

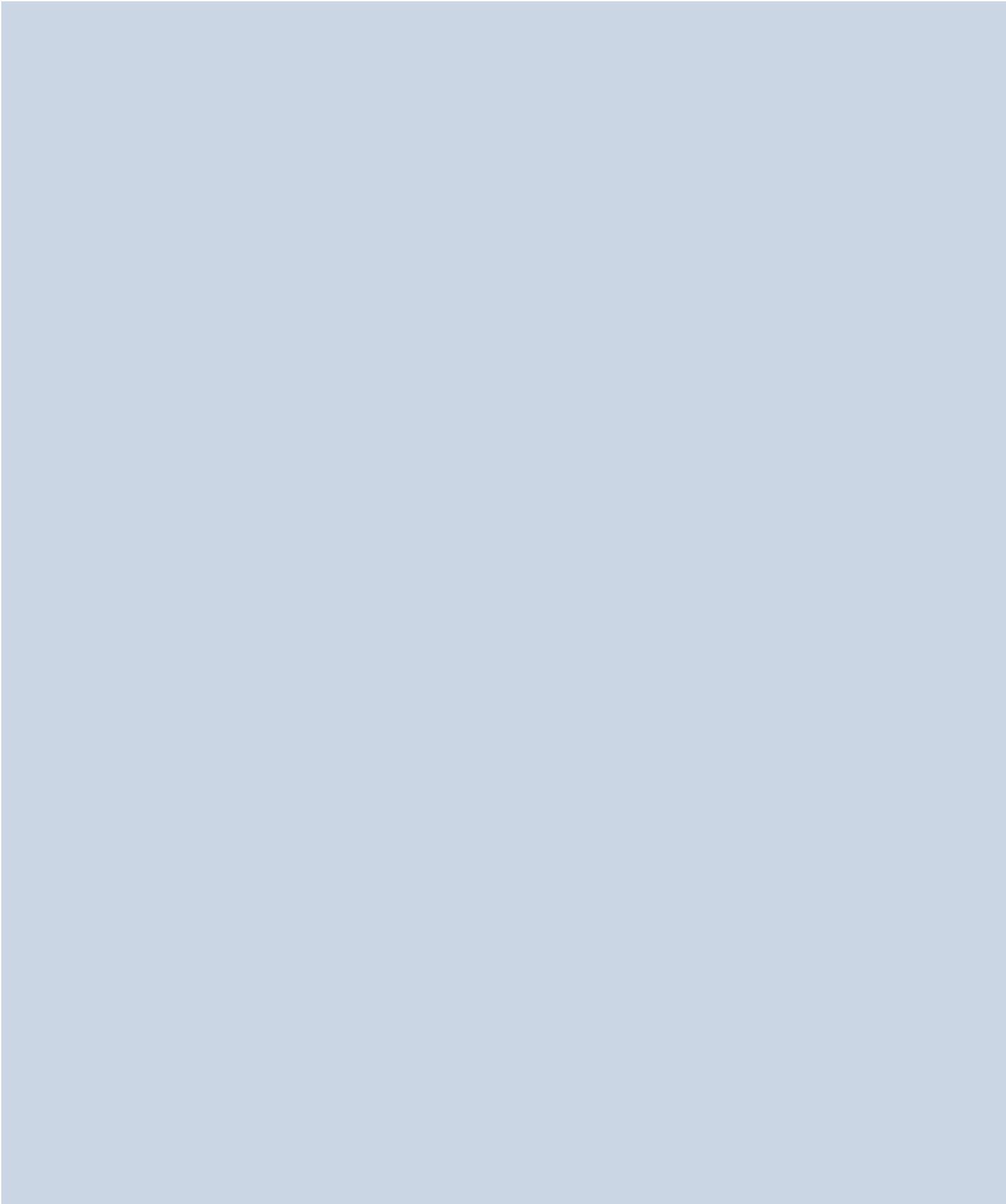


Duty to provide information, advice and assistance:



Guidance
for local
authorities
childcare
act 2006

2 Duty to provide information, advice and assistance: Guidance for local authorities



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Introduction



The Childcare Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act') extends local authorities' existing duty to provide information to the public on childcare and related services. From April 2008, in addition to information on childcare, local authorities are required to provide a range of information (prescribed by regulations) which parents may need to support their children through to their 20th birthday. Local authorities are also required to ensure that the information is made accessible to all parents who might benefit from it.

This statutory guidance sets out for local authorities how the section 12 duty should be implemented. The information which must be provided by local authorities has been prescribed in the Childcare Act 2006 (Provision of Information to Parents) (England) Regulations 2007 ('the Regulations').

Section 12(7) of the 2006 Act requires local authorities to have regard to this guidance when carrying out their functions under section 12. This means that local authorities must consider what this guidance says, and should follow it when carrying out the obligations placed on them by section 12, unless they have good reason to depart from it.

The 2006 Act provides the legal framework for implementation of the proposals set out in *Choice for parents, the best start for children: a ten year strategy for childcare* published in December 2004. This guidance is one of a series published to support the implementation of the 2006 Act. It should be considered in conjunction with other statutory guidance supporting the Act.

