

Inspection report for Sure Start Children's Centre Driffield

Local authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	383665
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Reporting inspector	Rachael Flesher HMI

Centre leader	Mrs Helen Williams
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
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Linked school if applicable	None
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	None

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.

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an early years inspector. The inspectors held meetings with parents and carers, centre staff and representatives from professional partnerships, the advisory board and the local authority. They observed the centre's work and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

Information about the centre

Sure Start Children's Centre Driffield is situated in the market town of Driffield. It is located in the same purpose-built building as adult services, which operates a day centre for the elderly and for adults with learning disabilities. The centre was designated in February 2008 and is a Phase 2 children's centre.

The centre serves families living in the town and the surrounding villages and hamlets, its reach area covering 108 square miles. The centre also provides outreach services from Langtoft Primary School. Some families live in one of the 30–40% most deprived areas in the country. These families may face issues of low education attainment and skills, low household income, poverty and worklessness, claiming job seeker allowance and workless benefits. Job opportunities are generally in retail, farming and agriculture and are often part-time positions or seasonal work with pay being the national minimum wage. Due to the rural nature of the area and lack of transport, many families find it difficult to access services and face issues of social isolation.

The population of the centre's reach area is predominantly of White British heritage. There is an increasing number of families from minority ethnic groups, including Eastern European and Traveller families. For some families, English is an additional language.

The centre does not commission or provide any early years provision on site but works closely with the wide range of early years providers in the local area. Many children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills below those expected for their age.

The centre is governed by the local authority. It has an advisory board made up of representatives from the local community and a range of partner professionals. The chair of the advisory board is a parent and a childminder; currently no other parents and carers sit on the board. The centre has its own parents' forum.

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

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

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

2

Main findings

This is a good children's centre. The leaders and managers routinely seek the views of those using the centre and use this information well to shape services and evaluate the effectiveness of provision. The services and activities provided are therefore accurately matched to the needs of the whole community. The participation rates of most groups, including those identified as most in need of intervention and support, are excellent and ensure the centre provides good value for money.

Children make good progress from their starting points and are well prepared for school. As a result, the gap between the lowest achieving 20% in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the rest is narrowing well. The majority of adults are engaged in learning and personal development opportunities and are also making good progress in developing their skills for the future and achieving their learning goals. However, systems to efficiently track the engagement and progress of all those using the centre and to demonstrate the impact of services and activities on their outcomes, including in the long term, are not fully developed. In addition, despite concerted efforts by the centre to encourage more parents to contribute to the decision-making and governance of the centre through membership on the advisory board and attending parent forums, parents are reluctant to take part. The leadership and management is, therefore, good overall. The outcomes are also good and provision is excellent. As a result, the centre has a good capacity for sustained improvement.

All staff and partners give the highest priority to safeguarding all children and vulnerable adults and outcomes for this aspect are outstanding. Their safety and well-being are significantly enhanced by the robust and highly consistent implementation of policies,

procedures and practice, including excellent partnership working with health and social care professionals. Referrals of vulnerable families are swiftly addressed through exceptional early intervention, often preventing children becoming the subject of a child protection plan or reducing the levels of concern.

Provision overall is outstanding due to the exceptional personalised care, guidance and support provided by highly skilled staff to enable and empower many vulnerable families, in great need of intervention, to achieve good and sometimes excellent outcomes. The centre works closely with a range of professionals, identifying vulnerable families, rigorously assessing their needs and ensuring that services are swiftly provided and tailored to individual needs. As a result the centre has also been extremely successful in engaging with the large majority of many target groups and those identified as most in need of intervention and support, for example teenage parents and pregnant teenagers, minority ethnic groups, fathers and vulnerable families living in rural isolation, and the gap between these groups and the rest is narrowing.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Improve partnerships with parents and carers to ensure greater contribution to the decision-making and governance of the centre by encouraging membership on the advisory board and parent forums.
- Use data and monitoring systems to efficiently track the engagement and progress of all those using the centre to further demonstrate the impact on the immediate and long-term outcomes for users.

How good are outcomes for families?

