

# Nidderdale and Harrogate Rural Children's Centre

c/o St Cuthbert's CE Primary School, King Street, Pateley Bridge, North Yorkshire, HG3 5LE

<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 January 2015
<b>Previous inspection date</b>	Not previously inspected

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

## Summary of key findings for children and families

### This is good centre.

- A strength of the centre's success is its strong relationships and good communication with all its key partners. The quality of leadership, management and governance is good. This means the centre is in a strong position to know what it does well and where it can continually improve its services.
- Services are delivered at accessible local venues across the rural area. As a result, a large majority of families are registered with the centre and they have access to its services. Good partnership work, particularly with health, ensures a very large majority of families identified as most in need of support receive the care, guidance and provision they require.
- A high priority is given to the well-being and safety of babies and young children. A strong commitment is in place to coordinate early help services to prevent any difficult situations escalating. This approach effectively safeguards most children.
- Health outcomes for families are good due to the healthy lifestyles encouraged by the centre and adopted by families. A strong breastfeeding culture is in place. Few young children have obesity or significant health issues.
- The enthusiastic, experienced and well-trained staff team ensures the quality of practice and services is good. Most young children using the centre's services are supported to take up early years funded places; consequently, they make good progress in their development and learning. Close work with childcare providers and schools enables the centre to accurately identify what more can be done to support children to be ready to start school.

### It is not outstanding because:

- Plans that staff prepare before delivering services to children, particularly at venues outside of the centre, are not always shared effectively. This sometimes hampers parents fully understanding the activities staff provide to further encourage the development of their children's learning.
- Although the achievements and progress adults make in their learning is followed when they attend some courses, strong procedures are not yet in place to monitor all adult learning activities.

## What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Improve sharing of the detailed planning that staff prepare prior to delivering sessions at outreach venues, such as parent and toddler groups, so that all adults fully understand what staff expect children to learn from the activities they provide.
- Further develop ways to monitor adults' achievements in learning more effectively in order to demonstrate the progress they all make from their starting points.

## 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 the children centre manager, the integrated services manager, centre staff, advisory board members, representatives of key partners and parents.

The inspectors visited Lofthouse parent and toddler group.

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

## Inspection team

Sue Pepper, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Wendy Pawson

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about the centre

Nidderdale and Harrogate Rural Children's Centre is a stand-alone centre that is based on the site of St Cuthbert's Church of England Primary School. The centre became operational in 2009. This centre covers a widespread, rural area that includes Pateley Bridge and outlying villages that are dispersed in the surrounding areas of the Yorkshire Dales. A large proportion of families have limited access to transport, therefore services are delivered at a range of community outreach venues. The centre offers family support, adult and health services.

The vast majority of families are of White British heritage. There are approximately 440 children under five years of age living in the community. Children generally enter early years provision with skills typical for their age.

The majority of families live in affluent areas. There are some pockets of deprivation, 7.4% of children live in workless households and 12% of families are dependent on the childcare element of Working Tax Credit. Many families work in the farming and agricultural industry, while some work in the seasonal tourist trade. The centre has identified children living with young parents, in low income households and living in more deprived areas as most in need of their support. The main issue that some families face is mothers with maternal mental health and well-being issues and social isolation.

North Yorkshire Local Authority is responsible for the governance of the centre, supported by an advisory board.

## Inspection judgements

### Access to services by young children and families Good

- Information on live births is regularly shared with the centre and antenatal and post-natal services are well-established. Effective joint partnership working with health partners has resulted in a significant increase of families and expectant parents accessing services. As a result, almost all families with children under one year of age now access centre services and the popularity of the fortnightly 'Well Baby Clinic' is growing.
- The small staff team has good knowledge of the needs of the dispersed communities living within their widespread rural area. To ensure families living in the most isolated areas feel included in the centre's services staff attend a range of adult learning, childcare and education venues to promote equality of opportunity. For example, they attend all six parent and toddler groups at least termly, in order to develop good relationships and gain a greater understanding of services that families need to more effectively support them.
- Good support is provided for a large majority of families. Close links with other agencies ensure that most mothers with mental health and well-being issues and a large majority of young parents get the support they need. The welcoming staff at the centre were described as 'non-judgemental, fantastic and inspirational'. Consequently, following good support to attend family learning or to return to education, parents demonstrate high levels of self-esteem and satisfaction.
- To break down barriers to access, a clear focus is on the support of families living in the more deprived areas or those living in low income households. For instance, travel costs are covered through the provision of a 'golden pass'. In addition, free crèche facilities support attendance on adult learning courses.
- Good partnerships, parent friendly advertising leaflets, including information on the internet help to market the centre's services. Families with two-year-olds access a choice of high-quality childcare places. As a result, most young children take up their free entitlement to early education places.