Annex 1 provides a summary of actions local authorities will need to take to fulfil the duty.

This guidance is current as at January 2008. It will be updated from time to time to reflect policy developments and any changes to contact details for support services for parents which appear in the document. In the meantime, local authorities' Families Information Services should keep themselves informed of subsequent changes and developments and amend their records accordingly.

All references to parents and prospective parents in this guidance include fathers as well as mothers; non-resident parents; foster parents; those with parental responsibility and others with care of a child such as grandparents.

Chapter 1

Context and vision



1.1 The Government aims to ensure that all parents have access to high quality, accurate and timely information. The development of services providing information to parents has been taking place in the context of a number of important policy initiatives, for example high quality accurate information can help parents support their children in achieving all of the outcomes set out in *Every Child Matters* in 2003. It can also help promote the new services for parents set out in *Every Parent Matters* in March 2007.

1.2 In his introduction to the *Children's Plan*, published in December 2007, Ed Balls, the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families set out the Government's ambitions:

"to make this the best place in the world for our children and young people to grow up";

"to put the needs of families, children and young people at the centre of everything we do"; and that

"families will be at the centre of excellent, integrated services that put their needs first".

1.3 The *Children's Plan* continues the emphasis on the importance of information services for parents, and sets it in the context of other planned initiatives such as Parent Know How and the Parents' Charter:

"Local authorities, in particular through their Children's Information Services, play a vital part in informing parents of the support available in their area."

1.4 However, despite the progress that has been made, parents often report that there is a shortage of coherent local information to help them in their parenting role. For example, surveys show that 75% of parents and carers say that they feel there are times in their lives, or the lives of their children, when they need access to additional information or support (*HMT Poverty Review 2004*). As a consequence, parents are often unable to make informed choices on childcare and other services to suit their needs.

1.5 Section 12 of the 2006 Act responds to these concerns and sets the framework for a vision of information delivery for parents.

1.6 Section 12 (2) of the 2006 Act states that local authorities must provide to parents or prospective parents information which is of a prescribed description. The information falls within two key categories:

- information about childcare (section 12 (2) (a));
- information about other services, facilities or publications which may be of benefit to parents, prospective parents, children or young people (sections 12 (2) (b) and (c)).

Families Information Services

1.7 Prior to 1 April 2008, local authorities have had a duty to provide information to the public on childcare and related services which they met by

The vision for information

- The provision of comprehensive, accurate, up to date information on childcare and other local services and support for parents of children and young people up to age 20
- Information that can be accessed easily, from a choice of locations visited by parents and in different media and formats
- An integrated information service strategically led by the local authority
- Information services which can directly support parents as well as referring them to services and information available at national level through websites, helplines and printed material
- Information services which reach out to disadvantaged families to overcome barriers to access
- Information delivered in a way which allows parents to exercise choice and to become informed consumers of available services to support them and their children, as set out in the *Ten Year Strategy for Childcare*
- Information services which are accessible to fathers as well as mothers; targeted to reflect the diversity of the local community; and delivered in line with equal opportunities legislation including the Disability Discrimination Act
- User friendly services reflecting parents' perceptions and needs, rather than information silos reflecting agency structures

running Children's Information Services (CISs). Many local authorities and their CISs have already started to provide a broader range of services in anticipation of the new duty in the 2006 Act.

1.8 The consultation exercise on the information duty showed that local authorities and CISs support a generic name for information services. The most popular name suggested was 'Families Information Service' (FIS). FIS has been used in this guidance when referring to all aspects of the service involved in meeting the section 12 duty. Elements could include: specialist centres dedicated to providing information to parents; Sure Start Children's Centres and extended schools; local authority call centres; and other local authority staff who provide services for parents. The name Families Information Services will be used in any publicity material produced by the Department once the information duty comes into effect. The Department recognises that some local authorities will wish to use locally developed names to badge their services.

Chapter 2 Childcare information



2.1 FISs are expected to provide comprehensive expert information advice and guidance to parents on childcare and early years services in their area.¹ This includes information about:

- registered childcare
- non-registered childcare
- the free entitlement to early years provision; and
- childcare settings suitable for children with disabilities and special educational needs.

2.2 FISs should also establish and run brokerage services for parents finding it difficult to access the childcare provision they need (see Chapter 3 of this guidance).

Childcare registered with Ofsted

2.3 The Regulations set out the categories of information which local authorities are required to make available for each registered childcare provider whose details are given to users. These are set out in figure 1.

2.4 FISs must make information available on all childcare registered with Ofsted. The Childcare Act 2006 introduces new arrangements for the regulation and inspection of childcare. These are summarised in Annex 2. From 1 September 2008, information should be provided on provision registered on the Early Years Register (EYR) and on the General Childcare Register, known commonly as the Ofsted Childcare Register (OCR). The OCR has two parts: the compulsory part (Part A, or the cOCR) and the voluntary part (Part B, or the vOCR). FISs should continue to provide information on childcare registered under the existing legislation (Part 10A of the Children Act 1989) and on the vOCR until the new regulatory arrangements come into effect.

