enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
Press enquiries:	pressenquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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Introduction

This official statistics release reports on children's centre inspections that occurred between 1 April 2010 and 31 December 2011 under Section 3A of the Childcare Act 2006.

Data for inspections carried out between 1 October 2011 and 31 December 2011 are provisional and subject to change. Ofsted will release final statistics for this period on 7 June 2012.

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Key findings

Latest quarter

- Of the 203 children's centres inspected between 1 October 2011 and 31 December 2011, 67% were judged good or outstanding for overall effectiveness. This is an increase of three percentage points on the last quarter, following on from the declining trend in the previous three quarters.
- Compared with the the same quarter in 2010 the proportion of good and outstanding providers is lower by eight percentage points.
- Three of the children's centres inspected in this quarter were judged inadequate. This is one less than during the previous quarter.
- The judgements for outcomes for users and for leadership and management are in-line with the overall effectiveness judgement; however, judgements for the quality of provision were more positive.
- The strongest aspects of provision were found in the effectiveness of the centre's policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children, where 87% of children's centres inspected this quarter were judged good or outstanding. The next highest judgements were for the quality of care, guidance and support offered to families (86%) and the extent to which children are safe and protected (86%).
- The least positive outcomes for users are the extent to which children are developing skills for the future and parents are developing economic stability and independence, where 52% of centres were judged good or outstanding. This is a two percentage point decrease on the previous quarter.
- The effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secure improvement in outcomes was the next least positive outcome, where 61% of centres were judged good or outstanding. However, this is a seven percentage point increase on the month of September 2011 figure.

All inspections (1 April 2010 – 31 December 2011)

- The inspection of children's centres commenced in May 2010. Since then, 1,007 children's centres have been inspected and their findings published on the Ofsted website.
- Of the 1,007 centres inspected, 71% were judged as good or outstanding for overall effectiveness at their most recent inspection and almost all (99%) were judged to be at least satisfactory.
- Twenty children's centres have been judged inadequate since May 2010. Of these, six centres have received a second inspection. All six were judged satisfactory for overall effectiveness at this most recent inspection.

Methodology

1. The data in this release are from inspections carried out between 1 April 2010 and 31 December 2011.
2. Statistics relating to inspections undertaken in the most recent quarter are provisional and include inspections in the period where the inspection report was published within one month of the end of the quarter. If exceptionally, an inspection report is published later than one month after the end of the quarter in which the inspection took place, it will be included in the final release of the statistics.
3. Following an evaluation of the first year of children's centre inspection, the children's centre inspection framework was refreshed to remove repetition and ensure a sharper focus on families in target groups. The refreshed evaluation schedule took effect on 1 September 2011 and impacts on the way the statistics should be viewed. Two judgements in the quality of provision section and two in the leadership and management section were combined. The outcomes for these new judgements do not match across to either of the judgements they replaced. Furthermore, whilst the wording of most of the remaining children's centre judgements were slightly amended to increase the focus on outcomes, in particular for families in target groups and those most in need of intervention and support, the focus of inspection has not significantly changed. These judgements, therefore, match across to their April 2010 to August 2011 iterations.
4. Revisions are published in line with Ofsted's revisions policy for official statistics which can be found on the Ofsted website:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/statistical-notice-ofsted-revisions-policy-for-official-statistics>

