

Great Yarmouth Community Trust Norfolk East (lots 23 and 24)

The Priory Centre, Priory Plain, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk NR30 1NW]

Inspection date 24-26 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	Select
Access to services by young children and families		Good	2
The quality of practice and services		Good	2
The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for children and families

This children's centre group is good.

- The group has significantly increased the number of families that are in contact with the centres and is working hard to encourage more families that really need their help to use the centres.
- Parents value the support of the staff and how they have changed their lives for the better. Family support work based on good quality assessment and skilled and sensitive work with families with mental health problems are making families' lives better. Families feel safe in the group.
- There is a strong focus on high quality early arts and music to encourage children's personal, social and emotional development and communication skills. All activities are planned based on children's interests and children and parents were observed to be learning and engrossed in activities.
- The group work closely with partners in health and children's social care to make sure that families that need extra help are identified and supported. Regular meetings between professionals help to make sure the right families are getting the right service at the right time.
- Leadership and management are good and as a result the centre is improving. The staff are well qualified and work well together as a team. There are good opportunities for them to develop their skills further and they are well supported by their managers, who make sure they have time to reflect on the important work they are doing with families.

It is not outstanding because:

- Although work is well on its way to make sure the group have all the right information they need to help with their plans, a formal agreement to share information between partners is not yet in place.
- Systems to track progress and measure how the group is making a difference to children and families' lives are not yet well established across all aspects of the group's work.
- More work is needed to improve the number of adults taking up the available opportunities for adult learning, such as literacy and numeracy courses. This is a priority within the group's action plan.

Information about this inspection

The inspection of this children's centre group was carried out under Part 3A of the Childcare Act 2006 as amended by the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009. The centres that form part of this children's centre group are Great Yarmouth Children's Centre (The Priory), Greenacre Children's Centre, Gorleston and Hopton Children's Centre and Seagulls Children's Centre.

This inspection was carried out by three of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

The inspectors held meetings with the local authority lead officer for children's centres, the chief executive officer of Greater Yarmouth Community Trust (GYCT), and the director of children and families for GYCT, the data and monitoring officer for GYCT and managers of teams working across all four centres. Inspectors also talked to specialist staff including the clinical psychologist, specialist health visitor, specialist midwife, music therapist and counsellor. Staff across the universal groups service, family support service and the parent and infant mental health service were spoken to as part of the inspection, as well as partners from voluntary agencies, health agencies, children's social care, adult education, primary school and linked nurseries.

The inspectors visited The Priory Centre, The Priory Children's Centre, Seagulls Children's Centre, Peggotty Road Community Centre, Gorleston Library, Gordon Road Resource Centre, the local travellers' site, St.Nicolas Children's Centre, The Priory Day Nursery, Seagulls Nursery and the Shrublands Building.

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

Inspection team

Penny Fisher	Her Majesty's Inspector, Lead Inspector
Susan Smith	Her Majesty's Inspector
Christine Davies	Her Majesty's Inspector
Robert Miller	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about the group

Children's centre services in Norfolk are delivered through a combination of grouped and stand-alone centres. As part of Norfolk County Council's restructure of provision of children's centres in 2012, Great Yarmouth Community Trust (GYCT), as part of a consortium with East Coast Community Healthcare and Norfolk and Waveney Mental Health Trust, was awarded the contract as lead partner for four Children's Centres in the Great Yarmouth and Gorleston area. GYCT is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. The Trust previously managed the Priory and Greenacre Children's Centres in Great Yarmouth and from July 2012 became the new lead partner for the Seagulls and Gorleston and Hopton Children's Centres. The GYCT has been established in the area for 11 years and also run linked registered day care at The Priory Day Nursery (URN): EY275636, Peggotty Day Nursery (URN): EY426343 and Seagulls nursery (URN): EY449161. These are subject to separate inspections and the reports can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk. The operational management of the Trust is delegated to the chief executive officer who directly line manages the director of children and families, who in turn line manages the service managers for parent and infant mental health service (PIMHS), the family support service and the universal groups service. Integrated services are delivered across the four centres ensuring the group meets its core purpose. The centre is accountable to the local authority.