2.5 Data on each registered provider will be sent to FISs by Ofsted in accordance with regulations which set out what information they must disclose to local authorities.²

2.6 However, Ofsted will not provide all the information about registered childcare providers

1. FISs should take into account the need to minimise burdens on registered and non-registered providers when contacting them for information.

2. The disclosure of information by Ofsted to local authorities for these purposes is dealt with by the Child Minding and Day Care (Disclosure Functions) (England) Regulations 2004 (SI 2004 No. 3136) (for childcare

registered under the Children Act 1989) and the Childcare (Supply and Disclosure of Information) (England) Regulations 2007 (SI 2007 No. 722) for childcare registered in the voluntary part of the Ofsted Childcare Register. From September 2008, Regulations will also govern the disclosure of information by Ofsted about childcare registered in the Early Years Register and in the compulsory part of the Ofsted Childcare Register.

“We want to enable parents to become informed consumers of services as part of the process of challenging and driving up the quality of those services”

Beverley Hughes, Minister of State for Children, Young People and Families – speaking at the NACIS AGM, October 2006

Figure 1

Information should be provided on:

- the registered person’s name;
 - the business name, if any, under which the childcare is provided by the registered person;
 - the address of the relevant premises³, except where the relevant premises are the home of any child to whom childcare is being provided;
 - the address of the registered person, if different from the address of the relevant premises;
 - any telephone number, fax number or email address of the registered person or the relevant premises;
 - (from 1 September 2008) whether the registered person is registered under Chapter 2 (regulation of early years provision), Chapter 3 (regulation of later years provision for children under 8) or Chapter 4 (voluntary registration) of Part 3 of the 2006 Act; **Note** information on these registers is available at Annex 2 to this guidance;
 - the date of the registered person’s registration;
- any unique reference number or other identifier used by the Chief Inspector in relation to the registered person;
 - the conditions, if any, attached to the registration of the registered person;
 - whether the registered person is registered as:
 - a childminder, or
 - a provider of childcare other than childminding;
 - where the registered person is registered as a childminder, whether the relevant premises are either (or a combination of):
 - the registered person’s home,
 - the child’s home, or
 - other domestic premises;
 - information about the most recent inspection by the Chief Inspector of the childcare provided by the registered person, including information as to how to obtain a copy of any report produced by the Chief Inspector in relation to that inspection;⁴
 - where the Chief Inspector is taking or has taken one of the steps mentioned in subparagraphs (b) to (e) of section 83(1) of the 2006 Act in respect of the registered person’s registration,⁵ information as to which steps the Chief Inspector is taking or has taken, and the date of any step taken.⁶

3. Relevant premises is defined in regulations as the premises on which the provision of childcare [by a registered person] takes place.

4. For the voluntary part of the Ofsted childcare register, parents should be given information on Ofsted’s compliance letter setting out the outcome of any inspection. The information will be published on the Ofsted website from September 2008.

5. The steps are:

- giving notice of her intention to cancel the registered person’s registration,
- cancelling the registered person’s registration,
- suspending the registered person’s registration, or
- removing the registered person from the register at that person’s request.

Figure 2

Additional categories of information to be provided on registered childcare providers

Any information the FIS is able to obtain as to:

- the type of childcare provided;⁷
- whether the registered person provides free early years provision;
- the cost of the childcare;⁸
- the time and duration of the childcare provided;
- the time and duration of any free early years provision;
- the number and ages of children to whom childcare is provided; and
- the suitability of the childcare for disabled children.⁹

Information about non-registered provision

2.7 The Regulations set out the categories of information on unregistered childcare provision which must be provided to parents if held by the FIS. These are set out in figure 3. This information will not be provided to the FIS by Ofsted. The FIS will only be able to provide parents with information that they gather themselves and should therefore use reasonable endeavours to obtain it. The steps suggested in paragraph 2.6 on obtaining information not provided by Ofsted could be taken. The FIS could also consider placing advertisements in the local press or entries on their website notifying non-registered providers that they would like to hear from them with information about their services. FISs could also provide the facility for providers to update information electronically on a self-service basis.

2.8 Types of unregistered provision for which information will need to be obtained include:

- provision that is not required to be registered and does not choose to go on the voluntary part of the OCR, e.g. holiday play schemes for children aged 8 and over;
- provision that is not eligible to be registered because it does not meet the registration requirements, e.g. because it runs for less than 2 hours per day;
- provision that is run directly by a school by a school's governing body on or off the school site for children ages three and over, where at least one pupil from the school attends. This provision is not eligible to be registered but will be inspected as part of the school inspection system.

which may be useful for parents. The section 12 Regulations define additional information which will help parents make informed childcare choices (see figure 2). This must be provided to parents if FISs are able to obtain it. FISs should use reasonable endeavours to obtain the information, for example, by contacting providers direct, by liaising with local authority staff responsible for developing childcare in the area, or when carrying out their childcare sufficiency assessment specified in section 11 of the 2006 Act.

FISs are also encouraged to provide any other information about registered childcare that they have available to them.

6. If a query is received about a registration which has been cancelled, suspended or removed from the register, or notice has been given of the Chief Inspector's intention to cancel it, the parent should be informed of the provider's registration status and that it would not be appropriate to refer them to that provider. If the parent wishes to make further enquiries they should be referred to the Ofsted helpline on 08456 404040.

