

Redcar and Cleveland Central Children's Centre Group

Rainbow Lane, Redcar, Cleveland, TS10 1RR

Inspection dates	11–12 November 2014
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.

- Overall, arrangements for the leadership, governance and management of the centre group are effective and securing good improvements. The performance of the centre group, and the quality of the services and activities provided, are robustly monitored and challenged by leaders, staff and the local authority. This ensures that services are appropriate, of high quality and are having the intended impact.
- The centre group uses the wide range of information available to accurately identify families living in the area whose circumstances indicate they are likely to be most in need of intervention and additional support. Services and activities are planned well to ensure they are what families need the most; staff develop strong relationships with families and support them to engage. As a result services and activities are very well attended.
- The range of services and activities are led by skilled practitioners and are of good quality. Programmes are carefully designed to support families to make continuous progress and remain engaged for as long as they need them. Their lives are significantly improving as a result.
- Young children accessing groups at the centres to promote their learning and development are making very good progress and are being well-prepared for school, due to the high quality provision. Monitoring shows those children at risk of falling behind are catching up and arrive at school ready to learn.

It is not outstanding because:

- Targets for improvement are not always measurable and recorded together in one place. This makes it difficult for the centre group to readily demonstrate the progress they are making and for the advisory board to challenge performance.
- Not all schools in the reach area are taking up the good opportunities that are available to work with the centre group and help more children to be ready for school and achieve a good level of development.
- Information is not routinely provided of all expectant parents and live births in the area to enable the centre group to swiftly target all those who may benefit from their services as early as possible.

What does the group need to do to improve further?

- Improve the performance management arrangements of the centre group by:
 - ensuring all targets for improvement are measurable and clearly recorded in one place, for example, in the performance improvement plan
 - using measurable targets to enable leaders, staff and partners to readily demonstrate the progress they are making towards achieving these targets and be held more accountable by the advisory board.
- Develop partnership working with more schools in the reach area in order to enable more children to achieve a good level of development and be well prepared for school.
- Improve the identification and engagement of expectant parents and those with new-born babies by:
 - the local authority securing processes with health partners to share information of all expectant parents and live births in the reach area, so that leaders and staff are able to quickly target those who would benefit from early intervention and support from centre services.

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. The centres that form part of this children's centre group are Dormanstown Surestart Children's Centre, Redcar Coast Surestart Children's Centre and Redcar Surestart Children's centre.

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector.

The inspectors held meetings with parents, staff and leaders, representatives of the advisory board and a range of professionals.

The inspectors visited activities and services operating from each of the children's centres.

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

Inspection team

Rachael Flesher, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ali Mekki

Her Majesty's Inspector

Heather Hartmann

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about the group

Redcar and Cleveland Central Children's Centre Group provides services for families from four children's centre buildings and other school and outreach venues in the area. The children's centre group offers a range of services which include: family support, health services, family play sessions, volunteering, adult learning and parenting courses.

In total, approximately 2,780 children under five years of age live in the area, with 1,040 living in one of the 1% to 30% most deprived areas in the country. Approximately 12% of families are in receipt of workless benefits. Almost all children living in the area are White British with 1.7% representing a range of minority ethnic groups. The majority of children enter early years provision with skills, knowledge and abilities below those typical for their age.

The priority families identified by the centre group as having needs or circumstances that require intervention and additional support include: children from workless households, teenage parents, families living in the 1% to 30% most deprived areas in the country, two-year-olds, children identified as in need, children subject to a child protection plan or 'Team around a Family' plan.

The group has an advisory board and is managed by Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Good

- Due to strong partnership working, almost all families within the area are registered with the centre group and have access to information about the wide range of services and activities available to them.
- Strong partnership working with health visitors and midwives, who deliver services from the centre group buildings, provide good opportunities for centre staff to develop relationships with some expectant and new parents in the area. However, there is not a process in place to provide the centre group with details of all expectant and new parents to enable them to identify those who may be vulnerable and may benefit from their support early on.
- Leaders and staff use data, information and the views of the community well to ensure they know the families in their area and identify what they need and want to help improve their lives. They use this to plan the services and activities they provide, develop good relationships with families and enable them to attend. As a result the large majority of families, including those the centre group has identified as in most need of its support, and those least likely to participate, are accessing them.
- The centre group has been particularly successful in engaging almost all teenage parents and babies and a good number of children from workless households, families living in the 1% to 30% most deprived areas in the country, two-year-olds, children identified as in need, children subject to a child protection plan or a 'Team around a Family' plan.
- Planning ensures that services and activities have clear progression routes to enable families to remain engaged in centre services and continue to make progress until their needs are met.
- There are very effective processes in place to monitor the attendance and participation of families in the centre group services and activities. This ensures that staff can swiftly follow up where families fail to participate and provide support to enable them to attend. This has been particularly successful in sustaining the engagement of two-year-olds eligible for free early education.

