

# Rawthorpe and Dalton Children's Centre

23-25 Ridgeway, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD5 9QJ

<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 May 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	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 large majority of families with the most needs regularly use services until their needs are met. Outcomes for these families are good.
- The centre is at the heart of the local community and is a thriving hub of activity. 'We would be lost without the centre' was a comment from one parent which was typical of many others.
- The centre works in a highly effective way with a wide range of partner organisations such as those from health, housing and social care. This ensures that families benefit from a good range of services and support and have good access to them.
- The work of the family forum is exemplary. As a formally constituted group, the forum plays a significant role in decision making, fund raising and representing the views and interests of families.
- Adult learning and training is an exceptional feature of the centre's work. Courses such as First Aid, English and mathematics help parents improve their knowledge and skills. As a result, their life chances and the quality of their lives improve significantly.
- The centre manager provides very motivating leadership. This has led to the development of a strong staff team, highly productive partnership arrangements and high standards of practice in the centre.
- Governance arrangements are effective. The local authority and the advisory board monitor the performance of the centre well, and support and challenge it to improve. This, combined with the good leadership and management within the centre, means that the quality of its work and its impact continuously improve.

### It is not outstanding because:

- The self-evaluation procedures do not cover with sufficient detail all aspects of the centre's work. As a result, action plans are not as thorough as they could be.
- The quality of tracking of children's progress is variable and there is not enough focus on monitoring the progress of individual children.

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

- Further strengthen the quality of leadership and management by:
  - developing self-evaluation procedures that cover all aspects of the centre's work
  - creating action plans that are appropriately linked to the self-evaluation process and which reflect the precise actions the centre needs to take to improve.
- Strengthen the tracking system to ensure greater consistency in quality and in monitoring the progress of individual children.

## 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 centre staff, local authority managers, parents, members of the advisory board and the family forum. They also spoke to representatives of partner organisations such as those from schools, early years providers, health, the library service, housing and the local community.

They observed the centre's work and visited sessions such as 'Stay and Play', 'Let's Move' and 'English for Speakers of Other Languages' (ESOL). They looked at a range of relevant documentation including the centre's self-evaluation report and improvement plan. Parents' views were taken into account from interviews with them and from analysing their evaluations and feedback to the centre.

## Inspection team

Priscilla McGuire, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Barbara Wearing	Additional inspector
Qaisra Shahraz Ahmad	Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about the centre

Rawthorpe and Dalton Children's Centre is a stand-alone centre which is managed directly by the local authority. The centre shares its site with a library.

The centre offers a range of services including adult learning, early years sessions, parenting training, health services and advice and guidance. Parts of the area such as Dalton are in the top 10% of the most deprived in the country but other parts such as Kirkheaton and Upper Moore are more affluent. The majority of the Dalton estate housing stock is social housing. Most families are of White British heritage but an increasing number of families are from other backgrounds, including migrants from Europe and Africa.

Around 30.8% of working-age residents living in the area claim some form of benefits. This is twice as many as the Kirklees average, which is 15.65%.

There are about 1,203 children aged under five living in the area. Most children enter early years provision with knowledge and skills below those that are typical for their age.

The centre has identified workless families who live in the top three most deprived areas as the priority group most in need of support. This includes over 400 families.

## Inspection judgements

### Access to services by young children and families

**Good**

- From antenatal support through to accredited learning courses, families including those expecting children have good access to high-quality information, services and advice from the centre and its partners. As a result, outcomes for families who use the centre are good.
- The centre shares information and data particularly well with its partners. Staff do this in various ways, such as through regular meetings with partners. As a result, most families in the area are registered with the centre.
- Most families from the centre's priority group of workless families who live in the most deprived areas are registered with the centre. A large majority regularly participate in services and activities offered by the centre.
- Staff effectively monitor attendance data to ensure they can minimise barriers for families who do not regularly use services. Through phone calls, text messages and personal contact, staff, notably the family workers, offer families the support they need to keep using services until their needs are met.
- Staff have implemented effective strategies to ensure all families, including those less likely to use the centre, have good access to services. These strategies include offering 'twilight' sessions, home visits to those with the most needs, and activities at different venues around the community.
- As a result of effective partnership working with the co-located library, families have good access to a wide range of resources in the library, such as books and computers.
- Overall take-up rates of free early years education are good. In conjunction with the local authority's care coordinator, the centre ensures families of two-year-old children are kept regularly informed of their entitlement to free early years education. As a result, take-up rates of those who want to access good-quality provision for their children are good.

