

Nottinghamshire - Ollerton & Boughton/Trent Villages North/Trent Villages South

Dukeries Complex, Whinney Lane, Ollerton, NG22 9TH

Inspection date	9–11 October 2013		
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
Access to services by young children and families		Requires improvement	3
The quality of practice and services		Requires improvement	3
The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for children and families

This is a centre that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- The group does not reach enough families from its priority groups. Fewer families use services in the Trent South area owing to its rurality as well as lack of accessible provision than other areas, and targeted families within the Ollerton & Boughton catchment are under-represented in activities.
- Targets set by the local authority do not always mirror families identified as a priority in this area nor is the impact of services on improving their well-being monitored carefully enough. This means that some targets are difficult to achieve.
- The group does not always record the numbers of those families using its services so data cannot be relied upon to assist with the planning of universal and targeted activities.
- Not all family support work is reviewed regularly by managers and this means that some targeted interventions do not always achieve the best outcomes for families quickly enough.

This children's centre group has the following strengths:

- Very skilled children's workers teach and support children well to make good progress in their learning, development and readiness for school.
- Strong and effective partnerships for example with health services, early years providers, schools and community organisations ensure that children and families who need extra support are identified early.
- Parents value services and staff highly. Parents said that the buildings and activities are always welcoming and safe, and staff work hard across the group to provide good support, care and guidance when it is needed.
- Consultation with parents and carers who use the services is good and this information is used well to inform and improve activities.

Information about this inspection

The inspection of this children's centre 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 Ollerton & Boughton, Trent Vally North and Trent Valley South.

This inspection was carried out by three of Her Majestys Inspectors and an additional inspector. The inspectors held meetings with the temporary group coordinator, centre staff, officers from the local authority and the Nottinghamshire Children and Families Partnership. They also met with health, education, social care and early years partners, representatives from local schools, representatives from the advisory board, Jobcentre Plus, adult learning providers and parents and volunteers. They looked at the centre's view of its own performance, the centre's development plans, a sample of the centre's policies and procedures, a selection of case studies and a range of other relevant documentation. The inspectors visited services on the two children's centre sites and at community and voluntary settings. Visits to activities across the group area were undertaken with the centre staff, and the temporary group coordinator attended all team meetings.

Inspection team

Lead inspector Stella Butler	Her Majesty's Inspector
Penny Fisher	Her Majesty's Inspector
Rachael Flesher	Her Majesty's Inspector
Joan Cawdron	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about the group

Services for children and families are delivered in three locality areas, covering the widely contrasting district of Newark and Sherwood. Within this group are Ollerton & Boughton children's centre, Trent Villages North children's centre and Trent Villages South virtual children's centre. Ollerton and Boughton Children's Centre was established in 2006 as a phase one centre. Trent Villages North and South were designated in 2010 as phase three centres. Services are shared across the centres and are delivered in two dedicated buildings and a range of school and community venues.

The reach area is very large, covering a swathe of rural and agricultural land and ex-coal mining fields, some of which have been reclaimed. Levels of deprivation are extremely variable across the group, with Ollerton and Boughton being a child poverty hotspot and therefore a priority area. In comparison Trent Villages South is one of the most affluent areas of the county, with low numbers of families in both Trent Villages North and South claiming benefits. Levels of obesity among children are low and children's school readiness is variable across the group. Children in Trent Villages North and Trent Villages South localities enter early year's education with skills, knowledge and abilities above the county average, unlike Ollerton & Boughton children who perform well below the county average.

There are approximately 1,777 children under five years of age living in the locality area with the majority of children registered with the group. Data demonstrate that the population is mainly White British, with a small population of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families, who are a priority group, as are lone and teenage parents, disabled children and families living with domestic violence.

The group has recently changed from local authority management to Nottinghamshire Children and Families Partnership, which has been commissioned by Nottinghamshire County Council to deliver children's centre provision across all Nottinghamshire's children's centres. The new partnership board comprises of North Nottinghamshire College, which directly manages this group of centres, Family Action and the National Health Service. A group coordinator manages the day-to-day running of the three centres supported by a family support lead practitioner. The group has two local advisory groups (LAGs), comprising of key partners including parents, who assist in governance.

What does the group need to do to improve further?

- The local authority and partnership board should ensure that services are reaching the large majority of the group's priority families.
- The local authority and partnership board should provide a clear strategic lead by establishing locally defined performance measures that more accurately reflect local priority groups identified within the reach area and which can demonstrate impact.
- The group coordinator should establish systematic ways for measuring the impact and outcomes of all activities to gauge how well each centre and the group as a whole is improving services and outcomes for the large majority of priority families.
- The group coordinator should improve the development and management oversight of family support work to ensure assessment of need and all subsequent plans are robust, realistic, timely and clear.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Requires improvement