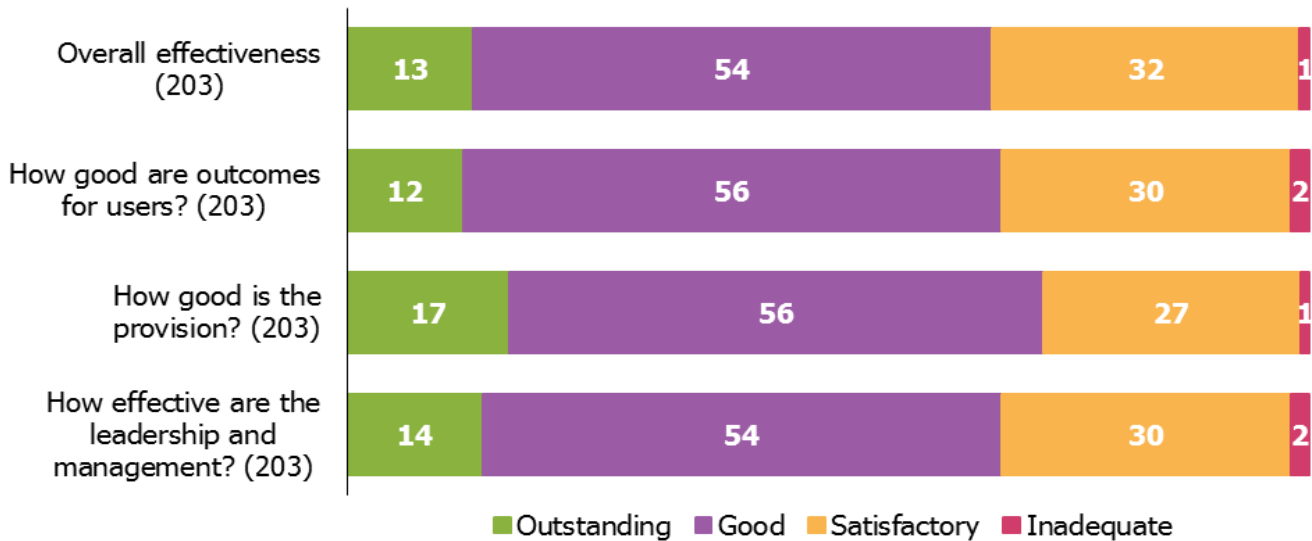
5. The inspection framework for children's centres was published in April 2010 and refreshed in September 2011. For more information about the framework and how Ofsted inspects children's centres please go to the Ofsted website:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Forms-and-guidance/Browse-all-by/Other/General/Framework-for-children-s-centre-inspection>.

Additional information

All the tables and charts shown in this release, along with additional analysis by month and at regional and local authority level, are available in Excel and csv format on the Ofsted website in the same location as this document.

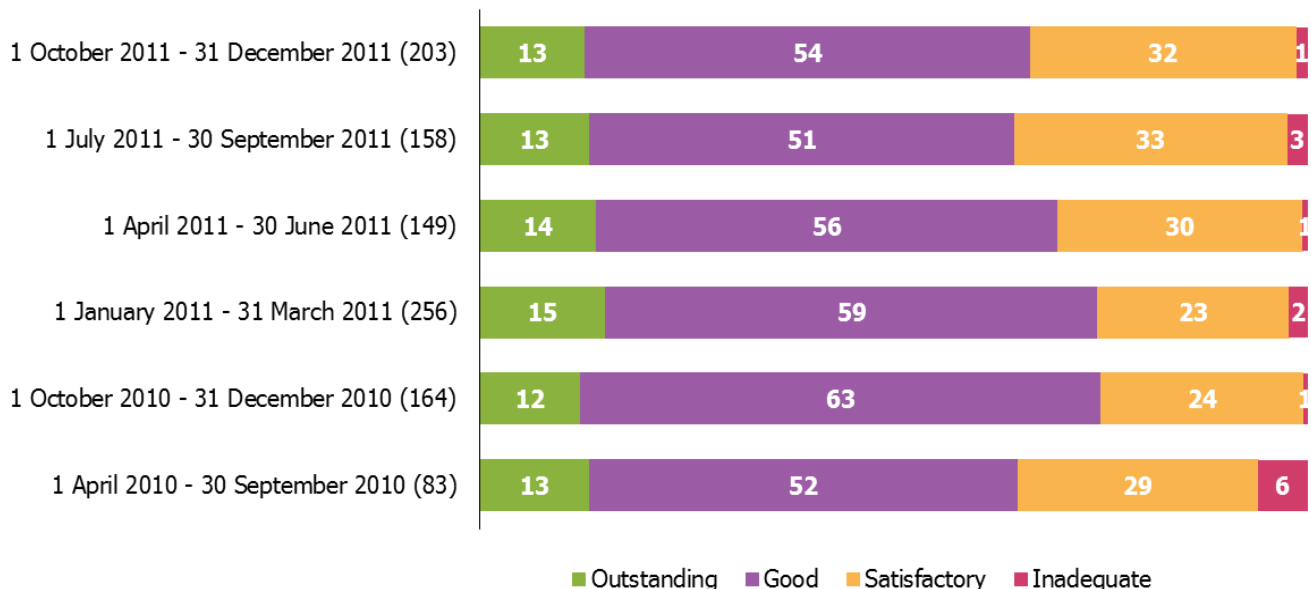
Chart 1: Key inspection judgements for children's centres inspected between 1 October 2011 and 31 December 2011 (provisional)¹



Source: Ofsted Inspections

1. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.

Chart 2: Overall effectiveness of children's centres inspected between 1 April 2010 and 31 December 2011, by quarter¹



Source: Ofsted Inspections

1. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.