In total, approximately 3724 children aged under five live within the reach area covered by the group. The urban Great Yarmouth area is one of the most disadvantaged in the whole of England, experiencing high levels of deprivation. The area has particularly high levels of unemployment, and employment opportunities are generally seasonal and poorly paid. The average household income is well below the national average. Levels of educational attainment, including achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage, are low and the number of adults with low or no qualifications is also high. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge at or below those generally expected for their age. Although levels of deprivation in the Gorleston area are not as high as in Great Yarmouth, many of the same family issues are prevalent. The village of Hopton in the reach area is relatively affluent in the context of the overall reach area, but families here can experience isolation.

The urban Great Yarmouth area has a traveller population on a fixed site. There is high mobility in the Great Yarmouth area and an increasing number of migrant families have moved in and out over the past 10 years. The largest ethnic group is White British, with a relatively large Portuguese community and increasing numbers of families from Eastern Europe (particularly Poland and Lithuania) in Great Yarmouth. The very large majority of the Gorleston population is of White British background, although the numbers of children from other ethnic backgrounds is increasing gradually. There is a high level of need in the area. The groups' identified target families include fathers, teenage parents, those suffering with relationship issues and those with mental health problems, including post-natal depression.

What does the group need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the local authority's new county-wide information sharing protocol with partners is fully implemented so that the group has all the timely and accurate information necessary to meet the high level needs of families in the area.
- Improve systems to measure the impact of the group by:
 - tracking the progress and outcomes for individual children and parents
 - collating the information that is gathered so that the group has a sharper overview of the impact of their services.
- Encourage more adults to access education to enhance their personal development, employability and families' well-being.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Good

- The GYCT is well-established and respected in the local area and The Priory and Seagulls centres are central to the community and easily accessible for families from across the reach area. The group offers fully integrated services and activities take place in a wide range of venues, including local libraries. The group has developed services to meet families' needs.
- Effective outreach work, supported by close joint working with health partners to ensure data accuracy, has led to a significant increase in the number of families registered with the group. The group has also carefully mapped target families and target streets within the reach area where more work is required to break down barriers to engagement. The large majority of target groups are now engaged with the centre.
- Good access is supported to free entitlement to early education for all vulnerable two-year-olds. The group places a higher proportion of children into childcare provision than in other areas of the county. The centre is being pro-active in addressing the current shortage of places for these children. Good analysis to identify which universal sessions have further capacity is being used to ensure that vulnerable two-year-olds have access to high quality activities.
- Target groups are clearly identified and the group has a clear picture of attendance figures. The group is now performing well overall in engaging their target groups, particularly young parents and ethnic groups. Good, regular joint working takes place between the groups' service managers and partners to identify those families most in need in the area through transfer meetings with local social workers and weekly allocation meetings.
- The quality of the information that the local authority provides to the group is continuously improving. Partner agencies, such as health, children's social care and adult learning providers have agreed to make sure information is shared quickly, accurately and appropriately. The new information sharing protocol is due to be introduced in October 2013.

The quality of practice and services

Good

- There is an appropriate balance of good quality and inclusive specialist, targeted and universal provision to meet the diverse needs of the families in the community. Play based activities are planned around the interests of the children attending. Good direct work with children takes place at all sessions and staff are skilled in role modelling positive interactions with children.
- Early arts and music specialists are effectively targeting those areas of learning where children are achieving less well than in other parts of the county. Activities carefully designed to enhance children's personal, social and emotional development and communication and language skills are contributing to gradually improving Early Years Foundation Stage profile scores. The group provides effective support, advice and training which is improving the quality of linked early years provision in the local area.
- The group ensures parents in need of extra support have access to a range of high quality evidence-based parenting programmes. Appropriate prioritisation is given to targeted families and completion rates are good. Having completed courses families show good improvement in their understanding of parenting skills and of how to keep their children safe.
- The parent and infant mental health service is carrying out sensitive work with vulnerable families. Work is based on the existing strengths within families and is sharply focused on bringing about sustainable change. The service is prioritising families effectively. Direct work with individual families, including Video Interaction Guidance (VIG) and the provision of group sessions ensures that the service is meeting the needs of as many families as possible. Positive outcomes include preventing children from entering the care system.
- Family support work is of good quality overall and cases demonstrate improved outcomes for most families, such as children no longer being the subject of a child protection plan. Assessment of need for targeted individuals is good and includes comprehensive information from a range of agencies as well as parents' views, wishes and feelings. Action plans are in place, but desired outcomes are not

always clearly stated.

