

Inspection report for Little Goslings Children's Centre

Local authority	North Lincolnshire
Inspection number	383696
Inspection dates	15 - 16 December 2011
Reporting inspector	Alison Veall HMI

Centre leader	Mrs Helen Keneally
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Centre address	41 Kenilworth Road Scunthorpe North Lincolnshire DN16 1EY
Telephone number	01724 850737
Fax number	Not applicable
Email address	Helen.keneally@northlincs.gov.uk

Linked school if applicable	117747 Bushfield Road Infants School
Linked early years and childcare, if applicable	EY280663 Little Goslings

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.

Report Published: January 2012

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/100080.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Picadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

No.100080

© Crown copyright 2011

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 centre staff, parents and carers, partner agencies and local authority senior managers. They observed the centre's work and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

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

Information about the centre

The Little Goslings Children's Centre is a phase one centre. It was designated in March 2006. The centre is located alongside Little Goslings Nursery and consists of an office, a kitchen and a small community room. Services are also delivered from St Lukes School, Frodingham Children's Centre, Frodingham Community Centre and in the homes of families using the centre. The centre's office base is located in the Baptist Church on Ashby Road in Scunthorpe. Integrated childcare and education are provided by Little Goslings Nursery. The nursery is privately managed and is subject to separate Early Years inspection arrangements. It was last inspected in 2009 and the inspection report can be found on the Ofsted website. Little Goslings Children's Centre is part of the Frodingham ward in the Scunthorpe South locality and falls within the top 30% of disadvantaged wards in the country. Three hundred and twenty children under five years old live in the area and of these 62% live within its most disadvantaged wards.

Governance of the centre is the responsibility of North Lincolnshire Council. The centre has recently been part of a local authority restructure. An advisory board made up of community representatives, partner agencies, staff and parents, and a parents' forum support the work of the centre. Approximately 33% of children under five years old live in households dependent on workless benefits. Most families are of White British heritage with a small

minority of Eastern European families. Most children enter childcare and early years education with a much narrower range of experiences and skills than those usually expected 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

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

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

2

Main findings

Unflinching dedication and the commitment of all The Little Goslings Children's Centre staff have ensured that outcomes for the large majority of families living within this locality have improved greatly and are now good; this is often in the face of the most challenging of circumstances. This centre is at the heart of the community and is an accessible and much needed resource in times of crisis. The outstanding care, guidance and support are empowering families to deal with these crises in an effective and productive way. The manager of this centre is also responsible for the management of a further two centres, which are relatively close and easily accessible to all families. Maintaining an overview of the services delivered from each centre has ensured that duplication is avoided but families are still able to access a wide range of services and activities of their choice. As a result, a large majority of families particularly those within its target groups of users are accessing services at the centre. However, engagement of and regular participation by a few of the centre's hardest to reach families continues to be a challenge.

Outcomes for children and families who are using the centre are good overall. As a result, they are making significant improvements to their lives. 'I am proud of my achievements'; 'I feel listened to by the staff'; 'all staff go the extra mile'; 'they have made a huge difference to our lives'; 'they really care'; 'you feel part of it without feeling a failure' are typical of the comments made by users. The views of users are routinely gathered through evaluations and the Families' Forum. These views are used very effectively to develop provision and tailor services according to need. Families confidently challenge the centre when they are unhappy about an element of service provision.

Services are delivered in an inclusive environment where inequalities are swiftly and effectively removed. Activities are well established and delivered in partnership with a range

of agencies. As a result of the centre's effective partnerships with health providers, families within its reach area are benefitting from a wide range of pre and postnatal services. Similarly, relationships with childcare and education providers are consistently improving children's learning and development. As a result, they are seeing a year-on-year narrowing of the achievement gap between those who achieve and others who do not. Adult learning and development is enabling parents to become more confident in their communication and interaction with their children. As a result of these learning and development opportunities, a few adults move into employment. However, too few centre users are given the opportunity to take part in volunteering or buddying opportunities and, as a result, are not developing the necessary skills to prepare them for the world of work.

