

# Inspection report for Staincliffe & Healey Children's Centre

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Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	384114
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Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
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Linked school if applicable	Manorfield Infant and Nursery School URN107672
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	Staincliffe and Healey Children's Centre EY342463

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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 one early years inspector.

The inspectors held meetings with senior managers from the centre and the local authority, parents, members of the parent forum and advisory board, local schools and a number of partner agencies including: health; early years staff; Jobcentre Plus, Citizens Advice Bureau, and Adult Education.

They observed the centre's work and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

## Information about the centre

Staincliffe and Healey Children's Centre is a phase one centre co-located on Manorfield Infant and Nursery School in Batley in West Yorkshire. There is also a local authority-run childcare provision on site. The centre gained designation in February 2007 and services are delivered either on site or at a local outreach venue. The local authority is responsible for all aspects of governance and management of the centre, including the day-to-day running of the centre and its strategic development. There is a separate advisory board consisting of key partners and parents, and a family forum.

The centre serves a mixed population of South Asian and White British heritages. Local housing is a mixture of private, social and rented accommodation. There are 1086 children in the reach area and 75% are registered at the centre, of which the large majority (74%) live in the 10 to 30% most deprived areas. Approximately 25% of children live in households where families are solely dependent on benefits. A small minority of families with additional needs attend the centre services.

Most children enter early years provision with knowledge and skills below those expected for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy, and personal and social development.

## 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
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### Capacity for sustained improvement

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

2
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## Main findings

Staincliffe and Healey Children's Centre serves the needs of its community well. It is particularly effective at engaging with hard-to-reach groups and is improving community cohesion by ensuring equality and diversity is at the heart of all its work. While outcomes are good overall, the centre is extremely successful in improving the health of families and encouraging those who use the centre to become actively involved in the centre's decision making. The centre is highly regarded equally by those who access services and partner agencies who work well with centre staff to ensure delivery of high-quality provision. However, the immense popularity of the one-stop shop has resulted in the centre becoming a victim of its own success. When vast numbers of families attend this service, the centre becomes overcrowded due to its limited space and the range of activities and resources on offer. As a result, attendees are unable to engage fully with some activities, thereby missing out on some learning opportunities. Additionally, an occasional lack of clarity and rigour with the assessment of risk means that some potential hazards are not minimised as much as possible.

The centre's reach area has had a number of health issues affecting it including low birth weight, which has contributed to high infant mortality, and childhood obesity. The centre has tackled these health issues with determination and tenacity and the strategies used have resulted in a decrease in low birth weight and a marked reduction in childhood obesity so that it is now significantly lower than the local authority and national averages. Better health and nutritional advice is having an extremely positive impact on families and the highly successful Baby Café has resulted in a significant increase in the numbers of mothers breastfeeding their babies beyond eight weeks.

Effective provision is a result of accurate assessment of need and services are continuously reviewed and revised following feedback from users. An active family forum and good parental representation on the advisory board ensure that parents' and carers' views are represented well, providing challenge to the centre's management team.

Safeguarding arrangements are robust with clear information-sharing protocols, sound vetting arrangements, knowledgeable staff and effective child protection procedures. Consequently, children and families are protected and supported well. The centre's leadership and management team is aware of the centre's strengths and weaknesses and sets ambitious and appropriate priority targets. The impact that the centre has had over recent years, plus its unfailing enthusiasm for further development explain why the centre has good capacity for sustained improvement.

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

### **Recommendations for further improvement**

- Ensure centre users are safe at all times by refining the risk assessments to ensure all potential hazards, both indoors and outdoors, are fully identified and by taking clear action to minimise risks.
- Improve the quality of planning in relation to drop-in sessions to ensure all children and parents can make the most of all activities and potential learning opportunities.

## **How good are outcomes for families?**

2
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The centre is valued highly by the community and families welcome the services provided. One parent described the centre as, 'part of their family.' Parents and children are developing an excellent understanding of how to live healthily through comprehensive advice on weaning and immunisations given at the midwifery and health visitor clinics, and the wealth of information provided on healthy eating. Many parents report that their diets have improved significantly and their children now choose to eat more healthily as a direct result of using the fruit and vegetable co-op, sampling healthy snacks at the centre and attending the very popular 'Big Cook Little Cook' sessions. As a result, the prevalence of childhood obesity, once a major concern, has reduced rapidly over recent years and children's health is improving. For example, one parent reported that with the help of centre staff, 'her daughter is walking now'. The centre's Baby Café has been instrumental in supporting mothers to breastfeed their babies. Evidence showed that 70% of babies who attended Baby Café were under eight weeks of age; of these, 77% were still exclusively breastfeeding at six to eight weeks and 21% were receiving some breast milk. This demonstrates that 98% of babies who had attended Baby Café were still receiving some breast milk at six to eight weeks of age. In recognition of the café's success, staff and peer support volunteers have been asked to speak at a national conference on supporting breastfeeding.

