

North Worksop Children's Centre (Worksop N and NW)

Raymoth Lane, Gateford, Worksop, S81 7LU

Inspection dates	17–18 September 2014
Previous inspection date	Not previously inspected

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:

- Although the centre is improving, not enough families, including priority families, are accessing the children's centre's services.
- Not all services are tracking the progress that adults make effectively. As a result, the centre cannot clearly show that they are having a positive impact on families' lives across all services.
- Not all children in the Rhodesia area are taking up the offer of a two-year-old free nursery place and do not access any form of early years service before they reach nursery age. They are therefore also missing the opportunity of a two-year-old progress checks.
- The achievement gap between the lowest performing children and their peers is too wide at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Different methods of sharing information with social care than with other services relies more heavily on written and face to face communication which can lead to delays in actions.

It has the following strengths:

- Good take-up of three-year-old nursery places with a large majority of children now accessing services in the area.
- Parents speak highly of the centre. They say that they can rely on the staff providing good quality care, guidance and support, particularly from children and family support workers who often visit families in their homes.
- Effective partnership working across early years, health and social care.
- Staff and leaders have a clear vision for the centre and are committed to improving the centre's services and outcomes for the children and families they are supporting.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Increase the number of families from the area that benefit from the centre's services by:
 - developing more creative methods of reaching and engaging families on low income and lone and teenage parents
 - working more effectively with partners to reach those hard-to-engage from the priority groups.
- Work with partners to improve the tracking of the progress that adults make through adult learning programmes and activities.
- Improve outcomes for children by working with the local authority and partners to:
 - source good places for those two-year-olds not currently taking up their free entitlement to nursery provision or accessing early years support and assessments
 - ensure that actions are put in place to narrow the gap between the lowest 20% of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the rest.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - securing meaningful tracking and impact data from partners
 - work with social care to identify how more effective methods of sharing information can be put in place, to link more closely with current system in place with health professionals to avoid duplication and delays.

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 three Additional inspectors.

The inspectors held meetings with district managers from Nottinghamshire County Council and Nottinghamshire Children and Families Partnership, and the centre coordinator. Inspectors also met with health and education professionals, commissioned providers, family support workers, parents and grandparents, volunteers and the chair and members of the advisory board.

The inspectors visited 'Stay and Play' and 'Bumps and Babies' sessions across both sites.

They observed the centre's work, and looked at the centre's self-evaluation documents, improvement plans, case files, safeguarding procedures and a range of other relevant documentation.

Inspection team

Joan Cawdron Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Debbie Sanders	Additional inspector
Patricia Hornsby	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

North Worksop Children's Centre delivers services from two purpose-built stand alone sites. The main site is located in Gateford, near to the site of St. John's Church of England Primary School (URN 122748), serving families in this area and the area of Sandy. Additional services are offered in the children's centre in the village of Rhodesia for families from Rhodesia and Shireoaks.

The centre has a coordinator and a team of Family Support Workers and Early Years workers, and is managed by Nottinghamshire County Council through the Nottinghamshire Children and Families Partnership. Day-to-day management and delivery of services are the responsibility of North Nottinghamshire College, which is a member of the partnership, in conjunction with a Local Advisory Group. The board includes providers, delivery partners, parents and members of the local community. The centre shares the advisory board with two further centres from a cluster in Manton and Prospect Kilton.

The centre offers a range of services which include early childhood and family support, health services and adult education and crèche facilities.

There are approximately 1200 children under five years of age in the children's centre reach area. The very large majority are White British with increasing numbers of families coming into the area from Eastern Europe. The economic position of families across the area is mixed with areas that are relatively affluent and pockets of deprivation. About 40% of children live in areas of relative deprivation. Housing development in the Gateford area has increased over the past five years seeing a large influx of working parents who commute to nearby towns and cities. The areas of Sandy, Rhodesia and parts of Shireoaks have higher levels of deprivation. In these areas there is a large proportion families on low income and benefits.

The centre's key target group is those families living in the areas of higher deprivation within the area. Other target groups also include families affected by domestic violence, lone and teenage parents. The centre also prioritises children who are eligible for free early education.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Requires improvement

