

WIRRAL COUNCIL CABINET REPORT - Early Years and Children's Centre Review: Outcome of Consultation 27th July 2015

Brief Description of:

Hub and Satellite Centres – Brief Description

Children's centre activity in Wirral will be facilitated through a model of main hub and satellite centres across each constituency area.

The designated hub centre - will ensure that appropriate early childhood services are delivered in an integrated way and are available across a geographical area (Sure Start children's centres statutory guidance, 2013). Early childhood services (section 2, Childcare Act 2006) are defined as early education and childcare, parent and family support, health services, training and employment support and information and advice services for parents and prospective parents

The Hubs will become the central administrative function for each geographical area they represent, including for Ofsted purposes and will ensure that every child will still continue to have a named children's centre and access to early childhood provision that is co-ordinated and facilitated through communities. It is expected that a Hub will be open from 8am to 6pm for 48 weeks of the year and will take on the function of a designated centre for the area as well as for Ofsted purposes.

Satellite centres will be identified as part of the formal designation of the children's centre hub and are required to provide one or more early childhood service (based on the needs of the area and priorities as determined by the local authority and through the Advisory Boards). These may include services on site, advice and assistance or support for gaining access to services elsewhere. The satellite is not required to be open all day or across 48 weeks of the year, though access will be determined according to the local delivery needs and priorities.

Extended School/Services

Information gleaned the DfE/Gov.uk websites regarding extended schools cited that:

There is no single model of an extended school but extended services are designed primarily to raise standards of achievement and allow children to realise their full potential in an environment where education is valued.

‘An extended school maximises the curricular learning of its pupils by promoting their overall development and by ensuring that the family and community contexts within which they live are as supportive of learning as possible’ (op. cit.).

The services offered by extended schools can help parents to balance work and family commitments, develop parenting skills, become involved in their child’s learning and support them in their efforts, and give them a broader range of experiences and interests.

They also enable parents and the wider community to make use of the school’s facilities. For example, parents could learn more about information and communications technology (ICT) or improve writing or maths skills.

Extended schools provide for a range of services or activities outside of the normal school day to help meet the needs of nursery, primary, secondary and special school children as well as their parents, families and local community. These include clubs, activities, classes and support for learning.

Evaluation of earlier projects indicated: high numbers of extended schools were targeting specific groups of pupils or families for support with extended services. Most commonly economically disadvantaged families and pupils with disabilities or SEN

Not unexpectedly, the original research found that there was little agreement on what constituted an ‘extended school’. Although information available identified that the concept of an ‘extended school’ could include:

- Schools that are open to pupils, families and the wider community during and beyond the school day, before and after school hours, at weekends and during school holidays;
- Activities aimed particularly at vulnerable groups, in areas of deprivation and/or where services are limited;
- The promotion of community cohesion by building links between schools and the wider community;
- The provision of services to communities, contribution to neighbourhood renewal and a positive effect on educational standard;
- Some schools may also offer services to the local community, such as information about healthy eating and nutrition or advice on managing finances, amongst many others.

Target Groups

Target groups refer to the groups and families the service identifies as having needs or circumstances that require intervention or additional support. Target groups vary according to the services identification of its community and their needs and may include:

- Children who are in the care of the Local Authority (looked after children)
- Children 'in need' or with a child protection plan Children of offenders and/or those in custody
- Children who are being cared for by members of their extended family such as a grandparent, aunt or older sibling
- Lone parents, teenage mothers and pregnant teenagers
- Families identified by the local authority as 'Troubled Families' who have children under five
- Children living with domestic abuse, adult mental health issues and substance abuse
- Fathers, particularly those with any other identified need, for example, teenage fathers and those in custody
- Those with protected characteristics , as defined by the Equality Act 2010
- Families who move into and out of the area relatively quickly (transient families), such as asylum seekers, armed forces personnel and those who move into the area seeking employment or taking up seasonal work
- A Children from low income backgrounds
- Any other vulnerable groups or individual families including those young children and families identified as at risk of harm by other services – such as adult social care, schools, police, and health services

Targeted work

Targeted work is based on the identification of needs in order to decide which early interventions will work best for local families and help ensure that families receive the services they need and that will make a difference to their lives. This can include work with families from within the groups as above and others with identified needs.

The **core purpose for children's centres** outlines the following targeted services that can make a difference for families with the greatest needs:

- i. **Parenting and family support**, including outreach work and relationship support (the quality of the relationship between parents is linked to positive parenting and

better outcomes for children). Provision of integrated support in response to identified strengths and risk factors within individual families.

ii. **Targeted evidence-based early intervention programmes** where published evaluation demonstrates that particular interventions can help families make accelerated progress in improving outcomes where they are at greatest risk of falling furthest behind.

iii. **Links with specialist services** for families where there are the most complex health or social care needs (eg disabled children, children with major health difficulties, or children likely to be “in need” or where there are safeguarding concerns).

Targeted work with families can take place in the home, centre, other buildings and settings or on a one to one basis or through group work.

Outreach

Outreach working involves making contact with families in a range of environments, including within the home, to ensure that they have access to relevant (universal and targeted) services within the community to meet their needs. These can include services delivered or supported by children’s centre staff or other partners, e.g. health visitors, schools, voluntary organisations, voluntary groups run by parents or others in communities.

Outreach workers also provide a range of advice, information and support around

- finding (and, where needed, giving support to access) local groups for children and parents/carers to attend
- positive parenting and managing children’s behaviour, boundary setting, child development
- financial difficulties/worries and where to go to for support
- support around transition points i.e: birth, settling into pre-school, school
- support for parents wishing to return to education, employment or training
- working with parents/carers to manage their own well-being and to build their confidence