7. Type of childcare could include the following:
 Sure Start Children's Centres – age range 0-5 years
 Pre school and playgroups – age range 2-5 years
 Nursery schools – 2-5 years
 Day nurseries – 0-5 years

Registered Childminders – any age
 School based childcare – breakfast clubs and after school

8. Where appropriate, parents should be provided with information on how to get help with meeting the costs of childcare outside of the free or financially supported entitlements, e.g. through the childcare element of Working Tax Credits, the 'Care to Learn' scheme for teenage parents, employer supported childcare vouchers and salary sacrifice for working parents.

9. Including experience of providing childcare for children with disabilities, particular expertise in providing specialist care and specialist facilities available.

Figure 3

Information should be provided on:

- the name of the person providing the childcare;
- the business name, if any, under which the person provides the childcare;
- the address of the relevant premises, except where those premises are the home of any child to whom the childcare is being provided;
- the address of the person providing the childcare, if different from the address of the relevant premises;
- any telephone number, fax number or email address of the person providing the childcare or the relevant premises;
- whether the person providing the childcare provides free early years provision;
- any information as to:
 - the type of childcare provided;
 - the cost of the childcare;
 - the time and duration of the childcare provided;
 - the time and duration of any free early years provision;¹⁰
 - the number and ages of children to whom childcare is provided;
 - the suitability of the childcare for disabled children.

2.9 It should be made clear to parents whether settings are registered or not. FISs should ensure that parents considering both registered and unregistered provision are given an explanation of the checks that registered providers will have undergone and the standards that they are required to meet, including the requirements of the Early Years Register and the Ofsted Childcare Register.

2.10 The FIS should also provide parents with information on the benefits of formal childcare in terms, for example, of sustainability, continuity of care and child development. Whilst FISs can advise parents on the implications of the available options, they should remain impartial and not guide parents to one particular form of care or individual provider. The final decision on the most appropriate care for their child should rest with the parent.

Additional information on registered and unregistered childcare providers

2.11 FISs should endeavour to provide additional information which might be helpful to parents.

Examples include:

- arrangements in place where more than one early years provider are working together to deliver the free entitlement;
- staff qualifications;
- availability of special dietary arrangements and environment, including outside play space and equipment;
- for childminders, pick up/drop off arrangements for local schools and details of pets in the house;
- how provision is funded and how long it has been operating. Where this information is available in the public domain it should be provided. However, it should be made clear to parents that these are not necessarily reliable indicators of sustainability or of quality.

Exemptions from providing information on childcare

2.12 The Regulations do not require FISs to provide:

- (a) contact details of a parent or relative of a child receiving childcare (unless they are the childcare

10. Although in practice the majority of providers delivering the free entitlement will be registered, it is possible that LAs might, for example, be using a breakfast or after-school club that is not currently required to register. The Government is considering requiring such providers to register with Ofsted as a condition of delivering the free entitlement.

provider), or other information about the parent or relative **without the parent's or relative's consent;**

- (b) information about the contact details for a childcare provider which they have notified the FIS they do not want disclosed to parents; or
- (c) any information where there is a legal reason why the FIS should not disclose it (for example, because this would breach the Data Protection Act 1998, or be in breach of confidence). **If in doubt the FIS should seek advice from the local authority's legal advisers.**

In practice this means that FISs are not required to provide contact details of premises which are the homes of children receiving childcare. Also, where they do not already hold details of childminders' and home-based carers' contact preferences, FISs should:

- contact registered child minders and home-based carers to find out if they are content for their contact details to be given to parents looking for childcare and, if so, in what format the information should be provided, e.g. address, phone number, mobile phone number, email;
- check that home based carers who wish to be contacted using their employer's contact details have permission for these to be given to parents looking for home based care.

Arrangements across local authority boundaries

2.13 Information services are not expected to hold the full childcare information in respect of each of their neighbouring authorities. However, services should liaise with each other to ensure that parents can obtain the information they need about provision in other areas without having to travel to neighbouring authorities.

2.14 The Department intends to put in place an information service to provide mechanisms for local authorities to be able to access information on national services and from other local authorities. FISs should provide their information on registered and unregistered childcare providers to this information service. This information should be structured and transferred according to standards finalised in consultation with local authorities during the development of the service but substantially based on those currently used to provide information to the Childcare Link website. FISs should be able to draw on this information service in order to provide information about childcare providers in other areas to parents.

Chapter 3 Advice and assistance – brokerage service



3.1 Section 12 (5) of the Childcare Act requires local authorities to provide advice and assistance to parents or prospective parents who use or propose to use childcare in the area of the local authority. This should be delivered through a **brokerage service**. The further assistance should be offered where parents do not find childcare that readily meets their needs.