High priority is given to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults by all staff and partners. As a result, outcomes for this aspect are good. The use of the Common Assessment Framework is firmly embedded. Case files and discussions with staff provide evidence of their sound understanding and effective implementation of assessments using this framework. Referrals of vulnerable families are swiftly addressed through early intervention. A recent reorganisation within the local authority has established single points of contact and multi-agency locality assessments in order to ensure an effective team around the child approach. The centre forms part of a preventative team and is seen very much as at the heart of multi-agency working in order to afford better protection to children and families.

The centre is managed well and governance arrangements are good. In the recent re-organisation arrangements were managed exceptionally well. This resulted in a seamless transition for families and ongoing service delivery. Staff are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities and report that they support one another well. Evaluation of the impact of the work with individual families takes place within the team, through case studies and through regular supervision of staff. The success of group activities is closely monitored. The manager, staff and partners have a good understanding of the priorities and needs of the centre and the community it serves. There has recently been an improvement in the accuracy of information from health providers. This, combined with the detailed information supplied by the local authority, is enabling the centre to pinpoint accurately areas of likely vulnerability. However, the centre is still embedding its process for the evaluation of this increasing range of data to even more closely meet the needs of the area. Despite this, as a result of the centre's effective partnerships, the dogged commitment of managers and staff and the good quality of its work and resources, there is good capacity for improvement.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

Recommendations for further improvement

- Improve engagement and the participation of the centre's hard-to-engage groups particularly fathers, male carers and teenage parents.
- Ensure that self-evaluation procedures incorporate the most recent and accurate information and data from all sources in order to sharpen the evaluation and analysis of the long-term impact of the centre's services.

- Improve the opportunities for centre users to become involved in buddying or volunteering.

How good are outcomes for families?

2

The attention paid to ensuring that the most basic care needs of families are met is exceptional. The manager's tenacity, knowledge of the area and ability to form effective partnerships has a profound effect on the well-being of families in crisis. Furniture, clothing and food provided by the centre and its community partners ensure that when families are at their most vulnerable at least basic provisions are available. They are provided with a range of information on debt management and benefits advice and they are signposted to appropriate lending agencies in order to avoid having to pay back colossal rates of interest should they be in a position where they need to take out loans. Timely referrals, effective signposting and ongoing support are empowering parents to bring about genuine and sustained improvements. As a result care, guidance and support are outstanding.

The centre knows and engages with a large majority of its pregnant teenagers and information from midwives ensures that family support workers engage with prospective families prior to the birth of their children. A health clinic attended by families from the centre is ensuring that they are informed about healthy lifestyles, the effects of drug and alcohol abuse on children and smoking cessation. Mothers are encouraged to and supported when breastfeeding. 'Fantastic centre, it helped me to feel proud of my achievements in relation to breastfeeding' are the views of one parent. Obesity levels are showing a year-on-year reduction and are below the locality and national levels. Most families are making good improvement in relation to their health and well-being.

Keeping families safe lies at the heart of the centre's work. Parents keep themselves and their families' safe, because they act on the advice they are given by staff, who model and give advice on best practice. The centre is a safe and welcoming place as a result of the vigilance of all adults and their adherence to the risk assessments for all areas and activities. The centre has effective assessment systems in place to ensure the safety of vulnerable children and adults and those families subject to Common Assessment Framework processes. Child Protection Plans are monitored closely. Comments from the evaluations from parenting courses demonstrate that activities are enabling parents and carers to understand and develop safe practices. 'Safety is a big responsibility I know I need to be aware.' Case studies show that parents are developing an understanding of safe and appropriate relationships and its impact on children wherever domestic abuse occurs.

Links with the local authority Early Years Standards and Effectiveness Coordinator is having a positive impact on the quality of childcare and early education within the area. This in turn is bringing about a year-on-year improvement in children's learning outcomes, particularly in personal, social and emotional development. The implementation and monitoring of the 'Every Child a Talker' project is evidencing children's good levels of progress in communication, language and literacy relative to their starting points. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress as a result of the targeted support

and appropriate interventions. Consequently, the gap between the lowest achieving 20% in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the rest is narrowing significantly.

