

# Inspection report for Central Ryedale Children's Centre

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Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	383405
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Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
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Linked school if applicable	Norton Community Primary 121456
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.

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## 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 co-located/partner primary school 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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector and one early years inspector.

The inspectors held meetings with staff and the manager from the centre, parents, and representatives from North Yorkshire local authority. Inspectors also met with a number of partners including those from education, health, voluntary and private organisations. They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

## Information about the centre

Central Ryedale Children's Centre is a purpose built Phase Two children's centre. It serves the towns of Norton and Malton, surrounding villages and the rural Yorkshire Wolds area. It is situated in Norton on a site shared with Norton Primary School and has a satellite centre in Malton and also delivers outreach provision in community venues. The centre opened in 2008, and provides the full core offer of services but does not provide childcare.

North Yorkshire County Council and a steering group are responsible for the governance of the centre. The children's centre service manager leads the centre, supported by two parent support advisors and on-site administration staff. The wider integrated services area team, and other local authority staff including a teaching and learning consultant, an education development advisor and an early years advisory teacher support the centre. A range of partners including those from health, social care, adult education, Jobcentre Plus, voluntary and private organisations work with the centre to deliver services to users.

The vast majority of local families are of White British heritage with a low minority ethnic population. In the Central Ryedale area, 27% of the local population are low waged, earning

less than £15,000. Data from the centre indicate that 125 of the 1240 children under four years old, in the reach area, live in workless households. The centre does not have accurate data for children in families that are in receipt of the childcare element of working tax credit. Children enter Early Years Foundation Stage provision with skills and abilities that are below those typically found for their age.

## 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 families**

<b>3</b>
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### Capacity for sustained improvement

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

<b>3</b>
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## Main findings

Central Ryedale Children's Centre is satisfactory overall. Some aspects of the centre's work are good. In particular, care, guidance and support and good safeguarding arrangements have a positive impact on the safety and well-being of families. Skilled parent support advisors provide good one-to-one support to families in times of crisis. The individualised support that some families receive helps them improve their parenting skills. Staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures. They are well-trained and ensure they promptly share any concerns with relevant agencies. Policies and procedures for safeguarding, including the recruitment and vetting of staff, are good. Parents told inspectors that they and their children are safe at the centre and that the support they receive helps them and their children stay safe.

The local authority is increasing the data it collects and provides to the centre. However, data are not sufficiently precise, relevant or timely which limits the centre's ability to target its provision, evaluate its effectiveness and further improve outcomes. Health partners do not always share information about new born babies with the centre; this means that the centre cannot directly contact these mothers to offer support and access to services for children under two years old. Although the centre promotes healthy living, the health authority's lack of evaluation of local outcomes and data limits the centre's ability to demonstrate its impact on health outcomes. The centre provides a satisfactory range of opportunities for users to make a positive contribution through consultation and volunteering opportunities. However, too few parents are involved in making strategic decisions about the centre; currently three parents are members of the steering group.

Those parents and children that attend sessions, such as 'Stay and Play', enjoy coming to the centre. As a result, the progress of these children is at least satisfactory and some is good. Coordinated work with early years professionals is helping improve children's achievements. However, the aspiration of families in the area is low and a small minority of adults join adult learning sessions. Retention and attendance rates for these sessions are low. As a result, very few adults gain skills and qualifications that will help them improve their economic well-being. Case studies indicate that some adults return to work or training but the centre does not carefully monitor and record users' destinations.

Working closely with its partners, the centre offers a range of appropriate services to the community. Provision offered in outreach venues and links with partners extends the opportunities for users, including those in rural areas. However, the lack of shared information regarding new births limits the centre's knowledge of children who may benefit from early support to help their learning and development. This means that the centre cannot target children under two years old until they are referred to them, which restricts their ability to provide early intervention.

The manager is ambitious and continually seeks to improve the provision, building on its strengths and reaching more of the families most in need. As a result, the number of families registered is increasing but only a minority of registered users engage with the centre. The centre recognises that two of the wards are the most deprived in the area and through building community links, they are increasing the numbers registered. Although self-evaluation is systematic, it lacks sufficient challenge to ensure that outcomes are continually improving. This is because the lack of relevant data prevents a rigorous analysis of outcomes leading to precise, ambitious and measurable targets. The lack of local information and outcomes measures makes it difficult for the centre to be secure in prioritising and targeting its resources to key priority groups.

The inclusion of all children and families is central to the vision of the centre manager and staff team. The centre meets the duties that apply to it regarding equality and diversity. However, the centre does not have sufficient mechanisms for identifying and engaging with its different target groups, nor does it have systems in place to measure the impact of all of its work.

