

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

OUTCOMES OF CHILDREN'S CENTRES OFSTED INSPECTIONS 2010/2012

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on the outcomes from Surestart Children's Centre inspections 2010 to 2012
- 1.2 Copies of all Ofsted Inspection Reports for Children's Centres are available in the Group Offices

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Ofsted has a duty under part 3A of the Childcare Act 2006, to inspect all Surestart Children's Centres on a 5 yearly cycle, beginning, 3 years after the designation date of the centre.
- 2.2 North Lincolnshire has 12 Children's Centres all of which meet the eligibility criteria for inspection.
- 2.3 10 of the centres have been inspected to date. The first was inspected in October 2010 and the tenth inspected in September 2012. The inspections on the remaining 2 centres are imminent.
- 2.4 Centres are judged on Overall Effectiveness and their Capacity for sustained Improvement.
- 2.5 In 2011/2012, 7 Children's Centres were inspected by Ofsted. All were judged good or better. The Ofsted annual report 2011/12, published in November 2012, ranks North Lincolnshire's performance as first, along with 31 other local authorities, for achieving 100% judgements that are good or better for overall effectiveness. The national average is 70% of Children's Centres achieving good or better judgements.
- 2.6 All Children's Centres inspections since 2010 have resulted in judgements that are 100% good or better. 50% of North Lincolnshire Children's Centres have outstanding features identified by Ofsted as part of the judgement. These features include, safeguarding, good use of resources, quality of care, 'guidance and support offered to families including those in target groups'. Please see appendix 1 for further detail.

- 2.7 Children's Centres in North Lincolnshire offer a range of multi agency universal open access services to all families. Centre staff target and deliver services and individual support to the most vulnerable families with children and young people aged 0-19yrs.
- 2.8 A key focus of recent Ofsted inspections (post September 2011) was the Family Support work undertaken by staff directly with families and in safeguarding, both in centres and in the family home. Reference to the excellent work undertaken is reflected in the 'Outstanding' judgements highlighted in Appendix 1.
- 2.9 Children's Centres are instrumental in the delivery of the 2year old early education-funding pilot to ensure the most vulnerable children and their parents are supported. This will be built on and further developed in anticipation of September 2013 when funding from central government will become available to all of those 2year old children eligible for free school meals.
- 2.10 The recent Ofsted annual report published in November made it explicit that the requirements to achieve a judgement of good had been increased since the introduction of the current inspection criteria in September 2011.
- 2.11 There is an emerging focus on the early health outcomes. Partnership work with Midwifery Services and Health Visitors is being strengthened and underpinned by target driven business plans to better engage new families and increase the registration of families to Children's Centres, which is essential to securing good and better grades in future inspections.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 The current provision of children's centres in North Lincolnshire is an important contribution to the council's priority of creating safer and stronger communities.
- 3.2 In the last quarter October to December 2012, 3780 children aged 0-5yrs lived in the most deprived areas of North Lincolnshire. 65% of these children are registered with a Children's Centre and 64.3% were recorded by Centre Staff as accessing centre early help activities.
- 3.3 Children's Centres provide an important contribution to ensuring all children have a best start. This is a component of our emerging Health and Well being Strategy to reduce inequalities in North Lincolnshire. The staff in children's centres help to support breast feeding, healthy diets, promote physical activity and contribute to the development of early communication and language and literacy skills which underpin achievement in school at key stage 1 and key stage 2 in primary phase education.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 This report is for information.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

5.1 The provision of the early help offer and preventative services to vulnerable children and families can reduce the likelihood of families requiring more expensive targeted and specialist services.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)

6.1 Ofsted is currently consulting until 11th January 2013 on a new inspection framework for Surestart Children's Centres.

6.2 Key components of this proposed new framework include, where appropriate, centres will be inspected in locality 'clusters' (rather than as individual centres) and that centres will be measured on impact made to local targets set by the local authority, rather than over arching 'outcomes'.

6.2 The requirement will remain for children's centres to offer family support services and reach the most vulnerable groups in the community served by the centre fulfilling the requirements of the Early Help Offer as recommended by Professor Eileen Munro.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION

7.1 As part of each Ofsted Inspection the local families who use the centre are asked to give feedback on their experience of the centres services and staff.

7.2 The sessions are effective in promoting the Early Years Foundation Stage provision and focus particularly well on children's personal and emotional development, communication and language. One father said 'I was made to feel really welcome at 'Stay and Play', they gave my daughter different things to do as she is very bright, and she continues to develop well'. (Barton Children's Centre Inspection October 2011)

7.3 The parents' forum makes a valuable contribution to shaping centre services. Their identification of a need for facilities for older children has resulted in the setting up of the popular 'Young Persons' Group'. Those attending appreciate these sessions as they say it keeps them 'off the streets '(North Axholme Children's Centre Inspection September 2012)

7.4 The views of users are routinely gathered through evaluations and the Families' Forum. 'I am proud of my achievements'; 'I feel listened to by the staff'; 'all staff go the extra mile'; 'they have made a huge difference to our lives'; 'they really care'; 'you feel part of it without feeling a failure' are typical of the comments made by users'. (Little Goslings Children's Centre Inspection December 2011)

7.5 The outstanding care, guidance and support are empowering families to deal with circumstances that are extremely testing. A large majority of families within the reach area access services at the centre. Outcomes for children and families using the centre are good overall. As a result, they are making significant improvements to their lives. 'I could not have turned my life around without the support of the centre'. 'I was lacking in confidence and very lonely, the centre has helped me make friends, I feel part of this community now,' are typical of the comments made by users. (Frodingham Children's Centre Inspection November 2011)

8. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 The Cabinet acknowledges the outcomes of Ofsted inspections of North Lincolnshire Children's Centres

DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE

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Date: January 2013

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: Nil

APPENDIX 1

Name of Centre	Date of Inspection	Outstanding elements
Ashby	11-12 th October 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No outstanding elements
Henderson Avenue	13 14 th January 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent to which the centre supports and encourages the wider community to engage with services and uses their views to develop the range of provision
Winterton	10 th 11 th February 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No outstanding elements
West Street	27 th 28 th July 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No outstanding elements
Barton	19 th 20 th October 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No outstanding elements
Frodingham	16 th 17 th November 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The quality of care, guidance and support offered to families, including those in target groups*
Westcliff	15 th 16 th December 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent to which children are safe and protected, their welfare concerns are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them*. The quality of care, guidance and support offered to families, including those in target groups*. The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of families, including those in target groups. The effectiveness of the centres policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults*.
Little Goslings	15 th 16 th December 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The quality of care, guidance and support offered to families, including those in target groups*
Manor Farm	02 nd & 3 rd May 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No outstanding elements
North Axholme	19 th 20 th September 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent to which children are safe and protected, their welfare concerns are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them*. The effectiveness of the centres policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults*