

Annex A – Covering Template for Responses

Please complete the attached cover sheet when sending evidence, indicating the set of questions to which a response is being provided and contact details of the person for any follow-up queries.

Contact details for respondent	
Name	
Job title	Gateshead Early Years and Childcare Service Manager
Do you represent an organisation? (if so, name of organisation and type: e.g. voluntary, public body, private company).	Yes Gateshead Early Years and Childcare Service, Gateshead Council – Public body
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	Which area of the review are you responding to? (please mark X)
Prevention strand	X
Review of disabled children	X
Strategy for youth services	
Review of high cost, high harm families	

Annex B1: Terms of reference for the Children and Young People's Review (prevention strand of review)

Objective:

To identify how services for children and young people from 0 to 19 and their families can build on the three principles identified in *Support for Parents, the best start for children*¹ – rights and responsibilities, progressive universalism and prevention - to improve outcomes for children and young people.

The scope of the review:

The review will develop the analysis set out in *Support for Parents, the best start for children* by focusing on the following factors that influence outcomes for children and young people:

- family prosperity,
- parenting and parents' behaviour,
- neighbourhood; and
- public services.

The review will look at risk and protective factors across these different areas and identify those that are most significant and the potential for and impact of more preventative services and early intervention on the life chances of children and young people.

The Review will exclude direct government financial support for families but include other aspects of policy as it relates to family prosperity such as support for employment. The Review will not address classroom teaching and learning practice, school admissions or other school organisation issues.

The key questions the Review will address are:

What should be the role of universal services in providing access to protective and preventative support, risk assessment and referral?

How can targeted and specialist services intervene earlier to address problems before they become acute?

How can the impact of intervention to prevent children, young people and families with complex needs repeatedly moving in and out of contact with targeted services be sustained?;

How can rights and responsibilities for individuals, families and communities be integrated into services to improve the lives of children and young people?

¹ HM Treasury and Department for Education and Skills (2005) *Support for Parents: the best start for children*.

What would be the impact of more preventative services and early intervention on the life chances of children and young people and on the value for money of public spending on children, young people and families?

Supplementary questions posed as part of the ‘call for evidence’:

- What works in reaching out to the most vulnerable families to ensure they are able to take full advantage of service provision, especially in the early years?
- What evidence is there of major barriers to developing a preventative system? Are there examples where you have overcome these barriers?
- What evidence is available on how funding can be freed up at the acute end of provision to spend on preventative services?
- How can we build the capacity of parents, families and communities to shape the design and delivery of services for children and young people?

Annex B2: Terms of reference for the Review of Disabled Children

Objective:

To improve outcomes and life chances of disabled children through the development of effective and accessible services for disabled children and their families.

The scope of the review will cover:

- services specifically for disabled children, including how specialist services for disabled children support access to universal services, specialist services provided in a universal setting and how universal services refer children to specialist services;
- childcare services, which are of particular importance in the early years for children's development and to support their parents;
- appropriate support for disabled children during the school years and in making the transition into adulthood;
- how expenditure by one service/department can avoid or reduce concurrent or later expenditure by another department.

The Government recognises that financial support and benefits have played an important role in reducing the risks of poverty and delivering economic wellbeing. This provides the foundation on which families, communities and government can work together to secure better outcomes for disabled children and their families. Although financial support and benefits will not be a focus, the review will consider the interrelationship between poverty and service delivery needs.

The review will consider the actions that can lead to better outcomes for those children already with a disability, including family support e.g. respite provision, rather than prevention and risk factors, which will be considered as part of the wider Children and Young People's Review.

The key questions the review will address include:

The changing profile of disabled children, for example, due to increases in complex disability and rise in Autistic Spectrum Disorders, profound and multiple learning disabilities and low birth-weight babies and the challenges this poses to services.

What progress has already been made in addressing the needs of disabled children and their families?

What are the barriers currently restricting access to services and therefore effective intervention?

Are services sufficiently co-ordinated at local level to allow families to access sufficient support to meet their needs?

How does the system of support for disabled children and their families compare across the country and abroad? Are there lessons we can learn to improve outcomes?

What family support services i.e. key workers, short breaks, sibling support, behavioural management are currently available and how do these relate to other services?

What are the most cost effective interventions in delivering better outcomes?

Are there interventions which, if made earlier, could reduce more costly interventions later? How can we identify the need to intervene earlier?

What lessons can we learn from the legal frameworks in other countries that might inform the review?

Response

Questions Annex B1

What works in reaching out to most vulnerable families to ensure they are able to take full advantage of service provision, especially in the early years?

- Outreach work – going to where the vulnerable families are and not expecting them to come to us (Children’s centre buildings) – home visits, supermarket cafes, pubs, churches etc
- Time to develop trusting relationships with vulnerable families – vulnerable families need nurturing – short contact but often, time to get to know them before the real work begins
- Client led services – services that these vulnerable families want and not what we think best suits their needs
- Services that are local, with workers they trust, delivered in a way that makes them feel comfortable and at a time that best meets their family needs
- Different levels of provision – so as they become less vulnerable they are confident to move on to the next level
- Agencies working together – joint visits to make the first links
- Peer support groups – where vulnerable families can access support from people at their own level – e.g. Young mums groups
- Practical needs met – e.g. childcare, transport
- Informal gatherings in targeted areas – fun days, special events, and celebrations
- A clear understanding of the local area and its specific need a good working partnership of effective multi agency practice (e.g. health and extended schools etc);
- Effective evaluation
- Services that are non- threatening and reflect the individual need of the family at that time.
- To ensure we captivate these parents we need well-trained staff, able to identify need, and provide different levels of support and expertise that will motivate and inspire parents to become confident learners.
- Opportunities that “help parents help their children reach their full potential” and as such do not pose as big as threat to the parent attending an activity solely for themselves.
- Provision of childcare, which is flexible &affordable. A transparent system of bursary or subsidy for those with childcare needs who cannot afford it.

Examples

- **Early Start** 0-1 years
- **Family Learning** (prepare your child for school / nursery often engages parents who have previously shown little initial interest but relationship has developed over the academic year and they want their child to succeed.

- **Toddler Group** with peer support
- **Movement to Music**
- New Birth Visits
- Specialist support for disabled parents or those with SEN. Also cultural awareness and respect for families.
- None stigmatising because universal.
- Support for these parents to engage with school when their children become 5.
- Training Muslim women as childminders.
- Eagle Project
- Sunbeams/Moonbeams
- Music and Movement
- Services within Matov (Jewish Nursery)
- Poppets and Parkhead School-based transition programme.

How can we build the capacity of parents, families and communities to shape the design and delivery of services for children and young people?

- Local strategy for consultation and participation
- Have a structure that allows levels of participation so parents, families and communities can find a level that they feel comfortable with, but as they grow in confidence have a route-way for progression
- Develop different types of local groups, consultative forums, focus and tasking groups, problem solving groups, informal, constituted etc
- Provide training – confidence building, practical skills, assertiveness and the practical needs to help them access e.g. childcare, transport etc
- Be prepared to start at parent's own level and allow time to nurture and develop
- Develop volunteering opportunities to gain confidence, practical experience to develop their interests
- Staff in Children's Centres trained to identify parents with basic skills needs & able to respond.

Questions Annex B2

Are services sufficiently co-ordinated at local level to allow families to access sufficient support to meet their needs?

- Not everywhere – still a bit of postcode lottery especially for Children's Centres developing from non-SSLP
- More awareness of Children's Centres to families with children with disabilities/specific needs, so they know what they can offer and how inclusive they are
- Although disabled children and their families should be fully included in all services provided by Children's Centre research shows (Support for Parents) many families report particularly high levels of unmet needs, isolation and stress.

- To ensure that universal services are available and barriers removed to all disabled children, including those with complex health problems, emphasis must be placed on willingness and co-operation at local level, to re-locate specialist services into Children's Centre when needed.
- Staff must be freed up by their employers (e.g. Health, School) to attend joint staff training and planning meetings.
- Issues around information sharing must be resolved.