Support provided will depend on individual parents' circumstances, but could include:

- helping parents navigate the information available to them;
- encouraging parents to widen their search criteria if appropriate;
- checking whether cost is a barrier to finding suitable childcare and whether the parent has taken up all possible entitlements;
- checking whether parents of eligible children are aware of the entitlement to free nursery education for 3 and 4 year-olds (free early years provision from 1 September 2008) and working with them to secure a place that meets their needs;
- brokering partnerships with providers in different sectors to enable parents to access a package of provision which meets their needs and the needs of their children;
- contacting local providers on parents' behalf to explain the needs of individual families and discuss

how they might be met, for example this could be because the child or the parent is disabled;

- introducing parents to providers and/or where appropriate, arranging and attending initial meetings between parents and providers.

North Tyneside Children's Information Service

As part of its brokerage provision, North Tyneside CIS has introduced a brokerage service for parents up to the age of 25 who are having difficulties in finding childcare. The service is delivered through the CIS and children's centres, and is supported by the Teenage Pregnancy Team, community midwives and health visitors.

Referrals can be made to the CIS or local children's centre. The CIS then contacts the parent either by phone or in person to discuss the parent's options for childcare. This takes into account factors such as local transport routes, languages and any additional needs of the family and also includes a check to see if the parents can get any financial help with childcare costs. In addition, the CIS can:

- Contact local childcare providers on behalf of the parent to explain the parent's needs and discuss how they might be met;

- Make arrangements to introduce parents to childcare providers and attend initial meetings between the parent and provider;
- Where appropriate, putting the parent in touch with a named person who is able to provide further support and answer any queries about the childcare provision;
- Provide assistance with forms and paperwork, including applications for financial assistance with childcare costs and parental contracts.

The CIS also makes arrangements for the parent to visit their local children's centre, and introduces them to the children's centre facilitator.

The CIS follows up with both the parent and the childcare provider after a month. This provides an opportunity to see if the parent requires any additional assistance. The CIS follows up the enquiry again after a further four months.

- Parents and carers who needed some additional support with finding childcare.

The FIS has set up pathways for standard childcare enquiries to become brokerage cases. This includes referrals from partner agencies as well as through a member of the FIS staff (Information Officer) assessing the enquiry as requiring more in depth support.

At the start of the brokerage process, the Information Officer takes a detailed account of the childcare needs and barriers. The Information Officer then agrees a course of action and a call back date with the enquirer. All potentially suitable childcare provision is identified and contacted to see if the specific needs can be met. The FIS also uses this opportunity to update the providers' details to avoid duplicating contact through the updating schedule.

The FIS has identified that it is important to have clear processes in place to address a situation where appropriate childcare cannot be found. This includes making parents aware of the steps that will be taken. York FIS initially assesses whether there is a gap for a specific type of childcare provision. Information on such situations is then fed into the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment.

3.2 The brokerage service should be offered to all parents who need it, including where they have attempted to find suitable childcare without success. It should also be focused on those groups who might otherwise find it hard to access the help they need.

3.3 It is for the LA and the FIS to decide how to organise their brokerage service. There may also be a role for other local staff outside the FIS such as family support workers from Sure Start Children's Centres and other local authority childcare and early years staff.

York Family Information Service

York Family Information Service has been running a brokerage service since May 2006. The majority of the support provided through this service has been for:

- Complicated childcare requirements;
- Parents who need childcare at short notice; and

3.4 It is essential that, in all cases, the final decision on which childcare to choose is with the parent/s. FISs should maintain impartiality and should not give their views on the merits of individual providers. They should help parents to identify the questions they should be asking providers rather than giving opinions on provision offered.

3.5 The brokerage service is intended to be the link between the authority's duty to secure sufficient childcare under section 6 of the 2006 Act and its duty to provide information, advice and assistance. There may come a point, after a series of attempts to identify suitable childcare through the brokerage service and exploring all options, that no suitable

childcare can be found. The FIS should record the details and feed back information on the nature of gaps in provision to the persons responsible for managing the duty to assess childcare provision (section 11 of the 2006 Act refers). FISs should not pass on names or other personal data of the relevant child or family. The statutory guidance on the assessment duty provides more information and can be found at www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/earlyyears/sufficiency/

3.6 Where parents, who are unable to find the childcare they need, wish to make a formal complaint to the local authority, FISs should provide details of the complaints procedure. However, FISs should not actively support parents in making complaints, e.g. by advocating on their behalf or helping with completion of documentation. Where appropriate, FISs should refer parents to other organisations who could provide support, for example the local Citizens Advice Bureau.

Chapter 4

Safeguarding children



4.1 FISs have a key role in ensuring that parents and carers have appropriate information to help them take decisions on the suitability of childcare providers. In all cases the final decision on the most suitable care should be the parents'. FISs should be able to explain the differences between registered and unregistered childcare and the checks that registered providers and their staff will have undergone. Parents should be informed of the registration status of all provision which they are considering. This should be provided in writing if the FIS considers it appropriate. FISs should guide parents to relevant materials and inform them of the questions they should be asking, e.g. by referring them to the DCSF publication *Looking for Childcare*.

4.2 FIS staff should advise parents on how to access information on providers from the Ofsted website, including inspection reports. They should assist parents in accessing this information if parents are not in a position to do so.

4.3 In some circumstances childcare which is not required to be registered with Ofsted may be the most suitable to meet parents' and children's needs. As mentioned above, the section 12 regulations require FISs to inform parents when providers are Ofsted registered.