### The quality of practice and services

**Good**

- The quality and range of courses and services that are open to all families and those targeted at specific groups are good. The centre is widely recognised as a real hub of the community that improves children's well-being and families' quality of life. There is a strong focus on reducing

inequalities and improving life chances for both children and adults.

- Well-maintained case files and case studies demonstrate the centre's effectiveness in accurately assessing the needs of families. The centre provides good support and care to families, particularly those with complex barriers to overcome.
- The centre provides an excellent range of high-quality toys, resources and activities for the benefit of children and families who attend early years sessions. These stimulate and promote all areas of learning. However, the quality of tracking of children's progress is variable and does not always show the progress individual children make towards meeting their developmental milestones.
- Through programmes like 'Healthy Cooking' and 'Big Cook, Little Cook', parents are actively encouraged to develop their knowledge of healthy eating. As a result, obesity rates are lower in the area than the average for Kirklees. However, breastfeeding rates at six to eight weeks are not yet high enough. Centre staff are fully aware of this and persist in their partnership work with health professionals to improve breastfeeding rates.
- Unemployed adults, who are one of the centre's key priorities, have good access to advice, guidance, education, training and volunteering opportunities. This helps them to become better prepared for work. As a result of the centre's effective partnership work with Jobcentre Plus and Citizens Advice Bureau, parents also receive the help they need to improve their economic well-being.
- The adult learning courses offered are an impressive and exemplary feature of the centre's work. Take-up rates of courses are good. Life chances of those with priority needs improve as a result of their participation in courses such as basic literacy, basic maths, first aid and English for Speakers of Other Languages. Parents who completed first-aid courses gave good examples of how they applied the skills they learnt to deal with health emergencies at home.
- Parents receive effective training to help them improve the knowledge and skills they need to support their children's learning and development. This contributes to the strong and improving trend in the proportion of children who achieve a Good Level of Development (GLD) by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The centre has high aspirations for parents and celebrates their achievements exceptionally well. For example, the centre manager has created a 'Graduation Day' photographic display and 'Roll of Honour' in the centre's foyer. It celebrates the success of parents who have completed courses and gained qualifications. This innovative practice inspires parents and gives them the confidence to believe in their own potential.

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

**Good**

- The centre is managed well by an energetic centre manager who leads by example. She leads a highly committed, well-supervised, well-trained team of staff who share her vision and passion to do the very best for families.
- Governance through the local authority and advisory board is effective in holding the centre to account and monitoring its performance. They know the centre well, understand its strengths and key areas for development. They also use data effectively to monitor the centre's performance.
- Effective strategies are implemented by the local authority to ensure the centre continually improves outcomes for families. The local authority sets clear targets for reducing inequalities and carefully monitors the centre's progress towards meeting these. However, the centre's self-evaluation procedures do not cover with sufficient detail all aspects of the centre's work. As a result, action plans lack precision and are not linked well enough to the self-evaluation process.
- Parents make an excellent contribution to the running of the centre. They are strong advocates for the centre's work. Through their roles on the advisory board and as members of the family forum, they make an exceptionally strong contribution to shaping services and to decision making. For example, as a separately constituted group, the forum submits its own bids for funding and organises activities for families.
- Safeguarding arrangements, including safer recruitment policies and procedures, are effective. Staff work well with social care professionals and are also supported by their 'safeguarding champion' to provide good support to families of children subject to child protection plans, looked after children

and children in need. Early help assessments are also used well to ensure families with the most needs receive the intervention and support that they require.

- The centre's promotion of equality and diversity is good. Courses such as ESOL are instrumental in reducing inequalities and promoting community cohesion. Data also show that the achievement gap for children between those who receive free school meals and other children is narrowing.
- The centre offers high-quality accommodation and a good range of resources to meet the needs of families. Through highly effective partnership working with organisations representing, for example, health, housing and social care, the centre offers a highly effective package of support and services for families.

**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 well-being 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>	22473
<b>Local authority</b>	Kirklees
<b>Inspection number</b>	455058
<b>Managed by</b>	The local authority
<b>Approximate number of children under five in the reach area</b>	1,203
<b>Centre leader</b>	Leathea Donaldson
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01484 225153
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