- Evidence collected throughout the inspection, indicates positive impacts for families engaged with the groups' services. However, systems have not yet been introduced to effectively monitor all areas of the groups' work, including tracking children's and adults' progress over time to measure the longer term impact of the groups' work. The GYCT is currently developing ways to do this.
- Opportunities for adult learning, such as literacy and numeracy, are available through the GYCT. However, the group is not currently ensuring that enough parents are accessing these courses or monitoring their progress. For example, Travellers spoken to as part of the inspection expressed an interest in adult education and learning how to use the internet, but services on the site are currently focused on activities for children rather than adults. This is an identified area for action in the groups' action planning.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- Lines of accountability are clearly defined and understood. The local authority officer carries out robust annual conversation and quarterly monitoring visits based on areas of the service specification, which lead to specific, agreed targets being set. These targets have effectively driven up the number of registered families and the proportion of target groups in contact with the group.
- The director of children and families knows the community very well, having worked in the area for 25 years. Professionals spoken to recognise her leadership as 'inspirational' and 'excellent'. Staff are highly qualified. Opportunities for continuous professional development are encouraged and staff feel well supported because professional and clinical supervision are embedded in the work of the group.
- Parents spoken to throughout the inspection value the work of the group highly. 'The staff really care. They remember things about you and make you feel part of the community' is how one parent summed up their view of the professionals delivering services. Individuals recount powerful stories of the difference the centre has made to their lives.
- There are good examples of parents' views shaping service delivery and design and the parents' forum is established. The move to one advisory board is underway and membership is established. The group have ensured that key partners are engaged and that the board is sustainable.
- Safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and implemented. All staff are aware of what to do if there is a concern about a child's well-being or safety. The use of the local common assessment is well-established in the area and used appropriately and well. Strong local relations with children's social care and health colleagues ensure close joint working and information sharing. A named social worker is in place.
- The group has developed strongly in the last year with the good practice in centres and services being disseminated across teams. The move to the delivery of services through one integrated team is ensuring good use of resources. The GYCT hardship fund for families with children under five has an excellent impact on inclusion and use of resources.
- The group is creative in building the capacity within their services, staff and partners to improve access for families. Specialists such as the specialist midwife and clinical psychologist are sharing their skills and expertise across teams so that more parents can benefit and waiting times for services are reduced.
- There are clear priorities and both the senior management and staff at all levels have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development within the group. The group's self-evaluation is accurate and demonstrates a precise knowledge of the needs of the area; however, it does not clearly outline the impact the centre is having on the lives of the families it reaches.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Practice consistently reflects the highest aspirations for children and their families and as a result inequalities are reducing rapidly and gaps are closing.
Grade 2	Good	Practice enables most children and their families to access good quality services that improve children's wellbeing and achieve the stated outcomes for families.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	Performance is not as good as it might reasonably be expected to be in one or more key areas.
Grade 4	Inadequate	The needs of children and families in its area are not being met and/or the leaders and managers are not providing sufficient challenge to bring about improvement to the quality of services.

Children's centre group details

Unique reference number	80147
Local authority	Norfolk County Council
Inspection number	424797
Managed by	Great Yarmouth Community Trust on behalf of the local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	3724
Centre leader	Karen Harvey, Director of Children and Families
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	01493 660090
Email address	karen-harvey@gyctrust.co.uk

This group consists of the following children's centres:

- Gorleston and Hopton
- Great Yarmouth (Priory)
- Greenacre
- Seagulls

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