

Harrogate West Children's Centre

Newby Crescent, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG3 2TT

Inspection dates	10–11 February 2015
Previous inspection date	Not previously inspected

Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
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 is a good centre.

- The centre is highly popular with local families and a large majority are registered and make good use of the wide range of services. A majority of families identified as those that need the most support are known to the centre and benefit from the high-quality support, activities and courses.
- Families make very good use of the good levels of effective advice and guidance about weaning, diet and exercise. Staff work successfully with health partners to ensure that breastfeeding rates remain very high and that obesity rates remain low.
- Activities, such as 'Small Talk', reduce inequalities by helping parents to understand the many different ways they can support their children's development. Almost all children are prepared well for school life and where extra support is required the centre works very effectively with schools and families to provide it.
- Support to help parents increase their self-confidence and improve their parenting skills is very effective. Staff and volunteers are very well qualified and use their good skills and experience very effectively to understand the needs of families. Staff help parents to get a better understanding of how to support their children's learning and development.
- The centre has very effective leadership, governance and management. Leaders have a clear ambition to continually improve the effectiveness of services. The centre manager has set high standards and monitors the centre's performance effectively. As a result the centre continually raises the quality of its work and increases the positive impact it has on improving the lives of children and families.

It is not outstanding because:

- Arrangements for recognising and recording the progress made by all children, including those identified as belonging to groups considered to be most in need of support are not fully effective. In addition, planning of activities does not include the steps to promote children's learning,
- Too few parents, particularly those identified as being in most need of support, are actively involved in helping the centre leaders to make decisions about how the centre is run.

What does the centre need to do to improve further?

- Build on the effective assessment of children's starting points through consistent checking and recording of their progress and use this to plan activities that maximise their learning and development.
- Increase the number of parents involved in helping to make decisions about how the centre is run, particularly those that the centre has identified as in most need of their support.

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.

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

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

The inspectors visited The Army Foundation College, Harrogate Library and Rossett Children's Centre.

The inspectors observed the centre's work, conducted a joint observation of a family session with the children's centre services manager, took children's views into account, and looked at a range of relevant documentation including parents' evaluation and satisfaction surveys.

Inspection team

Dan Grant, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Tara Street	Additional inspector
Anne Mackay	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about the centre

Harrogate West Children's Centre opened in April 2009. It is a stand-alone children's centre with a manager, three parent support advisors, two early years workers and two administrators. The centre meets its core purpose by offering a range of services which include family play sessions, health clinics, parenting courses, adult learning and family support. These services are delivered to families from the children's centre buildings, community venues in the area and through outreach home visits.

The centre has buildings on two sites, which are located with linked schools. The centre's main building is based on the same site as Saltergate Infants School, Saltergate Community Junior School, Saltergate Kids Club, and Gateways Nursery. The centre's second building was formerly a separate, neighbouring children's centre and is still known as Rossett Children's Centre. This building is on the same site as Rossett Acre Primary School and Rossett Acre Fun Club. These schools and early years settings are subject to separate inspection arrangements. The reports from these inspections are available on the Ofsted website www.ofsted.gov.uk.

The centre is managed directly by the local authority, in conjunction with an advisory board made up of delivery partners, members of the local community and parents.

There are approximately 1,250 children aged under five years in the reach area. The area covered by the centre is to the north west of Harrogate and stretches from the town centre to surrounding rural villages. The area is largely affluent and includes an army barracks and a small proportion of social housing. The groups that the centre has identified as needing specific support and intervention are: those from minority ethnic backgrounds; adult learners; those in need of support to improve their parenting skills; and those eligible for free childcare for two-year-olds.

At 87% the large majority of families within the area served by the centre group are of White British heritage with others from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Levels of unemployment are low, with only a small number of children living in households dependent upon workless benefits. Most children enter early years provision with knowledge and skills that are typical for their age. However, a significant proportion of children have lower than expected communication skills.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Good

- Staff have a good understanding of the needs of local families. They work successfully with key partners to ensure a very large majority of families with a child under five years of age are registered with the centre. Most of these families make good use of the services the centre has to offer and the numbers involved continue to rise.
- Well planned and focused outreach visits that take place in families' homes are used very effectively to thoroughly assess the individual needs of families. Staff successfully explain to parents what services are available and how the activities and courses can help them. This makes sure that those who may be reluctant to visit the centre and access services are encouraged to get involved.
- Staff and partners have established a positive reputation for providing highly effective support for all families within the area, including parents expecting a baby. Almost all families who are most in need of services are clearly prioritised and staff make sure they receive good support. For example, those who require help to improve their parenting skills, families from minority ethnic backgrounds, adult learners and those families with a child entitled to free funding for childcare. These groups engage well in the centre's activities.
- Staff ensure that families referred for specific help, such as those with a disabled child and those at risk of domestic abuse have good access and take up of services which are well matched to their needs. One parent told inspectors, 'Utterly discrete staff who kept my whole family safe and

healthy. I feel at home here, the staff provide a really individual package of support.'

