

Inspection report for Filey Children's Centre

Local authority	North Yorkshire County Council
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Linked school if applicable	Filey C of E Voluntary Controlled Infant and Nursery School URN 121533
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	Filey Childcare URN EY 336004

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.

An inspection of the registered early years/childcare provision Filey Childcare was carried out at the same time as the inspection of the centre under Section 3 of the Childcare Act 2006. The report of this inspection is available on our website www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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, the day care provider and the co-located school. Inspectors also met with parents and carers, members of the governing body and the steering group and representatives from North Yorkshire local authority as well as a number of partners including those from health, the voluntary sector and education. They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

Information about the centre

Filey Children's Centre is a phase one children's centre providing the full core offer of services. It is located on the site of Filey Infants School. A private provider, Filey Childcare, provides full day care in the centre building for children aged nought to five years as well as breakfast and after-school clubs.

Filey is a traditional seaside resort with a high number of retired residents and only 47% of the population being of working age. The centre covers a number of rural villages, including Hunmanby and Sherburn and provides outreach services delivered in partners' or community venues.

Governance is by North Yorkshire County Council with input from a steering group made up of professionals, partners, community members and users. A children's centre service

manager, supported by a team of parent support advisors, leads the centre. The children’s centre services manager also manages another centre and is line managed by an integrated services manager for the coast locality.

The centre serves a mixed area with specific pockets of deprivation. One third of children in the reach area live in one of the 30% areas most deprived nationally. Unemployment rates in the area are high with many jobs being seasonal or low waged. The centre does not have specific data for the number of families in receipt of the child care element of working tax credit but it knows that 23% of children live in workless households.

The majority of local families are of White British heritage with a low minority ethnic population of 0.4%.

Low academic and qualification achievement is a feature of the area with 91% of economically active adults having no or low level qualifications. Children enter Early Years Foundation Stage provision with skills and abilities that are at or below those typical 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

3

Capacity for sustained improvement

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

3

Main findings

Filey 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. The good quality on-site day care and activities in the centre promote learning well and as a result, enjoyment and achievement is good. The lack of effective systems for measuring the effectiveness of the centre’s performance and partners’ reluctance to share information limits the centres ability to target its provision and improve outcomes. A small minority of families are improving their economic well-being.

Outcomes for users are satisfactory overall but some are good. Skilled parent support advisors provide good one-to-one care, guidance and support to families in times of crisis. 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 and carers 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.

Parents, carers and children enjoy coming to the centre. Day care and stay and play sessions provided at the centre are good and as a result, children's progress from their starting points is good. Adults' development of parenting skills is good because of the support they receive from staff and peers. However, only a small minority of adults gain relevant qualifications to help 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. Although the centre promotes healthy living, the health authority's lack of local outcomes 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. The centre is seeking ways to increase the low number of users currently represented on the steering group.

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. However, the lack of shared information regarding new births from the health service limits the centre's knowledge of some potential users.

The new manager is ambitious to continue improving the provision, building on its strengths and reaching more of the families most in need. The number of families registered is increasing. Although evaluation is systematic, it lacks challenge and a rigorous analysis of outcomes leading to precise and measurable targets. However, the lack of local information and outcomes measures makes it difficult for the centre to be secure in where to target most effectively its provision.

The inclusion of all children and families is central to the vision of the new centre manager. The centre meets the duties that apply to it for equality and diversity. However, equality and diversity is no better than satisfactory as 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 leadership and management and outcomes for users together with good quality of provision and the clear vision of the new centre manager demonstrates a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- Improve systems to measure, analyse and increase the impact of the centre's work on user engagement of key target groups and outcomes.
- The local authority should ensure that key partners, particularly health services, share the responsibility to improve outcomes and target the provision, by ensuring the centre has access to key management information and data.

- Increase the numbers of adults gaining relevant qualifications in order to improve the economic well-being of families.

How good are outcomes for families?

3

Outcomes are satisfactory overall. Families benefit from good advice and the promotion of safety by the parent support advisors. As a result, they have a better understanding of how to keep their families safe. Early intervention for families with children identified as at risk or in need is helping to keep children safe and is supporting their progress. One parent told inspectors, 'I now understand safeguarding issues. I would never have managed the children without the centre.' Timely support is provided for children through effective 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 stay safe outcomes.

The centre is a welcoming attractive building, enabling children to play and adults to develop their skills. The good quality on-site day care provision and stay and play sessions make a good contribution to children's and adults' enjoyment and achievement. Children's progress and development of skills is good overall, although, the centre recognises that the personal, social and emotional development of boys is below average. Transition into the on-site infant school is good. Adults particularly enjoy courses to develop their parenting skills. One parent said, 'I did the parenting course twice. It really helped me manage my two children's different behaviour.'

The centre provides a range of opportunities for users to make a positive contribution through surveys, comments boards and a parents' forum. Some users express their views leading to improvement in their personal development. However, the number of users currently involved in strategic decisions is low. Children behave well and are developing useful skills for the future such as cooperation and independence and families are developing respect for each other. A minority of users are dissatisfied with the communication and consultation regarding recent changes to services introduced to improve health and safety and target those families in greatest need.

The centre promotes healthy living through a broad range of mechanisms but lacks centre-specific data or other measures of outcomes to monitor its success. Families increase their understanding of how to stay healthy but the centre recognises that too few babies are breastfed beyond six to eight weeks and that efforts to reduce childhood obesity have had insufficient impact.

