

Inspection report for Broadway Children's Centre

Local authority	North East Lincolnshire
Inspection number	382474
Inspection dates	6–7 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Jean-Marie Blakeley

Centre governance	Local authority
Centre leader	Jacquie Illingworth
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Centre address	Broadway Lacey Acres Grimsby North East Lincolnshire DN34 5RS
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Linked school if applicable	117926 Western Primary School
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	EY337669 Broadway Children's Centre Day Nursery

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.

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

The inspectors held meetings with staff and senior managers from the centre, parents and carers, members of the senior management team, the integrated services delivery group, the parents' forum and representatives from North East Lincolnshire local authority. Inspectors also met with a number of partners from health, education, social care voluntary and community organisations. They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

Information about the centre

Broadway Children's Centre is based south of Grimsby town centre on Broadway. It is located on the Western Primary School site. It is a Phase 1 children's centre and was designated in 2004. Governance is by North East Lincolnshire Council, a partnership group, a parents' forum and an integrated services delivery group that fulfils the role of an advisory board.

The centre provides the full core offer of services. Outreach provision is provided in community venues, such as a swimming pool and in a rural village school. The centre has recently been part of a local authority restructure. A centre coordinator, who at the time of the inspection had been fully responsible for the centre for two weeks. Centre based staff provide services for users. Some other provision, such as adult education and health services are provided on site.

The area covered by the centre is diverse in terms of economic, social and housing with the majority of property being social housing, with some privately owned houses. The community is stable with people choosing to remain within the area. Social issues, such as inter-generational long term unemployment, substance misuse and a culture of domestic violence experienced by some families are common in the area.

The centre serves an area that has two of its 10 wards in the top 20% and one in the top 10% of the most deprived nationally. Unemployment rates are high and above those found nationally. Of families with children, under four years old, 29% are lone parents and 12% are teenage mothers. The majority of local families are of White British heritage.

The percentage of children aged under five years that are living in households where no one is working is high at 35% and the number of low income families in receipt of family tax credit is high.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage provision with skills and abilities that are lower than those found nationally. The centre has an agreement with a private on-site day-care provider Broadway Children’s Centre Day Nursery. Day care is open from 8.00am until 6.00pm. The centre is open Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 5.00pm each day for 52 weeks of the year excluding bank holidays.

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

1

Capacity for sustained improvement

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

1

Main findings

Broadway Children’s Centre is at the heart of its community and is extremely successful, providing an outstanding quality of service for all its children and families. The organisation of children’s services at local authority level has a positive impact and ensures that families benefit from a wide range of integrated services. Broadway Children’s Centre is exceptionally well led and managed with strong mentoring support provided for the new coordinator by the outgoing coordinator. Parents and carers all highly praise the commitment made by the children’s centre staff and their partners, who provide a seamless service. During the inspection, users made exceedingly positive comments. Examples include, ‘It’s been a lifeline-you can come in at any time and ask for advice’, ‘Staff are so friendly and nothing is too much trouble’, ‘I love coming here-they are non-judgemental’, ‘Coming here has given me so much confidence- I’m a different person now.’

The lively centre is attractive and a hive of activity. Users receive a very warm and

personal welcome from reception staff when they arrive. The stimulating reception area provides a wide range of good quality toys, equipment and displays and children are kept safe by the provision of an internal gate and vigilant staff. This area is well used by children when their parents and carers come in to attend courses, speak to staff or drop in for help and advice, perhaps with a new baby. The enjoyment of children from the on-site primary school is evident from their laughter and attentiveness as they listen to stories delivered by library staff.

Equality is promoted sensitively and a very effective and robust approach is taken to challenge any form of discrimination. In this area of high unemployment, excellent attention is placed on training and development. A good number of users access a wide range of courses including Level 1 and 2 literacy and numeracy, First-Aid and vocational courses, such as childcare and office skills. More than 96% of those achieving qualifications are unemployed adults. As a result, the centre is narrowing the gap in the economic well-being of families. Many adults progress to further or higher education, paid employment, self-employment or volunteering. Excellent, on-site crèche facilities ensure equality of access to learning and encourage parents and carers to learn while their children are safe. One user said: 'I don't have much confidence and I go everywhere with my friend. She is off sick today. I've only been coming for three weeks but I've come on my own—I feel great.'