4.4 Providers wishing to be registered will be required to demonstrate that the people, premises and provision within their service are all safe and of a

suitable standard. Ofsted will make a series of checks (or require employers to do so). These will include Criminal Records Bureau checks on the manager and workers with unsupervised access to children.

4.5 FISs should provide information to parents who are considering using provision not regulated by Ofsted on recommended checks they could make, e.g. checking references and asking the provider what sort of checks they carry out on employees. Parents could check whether the provider obtains an Enhanced Disclosure from the CRB to help the provider decide whether there is information which would make the applicant unsuitable to work with children. The Enhanced Disclosure will reveal if the person has a criminal record (and if so, reveal all of their convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings); whether they are included on List 99 and/or the Protection of Children Act (PoCA) List; and relevant proportionate information held by the local police.

4.6 FISs should provide parents with information on forthcoming arrangements to help prevent unsuitable people from working with children and vulnerable adults. The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 provides the legislative framework for this. When the new scheme has been implemented, any individual who works in a 'regulated position or on specified premises such as schools, childcare premises, care homes', with children or vulnerable adults will be required to

register with the new Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) as being eligible to work with these groups. The new list of those barred from working with vulnerable adults and/or children will replace the current List 99, PoCA and Protection of Vulnerable Adults (PoVA) Lists. Individuals who are barred by ISA will commit an offence if they seek to work as a nanny, babysitter or in childcare, regardless of whether that childcare falls within the definition of childcare which is required to register with Ofsted. Further information on the scheme and details of a programme of information sessions already running across the country can be found at www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/socialcare/safeguarding/independentsafeguardingauthority/

4.7 The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 does not require parents to check the ISA registration of a nanny, babysitter or next door neighbour they use, neither is it a requirement that these people become ISA registered. This is because requiring such people to be centrally vetted could potentially criminalise them if they were not members of the scheme but were needed by parents to look after their children at short notice or in an emergency. However, for the first time, parents will have the opportunity to check if their babysitter is ISA registered (and therefore not on the barred list). A parent will commit an offence if they use an individual whom they know to be barred. An employer who uses an individual whether paid or as a volunteer (outside of personal or family arrangements) in a childcare setting e.g. a crèche, will commit an offence if they fail to check that their employee is ISA registered, regardless of whether the setting falls within the definition of settings required to register with Ofsted.

4.8 FISs should make sure that parents are fully aware of the new opportunity they will have to check the status of their prospective carers in the new scheme.

4.9 FISs should ensure that they are aware of and understand the framework for safeguarding children set by the Government safeguarding guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (HM Government 2006) as summarised in the briefer guide *What To Do If You're Worried a Child Is Being Abused*, and the specific local policies and procedures drawn up by their Local Safeguarding Children Board. Information services should be able to refer parents and other members of the public to children's social care within the local authority should they have concerns about a child's welfare or safety in the context of the childcare services, or more generally. If necessary the information services should themselves refer concerns about a child to social services or the integrated children's social care department or the police.

4.10 Local authorities should consider whether CRB checks can and should be undertaken on staff providing information to parents under section 12 of the 2006 Act depending on how their FISs are organised. A CRB check can be sought where individuals' normal duties involve 'caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of a child'. For many FIS staff these criteria would not normally apply. However, there could be circumstances, e.g. if children are left temporarily in the charge of an FIS member of staff, or if staff are interviewing teenage parents, where CRB checks can be made if considered appropriate. It is at the discretion of local authorities to decide whether CRB checks are required for staff working in FISs. Where CRB checks have not been undertaken staff must be advised on the restrictions on staff having care or supervision of children.

4.11 Amendments are planned to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 in 2008 to expand eligibility for CRB checks to those who have access to specific social services, education or medical data about children. More information will be made available to local authorities as the arrangements progress and will be included in future versions of this guidance.

Chapter 5

Information about other services, facilities and publications



5.1 This part of the guidance describes the services, facilities or publications referred to in section 12 (2) (b) and (c), about which parents and prospective parents should be given information. The relevant services, facilities or publications are those which the local authority and its FIS considers are likely to be of benefit to parents, prospective parents, children or young persons. There is no definitive list as there are likely to be variations on what is available from area to area. Examples are given in Annex 3 together with how to obtain the information where available.

5.2 FISs should provide the information prescribed in regulations for each relevant service, facility or publication as follows:

Prescribed descriptions of information relating to services, facilities or publications

Services and facilities

- the name of the service or facility;
- contact details for the service or facility, including its address, telephone number, email address and website address;
- a description of the main features of the service or facility;
- any restrictions on eligibility for using the service or facility;

- the days and hours when the service or facility is available;
- the cost of the service or facility;
- any other relevant information about the service or facility.

Publications

- the title of the publication;
- a general description of the publication's contents;
- how the publication can be obtained or accessed, including the address of any website where it can be read;
- the cost of purchasing the publication;
- any other relevant information about the publication.

FISs should use reasonable endeavours to obtain the information for all relevant services facilities and publications. They are not expected to give in depth information or advice on specialist areas.

5.3 For local services, facilities and publications, FISs should be able to draw on information contained in the local authority's Children's Services Directory.