The centre is aware that some users return to work or progress to education or training. However, they do not monitor and record all positive outcomes. Although the centre works in partnership with the adult education service, only a small minority of adults gain relevant qualifications in order to improve their economic well-being.

These are the grades for the outcomes for families:

The extent to which children, including those from target groups, are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy and families have healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children are safe and protected, their welfare concerns are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them	2
The extent to which all children and parents, including those from target groups, 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 parents, including those from target groups, contribute to decision-making and governance of the centre	3
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.	3

How good is the provision?

2

There is prompt and effective use of the Common Assessment Framework to provide support and services to families. Informal assessment and user feedback enables the centre to develop learning and development provision for existing users and 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. The new manager is focused on providing services for families with the greatest need. However, there is little identification of the needs of some target groups or evidence of their engagement.

On-site day care and activities to help children to learn and develop are good. The staff employed in day care are well-qualified and plan for children’s individual learning. The centre promotes children’s learning well and activities are of a good quality. As evidenced in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, there is a positive impact on those children accessing day care and learning and development sessions. One parent said: ‘The children have the chance to enjoy learning through music and messy play, which we do not do at home. It reminds me how to play with them and my child is learning to become more social.’

Case studies show that good support from the centre is making a difference to families, who may be vulnerable due to their circumstances. Parents and carers told inspectors how their involvement with the centre has helped them. One said, ‘The staff have really helped a lot. As we were both quite young to be parents, we didn’t have a clue. We were homeless and they helped us get a house and apply for benefits.’ ‘I did not know anyone with children when I moved back here’ said another, ‘Now we go to as many sessions as we can and have made many friends.’

These are the grades for the quality of provision:

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

How effective are the leadership and management? **3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Governance and accountability arrangements are clear. There are links between strategic planning and service provision leading to improvements. Staff understand their roles and responsibilities and are appropriately supervised. However, current systems do not ensure that the governing body, leaders and managers have a clear understanding of how successfully the centre and its services are influencing outcomes across the five outcome areas for the centre.

The new manager has a broad understanding of the key issues facing the centre but is restricted by the lack of secure performance measurements for the centre. There are links between the centre’s on-going evaluation of its services and priorities set out in its delivery plan. However, the lack of management information and data limits the centre’s ability for precise target setting and rigorous evaluation of outcomes. As a result, grades given in the centre’s self-assessment report are much higher than those awarded during the inspection.

The use of resources is having a satisfactory impact on outcomes for users, which means that the centre gives satisfactory value for money. The centre building provides a welcoming environment and outreach provision is extending the services provided. The work of the parent support advisors is appropriately targeted on supporting families in times of need. However, overall engagement of users is only satisfactory. The lack of analysis of user engagement means that the centre does not know how successfully it is meeting the needs of all of its target groups.

The centre meets its statutory duties for equality and diversity. Action to promote greater equality has resulted in engaging teenage parents with services provided by the centre. However, there is little analysis of the centre’s impact on community cohesion. The centre does not closely monitor its success in engaging with low income or workless families, lone parents or fathers and the narrowing of all achievement gaps.

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 outcomes for users. Services are mostly integrated and generally deliver cohesive provision for users. However, some partners do

not evaluate the impact of their work or sufficiently share information or the responsibility for improving outcomes. The good partnership with the on-site primary school and private day care enables good transition arrangements for children.

The centre seeks and makes use of feedback from users to develop the range and quality of its provision. However, insufficient communication regarding changes to services in order to target those in most need and to improve health and safety has resulted in some users being dissatisfied and therefore disengaging with the centre. The centre is seeking ways to increase user participation in the steering group.

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	3
The effectiveness of evaluation and its use of ambitious targets which secure improvement in outcomes	3
The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of families, including those in target groups	3
The extent to which equality is promoted and diversity celebrated, illegal or unlawful discrimination is tackled and the centre fulfils its statutory duties	3
The effectiveness of the centre's policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults	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	3
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.	3

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

Findings from the concurrent inspection of the Filey C of E Voluntary Controlled Infant and Nursery School were used to a minor extent.

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Summary for centre users

We inspected the Filey Children's Centre on 29 Sep 2011. We judged the centre as satisfactory overall. Thank you for talking with us and contributing to the inspection of the children's centre.

The centre offers good support to all of you that use it. You said that parent support advisors give good support and advice and always respond if any families are in crisis. They offer you practical help and advice on parenting that you appreciate. Those of you that have attended the parenting course really appreciate how it has helped you manage your children's behaviour. We found that staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures and that they 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 with children in day care really value the care their children receive. We found that children benefit from accessing services at the centre and make good progress from their starting points. 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 you learn more about how to stay healthy. However, the health authority does not provide enough local information to the centre on such things as how many children have had their immunisations or when a mother has had a new baby. The centre knows that too many children have problems with being overweight or obese. 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. Some of you are involved in making decisions about your centre through being on the parents' forum but not many of you are involved in strategic decisions through the steering group. A few families are unhappy that there was not enough consultation about some recent changes to services.

We found that managers and staff are keen to promote equality and diversity. Young families are enjoying sessions to help them be parents. However, the local authority and partners do not provide sufficient data to help the centre target its services in order to identify the families most in need of support and measure the impact of its work. We have asked them to improve this. We suggest that the centre monitors the outcomes more closely and set targets to improve further.

The local authority and the centre staff want to improve the work of the centre. Because the centre has been improving and it knows most of what it needs to do to improve further, we are confident that it will continue to do so.

A special thank you to those of you who took the time to come in and talk with 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.