2

Very good partnership working and the extremely effective systems for assessing users' needs, making referrals and intervening early are having a very positive impact on outcomes for children, including those subject to Common Assessment Framework (CAF) processes, looked-after children and children subject to a child protection plan. Staff intervene swiftly to support families and as a result the centre is reducing the number of children needing child protection plans and preventing situations from reaching crisis point. Children and parents feel extremely safe and are much safer in their homes and their communities as a result of the speedy intervention and partnership work and the high quality health and safety home checks and resource provision. Emergency hospital admissions and accidents in and around the home have significantly decreased as a result. Families have opportunities to share any safety concerns with the police through the monthly surgery and their visible presence at the centre and in the community, and community cohesion is developing as a result.

A large majority of families in the area particularly the most vulnerable are engaged well, with a good range of appropriate health services ensuring families are achieving good healthy outcomes. Health professionals and centre staff work very well together to provide these services, particularly ante-natal and post-natal support. This has a good impact on the

rates of mothers sustaining breast feeding and reductions in childhood obesity. The take-up of services for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also good.

Families using the centre and the wider community treat each other with respect. Most families using the centre express their views and contribute to shaping services. However, not enough parents are involved in bringing a positive contribution to the governance of the centre through membership of a parents' forum and the advisory board.

The majority of adults are engaged in training, adult learning and personal development courses and some are involved in the volunteer programme. As a result they are developing their employability skills, including their personal and social skills. Outcomes for families seeking suitable employment are good. A high proportion of fathers are involved in centre activities. Excellent information, advice and guidance is provided to parents regarding childcare options, financial issues, benefits and tax credits, thus improving their economic stability and independence.

Children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress from their starting points in developing their skills for the future. Schools report that children arrive ready to learn and are confident and independent. Good-quality transition arrangements and partnership working are in place to ensure consistency and the continuity of care, learning and development of children. The centre ensures a strong focus on the areas of development where children are achieving less well. Almost all three- and four-year-old children are accessing their free nursery education entitlement and the most vulnerable two-year-olds are accessing 15 hours of childcare a week through a government funded two year old nursery pilot. Early years settings are supported to develop their quality, ensuring that all children have access to good quality provision. As a result, the majority of children achieve 78 points in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the gap between the lowest-achieving 20% and the rest is narrowing well.

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	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 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	2
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.	2

How good is the provision?

The centre works extremely well in partnership with other services to ensure assessments, such as those carried out under the CAF process and for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are robust, well-informed and lead to early intervention. Staff are highly skilled at identifying the needs of families and intervene early to ensure they receive the personalised support they need to improve their outcomes and prevent situations reaching crisis point. Extremely strong partnership working, and correct identification of the make up the reach area, ensures the centre is supporting a large majority of vulnerable families and many target groups. The provision for most of these target groups is excellent, resulting in high participation, user satisfaction and dramatic outcomes. For example, the 'Baby and U2' group, which is delivered in partnership with the Youth Service, provides a wide range of support to all teenage parents and teenage parents to be in the reach area. It helps them develop good parenting skills, secure housing, access benefits and financial advice and guidance and make significant progress in their personal, social and employability skills. The centre has also been highly successful in engaging almost half of all fathers in the centre services and activities, and a large majority of families from minority ethnic groups, for example the Polish community, many of whom live in rural isolation, and some families from the Traveller community. The outcomes for these families are improving well as a result.

Excellent support is provided generally by staff to enable families living in rural locations with no transport to access much needed services, groups, and advice and guidance. This includes taking services such as the toy library out to community venues and groups, making home visits and providing much needed transportation. Users state this has helped them to make friends, reduce social isolation, access childcare and receive financial advice, with one parent stating, 'They have enabled me and my partner to get a job'. Vulnerable families are exceptionally well supported in times of crisis with skilled and committed staff successfully empowering and enabling parents to make significant improvements to their lives. For example, the majority of adults, including those from target groups and the most vulnerable, are helped to access training, personal development courses and employment, which is increasing their self-esteem and confidence and securing emotional stability. This includes supporting many families from minority ethnic groups for whom English is an additional language to develop their skills. However, the centre does not routinely track the long term progress and learning and development of all users to fully demonstrate the impact of services on their outcomes. Parents report that the centre has '...turned my life around', '...given me a light at the end of the tunnel' and that staff are 'non-judgmental', '...go above and beyond' and are '...friendly and helpful and I love coming'.

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	1
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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.	1

How effective are the leadership and management?

2

The inclusion of all children and families, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is promoted very effectively and diversity is celebrated. The centre plays a significant role in the life of the community and is breaking down barriers to further community cohesion.