2. Data for 1 October 2011 and 31 December 2011 are provisional.

3. The first two quarters of children's centres inspection have been combined for this chart owing to the small number of centres inspected during this period.

Table 1: Number of children's centres inspected between 1 April 2010 and 31 December 2011, by quarter and monthly period

	Full inspections
All inspections ¹	1,013
First year (1 April 2010 - 31 March 2011)	503
1 April 2010 - 30 June 2010	23
1 July 2010 - 30 September 2010	60
1 October 2010 - 31 December 2010	164
1 January 2011 - 31 March 2011	256
January 2011	52
February 2011	80
March 2011	124
Second year (1 April 2011 - 30 September 2012) ¹	510
1 April 2011 - 30 June 2011	149
April 2011	18
May 2011	66
June 2011	65
1 July 2011 - 30 September 2011	158
July 2011	64
August 2011	33
September 2011	61
1 October 2011 - 31 December 2011 ¹	203
October 2011 ¹	78
November 2011 ¹	85
December 2011 ¹	40

Source: Ofsted Inspections

1. Data are provisional.

Table 2: Inspection outcomes of children's centres inspected between 1 October 2011 and 31 December 2011 (provisional)^{1 2}

	Total number inspected	Outstanding		Good		Satisfactory		Inadequate	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
The effectiveness of the children's centre in meeting the needs of and improving outcomes for families	203	26	13	109	54	65	32	3	1
The centre's capacity for sustained improvement, including the quality of its leadership and management	203	30	15	110	54	60	30	3	1
How good are outcomes for families?	203	24	12	114	56	61	30	4	2
The extent to which children, including those from target groups, are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy and families have healthy lifestyles	203	24	12	112	55	67	33	0	0
The extent to which children are safe and protected, their welfare concerns are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them	203	52	26	121	60	28	14	2	1
The extent to which all children and parents, including those from target groups, enjoy and achieve educationally and in their personal and social development	203	32	16	116	57	55	27	0	0
The extent to which children engage in positive behaviour and develop positive relationships and parents, including those from target groups, contribute to decision-making and governance of the centre	203	35	17	98	48	67	33	3	1
The extent to which children are developing skills for the future and parents, including those from target groups, are developing economic stability and independence including access to training and employment	203	18	9	88	43	96	47	1	0
How good is the provision?	203	34	17	113	56	54	27	2	1
³ The extent to which the range of services, activities and opportunities meet the needs of families, including those in target groups	203	29	14	109	54	62	31	3	1
The extent to which the centre promotes purposeful learning, development and enjoyment for all families, including those in target groups	203	33	16	114	56	56	28	0	0

Table 2 (continued)

	Total number inspected	Outstanding		Good		Satisfactory		Inadequate	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
The quality of care, guidance and support offered to families, including those in target groups	203	72	35	104	51	26	13	1	0
How effective are the leadership and management?	203	28	14	110	54	61	30	4	2
The extent to which governance, accountability, professional supervision and day-to-day management arrangements are clear and understood	203	26	13	110	54	63	31	4	2
³ The effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secure improvement in outcomes	203	28	14	95	47	76	37	4	2
The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of families, including those in target groups	203	32	16	104	51	64	32	3	1
The extent to which equality is promoted and diversity celebrated, illegal or unlawful discrimination is tackled and the centre fulfils its statutory duties	203	30	15	107	53	64	32	2	1
The effectiveness of the centre's policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults	203	59	29	117	58	25	12	2	1
The extent to which partnerships with other agencies ensure the integrated delivery of the range of services provided by the centre to meet its core purpose	203	45	22	107	53	50	25	1	0
The extent to which the centre supports and encourages families in the reach area to engage with services and uses their views to develop the range of provision	203	29	14	106	52	67	33	1	0

Source: Ofsted Inspections

1. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.
2. Where the number of inspections is small, percentages are not shown.
3. Judgement only made at inspections since 1 September 2011.
4. Wording of some judgements refreshed on 1 September 2011 but the criteria for assessing them remained unchanged. Data are amalgamated for inspections conducted before and after this date.