Parents and children play, have fun and learn together during a wide range of activities including 'Stay and Play', holiday play-schemes and health and fitness activities. In addition, there is a range of good quality information and advice to parents, which is helping them to understand how they can help their children. Adults are developing confidence and the skills necessary for them to support their children's learning, be part of the wider community and to engage with learning and development opportunities. Parents who talked to inspectors were very enthusiastic and wanted to discuss their progress. Case studies also illustrate the progress and the improvements they make in their economic stability by accessing further training or finding employment.

There is a strong commitment to listening to parents and using their views to develop services. They make their views known through the evaluations of activities, contact with centre staff and through day-to-day verbal feedback. They consider they are listened to and their views are used to plan activities. 'I feel listened to by centre staff.' 'They change what they can after talking to us.' These were just some of the comments received from parents.

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	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	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?

2

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. It has worked successfully to engage and work over sustained periods of time with a large majority of its reach population and particularly those whose circumstances make them most potentially vulnerable. An experienced staff team, including administrators, are well known within the community and work tirelessly to make contact with hard-to-reach families. They are described by parents as 'amazing,' 'so helpful', and 'respectful'. The centre is very aware of the difficulties and

challenges faced by families within its reach area. Whilst the centre has established a good track record for driving up participation rates and improving engagement, there are still parts of the area in which a minority of families remain stubbornly hard to reach.

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. The quality of support for families in crisis is excellent and much preventative work is done to minimise crisis events. Without exception parents and partner agencies are extremely positive when discussing how the individualised care, guidance and support are making a difference to the lives of children and their families. 'They go the extra mile' was a typical comment made by many. The centre's provision during school holidays demonstrates its understanding of the difficulties many families face during this time and, its commitment to meeting the holistic needs of families. Best use is made of safe space within the community to provide events for children under five and their older siblings. The centre recognises that there are certain times throughout the year, such as Christmas, where circumstances make families potentially more vulnerable than others. Effective partnerships enable the centre to signpost parents to statutory and community agencies who offer support. For example, the centre's partnerships with The Forge centre and Scunthorpe Baptist Church ensure that families have food and supplies if in crisis.

The shared actions taken to involve and improve outcomes for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are good. Family outreach work supports families when attending appointments and when challenging professionals' decisions that they do not agree with and consider would not be in their child's best interest. Childcare and early education providers, including childminders within the area, have agreed and implemented joint strategies and members of staff from all provisions attend a range of joint events. This approach ensures consistency and has been one of the factors which have brought about good and in some instances outstanding levels of improvement in the progress children make.

Parents are developing their skills through a range of suitable activities which are carefully tailored to meet the needs of the community. Purposeful and relevant adult education, such as literacy and numeracy and confidence building, are provided. The centre also provides first aid and health and beauty. Parenting programmes, including the 'Sex and Relationship' course enable parents to develop the confidence needed to discuss sexual health matters with their children. 'Sometimes it is difficult but we have to be honest', 'we have made real friends and we are now helping each other'. These comments were made by parents during the course evaluations. The celebration of personal successes and achievements is a consistent feature of this provision. Parents proudly shared their achievements and plans for their future training with Inspectors. The staff team's excellent understanding of the community ensure that adults are signposted to relevant agencies in order to pursue further training, seek benefits advice and secure employment.

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	2
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

Leaders at all levels contribute to the success of the centre and the improving outcomes for children and their families. Senior leaders are visionary and they understand that achieving successful outcomes is an on-going process and are motivated to develop the centre further. Children and family services, including children's centres within North Lincolnshire, have recently been re-structured. The vision, to provide a 0-19 service which meets the holistic needs of children sits very firmly within the Children and Young People's Plan and is making rapid progress. As a result of the local authority re-structure, there have been several staff changes and many of the staff are settling in to their new roles. However, the centre coordinator generates enthusiasm amongst her staff and centre partners. The whole staff team are unequivocal in praising the support they receive. They consider staff supervision to be of a good quality. They are confident that they are respected and their own health, well-being and development are given very high priority. As a result of this, every member of the staff team believes that they play an important part in the children's centre and its delivery of a wide range of services. Their enthusiasm, commitment and dedication are obvious. The safety of the staff is ensured when working alone and home visiting through the effective implementation of lone working policies and procedures. As a result of the vision, commitment and practice outcomes are good and the Little Goslings Children's Centre provides good value for money.