- The centre has accurately identified its priority groups, but are not yet engaging and keeping contact with those families on low incomes and lone and teenage parents with only a minority of these families accessing services.
- Actions to improve the number of children and families registered for the centre's services began with a 'Summer of Action' strategy in 2013. This resulted in an increase in children from targeted families engaging with the centre. Centre staff and partners continue to promote the centre's services at local events such as summer fetes, local school activities, health centres and through leaflet drops.
- A large majority of families living in the area, including those expecting children, are now registered with the centre and access to services, information, advice and guidance.
- Families engage well with 'Bumps and Babies' and 'Stay and Play' sessions where they receive well organised focused activities for their children.
- Health clinics held in the centre are well-attended. At these clinics parents are encouraged to register with the children's centre and receive promotional material regarding other services.
- Take up rates for two-year-old funded places is high overall, but is lower in the Rhodesia area. Not all children are therefore accessing any form of early years service before they reach nursery age. Some children are at risk of not having the 2 year old progress check carried out and therefore any early intervention needed may be missed.
- Partners work well together to identify and support disabled children and those with special educational needs to access appropriate services.
- While retention and success rates for adult learning courses are generally high, information is only available at an individual course level. Information on the number of parents referred to other learning providers and agencies, and the outcomes of these courses, is not available to allow the centre to analyse their effectiveness.
- Multi-agency panels, attended by an appropriate range of partners, are ensuring that families have access to services including specialist support through Child and Adult Mental Health services that are appropriately matched to their needs.

The quality of practice and services

Requires improvement

- Parents are able to access 'Stay and Play' sessions which are open to all and well planned with well organised focused activities for their children. These sessions give parents opportunities to observe staff role modelling support to help children develop.
- Although majority of children living in the reach area achieve a good level of development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the gap is not narrowing sufficiently between children from poorer backgrounds and their better-off peers and is too wide at 37.3% in 2013-14.
- Parents speak highly of the centre's work and the transition plans in place for moving on to nursery. As a result of this, when children move on to nursery and school, parents say that children settle well because they are familiar with the new setting.

- Family support work is effective and well-recorded. Services are able to demonstrate the impact of their work, such as improving parents' knowledge and understanding of parenting. Parents say that they are managing children's behaviour more positively and have an increased understanding of the importance of their interactions with their children following support and guidance from staff.
- The Common Assessment Framework and other early help assessment tools, are used well to identifying the needs of families effectively. Good partnerships are in place to support families affected by domestic violence. Staff have received training to be able to recognise signs of abuse and in supporting those affected.
- Parents report that they have noted significant improvements in their lives following engagement with the centre's services, such as, reducing levels of isolation and depression.
- Families have access to a wide range of learning opportunities in a variety of settings to improve their social, personal and employability skills. Links with Jobcentre plus are improving and current vacancies are displayed at the centre. The vast majority of adults who attend courses achieve their main learning outcomes and improve their life chances. However the recording and tracking of outcomes is not robust enough to accurately reflect the impact of the services on adults' skills and knowledge.
- While currently the centre has few volunteers, they have a clear history of recruiting and progressing parents from volunteering into work. Volunteers are vetted, well-supported and access a range of highly participative training.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Requires improvement

- Governance arrangements are clearly defined and understood. The local authority works effectively with Nottinghamshire Children and Families Partnership (NCFP) which manages the centre.
- While effective use is made of robust information to set targets for the centre there is insufficient information provided by partners who work with adults. The centre uses the any information available well and is able to show that improvements are being made in engaging with priority families.
- Information sharing with health services has improved through the use of a joint data system. This allows providers to keep up-to-date information following interventions with families. However, social care are not included in this model and centre staff therefore, continue using paper-based case files and a separate information system to record actions with families. This leads to some duplication of work and delays in sharing up to date information.
- Leaders and managers demonstrate a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the centre and appropriate priorities have been agreed based on accurate analysis of needs and local knowledge. Actions and targets for improvement are contained within their improvement plan. Progress is being made and monitored frequently. Monthly challenge meetings take place to share and discuss progress.
- The centre coordinator and staff team are highly skilled and well qualified. They continue to work relentlessly to support families in this area. Improvements over this year are beginning to be seen, particularly in access by target families.
- Safeguarding, including e-safety is a high priority within the centre and its policies and procedures

are sound. Supervision is undertaken regularly and staff feel well supported. Close working relationships with family support staff, midwifery and health teams, and other partners, ensure a collaborative approach to protecting the most vulnerable children, including looked after children, children in need and those subject to a child protection plan.

- Parents' views are sought and they complete evaluations of services they have attended, as well as attending the parents forum and advisory board. Views are also sought by the chair, who is a parent, and who seeks views whenever he meets parents.
- NCFP have trialled a number of different ways of engaging partners and other stakeholders in local advisory groups, and the current model where a joint board between this centre and the Manton and Prospects Kilton centres is working well.
- The centre is attractive and welcoming, having an inclusive approach to all users, but it is not yet engaging enough priority families. The centre makes good use of resources which is evidenced in the delivery of well-targeted services and the on-going work in conjunction with partners, to meet both the apparent and hidden needs of the families in this area.

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.

Centre details

Unique reference number	22194
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	447507
Managed by	Nottinghamshire Children and Families Partnership on behalf of the local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	1200
Centre leader	Jackie Collins
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01909 488220
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