Centre staff actively engage with families to educate them in how to improve children's safety, although, a lack of precision in the centre's risk assessments has resulted in oversight of some potential risks to children in the outdoor area and to families indoors during the very popular drop-in sessions. However, children who are subject to a child protection plan are effectively safeguarded through clear protocols and good safeguarding arrangements. Staff trained in the use of the Common Assessment Framework discharge their responsibilities well and appropriate records are maintained and stored confidentially. Additionally, posters relating to domestic violence support are displayed in different languages and the centre has an innovative way of giving confidential support to victims of domestic violence in the form of lip moisturisers with a numbered barcode which corresponds to the domestic violence helpline.

The centre actively focuses on child development and works collaboratively with local schools to secure improvements in Early Years Foundation Stage profile point scores. Data show that children who have accessed centre services have increased scores compared to those who have not and two out of three nearby schools show improving scores year-on-year. The centre uses the 'Child's Journey' and 'Family Links' programmes to successfully help parents understand child development and support their children at home. One parent reported that her 'son didn't share' before she attended one-stop shop. 'Now he shares with everyone.' Local headteachers speak highly of their good partnerships with the centre and report that parents who have accessed centre services are confident to engage with teaching staff once their children start school. This readiness to engage in learning is also reflected in the increasing numbers of adults accessing education and training in order to improve their skills and employment opportunities. The centre has 100% success rate in those embarking on a food safety qualification and 78% of adults who start English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and literacy courses achieve accreditation at entry level 1 and progress to level 2. Partnerships with Jobcentre plus and the Citizens Advice Bureau are also helping to improve families' economic and social well-being with advice on benefits, training and employment opportunities. There has been exceptional success for a small number of parents, including two who are currently undertaking midwifery training.

Adult users take an active role in the decision-making of the centre. Parents who openly admit to having low self-esteem and little confidence have found a voice through the strong family forum and advisory board and now openly challenge the centre to improve services further. They are exceptionally strong advocates of the centre, organising petitions and campaigning against potential cuts to services. Many spoke of how the centre has made an enormous difference to their lives by raising their aspirations and giving them the confidence to speak out about issues which affect their lives.

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>1</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>3</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>2</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>1</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>2</b>

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

<b>2</b>
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Assessment is used effectively to determine the needs of children and parents within the community. Consequently, the centre knows the community well and strives to ensure that services successfully meet the needs of users. There are clear programmes in place to promote the health and social well-being of families, including a strong emphasis on providing emotional support to boost their confidence and raise their self-esteem. Good care, guidance and support are offered to families at all times. Specialist roles, such as the infant feeding coordinator, peer support advisors and skilled playworkers ensure the individual needs of families in target groups are met well. Effective collaborative working with partner agencies secures swift support to families in times of crisis.

Experienced staff are well known within the community and work tirelessly to make contact with hard-to-reach families and they are described by parents as 'very helpful'. The centre is very aware of the difficulties and challenges faced by families within its reach area, for example, those who are isolated in the community, those with a limited command of English and those suffering domestic violence. Past racial tensions have eased significantly due to the centre's success in encouraging different cultures to engage with one another. Examples of success include the multi-faith days and the Saturday and holiday fun days when all families come together to celebrate cultural differences and show respect for one another.

There are many examples of good quality outreach and support work, including the regular stay and play sessions, the Family Links programme, coffee mornings, Babies into Books sessions and teenage support groups. Midwifery and health visitor services are run weekly in the centre and Jobcentre Plus runs clinics at the centre and at outreach venues to offer help and support with training and employment issues. Parents are given a wide choice of learning opportunities which are well attended and completion rates are high. All sessions are continuously reviewed, taking account of families' views, and changes are implemented as and when necessary.

