

**NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**

**PEOPLE CABINET MEMBER**

**CHILDREN'S CENTRE OFSTED INSPECTION OUTCOME**

**1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet Member of the outcome of the OFSTED inspection of North Axholme Children's Centre, undertaken on 19 & 20 September 2012.
- 1.2 A full copy of the report is available in Group offices.

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 All Children's Centres are subject to an OFSTED inspection on a five yearly cycle. This is the first inspection for the Isle of Axholme Children's Centre.
- 2.2 The inspections are carried out under Part 3A of the Childcare Act 2006 as inserted by section 199 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009.
- 2.3 Inspectors gather evidence from a range of interviews, observations and the examination of written information.
- 2.4 The inspection report gives an overall judgement based on:  
  
**Overall Effectiveness** - The effectiveness of the children's centre in meeting the needs of and improving outcomes for users and the wider community  
  
**Capacity for Sustained Improvement**- The centre's capacity for sustained improvement, including the quality of its leadership and management
- 2.5 The judgements are categorised under four criteria:
  - 1 – Outstanding
  - 2 - Good
  - 3 - Satisfactory
  - 4 - Inadequate
- 2.6 Inspectors can make judgements as to whether requirements or recommendations are needed. A requirement is a mandatory action; a recommendation is a suggestion to improve current practice.

### 3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 North Axholme Children's Centre was inspected and the overall rating was GOOD.

#### Summary of the inspection findings:

| Outcome area  | Grading        |
|---|----------------|
| Overall Effectiveness   | 2 - Good       |
| Capacity for sustained development  | 2 - Good       |
| How good are outcomes for Families?   | 2 - Good       |
| How good is the provision?  | 2 - Good       |
| How effective are the leadership and management?  | 2 - Good       |
| The extent to which children are safe and protected, their welfare concerns are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them            | 1- Outstanding |
| The effectiveness of the centre's policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults | 1- Outstanding |

#### Summary taken from the report

- The centre provides a wide range of quality activities and services from its two bases and in Families' homes that successfully support parents in caring for and educating their children. As a result, most outcomes are improving well.
- The centre's work in helping to safeguard children and vulnerable adults is outstanding. All staff, partner agencies and users have an excellent understanding of their responsibilities for safeguarding and are very clear about the procedures for referring child-protection concerns. The numbers of children subject to a child protection plan or deemed to be children-in-need is very low as families receive timely, individually tailored support before their situations reach crisis point.
- Children's and young people's enjoyment of the activity sessions is evident. They enhance their skills, become inquisitive, independent learners and develop positive relationships with their peers and adults. Parents really value the opportunities to meet other parents, to make new friends and to improve their skills through the courses and activities offered by the centre.
- The centre has a good capacity to improve. Managers and staff understand the needs of local families well and have developed strong partnerships with a wide range of agencies to complement their work.
- Leadership and management are strong. The local authority's strategic vision, to ensure that children have the 'Best Start', has led to a reshaping of services in which children's centres have a pivotal role. The advisory board has become increasingly involved in evaluating the centre's progress and providing greater challenge in identifying local priorities.

The centre uses a wide range of techniques to gather feedback from families in order to gauge satisfaction, measure its impact, and inform service planning.

- Development planning and target setting have resulted in improved engagement of targeted groups, particularly young parents and families with a disabled child.

### **Recommendations from report**

**There were three recommendations from the report:**

- Work with partners to reduce obesity levels of children in Reception Year
- Increase the involvement of partner agencies in registering families with the center, recording users of centre services and systematically tracking outcomes for families signposted to other services
- Strengthen self-evaluation and improvement planning by using the recently acquired reach-level data to set measurable targets for improving health outcomes and assess the impact of the centres services on outcomes for children and families overtime.

## **4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

4.1 The Cabinet Member may wish to write to the Children's Centre manager regarding the outcomes of their inspection.

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

5.1 Financial – none at this time

5.2 Staffing - none at this time

5.3 Property – none at this time

5.4 IT – none at this time

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

6.1 Each Centre completes a Self Evaluation document and a business plan and an annual conversation is undertaken with the centre by the Local Authority

## **7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION**

7.1 An important part of the inspection was the dialogue between the inspectors and service users, with parents commenting:

‘The children's centre is very helpful and my child loves coming’ and

‘Staff are very friendly and make everyone welcome’

- 7.2 Some parents commented that they were disappointed that some sessions that used to run in the centre were no longer available. Inspectors explained in the written feedback to parents that this is because the centre staff focus more of their work on working with families who need its help the most and commented that there is still a wide range of services available for universal access.

## 8. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 Continue to support improvements in North Axholme Children's Centre
- 8.2 Cabinet Member may like to write and make suitable comments to North Axholme Children's Centre on the inspection report.

DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE

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**Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:** Isle of Axholme Ofsted inspection report