Excellent partnerships with health professionals ensure that new and prospective parents benefit from on-site pre- and postnatal midwifery and health visiting services. Families arriving at times of crisis benefit from the staff's wide knowledge and contact base and are promptly signposted to services to support them. Users are developing healthy lifestyles as a result of extensive advice, participation in the parents' and children's gardening group 'Little Diggers' and in the wide range of high quality courses aimed at promoting healthy lifestyles. Parents, carers and children enjoy sessions, such as 'Measure Up' and 'Family Fitness' and are confident that the advice they are given has enabled them to have a much better understanding of healthy eating. However, data indicates that there has been limited success in reducing obesity in Reception age children, reducing the number of mothers who smoke during pregnancy and in increasing the number of mothers who breastfeed their babies.

Safety awareness is very well promoted, with users developing an excellent understanding of how to keep their children safe. The centre runs many successful courses including Home Safety and the Family Links Nurturing course, which are well-attended. As a result, the numbers of children that have accidents within the home are reducing.

Safeguarding arrangements within the centre are outstanding. An integrated approach and excellent knowledge of the Care Pathway scheme and the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) ensure that services are exceptionally well targeted. Identified concerns are dealt with effectively and promptly referred to relevant agencies. Strong partnerships and integrated working has a very positive impact on the safeguarding of children.

The centre demonstrates an excellent capacity for sustained improvement. Outstanding outcomes are achieved because leaders and users constantly monitor the impact of services and identify how they can be improved. Robust self-assessment is based firmly on the analysis of outcomes. The centre actively seeks and welcomes the views of users and the wider community and uses these to improve services. Children are involved in evaluation and the centre meaningfully involves parents and carers in shaping the services of the future through the highly effective parents' forum. The local authority gives strong support to the centre through evaluating its services using a wide range of data and robust challenge. The senior management team and the partnership group, both made up of a range of external partners and local authority staff, further ensure a cohesive approach to evaluation and challenge. However, plans to include more parents and carers and community members, at a strategic level, on the recently formed integrated services delivery group have not yet been implemented.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- Improve health outcomes further by identifying effective strategies to:
 - increase the number of mothers who breastfeed their babies
 - reduce childhood obesity
 - reduce the number of mothers that smoke during pregnancy.
- The local authority should implement its plans to involve more users and members of the community in strategic decision making through membership of the integrated services delivery group.

How good are outcomes for users?

1

The children's centre is an extremely safe and secure environment where children's well-being is given the utmost priority. A highly effective multi-agency 'team around the child' approach ensures that those subject to a child protection plan or CAF process are extremely well supported. Children, parents and carers develop an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe and reduce risk. Parents and carers talk positively about how the ongoing support and information from the centre have helped them to think about child safety in and around the home. Family resource staff and parental engagement workers provide excellent support to those who have been subject to domestic violence and abuse. The centre works well with other agencies to resolve situations and to protect children as well as parents and carers.

Through an outstanding range of supported play and development opportunities, parents and carers are learning how to support their children's learning and development. High quality procedures to support children's transition ensure that they benefit from seamless provision. Children make outstanding progress from their very low starting points in developing the skills that will help them in the future. Staff at Western Primary School commented that children who have been involved with the children's centre and its commissioned services, arrive at the school in a good position to learn. Outcomes for these children are excellent.

Parents and carers who have accessed baby massage, 'Little Diggers' and the Family Fitness sessions comment upon the positive impact this has had on their health and that of their children. The support given by the centre to the parents' and carers' wish to grow vegetables has resulted in a range of home grown produce being produced and cooked in meals or snacks in the 'Little Diggers' session. Attendance at clinics is very high and immunisation rates at 98% are excellent. However, although extensive support is offered to users, there is little impact on some health outcomes such as, increasing the numbers of mothers who breastfeed their babies, reducing childhood obesity and reducing the number of mothers who smoke during pregnancy.

Parents and carers involve themselves in a wide range of learning and development opportunities, including literacy, numeracy and vocationally based courses. There is clear evidence that adult learning is improving outcomes for parents and carers and is leading to positive progressions in further education, employment or self-employment. 'You really do get one-to-one here; I love my courses' said one parent. Centre users are actively encouraged to participate in the decision making of the centre. Their feedback on the work of the centre the services provided is routinely used to shape services.

These are the grades for the outcomes for users

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	1
The extent to which children engage in positive behaviour and develop positive relationships and users contribute to decision-making and governance of the centre	1
The extent to which children are developing skills for the future and parents are developing economic stability and independence including access to training	1

How good is the provision?

1

The centre's excellent knowledge and understanding of the community it serves leads to the delivery of exceptionally high quality, holistic provision. Staff demonstrate an outstanding commitment to improving the life chances of children, parents and carers. Training, courses and progression routes are carefully planned based on the assessment of individual needs. The centre is very proactive in its approach to working with community and national organisations in order to enhance the provision. Although only a small centre, the building is well-equipped to provide adult learning courses, activities for users, health services and a crèche for children. Excellent relationships within the community mean that some services are delivered effectively on other sites in order to reach more users. This ensures there is a very good balance of universal and targeted services to meet the needs of the community.

The outstanding effectiveness of the centre's approach to care, guidance and support is clearly demonstrated in users' high uptake of its services. Parents and carers comment that the centre has made a big difference to their lives. Typical comments were, 'I have taken control of my life and my family will have a better future' and 'My child's speech has improved amazingly; it's because they go to the crèche while I do courses—so really, we are both benefiting.' Home visits by centre and partner staff are very successfully in engaging families. Staff have a 'can do' and 'drip feed' approach to information, advice and guidance, which is highly successful. They appropriately identify need, provide ongoing support and refer to other services. Strong relationships enable families to approach the centre with confidence, particularly during times of crisis.

Staff use information about children's starting points to effectively plan their learning and measure their progress. A strong commitment and highly effective partnership work are improving children's communication, language and literacy, social and emotional, and creative development. This is having an excellent impact on improving educational outcomes and narrowing the gap between those who achieve and those who do not. Parents and carers are encouraged to support their children through such activities as, regular play and stay sessions, by borrowing books from the library and by attending story and rhyme times. Commissioned services, such as those from speech and language therapists and the Pre-School Learning Alliance are fundamental to the progress children make.

Through close partnership working with the Teen Pregnancy team, the Childminders Network and Portage, the centre is providing services to those who are hard to reach. Staff provide effective targeted support for parents, carers and children with disabilities. One parent said: 'Staff at the centre have been brilliant. They helped me understand my child's disability. I didn't know anything about CAF and was frightened but they supported me all the way through.'

The dynamic training team leader and the centre’s training coordinator are persistent in their determination to engage adults in individually appropriate learning, training and development. The centre is resolute in its commitment to ensuring that as many parents and carers as possible access a wide range of courses, thereby increasing their chances of paid employment and suitable volunteering opportunities. The centre is innovative and achieved great success, in reaching previously hard to reach families through its response to users’ requests for a knitting group. Effectively led by a volunteer, this group is heavily subscribed by new users.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The effectiveness of the assessment of the needs of children, parents and other users	1
The extent to which the centre promotes purposeful learning, development and enjoyment for all users	1
The extent to which the range of services, activities and opportunities meet the needs of users and the wider community	1
The quality of care, guidance and support offered to users within the centre and the wider community	1

How effective are the leadership and management?

1

Senior managers at a strategic level demonstrate a strong vision of inclusion and an excellent understanding of and commitment to the success of this children’s centre. This, coupled with the commitment and determination of the centre’s staff team, is providing excellent outcomes for users. Governance and management are outstanding. Teamwork is highly effective and accountability arrangements are clear and understood. High expectations are clearly communicated to staff who are inspired to drive forward and improve services.

