



Appendix B

Childcare Services: update of progress

Our Childcare Services Team is in the process of improving and expanding the settings they provide to our communities. Currently there are 151 childcare settings and 91 staff, all of whom are undergoing or about to begin a process of up skilling, with staff taking on SVQ 3 and SVQ 4 qualifications in childcare. In addition to this, all managers of the settings will begin a degree level course in Childcare management by 2014.

The service has had a challenging year, adapting to new and more stringent care inspection requirements, tackling many new policies, procedures and increased expectations regarding community engagement. Whilst this has impacted on the number of positive care inspections that have been received, a Childcare Services Improvement Board has been established and is in the process of implementing its Childcare Services city wide action plan. Under the main priority of improving the quality and impact of our Childcare Services, the following priorities have been identified:

1. Improve standards in line with Care Inspection regulations
2. Enhance Childcare Services capacity to meet the needs of communities through effective community engagement
3. Ensure high standards in Childcare Services through delivering a range of CPD and up-skilling opportunities
4. Support families through good quality family learning and parent support provision in communities
5. Deliver support through learning to carers/parents with early years children

Workforce planning days have been scheduled and are underway, with Childcare staff coming together for the first time to share their achievements, challenges and barriers during the process of change, proactively suggesting and recommending how the action plan should be carried out. Staff recommendations include: establishing regular area meetings; introducing Childcare Services uniforms; developing policy checklists and information material to keep parents informed of changes; as well as planning their own promotions to increase service use and community engagement in their areas.

Senior management has made a commitment to provide continued support to everyone in the service in response to these suggestions and recommendations. These measures, along with commitment of all in the Childcare services staff is already beginning to have a positive impact with improvements in care inspection reports, customer feedback and increased staff moral. We hope this will continue throughout the year and beyond.