

Kirklees Challenge and Support Strategy

for early learning and childcare



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Kirklees' Shared Outcomes

This strategy is part of the Kirklees Outcomes: 'Best Start' and 'Aspire & Achieve'.

This means that we aim to deliver a service that ensures that **'Children have the best start in life'** and **'People in Kirklees have aspiration and achieve their ambitions through education, training, employment and lifelong learning'**. We also ensure that 'All children and young people in Kirklees have access to good quality inclusive learning and education provision'.

It contributes to diminishing differences for the least advantaged children as early as possible in a child's life.

Purpose

The Challenge and Support Strategy provides local authority support and challenge to early years providers, in order for them to demonstrate that they are high quality and achieve good outcomes for children as measured by 'Good or better' OFSTED outcomes.

Maintaining a culture of continuous quality improvement remains at the heart of the support provided by the local authority. The Early Years Outcomes Team offers each provider a visit which identifies strengths and areas for improvement. In addition the local authority provides targeted support to childcare settings who 'Require Improvement' or have 'Inadequate' Ofsted judgements, so that they can move to 'Good' or better.



Roles and responsibilities of the local authority

- To ensure sufficient high quality learning and childcare places
- To ensure good outcomes for children
- To ensure settings meet the needs of vulnerable children
- To provide challenge and support for providers so they continuously improve
- To provide targeted support to providers that are less than 'Good' and support them in achieving a 'Good' Ofsted grading at the next inspection
- To provide access to early years information and advice through our communication strategy
- To signpost settings to professional development and partnership working opportunities
- To work with key partners to ensure the implementation of early intervention strategies, which improve early learning outcomes and narrow the gap between disadvantaged children and the rest

Roles and responsibilities of the early learning and childcare provider

- To work in partnership with the local authority to ensure a high quality service
- To provide strong leadership and management
- To continually review practice through self-evaluation
- To draw on tools and resources available locally and nationally to support quality improvement
- To support staff in their continuing professional development
- To work with key partners to support early prevention and intervention to improve outcomes for children
- To monitor and measure the effectiveness of their provision on children's outcomes

Universal support for all early learning and childcare providers

Advice and guidance

The 'Early Years Outcomes' team will offer advice and information to all providers through telephone, email, dedicated web and Facebook pages.

Early years provider networks

In addition to advice and guidance, the team offer regular free networks for all providers. These sessions are used to disseminate early years information and guidance, update providers on the national and local agenda, consult with providers and provide opportunities for peer support.

Non-funded settings

Settings not in receipt of funding will be offered regular visits as part of the local authority's commitment to high quality provision for all. This offer is comparable to the universal and targeted offer for funded providers as outlined below. For some settings such as out of school clubs who are under school governance, we will work with the school to provide advice and guidance.

Universal provider visits for funded early learning and childcare settings

A self-evaluation toolkit is available to all providers via the website. Providers are requested to consider their safeguarding policy and procedure and self-evaluation and to send notes ahead of the visit in order for the consultant to shape the focus of the visit. There is no one way to do this, but providers may wish to use the tools provided by the local authority to frame their thinking. The visit will generally take a half day and will be followed by a written report to the setting within ten working days of the visit. For larger settings, time will be extended to allow observation across age groups. Visits will be offered on a biannual basis and will outline strengths and recommendations for improvement. Whilst engagement with the local authority team is not compulsory we strongly believe that providers will benefit from an external analysis of quality, an evaluation regarding the meeting of statutory requirements and validation of a setting's own self-evaluation.

The local authority encourage childcare settings to maintain their own continuous cycle of quality improvement, prioritising those things which will make most difference to outcomes for children.

Targeted support for early learning and childcare providers judged less than 'Good'

Following an Ofsted judgement which deems the provider to 'Require Improvement' or to be 'Inadequate' the local authority has a statutory duty to offer support for that provider in moving to 'Good' or better.

Targeted support may also be allocated where a universal provider visit indicates poor quality provision, or where there are welfare or safeguarding concerns, or where outcomes for children are low, or where the needs of vulnerable children are not being met.

Targeted support may also be granted when a setting is in need of additional resources or support to complete actions against welfare requirement notices.

