

Immingham Children's Centre

Margaret Street, Immingham, North East Lincolnshire, DN40 1LD

Inspection dates	18–19 June 2014
Previous inspection date	Not previously inspected

Overall effectiveness	This inspection: Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
		Not previously inspected	
Access to services by young children and families		Outstanding	1
The quality of practice and services		Outstanding	1
The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for children and families

This is an outstanding centre.

- All of the families who live in the Immingham area are known to the centre and a very large number of them use the centre's very good services. Staff at the centre know the area very well and have an excellent understanding of the needs of the local families. Those with a new baby and families new to the area receive a home visit from the staff to welcome them and to explain the advantages of using the centre.
- Families facing the greatest challenges and those identified by the centre as most in need receive very thorough and effective support from the centre. Staff work very successfully and sensitively to help families overcome difficulties and to find solutions for their problems.
- The centre has established highly effective partnerships with health, social care, education and early years providers. These ensure that families' needs are continually very well met. Exceptionally strong partnerships with midwives and health visitors mean that families' health and well-being improve year-on-year.
- Children who attend the centre's activities make very good progress in most areas of their development and are prepared well for school. However data from local schools shows that some children leave the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels in reading that are below those typical for their age. The centre is aware that they need to work with partners to extend the range of activities provided to address this issue.
- The centre manager is an inspirational leader. She enthuses others to have high aspirations for all children and families. Staff and partners share her enthusiasm and are passionately committed to do whatever it takes to continually improve the health, well-being and safety of all children and families, particularly those families in most need.
- The high quality of the centre's leadership, governance and management, together with rigorous checks on how well it is doing and very thorough training for all staff, drives improvement rapidly forward and helps to shape its innovative practice. The local authority provides highly effective support for the centre. It sets challenging targets and holds the centre to account, making sure that it continually improves.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Continue to work with key partners to extend the range of interesting and effective activities to help children improve further their reading skills in readiness for school.

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.

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

The inspectors held meetings with parents and children, the centre manager, outreach and support workers, and representatives from the local authority. They also met health, education and early years partners, an employability officer, adult education coordinators, volunteers, students and representatives of the advisory board.

The inspectors visited adult education classes at Immingham Resource Centre and outreach activities at Healing Primary School. They observed the centre's work, and looked at a range of relevant documentation.

Inspection team

Daniel Grant, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jackie Phillips	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

Immingham Children's Centre became operational in 2008. It is a stand-alone centre and offers a range of services which includes child health, family play sessions, parenting programmes, adult education, and family outreach. It is situated on the same site as Eastfield Primary Academy and Immingham Day Care which are subject to separate inspection arrangements. Reports from these inspections can be found on our website www.ofsted.gov.uk

The centre is managed by the local authority. An advisory board, comprising parents, key partners and centre staff, provides its governance. The staff team includes one centre coordinator, four parental engagement workers, two community play development workers, one family support officer, one employability officer, two receptionists and one business support officer. The centre is open from 8.30am to 5pm Monday to Thursday and 8.30am to 4.30pm on Fridays.

The local area is dominated by the port of Immingham and the adjacent petrochemical industry. There are 849 children under five years of age living in the centre's area, which covers the whole of Immingham and the surrounding rural villages of Habrough, Stallingborough and Healing. Just over one third of the children served by the centre live in areas within the 10% most deprived in the country. Meeting the needs of these families is a key priority of the centre's work. Target groups identified by the centre include workless families, teenage parents, families living in the most deprived areas and children who are not a healthy weight.

Most children enter early education with knowledge and skills slightly lower than those typically expected for their age. Data show that overall 18% of children live in workless households. Some 33% of families are eligible for the childcare element of Working Tax Credit. Approximately 6% of families living within the reach area are of minority ethnic heritage.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Outstanding

- Meticulous planning and thorough analysis of data ensure that the centre remains fully aware of every family in the Immingham area with a child under five years of age. Almost all families have registered with the centre and most attend activities regularly. The centre is in regular contact with the few families who do not use its services and staff make sure that they are fully aware of all of the activities available. All families with a new baby and those who move into the centre's reach area receive a home visit from centre staff to let them know what is on offer. This leads to most engaging very quickly with the centre and the services it has to offer.
- The centre has very well established and highly effective partnerships with schools, health services, adult education providers and social care organisations. These enable the centre to obtain accurate and up-to-date information about families most in need of support. The centre and its partners quickly identify families' needs and work together very effectively to provide high quality services and support.
- The centre works very hard to meet the aspirational targets that have been set for the registration and engagement of the most vulnerable families in the locality. As a result, of this very good work a very large majority of families identified by the centre as priority groups attend regularly. Families at risk from poverty, including those from workless households, have very good levels of engagement, as do those facing debt and homelessness.
- Midwives and health visitors hold clinics at the centre several times each week. These services are very well attended and fully integrated with other activities at the centre. Families benefit from the wide range of well-targeted information and support available. Expectant parents are introduced to the centre and meet the staff to find out about the services on offer. As a result, the number of expectant parents accessing services at the centre is very high.
- The centre provides high quality outreach support for families in the surrounding villages and for

those whose circumstances make them unable to attend sessions. These families do well because of sustained home visits and telephone calls. Frequent contact through work carried out in the home keeps families involved successfully.

