

**Overall Aim of the Service:** To provide sufficient high quality early years provision and support to families with children under the age of 5, to improve their level of development enabling children to be ready for school.

## What do Early Childhood Services offer?

### Early Years and Early Education

- Childcare Sufficiency Assessments.
- Quality & Improvement– *support packages, Ofsted readiness, safeguarding support, etc.*
- Guidance for all Early Years Providers including Schools.
- School Readiness – *15 hours free childcare for all 3 & 4 year olds.*
- Support Parents into employment – *15 hours of free childcare for 3 and 4 year olds from working households.*
- Closing the Gap – *15 hours free childcare for eligible 2 year olds. Target groups include Looked After Children, English as an Additional Language and SEND.*
- DCATCH – *assessment panel and payments to the sector for children with high level SEND needs.*

### Commissioning

- Commissioning Children Centre services (include speech & language, attainment, parenting, health interventions etc.)
- Commissioning the Families Information Service.
- Procurement of Early Years provision in areas of greatest need.
- Performance management.
- Property and capital – *management of Children Centre property and County Council premises used by Early Years providers.*

## Why are we doing this work?

Early education is far more than childcare and aims to prepare young children to be ready to continue to learn when they enter statutory education.

Securing a successful start for our youngest children, and particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, is crucial. It can mean the difference between gaining seven Bs at GCSE compared with seven Cs and is estimated to be worth £27,000 more in an individual's salary over the course of their career.

Families benefit by a free childcare entitlement, this can reduce the barrier to employment; as well as closing the educational gaps at the earliest opportunities.

Improving outcomes for young children and their families, with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged families, reduces inequalities in child development and school readiness, supported by parenting aspirations, self-esteem and parenting skills, child and family health and life chances.

## Local Progress

- 75% of eligible 2 year olds are accessing their free entitlement to early education.
- 89% of early years settings are currently rated Good or Outstanding (3% more than the national average).
- 100% of under 5s living in disadvantaged areas are registered by Children Centres. They have worked with 77% of children identified from low income families.
- 67.1% of Nottinghamshire pupils achieved a good level of development in 2016 (an increase from last year).
- The attainment gap for pupils eligible for FSM and their peers has started to narrow.

## Key priorities for the service

- Increase the number of 'good/outstanding' Early Years providers.
- Continue to work to increasing the number of children achieving a good level of development at the foundation stage.
- Reduce the attainment gap to ensure the most vulnerable children are ready for school.
- Ensure there is sufficient, sustainable, high quality, inclusive and safe early education and childcare provision.
- Children Centre Services ensure low income families with children aged 0-5 years are registered and actively engaged in services and interventions.
- Ensure eligible 2 year olds access their early education entitlement.
- Ensure parents are aware of and take up their free childcare entitlements.
- Ensure parents have access to high quality information about early years provision.
- Increase the % of Early Years Pupil Premium funding allocated to Early Years providers.
- Target the most vulnerable groups of children to ensure they are effectively supported to access and engage in early years provision.

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