Following publication of the inspection report, a consultant will be allocated to the setting and visit to support the completion of a post-OFSTED plan in order for a provider to meet their recommendations.

The consultant will discuss the process for targeted support. They will identify the priority areas and discuss appropriate resources to secure improvement. The consultant will make recommendations to LA senior leaders on the setting's behalf, to secure support and resources.

Where there is indication that children effective safeguarding is at risk, staff will be deployed rapidly.

The Early Years Outcomes and Childcare Sufficiency Team senior leadership will consider any request for additional resources carefully against the following set of agreed criteria and principles which are intended to secure sufficient high quality provision:

- Ofsted's reason for awarding an 'Inadequate'/'Requires Improvement' judgement
- The assessment of significant risk to children
- Provider's track record of Ofsted judgements
- Response to previous interventions and action plans
- Capacity of leadership to improve in a reasonable time frame
- Assessment of local childcare sufficiency

The Childcare Sufficiency Team teams will contact the provider about decisions regarding the allocation of free early education and care funding.

The Early Years Community Consultant will confirm with the childcare provider what, if any, additional resources have been allocated to support their quality improvement.

The consultant will monitor progress and visit a 'Requires Improvement' setting at least every three months or until a provider is no longer deemed at risk of not being 'Good' at next inspection.

For 'Inadequate' settings, visits will be at least monthly until next inspection.

Monitoring progress of the post-Ofsted action plan

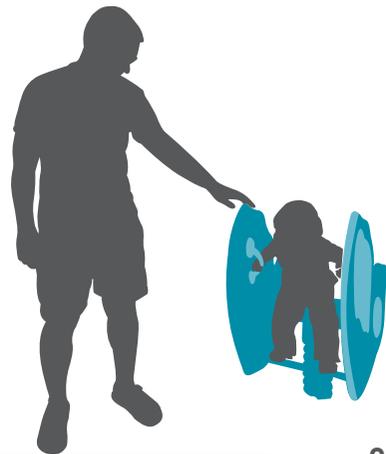
The consultant will monitor progress of the post-Ofsted action plan. If the consultant is concerned about the lack of progress being made, they will refer the matter to the senior leadership team as a 'setting causing concern'. Concerns may be raised for one or more of the following reasons:

- The provider is not making satisfactory progress towards 'Good'
- Actions on the post-Ofsted action plan are not being achieved
- The provider is unlikely to achieve a 'Good' Ofsted judgement at the next inspection
- Leadership and management is considered to be weak and the provider does not have the capacity to improve
- Further concerns or complaints have been made about the quality which has triggered a visit from Ofsted
- Further quality issues such as safeguarding, needs of vulnerable pupils, poor outcomes for children

If the provider is deemed to be causing concern they will receive a letter from the Early Years Outcomes Manager requiring leaders to attend a meeting to discuss concerns and next steps.

A setting causing concern will be at high risk of losing their free early education and care funding and will need to demonstrate how they can meet their improvement targets and strengthen their capacity to improve.

A setting causing concern may also be at risk of repeated 'Requires Improvement' or 'Inadequate' Ofsted judgements which may place them at risk of de-registration by Ofsted.



Support for New Providers

New providers will be treated as a targeted setting so that they are given advice and support to enable them to have a successful first inspection. A series of three visits will be given at various stages of enquiry and registration using a New Provider evaluation tool and other documents. These are designed to ensure statutory requirements are met and that the quality of practice is good. All providers will receive an observation of teaching as part of this package. New Providers may also access materials and essential training supplied by the local authority. The offer ends with a universal provider visit and from this point, the provider will fit into the bi-annual cycle of visits.

A comparable offer of visits and support will also be extended to settings where there has been significant change. For example; re-registration, new owner or manager and change of type of provision.

Measuring the impact of the 'Challenge and Support Strategy'

The impact and success of the strategy will be measured through the percentage of 'Good or above' Ofsted judgements across all sectors. The local authority recognises the part providers play in preschool education and care and their contribution to attainment at five, as measured by the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. It also monitors and uses Ofsted judgements in place-based planning and provision of high quality early childhood services.

The operational outworking of the strategy will be shaped by intelligence and feedback from providers and partners, and in response to local and national priorities and initiatives.