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>2</b>
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<b>The extent to which the centre promotes purposeful learning, development and enjoyment for all families, including those in target groups</b>	<b>2</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?**

2
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Leadership and management are consistently good at all levels and outstanding in relation to equality and diversity and user engagement. Staff are passionate about the centre and its community. Senior leaders have a clear vision, set the tone, communicate high expectations and are determined to ensure that the centre is effective in improving the life chances of all users. Day-to-day management, accountability and strategic leadership arrangements are clear and effective. Each staff member is committed to the centre's work and understands how they contribute to its effectiveness. For example, administrative staff know the importance of a warm welcome and their linguistic skills ensure new visitors to the centre feel valued and secure the moment they make contact.

The inclusion of all children and families is given the utmost priority. Staff are highly effective in ensuring that all children and parents, regardless of background, aptitudes or other differences have equal access to the provision available. All information is displayed in different languages and translation services are available on site due to multilingual staff. Resources reflect the cultural diversity of the community thereby ensuring families feel valued and respected. The centre is accessible for people with disabilities and effective links with Dewsbury Hospital Child Development Centre have resulted in increased engagement with families with additional needs. As a result of all these initiatives, the centre has been highly successful in breaking down cultural barriers and building trusting relationships with all members of the community. Consequently, the centre has had exceptional success in engaging with families, including those who are harder to reach and families have become fully involved in all aspects of the centre, contributing to decision-making on key matters affecting the centre.

All safeguarding training is up to date and staff are fully aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. Their good knowledge of the centre's safeguarding procedures means they respond appropriately to concerns. Robust procedures and protocols for sharing information, together with all referrals for support going to the integrated work group, ensure that needs are prioritised effectively.

The effective data collection system is enabling management to measure the success of provision on outcomes and self-evaluation is ongoing and largely accurate. Consequently, there is a good understanding of the centre's strengths and where further improvements can be made. As a result, priorities for improvement are appropriate, challenging and realistic.

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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of evaluation and its use in setting ambitious targets which secure improvement in outcomes</b>	<b>2</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>2</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>1</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>2</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>1</b>

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

None

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## **Summary for centre users**

We inspected Staincliffe and Healey Children's Centre on 16 and 17 November. We judged your centre to be good.

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, staff, and partnership workers. We were pleased to speak to so many of you about the centre's work and to listen to your views. We really enjoyed talking to you around the centre and in the

various activity sessions you were engaged in. You expressed your views very clearly and we appreciated your straight talking in telling us how things really are.

We are pleased to tell you that the centre provides good support to you and your families through the wide range of good quality activities and services it has on offer. The centre does some things extremely well, such as the way it helps you to lead healthy lifestyles, the way you are encouraged to engage with services and make an active contribution to the centre and your community. You told us that you and your children are well cared for and we agree with you. We were pleased to hear how many of you have benefited from coming to the centre, making new friends and getting involved.

The centre works hard with local day-care provision and schools to improve your children's educational achievements. They are also good at helping you increase your knowledge about play and how children learn through the many stay and play activities and parenting sessions, which you told us are fun and worthwhile. We also know that many of you and your children have enjoyed learning about nutrition and cooking healthy meals through the healthy 'Big Cook Little Cook' sessions, and that you have made changes to your diet as a result. We were impressed by the fruit and vegetable co-op which allows you to purchase fruit and vegetables at low cost and helps introduce your children to new foods. We were also very impressed by the excellent Baby Café which has successfully encouraged and supported so many of you to breastfeed your babies, thereby giving them the best start in life.

We were delighted to see that the centre is making a real difference to improving your lives and to hear how much more confident you feel. You told us about the friends you have met through the centre's activities and so many of you told us that you feel less isolated in the community through coming into the centre and getting involved. We were very impressed by the way in which so many of you play such an active role in the centre through the family forum and the advisory board. We were also very pleased to hear that many of you have undertaken training to increase your confidence and develop your skills, which may help you secure employment should you wish to do so.

It was clear to us that the centre staff are working very hard to make the centre as good as it can be. With your help, centre staff are good at finding out what the centre's strengths are and what areas can be improved. To help them we have suggested they look more closely at the risk assessment to ensure that all potential hazards are identified and steps are taken to minimise risks, both indoors and out. This is particularly important when so many of you attend the One Stop Shop to ensure that all of you are kept safe. We have also asked them to look at the planning of activities during these very busy times to ensure that you and your children get the most out of the opportunities available to you.

Thank you once again for your welcome and your willingness to talk to us. We can see why the staff enjoy working with you every day and wish you every success in the future.

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