- Too few priority families including lone parents, disabled children, teenage families and those living with domestic violence are using group services on a regular basis. Outreach, home visits and attendances, including parent-led activities, are not always recorded on to the group data base so information cannot be relied upon or used strategically to demonstrate whether activities are targeting the right families or meeting their needs. The location of services in the south of the area is inhibited by its vastness and its rurality, with families able to access too few activities within easy reach.
- Outreach work is not used well enough to encourage those families who are reluctant to engage to get involved in the range of activities offered. In the recent past this has not been helped by local authority policy that prevented workers from visiting newly registered families who had signed the 'consent to contact' form. A new initiative called 'Zone Attack' has been introduced to ensure targeted visits take place in those localities where many non-centre user families have been identified. As a relatively new scheme in the area it is still to soon to show whether take up is increasing although initial responses have been encouraging.
- The group makes best use of available resources to encourage parents to get involved in activities in their local communities and to use a variety of venues where available. Drop-in sessions are usually well-attended and more structured sessions such as baby massage, forest school activities and 'mini-chefs' are popular and often over-subscribed. Staff have responded to demand where possible, for example taking resources to community venues, supporting parent-led groups and splitting or amalgamating groups where possible.
- Parents and families who come through the door and those who receive outreach and family support visits are positive about the work of the group. These parents are kept up to date with the different activities that are on offer through a variety of methods including word-of-mouth, leaflets, display boards in various locations and the 'Voice' newsletter. They express high levels of satisfaction with the programmes offered.

The quality of practice and services

Requires improvement

- Children's workers are highly skilled in supporting and teaching children to make progress through the range of activities they experience. At the Ollerton & Boughton centre the quality of observation, assessment, planning and monitoring for each child who attends activities is exemplary and ensures that all children make at least good progress from their starting points. More generally activities are not routinely evaluated to make sure provision is having the intended impact and outcomes for those children and families attending.
- Family support work is accessible and some is of good quality. However, sometimes interventions are not timely and outcomes for families are not improving quickly enough. Family support workers do not always identify and record clear success criteria in action plans and therefore cannot demonstrate the value and relevance of their work with all families.

- In Ollerton & Boughton an increasing number of families are accessing family and adult learning which is helping to improve their confidence and employability skills. Job Centre Plus services are used well during fortnightly visits to support adults' job searches. Adult literacy and numeracy courses are available but these are not linked closely enough to improving work readiness. The systems being used to capture the take up of services are not used effectively to show how many families are achieving good personal development outcomes.
- Health services ensure that in most areas there is an adequate range of activities and services to promote families' health, safety and wellbeing. Breastfeeding rates are good in Trent Villages South and improving in Trent Villages North and Ollerton & Boughton but from a low base line. Delivery of co-located midwifery and baby clinics in Trent North provides a seamless service for expectant and new mothers, encouraging them to move on to other appropriate services within the group.
- Partnerships with early year's providers and schools are strong, supporting the quality and consistency of the early year's offer delivered in a range of settings. Local groups, including child minders, value the support of centre staff and the early year's specialist teacher who have helped to build their capacity and skills in providing good quality early education.
- Parenting programmes are well targeted to families who need them most and are of good quality. Parents engage well and increase in self confidence, learning new techniques for managing their children's behaviour and good strategies for improving and sustaining positive relationships in the family. These interventions are evaluated and in some cases prevent further escalation to children's social care services.
- Parents using the centres are happy with the services and support provided by centre staff. Parents told inspectors how they could always ask for help and advice about most things and especially in times of crisis, for example: 'I don't know what I would have done without this place.'

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Requires improvement

- Recent disruption to leadership and the new commissioning arrangements have impacted to some degree on staff morale. A local implementation plan has been devised to identify key priorities and targets to drive improvement which are reviewed by senior managers and the group coordinator to check progress against them. Improvement targets, set by the local authority, do not closely reflect the area's priority groups and plans do not demonstrate well enough the difference services are making to families' lives. Significant changes in local policies and procedures are being implemented and these new ways of working have been welcomed by staff but it is too soon to evaluate the effectiveness of the changes being made by leadership and management.
- The quality and rigour of staff supervision and the management oversight of family support work are too variable. Some assessments, including those using the Common Assessment Framework procedures reviewed by inspectors, did not clearly explain the reasons for the intervention and what actions were to be taken. At times this has meant that the support offered has lost its focus and has drifted for too long.
- Resources are generally well managed and good work has been done to avoid duplication of provision and to increase community capacity across the group. The strong commitment and attention to equality and diversity has ensured good access to early year's services particularly for the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community. However, not all provision is appropriately targeted to families with the greatest need.

- Governance arrangements are effective because of the work of the two Local Advisory Groups (LAGS) which are well established, representative of the community and supportive. Members come from a broad range of professional and community backgrounds, and both LAGs include good parent representation. Meetings are well attended and minutes demonstrate appropriate challenge and discussion about target setting, the quality of the group's work and areas for improvement.
- Statutory safeguarding requirements are met. All staff, including volunteers, are appropriately qualified and have undertaken the required levels of safeguarding training. Staff attend relevant inter-agency meetings to support children in need or who are subject to child protection plans. The centres are welcoming and provide a safe place for parents and children to come. Links with 'Women's Aid' which provides support for women experiencing domestic violence are effective, ensuring help is timely and relevant.
- Opportunities for parents to be involved in the management, design and delivery of services are sufficient and ensure that parents' voices are heard. Parents contribute regularly to feedback on centre activities and to the two local advisory boards, which is leading to positive improvements in service delivery. Some have gone on to complete volunteer training and to run parent-led sessions in the two main centres.

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	80640
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	430442
Managed by	Nottingham Children's and Families Partnership on behalf of the local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	1,777
Centre leader	Elizabeth Dickson, Group Coordinator - Sally Penn, Cluster Manager
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01623-861691
Email address	spenn@nnc.ac.uk

This group consists of the following children's centres:

- 22261 Ollerton & Boughton children's centre
- 23350 North Trent Villages children's centre
- 23351 South Trent Villages children's centre

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

(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.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

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

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