Table 3: Inspection outcomes of children's centres inspected between 1 October 2011 and 31 December 2011 (provisional)^{1 2}

	Total number inspected	Outstanding		Good		Satisfactory		Inadequate	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
The effectiveness of the children's centre in meeting the needs of and improving outcomes for families	1,013	138	14	571	56	284	28	20	2
The centre's capacity for sustained improvement, including the quality of its leadership and management	1,013	157	15	571	56	264	26	21	2
How good are outcomes for families?	1,013	132	13	606	60	262	26	13	1
The extent to which children, including those from target groups, are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy and families have healthy lifestyles	1,013	153	15	584	58	273	27	3	0
The extent to which children are safe and protected, their welfare concerns are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them	1,013	239	24	627	62	141	14	6	1
The extent to which all children and parents, including those from target groups, enjoy and achieve educationally and in their personal and social development	1,013	158	16	620	61	229	23	6	1
The extent to which children engage in positive behaviour and develop positive relationships and parents, including those from target groups, contribute to decision-making and governance of the centre	1,013	175	17	542	54	284	28	12	1
The extent to which children are developing skills for the future and parents, including those from target groups, are developing economic stability and independence including access to training and employment	1,013	105	10	513	51	387	38	8	1
How good is the provision?	1,013	170	17	583	58	249	25	11	1
⁴ The effectiveness of the assessment of the needs of children, parents and other users	750	169	23	400	53	173	23	8	1
³ The extent to which the range of services, activities and opportunities meet the needs of families, including those in target groups	263	39	15	133	51	87	33	4	2
The extent to which the centre promotes purposeful learning, development and enjoyment for all families, including those in target groups	1,013	154	15	626	62	226	22	7	1
⁴ The extent to which the range of services, activities and opportunities meet the needs of users and the wider community	750	124	17	413	55	204	27	9	1

Table 3 (continued)

	Total number inspected	Outstanding		Good		Satisfactory		Inadequate	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
The quality of care, guidance and support offered to families, including those in target groups	1,013	356	35	519	51	133	13	5	0
How effective are the leadership and management?	1,013	152	15	571	56	270	27	20	2
The extent to which governance, accountability, professional supervision and day-to-day management arrangements are clear and understood	1,013	153	15	546	54	289	29	25	2
³ The effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secure improvement in outcomes	263	38	14	117	44	103	39	5	2
⁴ The extent to which ambitious targets drive improvement, provision is integrated and there are high expectations for users and the wider community	750	127	17	392	52	213	28	18	2
The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of families, including those in target groups	1,013	186	18	534	53	279	28	14	1
The extent to which equality is promoted and diversity celebrated, illegal or unlawful discrimination is tackled and the centre fulfils its statutory duties	1,013	152	15	569	56	282	28	10	1
The effectiveness of the centre's policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults	1,013	272	27	593	59	139	14	9	1
⁴ The extent to which evaluation is used to shape and improve services and activities	750	98	13	349	47	282	38	21	3
The extent to which partnerships with other agencies ensure the integrated delivery of the range of services provided by the centre to meet its core purpose	1,013	292	29	493	49	220	22	8	1
The extent to which the centre supports and encourages families in the reach area to engage with services and uses their views to develop the range of provision	1,013	158	16	534	53	303	30	18	2

Source: Ofsted Inspections

1. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.
2. Wording of some judgements refreshed on 1 September 2011 but the criteria for assessing them remained unchanged. Data are amalgamated for inspections conducted before and after this date.
3. Judgement only made at inspections since 1 September 2011.
4. Judgement only made at inspections between 1 April 2010 and 31 August 2011.

Table 4: Most recent inspection outcomes of children's centres inspected between 1 April 2010 and 31 December 2011 (provisional)^{1 2}

	Total number inspected	Outstanding		Good		Satisfactory		Inadequate	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
The effectiveness of the children's centre in meeting the needs of and improving outcomes for families	1,007	138	14	571	57	284	28	14	1
The centre's capacity for sustained improvement, including the quality of its leadership and management	1,007	157	16	571	57	263	26	16	2
How good are outcomes for families?	1,007	132	13	606	60	260	26	9	1
The extent to which children, including those from target groups, are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy and families have healthy lifestyles	1,007	153	15	584	58	268	27	2	0
The extent to which children are safe and protected, their welfare concerns are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them	1,007	239	24	627	62	137	14	4	0
The extent to which all children and parents, including those from target groups, enjoy and achieve educationally and in their personal and social development	1,007	158	16	620	62	225	22	4	0
The extent to which children engage in positive behaviour and develop positive relationships and parents, including those from target groups, contribute to decision-making and governance of the centre	1,007	175	17	542	54	280	28	10	1
The extent to which children are developing skills for the future and parents, including those from target groups, are developing economic stability and independence including access to training and employment	1,007	105	10	513	51	384	38	5	0
How good is the provision?	1,007	170	17	583	58	246	24	8	1
⁴ The effectiveness of the assessment of the needs of children, parents and other users	744	169	23	400	54	170	23	5	1
³ The extent to which the range of services, activities and opportunities meet the needs of families, including those in target groups	263	39	15	133	51	87	33	4	2
The extent to which the centre promotes purposeful learning, development and enjoyment for all families, including those in target groups	1,007	154	15	626	62	222	22	5	0
⁴ The extent to which the range of services, activities and opportunities meet the needs of users and the wider community	744	124	17	413	56	202	27	5	1