Satisfactory outcomes, quality of provision and leadership and management, together with the drive and determination of the centre manager demonstrate a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

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

### Recommendations for further improvement

- The local authority should ensure that:
  - the centre has access to precise and accurate local data in order to improve the effectiveness of self-evaluation and targeting provision
  - key partners, particularly health services and adult education, share the responsibility to improve outcomes and provide the centre with access to key management information
  - ambitious targets are set for the centre to further improve outcomes for users.
- Identify, prioritise and target key groups including those children under two years old in need of early support.
- Raise the aspiration of adults and increase the numbers gaining relevant qualifications in order to improve the economic well-being of families.
- Increase the number of parents who reflect the reach area in decision making about the centre through greater representation on the steering group.

## How good are outcomes for families?

<b>3</b>
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Outcomes are satisfactory overall. Parent support advisors provide good individualised support and advice and effectively promote safety in the home. As a result, parents have improved their understanding of how to keep their families safe. Early intervention for families with children identified as at risk or in need, and the early education funding for two year olds, is effectively supporting their progress. One parent told inspectors, 'I have had 110% support here. I do not know what I would have done without the centre.' Effective support is provided for individual children through use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and case studies demonstrate that as a result, they make good progress. However, the centre lacks local information on the full impact of its work on staying safe outcomes such as the rate of hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries.

Local authority early years professionals work closely with the centre, childcare settings and schools, to support children's progress and as a result, the gap in achievement between the lowest 20% and the rest is steadily narrowing. Efforts to improve communication, language and literacy skills has resulted in improving achievement as evidenced in improving results of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. However, the centre recognises that the development of boys is below that of girls and is focusing support to help narrow this gap. Although the centre works in partnership with the adult education service, very few adults

accessing learning gain relevant qualifications, in order to improve their economic well-being.

The centre provides a range of opportunities for users to positively contribute their views to the development of the provision through consultations and a comments board. However, the number of users currently involved in strategic decision making is low. Children behave well and are developing useful skills for the future such as co-operation and independence and families are developing respect for each other. Some adults actively become volunteers at the centre.

The centre promotes healthy living through a broad range of mechanisms including parenting classes, exercise and physiotherapy sessions. However, the lack of centre-specific data or other measures of outcomes hinders its effectiveness in measuring success. Families increase their understanding of how to stay healthy. Efforts to reduce childhood obesity have had an impact in reducing obesity rates for children in the Reception Year from 13.6% to 9.3% in the last three years. Staff and volunteers provide support for breastfeeding but the centre does not have access to local data on the number of babies that are breastfed beyond six to eight weeks. Nor does it have information on the number of mothers who give up smoking during pregnancy.

These are the grades for the outcomes for families:

<b>The extent to which children, including those from target groups, are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy and families have healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which children are safe and protected, their welfare concerns are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which all children and parents, including those from target groups, enjoy and achieve educationally and in their personal and social development</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>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</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>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.</b>	<b>3</b>

## **How good is the provision?**

<b>3</b>
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Informal assessment and user feedback enables the centre to develop provision and services for existing users. Targeted opportunities are extended through outreach services. The flexible range of services provided by the centre generally meets the needs of most users who access it. Participation is increasing and is satisfactory overall. However, attendance in some sessions by some target groups is low.

The centre is a welcoming, attractive building, enabling children to play and adults to develop their parenting and other skills. The on-site crèche and joint parent and child sessions make a good contribution to children's enjoyment and achievement. The centre promotes children's learning well and activities for children are of a good quality. As evidenced, the positive impact on those children accessing learning and development sessions is reflected in the improving Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. One parent said: 'I have been to other toddler groups but it is much better here. The outside play area is great'. However, learning and development are satisfactory overall because very few adults access adult education learning opportunities and attendance and retention rates are low. Although a 'work club' is held at the centre, very few adults gain employment.

Case studies show that good support from the centre is making a difference to families attending, who may be vulnerable due to their circumstances. Parents told inspectors how their involvement with the centre has helped them. One said: 'The parent support advisors have given me lots of useful information and advice. They have helped me understand my child's behaviour and establish routines to help sleeping'. Effective multi-agency working, including with on-site services such as psychological services, physiotherapy and speech therapy means that families have good access to a range of support which meets their needs.

These are the grades for the quality of provision:

<b>The extent to which the range of services, activities and opportunities meet the needs of families, including those in target groups</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which the centre promotes purposeful learning, development and enjoyment for all families, including those in target groups</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The quality of care, guidance and support offered to families, including those in target groups.</b>	<b>2</b>

## **How effective are the leadership and management?**

<b>3</b>
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Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Governance and accountability arrangements are clear. Appropriate links between strategic planning and service provision lead to ongoing improvements. Staff understand their roles and responsibilities and are appropriately supervised. However, current systems do not ensure that governors, leaders and managers have a clear understanding of how successfully the centre and its services are influencing and having an impact on the five outcome areas.