The quality of practice and services**Good**

- Leaders and staff ensure there is a good balance between services and activities that are open to all and those that are targeted to families with particular needs, and these are well attended.
- Staff take time to get to know the families who use the centre group and support is well targeted at those who most need their help. Families who use the centres value the care and support the staff provide stating staff 'go above and beyond' and 'provide consistent support'. As one summarised the views of many, 'I don't know what I would have done without the service'.
- Clear systems are in place for monitoring the quality of provision and the progress children make while accessing centre services. As a result, staff can fully demonstrate how all children are being supported to make good progress and that any gaps in their learning and development are narrowing, greatly improving their school readiness.
- Very strong quality assurance processes are in place to manage the two-year-old early education entitlement and to support early years settings and childminders to provide high quality provision. As a result, leaders can robustly demonstrate that a good number of children are making good progress. As one headteacher reported, 'You can see the children who have come through the two year old provision in our school nursery. They are ready to learn'.
- Local schools report that a significant number of children arrive at school without the personal, social and emotional and communication and language skills required. In addition, data shows that too many children do not achieve a good level of development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. In response to this, centre group staff offer a range of support to local schools, for example through the highly successful transitions groups. However, not all schools in the reach area are taking up the good opportunities to work with the centre group and improve children's progress.
- Parenting courses and groups for parents and children to play and learn together, such as 'Bookstart Corner', are having a positive impact on families who need this intervention. Parents demonstrate they are developing good parenting skills and understand how to promote the health and safety of their families and the importance of being involved in their play and learning.
- A good number of adults access the wide range of adult learning and personal development opportunities available through the children's centre group. They report that their parenting and academic skills have improved as a result and many have progressed onto volunteering or employment. The provision of a crèche greatly enables their access and parents highly value this.
- Case files ensure a well-maintained record of events and decisions and there is good evidence of management oversight and professional supervision. The child's diary is a clear and easily understood format for capturing the work undertaken by early help practitioners.

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

- Leaders, staff and the advisory board meaningfully seek the views of families through a range of different ways, including discussion forums, questionnaires, evaluations and consultation events. They use this feedback very well to shape services and inform families of the changes they have made.
- Strong partnership working and clear and effective policies and procedures ensure that the centre group works collaboratively to support looked-after-children, children identified as in need and children subject to child protection plans and Common Assessment Framework (CAF) processes. This ensures that families receive swift and timely support from the range of professionals required.
- A wide range of training and development opportunities are available to meet the professional development needs of staff and enable them to carry out their roles, particularly in supporting vulnerable families with a range of often complex needs. These opportunities are well utilised by staff, resulting in a high quality staff team.
- Staff state they are 'well led and managed', 'kept fully informed' and leaders seek their views and 'are open to suggestions'.
- Strong team working and very effective professional support and supervision from the local

authority and leaders ensure staff can fully demonstrate the difference they are making and be held fully accountable. Self-evaluation is a team effort and all contribute to this.

- All staff are reflective practitioners who understand the importance of analysing their practice and finding ways to do things even better. They are open to feedback through their regular debriefing sessions and demonstrate that they are solution focussed.
- Leaders use the range of improvement plans developed by professional partners and working groups, the local authority service plan and all available data and information to identify accurate priorities for improvement and secure sufficient and appropriate resources. This ensures services and activities are those which families need the most and help the local authority monitor the centre group's performance. However, targets are not always measurable and clearly organised.
- The advisory board is represented well by a wide range of partners and includes parents who regularly attend and share the views of the community. Meetings provide a good platform for partners to share information and talk about any progress and improvements pertinent to their services. The advisory board understands data and how staff are being managed. However the lack of measurable targets in the centre group's performance and improvement plan prevents the advisory board from fully challenging the centre's performance.

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 group details

Unique reference number	80274
Local authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	447636
Managed by	The local authority

Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	2,780
Centre leader	Christine Bell
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01642 776030
Email address	chris.bell@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk

This group consists of the following children's centres:

- 20972 Dormanstown Surestart Children's Centre
- 22484 Redcar Coast Surestart Children's Centre
- 22483 Redcar Surestart Children's Centre

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