Table 4 (continued)

	Total number inspected	Outstanding		Good		Satisfactory		Inadequate	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
The quality of care, guidance and support offered to families, including those in target groups	1,007	356	35	519	52	129	13	3	0
How effective are the leadership and management?	1,007	152	15	571	57	270	27	14	1
The extent to which governance, accountability, professional supervision and day-to-day management arrangements are clear and understood	1,007	153	15	546	54	288	29	20	2
³ The effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secure improvement in outcomes	263	38	14	117	44	103	39	5	2
⁴ The extent to which ambitious targets drive improvement, provision is integrated and there are high expectations for users and the wider community	744	127	17	392	53	212	28	13	2
The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of families, including those in target groups	1,007	186	18	534	53	276	27	11	1
The extent to which equality is promoted and diversity celebrated, illegal or unlawful discrimination is tackled and the centre fulfils its statutory duties	1,007	152	15	569	57	279	28	7	1
The effectiveness of the centre's policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults	1,007	272	27	592	59	137	14	6	1
⁴ The extent to which evaluation is used to shape and improve services and activities	744	98	13	349	47	281	38	16	2
The extent to which partnerships with other agencies ensure the integrated delivery of the range of services provided by the centre to meet its core purpose	1,007	292	29	493	49	215	21	7	1
The extent to which the centre supports and encourages families in the reach area to engage with services and uses their views to develop the range of provision	1,007	158	16	534	53	300	30	15	1

Source: Ofsted Inspections

1. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.

2. Wording of some judgements refreshed on 1 September 2011 but the criteria for assessing them remained unchanged. Data are amalgamated for inspections conducted before and after this date.

3. Judgement only made at inspections since 1 September 2011.

4. Judgement only made at inspections between 1 April 2010 and 31 August 2011.

Table 5: Overall effectiveness of children's centres inspected between 1 April 2010 and 31 December 2011, by quarter¹

	Total number inspected	Outstanding		Good		Satisfactory		Inadequate	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1 October 2011 - 31 December 2011 ²	203	26	13	109	54	65	32	3	1
1 July 2011 - 30 September 2011	158	21	13	81	51	52	33	4	3
1 April 2011 - 30 June 2011	149	21	14	83	56	44	30	1	1
1 January 2011 - 31 March 2011	256	39	15	152	59	59	23	6	2
1 October 2010 - 31 December 2010	164	20	12	103	63	40	24	1	1
1 July 2010 - 30 September 2010 ³	60	8	13	34	57	16	27	2	3
1 April 2010 - 30 June 2010 ⁴	23	3	-	9	-	8	-	3	-

Source: Ofsted Inspections

1. Where the number of inspections is small, percentages are not shown.
2. Data are provisional.
3. There were no inspections of children's centres carried out in August 2010.
4. Inspection of children's centres commenced in May 2010.

Glossary

Children's centres

Children's centres are expected to provide, or make arrangements for parents-to-be and families with young children, including wider family members such as grandparents, to access early childhood services. They are a local port of call when a mother, father or carer needs help or advice; whether that is in relation to their role as parent/carer, or their child's well-being or learning and development, or simply to find out about neighbourhood activities for parents or activities for children including play groups or nurseries. In this context, early childhood services are:

- childcare for young children
- social services functions of the local authority relating to young children, parents and prospective parents
- health services relating to young children, parents and prospective parents
- employment support from Jobcentre Plus for parents or prospective parents¹
- the local authority's information, advice and assistance service relating to childcare and other services and facilities relevant to young children and their families.

Additional full inspections

Children's centres judged inadequate for overall effectiveness will receive an additional full inspection approximately 12 months after the inspection that judged them to be inadequate. Apart from inadequate provision, Ofsted will inspect all other provision once in the current cycle, which is due to end in 2015.

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¹ This may include partnership working with other services to provide services to parents and prospective parents on site or by referral elsewhere.