- As a result of the centre's very good work the vast majority of eligible children take up their funded two-year-old place at an early years setting. All of these places are at settings that are of at least good quality. There are similarly high levels of take-up for children who receive three- and four-year-old funded places. The very large majority of these children take up their place to support their learning and development.

The quality of practice and services

Outstanding

- The centre offers a very good range of services from its main site and through its outreach work. There is a good mix of sessions available to all, such as the baby massage, and those services targeted at particular needs, such as the centre's parenting programme. The level of care, guidance and support offered to individual families is outstanding. Feedback from parents about the centre's work is highly complimentary and they can 'see the benefits of attending the centre'.
- Staff have high levels of skills, knowledge and experience which they use particularly effectively to ensure that families engage fully in all sessions and make very good progress. Staff are highly secure in their understanding of the purpose of each session and continually model the highest standards in parenting and children's play, learning and development work.
- The centre has very well-established processes to measure the impact of services and staff prioritise the centre's targets for development. This makes sure that the centre continually improves what it has to offer so that families receive greater benefit. These evaluations show that almost all sessions, including parenting sessions, make a positive difference to the adults who attend. Case files are well maintained and give a clear picture of very good progress for most families receiving this type of support.
- The proportion of women who breastfeed their babies is increasing significantly because the centre and its partners are working together very successfully to provide highly effective support, information and guidance. As a result of challenging targets set by health partners and very well – targeted and sustained efforts by the centre to promote healthy eating and active life styles childhood obesity has halved..
- The centre has very well-established arrangements to make sure that parents have access to good adult learning courses, vocational training and information about job vacancies. These ensure that a large proportion of parents for example, from workless households, improve their employability and are better equipped to help their children learn. The centre has identified that many adults require better skills in English and mathematics and staff work very closely with the local colleges and the community learning staff to ensure high rates of attendance and success.
- Year-on-year children are increasingly well prepared for school. The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile shows that good levels of development are reached in the vast majority of areas. However, children's reading remains a high priority for the centre because their levels are below those expected for their age. The progress of children who attended the centre and have now started school is tracked; this shows that they do significantly better in their learning and development than the few children who did not use the centre.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Outstanding

- Arrangements for governance, leadership and management of the centre are highly effective. The local authority, together with the centre leader, has an excellent understanding of the centre's strengths and knows what is required to ensure that it continues to provide outstanding services to local families. Challenging targets are set by the local authority and are well met by the centre. Performance is monitored closely, to ensure that
- local authority and centre priorities continue to reduce inequalities for families.

- The local authority not only checks the information that it has on the centre's performance, but it attends meetings and drops in on activities to ensure the centre's high performance is sustained. Research evidence is used very effectively to help the centre shape its provision to best meet the needs of local families, such as understanding the dangers of electronic cigarettes and the advantages of training and supporting a breastfeeding peer support group.
- Parents make a significant contribution to the running of centre through membership of the advisory board and through frequent and thorough evaluation and consultation. Parents, partners and staff are fully engaged in leadership processes, including monitoring of the centre's performance, target setting and future planning of services and activities. Representatives of health, education and social care services play a vital and highly valued role in setting the centre's strategic aims and priorities.
- The centre manager provides inspirational leadership and the staff team share her passion to ensure that local families receive high quality services and support. Staff are very well trained and have high levels of experience. Their performance is managed very effectively by the centre manager. The excellent work of the centre is underpinned by a very secure framework of policies and procedures which are understood by all. Exceptionally strong partnership work is the key to the centre's success in identifying, engaging and meeting the needs of so many families, particularly those facing the greatest challenges.
- The centre's resources are used extremely effectively to make sure that families' needs are met well. The centre has an extensive and well-planned outdoor area which families find highly stimulating. A very good range of toys, books and equipment makes sure that the centre is an attractive and interesting place to be. Fresh fruit is available at reception for families to purchase at a reduced cost and the 'swap-shop' provides families with very good opportunities to save money by exchanging items of clothing.
- Staff ensure that families who use the centre remain safe because of the very effective safeguarding arrangements. The needs of children and vulnerable adults are prioritised by staff who work diligently to keep families safe. Children on child protection plans and those in need do well as a result of the very strong partnership working with health and social care services. Children assessed through the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) receive well- planned support and provision that lead to greatly improved family lifestyles in most instances. Adults who have experienced domestic abuse also receive very effective support which significantly improves their well-being.

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 details

Unique reference number	21605
Local authority	North East Lincolnshire
Inspection number	442866
Managed by	The local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	849
Centre manager	Alison Jollands
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