**The quality of practice and services**

Good

- Staff work hard to maintain a balance of affordable services that are available to all, but particularly, those families whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Parents' views are regularly sought to ensure services continue to meet their needs. Suitable procedures are in place to assess the quality of services staff or their partners deliver.
- Healthy lifestyles are strongly promoted through sharing useful tips and advice, such as how to maintain breastfeeding or make homes safer. Families learn how to make nutritious low cost recipes and they get expert advice on healthy eating. Consequently, parents are helping their children to live safer, healthier lives.
- 'Nidderdale' children are well prepared for school. Recent data suggest that the children who have attended the centre's services are more prepared to engage in the school learning environment. As a result, a large majority of children have reached a good level of development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- A strong drive is in place to encourage parents to support their children's learning at home. Where there are any identified gaps in children's development specific sessions are provided to further accelerate learning and reduce inequalities. For example, 'Small Talk' sessions help to successfully develop children's listening skills and communication.
- Planning, observation and assessment procedures are well-established and most are shared with parents. However, staff do not routinely share, or discuss all plans with parents so that they fully understand what they expect children to learn from adult-led activities that the centre delivers. Therefore, this could sometimes hamper learning in the home.
- Adults are well supported to attend training and improve their employability skills. The rotation of short courses is tailored to meet adult needs successfully and a few have completed accredited training. However, detailed monitoring of adults' achievements does not always take place. As a result, the centre is not in a strong position to demonstrate how well adult learning is helping the families that they have identified as most in need of support to improve their economic well-being.
- Parents demonstrate high levels of satisfaction with the friendly welcome they receive at the centre. Some described the good support to help improve family relationships and manage children's behaviour positively as 'vital'. A few parents are willing to work as volunteers and the centre is developing parent ambassadors to work out in the community to further promote the benefits of the centre's services.

**The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management**

Good

- The centre manager is a good role model; she is a strong effective leader with a relaxed, calm and positive manner. Good relationships are evident between the local authority and the cohesive, small staff team who are all appropriately qualified. As a result, relationships are mutually supportive.
- The local authority monitors the centre's performance well. The centre's priority development plan shows the significant progress, particularly over the last few years that the centre has made to the families in the community.
- The advisory board, formerly called the 'steering group', is well-established and led by an independent chairperson. Members have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and, although they have a few parent members they are actively seeking more parent representatives. The children centre manager is a strong communicator, this enables the advisory board to effectively support and drive forward improvements.
- Clear and effective procedures are in place to supervise staff and promote their continuous professional development. Self-evaluation is accurate and data are used effectively to monitor performance. Leadership, governance and management are not complacent; they know where further improvement is required and they are working with their community partners to develop a creative adult learning hub and to embed adult pathways to learning.
- The centre works well with their early intervention partners to reduce the risk of harm to children to 'develop stronger families'. A strong commitment to safeguarding families is evident; case files are maintained to a high standard and a comprehensive range of policies and procedures underpin the centre's daily work. Looked after children and those identified as in need are very well supported by

the Common Assessment Framework.

- The centre works closely with other children's centres and key community partners such as 'My Neighbourhood' to help build stronger communities to share resources effectively and efficiently. The children centre manager prioritises the use of limited resources well; ensuring staff time is spent as much as possible with families who most need their support.

**What inspection judgements mean**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Judgement</b>	<b>Description</b>
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**

<b>Unique reference number</b>	22150
<b>Local authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	454024
<b>Managed by</b>	The local authority
<b>Approximate number of children under five in the reach area</b>	440
<b>Centre manager</b>	Catherine Baker
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01609 798818
<b>Email address</b>	nidderdalecc@northyorks.gov.uk

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