The local authority provides an extensive range of data and information on the centre’s priorities and how well it is meeting them. This centre uses data exceptionally well to plan and evaluate the delivery and impact of its services and to set measureable targets for improvement. The centre and its partners make excellent use of their critical reflection and evaluation skills to set meaningful targets for improvement in order to narrow the gap for the most disadvantaged. Users’ views play a vital part in developing provision particularly through the strong parents’ forum. The centre seeks and welcomes the views of all users. However, although the local authority plans include increased membership of parents and carers and the community on the newly formed integrated services delivery group, these plans have not yet been implemented.

Each member of staff plays an important part in the children’s centre and its delivery

of a wide range of outstanding services. Their enthusiasm, professionalism, commitment and dedication are exemplary.

The inclusion of all families and children is outstanding and fully promoted in all aspects of the centre's provision to ensure that their diverse needs are supported. One parent said: 'It's the one place you can take a child with learning disabilities and don't feel judged.' Another commented, 'The staff have given me so much help and information it's unbelievable. They noticed that my child wasn't communicating well and even got me on a course so I can understand my child's disability.' Professionals from a range of agencies consider that the children's centre makes an outstanding commitment to partnership working and to improving the life chances of children and families within the area. Senior leaders are highly effective in ensuring children and families are safe through rigorous attention to child protection, vetting and recruitment procedures. Safeguarding arrangements are exemplary.

Local authority leaders are determined to ensure that the children's centre is sustainable and services to users are not compromised, despite cuts in funding. The management of these cuts has been imaginative and effective to ensure that services are improved and that support users receive is increased rather than reduced. Resources are used and managed extremely efficiently, effectively and creatively to meet the needs of users and the wider community. The centre provides excellent value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The extent to which governance, accountability, professional supervision and day to day management arrangements are clear and understood	1
The extent to which ambitious targets drive improvement, provision is integrated and there are high expectations for users and the wider community	1
The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of users and the wider community	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
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	1
The extent to which partnerships with other agencies ensure the integrated delivery of the range of services the centre has been commissioned to provide	1
The extent to which the centre supports and encourages the wider community to engage with services and uses their views to develop the	1

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

None

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 Broadway Children's Centre on 6-7 June 2011. As part of the inspection, we visited a number of activities, looked at the centre's documentation and talked with a range of children and adults including: parents, carers, staff, and representatives from the community and partner agencies.

The information given and the stories you shared with us enabled us to judge that the centre is outstanding overall. To make sure that it stays this way, we have asked the local authority to make sure more of you are involved in the new integrated services delivery group. We have also asked the centre to find more ways to help families stay healthy by encouraging more mothers to give up smoking while they are pregnant, to breastfeed their babies and to find ways to help reduce the number of children who are obese by the time they reach school age.

You told us how the children's centre has supported you to improve your lives and how you now have more confidence. It was clear that you are very proud of your achievements. Many of you talked about your involvement with the centre and how it has helped you and your children. You told us how it has become easier to ask for help and support because of the friendly welcome and good quality relationships that you develop. You also told us about the friends you have met as a result of your involvement in the centre's activities and outings.

It is clear that you feel welcome at the children's centre because so many of you were in and out of the building with your new babies and toddlers when we were there. Many of you who start by making contact with the centre become more involved than you expect to. We found out that many of you have learned new things and developed new skills, and increasing numbers gain qualifications, go on to further training, volunteering or find work. Some of you have also set up new

businesses. We saw the fantastic photographs taken by two mothers with their own business. Many of you said how the involvement with the centre is improving your lives and the lives of your children, and how much you appreciate the support and encouragement staff give you.

We recognise the outstanding leadership and management that make the centre so successful. The staff are committed to the work of the centre and supported by the strong leadership of the centre coordinators provide you with a range of high quality services that are tailored to meet your individual needs. They use their contacts to call on professionals from health, education, voluntary organisations and social care to make sure you get the best service. The local authority rigorously checks how well the centre is working and supports and challenges them to improve.

The centre works well for everyone in the community, irrespective of their background, and in doing so it contributes very strongly to community harmony and cohesion. Many more of you are now using the centre because of the knitting club.

Thank you very much for your welcome and openness with inspectors. We thoroughly enjoyed talking to you, sharing your stories and meeting your babies and children. We wish you every success in the future.

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