The manager has a clear understanding of the key issues facing the centre but is restricted by the lack of secure performance measurements for the centre. Self-evaluation of the centre's services is used to inform priorities for improvement in the delivery plan. However, the lack of management information and data limits the centre's ability to set precise and challenging targets. For example, the local authority has not established protocols to ensure



that schools share information on individual children's progress in order for the centre to monitor its effectiveness.

The use of resources is having a satisfactory impact on outcomes for users although some provision, such as adult sessions and the crèche, is not well attended. The work of the parent support advisors is effectively targeted on supporting families in times of need. Outreach provision and partnership working are extending the services provided. However, overall engagement of users is satisfactory and the centre represents satisfactory value for money. Action to promote equality has resulted in increased engagement with disabled children, teenagers and some families who may be vulnerable due to their circumstances. However, the centre does not have access to pertinent information on some of the groups it serves and, therefore, cannot carefully evaluate the impact of their engagement. There is little analysis of the centre's impact on community cohesion.

Safeguarding is good and meets current statutory requirements. The centre has effective systems in place for recording information related to the vetting and recruitment of staff. Staff and partners have a clear understanding of policies and procedures to ensure the protection of users. They understand their role in identifying and reporting concerns and do so promptly. As a result, users' ability to stay safe is increasing. The centre collaborates effectively with other key agencies to reduce the risk of harm to children.

Partnerships with other services contribute to the satisfactory outcomes for users. Services are mostly integrated and generally deliver cohesive provision for users. The centre manager is instrumental in forming strong partnerships to support the work of the centre. The good partnership with the on-site primary school and a wide range of statutory, private and voluntary organisations contributes well to care, guidance and support. However, some partners do not evaluate the impact of their work or sufficiently share information or the responsibility for improving outcomes.

The centre seeks and makes use of feedback from users to develop the range and quality of its provision. However, parent participation in the steering group is low and below the local authority guidelines for membership of the group.

These are the grades for leadership and management:

<b>The extent to which governance, accountability, professional supervision and day-to-day management arrangements are clear and understood</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secures improvement in outcomes</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of families, including those in target groups</b>	<b>3</b>

<b>The extent to which equality is promoted and diversity celebrated, illegal or unlawful discrimination is tackled and the centre fulfils its statutory duties</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the centre's policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>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</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>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.</b>	<b>3</b>

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

The findings from the concurrent inspection of Norton Community Primary School have contributed to this report and judgements.

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## **Summary for centre users**

We inspected the Central Ryedale Children's Centre on 24 January 2012. We judged the centre as satisfactory overall.

Thank you for talking with us and contributing to the inspection of your children's centre. The centre offers good support to those of you that use it. You said that parent support advisors give good support and advice if any families are in crisis. They offer you practical help and advice on parenting which you appreciate. Staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures and are well trained. You said that you feel your children are safe at the centre.

You enjoy the sessions such as 'Stay and Play' with your children. Those of you, who have children in the crèche, while attending courses, value the care they receive. We found that children benefit from accessing services at the centre and this helps them make good progress in their learning and development. The centre is working with the adult education service to give you access to courses to help improve your own education and future employment opportunities. We have asked the centre to find ways to increase the number of adults who gain qualifications to help families improve their economic well-being.

Your children behave well and sessions help to increase your understanding of how to stay healthy. However, the health authority does not provide enough local information to the centre on such things as when a mother has had a new baby. This means that the centre is unable to offer support directly to these mothers and babies. The centre has helped families increase their understanding of healthy eating and promotes physical exercise. As a result, the number of children that have obesity problems has reduced. We have asked the local authority to make sure all partners share information and the responsibility of trying to improve outcomes for you. The centre listens to you and asks you what you think of the services and activities they offer. They change how and when they do some things because of what you say. However, too few parents are involved in strategic decision making about what the centre offers. We found that managers and staff are keen to promote equality and diversity. Families with disabled children enjoy the monthly sessions held on Saturdays. However, the local authority and partners do not provide sufficient data to help the centre target its services, identify the families most in need of support and measure the full impact of its work. We have asked them to improve their sharing of data and set targets to secure continuous improvement.

The local authority and the centre staff are motivated and understand what is working well and what needs to improve. Since the centre opened, it has been steadily improving and therefore demonstrates that it has the capacity to continue to do so.

A special thank you to those of you who took the time to come in and talk to us and for letting us join you in some of your sessions. We wish you all the best for the future.

The full report is available from your centre or on our website [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).