“Everyone is concerned about drugs, school discipline and bullying in school. Young people want more things to do and better places to go. Parents are anxious about healthy eating, about how to get the benefits of the internet and keep children safe – and yearn to be more involved in schools...

So we should all be thinking very hard about how accessible the services that we offer to families are – particularly for those who need extra help...”

Ed Balls, commenting on his visit to a Children’s Plan consultation event.

5.4 FISs should also be able to provide information about sources of national services, facilities and publications provided by public sector and third sector organisations such as those delivered through ‘Parent Know How’, through Direct Gov and provided by public sector bodies such as the NHS, BERR, DWP and Ofsted. FISs should be able to draw on information contained in the Department’s central information service described in paragraph 2.14.

5.5 The information available to parents should cover legislation, information on good practice (e.g. on health issues) and direct practical advice and specialist support services relevant to the parent’s situation. FISs should be sufficiently familiar with how services operate to enable parents to select the best method of access to suit their needs.

5.6 For information sourced both locally and nationally (other than childcare) it is not expected that FISs should be able to provide in depth advice in specialist areas. They should be able to steer parents to appropriate sources of such advice.

5.7 Where the enquirer does not have access to the internet, FISs should endeavour to facilitate access to web based services on their behalf where appropriate.

5.8 FISs should maintain their data in a way that is consistent with the Integrated Public Sector Vocabulary¹¹ and e-Government Metadata Scheme¹² (e-GMS). As set out in 2.14, the Department intends to put in place an information service to provide mechanisms for local authorities to be able to access information on national services and from other local authorities. FISs should provide information about other local services, facilities and publications to this service. This information should be structured and transferred according to standards finalised in consultation with local authorities during the development of the service but substantially based on the GovTalk Children’s Service Directory Schema version 1.1.¹³ FISs should be able to draw on this centrally provided service in order to provide parents with information about other services, facilities and publications in other areas.

Worcestershire FIS

Worcestershire’s Family Information Service (FIS) began expanding their information in 2004 when they developed the Children’s Services Directory for the county. The purpose of the directory is to support practitioners in

11. www.govtalk.gov.uk/schemasstandards/gcl.asp

12. www.govtalk.gov.uk/schemasstandards/metadata_document.asp?docnum=1017

13. www.govtalk.gov.uk/schemasstandards/schemalibrary_schema.asp?schemaid=271

making appropriate referrals and to ensure that the public, and parents in particular, can access information on support services.

Since the launch, feedback from users has led to regular developments and the new 'Worcestershire Family Services Directory' (FSD) was launched in November 2006. This contains details of local statutory and voluntary services as well as national organisations and helplines. The FIS also provides telephone support for those who may require additional information or advice.

The FSD is currently undergoing further developments so that it continues to meet the changing needs of practitioners, schools and parents (as well as the range of information required under section 12 of the Childcare Act). These developments will include: agreements with agencies to maintain information about their own services; geographical searches; more information on local community support services (such as coffee mornings and drop ins); and further consultation with and promotion to schools and practitioners using the extended services planning events and CAF roll out.

Chapter 6

Information on services for disabled children, for children with special educational needs and for disabled parents

Information for parents of disabled children

6.1 Section 12 (3) requires the Secretary of State to have regard to the needs of the parents of disabled children when prescribing (in regulations) information which should be provided both in relation to childcare and other services, facilities or publications. The regulations therefore require FISs to provide information about whether particular childcare is suitable for disabled children, and about services, facilities and publications which may be of particular benefit to disabled children, young people or their parents.

6.2 More detail of the information that should be provided to disabled children or young persons is set out in Annex 3. The information provided should be tailored to the individual needs of children and their parents and be readily accessible in a range of formats.

6.3 LAs should deliver their services under section 12 to complement:

- their duties under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, as public bodies, to promote disability equality and to publish a disability equality scheme; and
- the Government's aim to empower disabled young people and their families as set out in *Aiming High for Disabled Children: Better Support for Families*.



6.4 FISs will need to work closely with local and national organisations offering help and advice to families with disabled children. These include Contact a Family, Working Families, Parent Partnership Services, the Council for Disabled Children, RNID, RNIB, Mencap, Scope, National Autistic Society and any local portage services.

Information for parents of children with special educational needs

6.5 Section 332A of the Education Act 1996 requires local authorities to arrange for the parent of any child in their area with special educational needs to be provided with advice and information about matters relating to those needs. LAs must also take whatever steps they consider appropriate to make Parent Partnership Services (PPS) known to parents, head teachers, schools and others they consider appropriate. Local authorities will need to ensure that their FISs establish links with PPS. Details of the local PPS can be found at www.parentpartnership.org.uk or by ringing the National Parent Partnership Network on 020 7843 6058.

6.6 Parents, particularly where a child has special educational needs, hold key information and have a critical role to play in their children's education. Parents of children with special educational needs should be treated as partners. They should be supported so as to be able and empowered to:

- recognise and fulfil their responsibilities as parents and play an active and valued role in their children's education;
- have knowledge of the child's entitlement within the SEN framework;
- make their views known about how their child is educated and have access to information, advice and support during assessment and any related decision-making processes about special education provision.