Are there interventions which, if made earlier, could reduce more costly interventions later? How can we identify the need to intervene earlier?

- Co-location of integrated local teams would enhance service provision, make for swift and easy referral, make services more economical, efficient, effective and ethical
- By working more closely with other service providers, sharing skills, time, experience, knowledge, practise, resources
- By following the ethos of Sure Start Local Programmes and agencies moving out of their boxes, and trying new ways of delivering services, e.g. by following the public health agenda. e.g. five-a-day becomes part of every agency's agenda to tackle child obesity etc
- Preventative services for the most vulnerable have a cost in terms of staff time, childcare, transport etc. Children Centre budgets should reflect this.

Matov

What works in reaching out to the most vulnerable families to ensure they are able to take full advantage of service provision, especially in the early years?

In the Matov programme we attempted to reach the most vulnerable families by ensuring our services are advertised in a number of different ways i.e.

- Posters in places visited by families with children under 5. These posters are as inclusive as possible enabling people with limited literacy skills to identify that families are welcome.
- Word of mouth – The Parent Outreach Worker and Lead of Centre have to engage the nursery staff, practice managers, health visitors and voluntary workers encouraging them to promote the children's centre programmes.
- Word of mouth with parents – this has been with organise events developed to encourage parents and children – at these events CC staff have been on call to answer questions and encourage parents to the CC.

Some of these parents have been identified as :-

- BME
- Additional needs - parents
- Additional needs – children
- Low income families

So far these techniques have worked in engaging 76 parents to register in this very new children's centre (designated in April 2006)

Continued Development - To further engage parents of children under 5 will be:-

- More focused outreach workers
- Home visiting programme to identify individual need.

How can we build the capacity of parents, families and communities to shape the design and delivery of services for children and young people?

Within the events mentioned in the answer to the first question Parent Outreach Workers talk with parents, document their comments and bring these to "Management Group" meetings, where issues are discussed and need are identified. These meetings are designed to facilitate programmes as identified by parents. This "Management Group" also feeds information into the CC "Steering and Reference Group".

Also, regular visits by the Parent Outreach Worker to Parent & Toddler groups in the community help to inform the above mentioned "Management Group".

Continued Development – The children's centre plans to engage with the "Friends of Ohel Rivka" groups; this is a voluntary group of parents, past and present, of the Jewish Nursery School who fund raise for the nursery school.

We also plan to set up a parent's forum consisting of representatives of all the voluntary groups in the area who have a membership of parents with children under 5.

Services specifically for disabled children, including how specialist services for disabled children support access to universal services, specialist services provided in a universal setting and how universal services; childcare services, which are of particular important in the early years for children's development and to support their parents.

There have been links made with the SENSS Unit – supporting children and families with additional difficulties – the hope is that this unit will begin to promote our services, accompanying parents and children when attending until that parents feels confident enough to attend on their own. This development is only now developing. The SEN review is addressing aligning and joining up LA Early Years SEN/Inclusion services with Sure Start/Children's Centre funded services. At present Sure Start fund education psychology and speech therapy programmes, but need continuation funding after March 2008.

Are services sufficiently co-ordinated at local level to allow families to access sufficient support to meet their needs?

- A supported “Parents and Toddler” group and a music group has been established to support those parents who have children with additional needs – the aim of this group is to provide a secure environment for these parents and children, encouraging peer support and helping these parents access mainstream services.
- All services are delivered and promoted in an accessible way, tailoring the service to meet local needs and remove anxieties from parents that professionals lack respect for them. This ethos will continue to be developed and Centres must remain universal & not “targeted” on the disadvantaged. Currently this is the model in Gateshead.
- The employment of Health Support Workers, Speech and Language Support Workers, Community Nursery Nurses through the Sure Start Programmes have shown that when supervised by lead professionals, such workers can successfully engage with children and their families where there are additional needs. This model of lead professional & support workers not only engages with these families but also those with parental issues, debt management, health issues etc. The model is cost effective but requires support from all employer agencies