Governance and accountability arrangements, as well as clear roles and responsibilities at all levels of leadership and management, are well-established and understood by all. The advisory board and local authority challenge the centre and staff, leaders and partners routinely reflect on their practice and provision to secure continuous improvement. Users' views are sought and used to contribute to good self-evaluation and shape services. Self-evaluation provides the centre with a good understanding of its strengths and areas for development and is used to inform planning. This is good overall. However, data and monitoring systems are not fully utilised to track the engagement of all users and to fully demonstrate the impact the centre is having on their outcomes, including in the long term. Resource planning takes very good account of the need to ensure that services are sustainable and the centre provides good value for money.

The centre takes a full and active role in developing and implementing a variety of partnership activities which include statutory, private, voluntary and independent providers and organisations. This ensures extremely effective partnership working that enhances opportunities for families in the area and has a positive impact in securing good and improving outcomes. However, partnerships with parents are not fully developed to ensure more can contribute to the decision-making and governance of the centre.

Safer recruitment procedures are stringently followed and all relevant checks are made to ensure that all staff are suitable and safe to work with children. All staff receive high-quality child protection training and are extremely confident in their role to safeguard children. Risks are thoroughly assessed and minimised. Staff are effectively deployed. Protocols and practices for sharing information between agencies are exemplary. Very good professional supervision and management arrangements are in place to monitor the performance of staff and ensure their safety and well-being and ongoing professional development. Staff development and training are effective and appropriate in order to meet the current and future needs of children and families in the reach area.

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	2
The effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secure improvement in outcomes	2
The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of families, including those in target groups	2
The extent to which equality is promoted and diversity celebrated, illegal or unlawful discrimination is tackled and the centre fulfils its statutory duties	2
The effectiveness of the centre's policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults	1
The extent to which partnerships with other agencies ensure the integrated delivery of the range of services provided by the centre to meet its core purpose	2
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.	2

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

None

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Summary for centre users

We inspected Sure Start Children's Centre Driffield on 19 and 20 October 2011. We judged the centre as good overall.

Thank you to those of you who contributed to the inspection. We found your children's centre to be warm and welcoming. Staff are friendly, enthusiastic and committed to improving the outcomes for your families. You are accessing a good range of health services and the good health of your families is improving as a result. You and your children are extremely safe when using the centre and staff are swift to intervene early with any safeguarding concerns to ensure children are safe and families are fully supported. Your centre has helped you make your homes safer and children are having fewer accidents. Good partnerships with the police have helped make your community a safer place to be and the different groups in your community get along well together.

You and your children are learning and developing well. The majority of adults are engaged in training, adult learning and personal development courses, with some accessing the volunteer programme. You are developing your employability skills as a result. However, your centre does not routinely track your progress once you are accessing development opportunities they have helped you find outside the centre. As a result, your centre cannot always demonstrate the long-term impact it has made on your progress and development. Your centre has been asked to improve this. Your children have good opportunities to learn and develop and are ready for school, confident and independent. They are making good progress in developing their skills for the future.

Your centre knows the needs of your community exceptionally well and works very effectively with other professionals and actively seeks your views to ensure the services it provides meet the needs of your families. Staff have been extremely successful in engaging the large majority of families from your community to access the centre and services, particularly those who are the most vulnerable or in most need of support. A high proportion of fathers, teenage parents and pregnant teenagers, families from minority ethnic groups and families living in rural isolation are accessing much needed services. This is often due to

the centre taking services out into the rural community and providing transportation to these families. As a result, your feedback shows that the vast majority of you are satisfied with the services your children's centre provides and attendance is very high. However, your centre is struggling to encourage more of you to become members of the advisory board and parents' forum so you can contribute to the governance of the centre and help drive improvements further. Your centre has been asked to improve this.

Your centre provides your families with exceptional care, guidance and support particularly when you are facing times of crisis, with outstanding results. As some of you told us, the centre has '...turned my life around', '...given me a light at the end of the tunnel' and staff are 'non-judgmental', '...go above and beyond' and are '...friendly and helpful and I love coming'.

Your centre strives to be better and is always looking for ways to improve to ensure it is having the biggest impact on improving outcomes for you and your families. Your children's centre has a good capacity to improve further the outcomes for families living in your community and to continue to narrow the gap between the most disadvantaged and the rest. It does so with great determination and dedication. We wish you all the very best for the future.

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