- The centre works exceptionally well with key partners to ensure the large majority of eligible two-year-olds take up their early years funded place at provision which has been graded by Ofsted to be good or better. A very high proportion of the three- and four-year old children eligible for funded places take up the offer.

The quality of practice and services

Good

- All families, including those identified as needing the most support, benefit from the high-quality courses and activities that are open to all. Staff respond swiftly to requests for family support and the impact of their work on improving children's well-being and improving the lives of families is recorded appropriately in case files.
- Staff are very well qualified and they have good experience of working successfully with health and other key partners to provide highly effective support for breastfeeding mothers. The centre has a good range of information, posters and leaflets available and expert advice from health staff. This has contributed to the very high proportion of mothers who continue breastfeeding beyond six to eight weeks and also to the low rate of childhood obesity.
- A good range of relevant activities supports children's development and learning well. This contributes significantly to children's good progress through activities such as 'Small Talk' and 'Stay and Play'. However, the planning of activities and systems in place to track children's progress over time are incomplete and not used consistently enough to make sure children continue to make good progress.
- The centre has well established and highly effective partnerships with schools to support children's learning and development. For example, the centre has identified that a larger than expected number of children would benefit from support to increase their speech and language skills. As a result of this the centre now plays a key role in providing targeted support for those who need it.
- Staff ensure that children are prepared well for starting school. They provide families with useful information leaflets to help them understand how best to support their child's learning. A higher proportion of children in the area than seen nationally achieve a good level of development by the end of their Reception Year.
- The centre provides a good range of adult learning courses, including accredited qualifications, through their effective partnership with the local authority adult and community learning service. These groups are very well attended and ever popular with parents. Basic courses on language, literacy and numeracy have helped several parents move on to higher-level courses, including university degrees, secure voluntary work and, subsequently, find paid employment.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- The centre has very effective leadership, governance and management. The centre manager has an accurate understanding of the needs of local families and ensures the centre provides good services to meet those needs. Effective plans, informed by accurate self-evaluation, are in place to sustain on-going improvements. The advisory board is effective in planning and reviewing the centre's services but its membership does not include enough parents, particularly those families in most need of support.
- The local authority provides good advice and support, which helps to promote the highly effective teamwork. Resources are particularly good and staff use them efficiently and effectively to meet local needs. The whole staff team ensure that the centre provides a warm and welcoming environment where families feel relaxed, safe and very well supported.
- The centre leaders closely monitor the performance of the centre and the quality of services. Data is analysed closely and trends in performance are used effectively by leaders to ensure all families receive a good range of services matched to their needs. As a consequence, the group's work continues to have positive impact on reducing inequalities for children and families.
- Parents are actively involved in various aspects of running the centre, including as volunteers and as members of the advisory board. Staff consult with parents regularly and support them to provide

frequent and thorough evaluation of services and contribute new ideas. However, too few of these parents are from those that the centre has identified as in most need of support. This means that leaders cannot be confident that these families' views are being heard and used to shape future services.

- The centre manager has high expectations of her staff team and supports them very well. Staff are well trained and their performance is managed thoroughly, helping them to develop their practice and improve their work. The centre has effective policies and procedures which are understood by all.
- The staff make very good use of the Common Assessment Framework to ensure families most in need of help receive well organised, timely support. The centre has good safeguarding arrangements because staff have a very good understanding of how to keep families safe. They closely follow policies and procedures which are up-to-date and comprehensive. Staff vetting checks meet current requirements. When required, effective supervision is given to children identified as in need, those subject to child-protection plans and those looked after by the local authority.

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	21387
Local authority	North Yorkshire County Council
Inspection number	454019
Managed by	The local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	1,250
Centre manager	Fiona Corby
Telephone number	01609 533115
Email address	Fiona.corby@northyorks.gov.uk

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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (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.

This template is available at www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/130186.

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

No. 130186

© Crown copyright 2014

