High Quality Early Years provision for Children – A Shared Challenge

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NCMA/PSLA Annual Conference
11 December 2008

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Children's Plan - One Year On

- Parents bring up children, not government – but families need help and support to do their job
- All children have the potential to succeed and should go as far as their talents can take them
- Children and young people need to be safe, healthy and enjoy their childhood as well as grow up prepared for adult life
- All children and families deserve services that work together for them, and meet their individual needs
- It is always better to prevent failure than tackle a crisis later

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Sharing a Vision of Success for Every Child

- The best country in the world in which to grow up
- Children achieving full potential regardless of background or family circumstances
- Narrowing gap between the lowest 20% and the rest, while raising quality for all
- Safe, well cared for, happy and healthy

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A three pronged approach

Access

- Free entitlement
- Children's Centres

Parents

- Information
- Engagement

Quality

- Underpinning services with high quality at every stage

Quality is the Key

- Evidence clear on impact of high quality provision on all children, and disadvantaged in particular – and lasts to age 11

- Only high quality provision makes critical difference – poor quality adds no value in the long term

High Quality – the Key Elements

- Well qualified workforce leading practice
- High quality content provided in a safe, secure and stimulating environment – Early Years Foundation Stage
- Day-to-day practice which is responsive to each child's needs, interests and abilities, and encourages parents' involvement
- Ever improving – focus on continuous quality improvement, not minimum standards

Learning from Experience – 2008 results

- **Encouraging signs but more to do**

- **The Good News**
  - More 5 year olds achieving a good level of development (4%)
  - children from disadvantaged areas catching up
  - Gap between the lowest achievers and the rest narrowed (1%)
  - More children achieving 6 or more points in every scale

- **More to do**
  - Gap between boys and girls still very wide
  - Writing still a challenge
  - Speaking and listening
  - Personal, social and emotional development

What Next? – Focus on Quality Improvement

- A shared endeavour - Govt, LAs, Settings, practitioners, parents
- Government - set direction and invest to support activities that make a difference
- LAs - set local plans, clearer expectations of settings, stronger performance management, robust challenge of failing settings, provide support
- Settings and practitioners – self-evaluate (OFSTED SEF), deliver EYFS, focus on understanding child development, monitor progress, share best practice
- Parents - demanding high quality and participating in children's learning

Where we need to be – ‘golden threads’

- A shared endeavour
- Embedded continuous quality improvement – in all settings, focusing on all aspects of quality
- Settings working with partners to provide integrated services and share best practice and work closely with schools – ECM realised

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- Leaders and managers who are setting a vision and leading a learning culture
- A highly qualified EY workforce – an ambition for Level 3 qualification as minimum – more graduate leaders
- Universal understanding of quality, demanded by parents

Where we aim to get to

- CP 2020 goal - 90% of children developing well across all areas - implies raising the achievement of many of the lowest achievers
- PSA gap narrowing target for 2011 (33%) – stands at 36%
- Slight narrowing of disadvantage gap, but still quite a way to go
- Some good signs but progress must be maintained – challenge securing further improvements faster

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