Throughout the restructuring process a strong commitment was made to ensuring that safeguarding remained a high priority. Good partnership working between staff and effective liaison with families and partners resulted in a seamless transition for families particularly those most vulnerable. The Common Assessment Framework and the referral process are very well embedded and lead to a swift exchange of information, which results in better protection for all. Recently implemented systems within the local authority now record all interventions giving a much more accurate picture of agency interventions with families. Risk assessments are detailed and ensure that all venues, activities and equipment are suitable and safe. Recruitment procedures are managed by the local authority and the children's centre maintains a list of Criminal Records Bureau checks in addition to letters confirming that third party checks are undertaken by the relevant body.

Inclusion and the accessibility of services provided by the centre are good. Diversity is celebrated through its wide range of resources and activities. In assessing the impact and

quality of the services provided, the centre routinely explores the views of users. The centre's self-evaluation diligently includes all inspection aspects and is accurate and, the improvement plan identifies targets and priorities for improvement.

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 secures 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	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	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

The inspectors considered the judgements made for the Early Years Foundation Stage for Bushfield Infants School, Frodingham Infants School and Little Goslings Nursery.

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 the Little Goslings Children's Centre on 15 and 16 December 2011. We judged the centre as good overall.

'Feel listened to by the staff'; 'all staff go the extra mile'; 'has made a huge difference to our lives'; 'my child now talks non-stop'; 'they really care.'; 'you feel part of it without feeling a failure.' These are all comments made during the inspection which reflect the high regard you have for the centre's work. These comments also helped inspectors to identify that a significant strength of the centre is the care, guidance and support given to you and your families. We judged this aspect as outstanding. As part of the inspection, we visited a number of activities, looked at the centre's documentation and talked with a range of children, users of the centre, staff, community representatives and partnership workers.

We would like to thank all the people who spoke with us and shared stories of the difficulties you face but also the positive times in your lives. Many of you told us what you thought about the centre and its activities. Your views were very helpful. Everyone we spoke to was full of praise for the centre. It is clear that you are delighted with what the centre has to offer and many of you view it as a 'lifeline'. So that more families can benefit from the types of service you are receiving, we have asked the centre to make contact with and provide for families who do not currently attend. We have also asked the centre to use the range of information they have to analyse and evaluate how effective its services are for you and your families over time.

Led by a manager who knows the community exceptionally well and is passionate about helping you to improve your circumstances, all staff members work very effectively to safeguard children and families. They provide a 'team around the child' approach, which supports the improvements you are trying to make to your lives. We know from the information supplied by the centre that, for a large majority, the safety of your children at home and in the community is good. Your centre has helped you make your homes safer and children are having fewer accidents. Intervention work is ensuring that you get tailored services that meet your needs and those of your families well. You told us that during a recent reorganisation there was no change to the services offered and you were kept informed by the centre manager.

The care, guidance and support offered by the centre are exceptional. We know that when your circumstances make you extremely vulnerable centre staff go that extra mile. Many of you told us about 'Helen's lock up', and how it has provided you with basic equipment to improve your living conditions. You also told us that as a result of the partnership with Scunthorpe Baptist Church and The Forge you receive food vouchers and food parcels. The centre works well with a range of partners, such as health, education and community groups. The links with the health professionals are good and these are making it much easier for you to attend baby clinics and to gain useful information about how to keep your children healthy.

You and your children are learning and developing well as a result of the wide range of good quality activities available. Your children are confident, are developing independence and readiness for school. They are making good progress in developing their skills for the future. We know that at least a third of you have been involved in training, adult learning and personal development courses. These courses are enabling you to develop confidence in your communication and interaction with your children. Accredited courses, such as level

one and two literacy and numeracy are preparing you for further training and are enabling you to develop employability skills. In order to support you even further by providing work-related experiences, we have asked the centre to provide volunteer and buddying opportunities.

Thank you once again for coming to talk to us. We thoroughly enjoyed spending time at your centre, particularly at the Christmas party and we wish you and your families our best wishes for the future.

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