Information on additional financial support

6.7 Information provided on services and facilities for disabled children and for children with special educational needs should include additional financial support that may be available to parents and carers, i.e. information about the criteria for claiming benefits, including Disability Living Allowance; Disabled Child Tax Premium for those receiving Child Tax Credit; and Carers Allowance.

Bath & NE Somerset Family Information Service

The Family Information Service in Bath & North East Somerset has a specialist development worker to support families of children with disabilities. Her remit is to provide timely and relevant information and support to the parents and carers of children with disabilities and additional needs. This includes:

- individual support available via a free phone helpline and email;
- additional assistance to help parents and carers access registered childcare;
- a support group for parents and carers;
- newsletters published three times a year and mailed directly to families;
- a directory of services setting out both local and national information.

The service has also undertaken consultation with families to review what information is required and help plan for future delivery.

Ensuring access to disabled parents

6.8 As part of the LA's compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and their published disability equality scheme, FISs will need to ensure that:

- their premises are accessible to disabled parents, e.g. by means of ramps, intercom/push-button for help facilities;
- they provide appropriate support for disabled parents, e.g. by means of hearing loops and staff who can sign or translate; and
- information is made available via different media which might include the following non exhaustive list:
 - large print version of materials;
 - easy read format;
 - Braille or audio versions – CD, tape or audio option on the website;
 - language lines;
 - text phone for hearing impaired enquirers.

Chapter 7

Access to the information service



7.1 Section 12 (6) requires local authorities to be pro-active in establishing and maintaining their information service in ways that best facilitate access to it, in particular, that reach out to people who might otherwise have difficulty in taking advantage of the service.

7.2 FISs will need to identify, and keep updated, intelligence on the particular and varying information needs of parents in their area, particularly those from groups who rarely use the service.

Identifying needs

FISs should consider:

- carrying out an annual needs assessment including monitoring and reviewing uptake of information services by disadvantaged groups;
- systematically recording and identifying particular needs of people who approach the service so as to establish a local picture of families and the demand for services;
- using any management reporting data from helplines and online services they run to determine how successfully the FIS is addressing parents' needs;

- taking into account previous audits of need within the authority, e.g. mapping needs of disadvantaged communities for the Children's Fund, Sure Start Children's Centres and for the local parenting support strategy;
- engagement with the LA's single commissioner of parenting support services who will be responsible for co-ordinating and producing the local strategy on parenting support;
- identifying needs through outreach sessions;
- working with colleagues in Children's Centres and extended schools to help identify and report back on parents' information needs which are not being met;
- involving employers and voluntary and community organisations.

7.3 FISs will need to focus their efforts to increase access to information on those who may be socially excluded in their areas including:

- people from Black and minority ethnic communities;
- young mothers and fathers;
- people for whom English is an additional language;

- parents of children with a disability or a special educational need;
- parents with learning disabilities/difficulties;
- parents who are unemployed or on a low income and those from disadvantaged areas;
- new arrivals, refugees and asylum seekers;
- families with disabled or mentally ill parents; and
- Gypsy, Roma travellers and travellers of Irish Heritage.

7.4 Information and support should be provided to all who need it because they have a role in caring for a child, i.e. fathers as well as mothers; gay and lesbian parents; and carers as well as birth parents. FISs must comply with equality legislation in the provision of the service.

7.5 FISs should also ensure that key people working with children in care have access to the same information as that available to parents. They should ensure that the information is relevant to their needs and should proactively ensure that carers access this information. Amongst those to whom the information should be made available are: foster carers, social workers, residential care workers, independent fostering services, adoptive parents and prospective adoptive parents.

Delivery outlets

7.6 FISs should ensure that information is made available through a wide range of outlets, particularly in places frequently visited by parents. Two key delivery outlets will be schools and Sure Start Children's Centres. *The Sure Start Children's Centres Practice Guidance* (November 2006) emphasises the importance of providing good quality information to enable parents to make decisions about the best services for them and their children. *Extended Schools: Building on Experience* (2007) asks schools to provide parents with information about nationally and locally available sources of information, advice and support.

7.7 In addition to Sure Start Children's Centres and schools, other outlets may include doctors' surgeries, libraries, community centres, shops, post offices, schools, workplaces and kiosks. FISs will

need to ensure that parents understand the scope of the information that can be provided by Children's Centres and schools, i.e. whether the information can be provided direct or if a referral to the FIS or to a specialist organisation is needed.

Plymouth Family Information Service

Plymouth FIS, which is part of the charity Routeways, operates from a shop front in Devonport, in the New Deal for Communities area. The FIS carries out regular outreach sessions to take the service to the communities and localities across Plymouth. This includes delivery in a wide range of outlets, such as: Children's Centres, libraries, local hospitals, special schools, supermarkets and community centres. The FIS also holds baby clinic sessions within GPs' surgeries, fun days, BME information days and links with the Respect festival. If potential clients cannot get to the FIS there are systems in place (including home visits) to get the service to them.

In addition to the core FIS services, Plymouth FIS offers:

- childcare chats and tasters in conjunction with Jobcentre Plus;
- childcare recruitment and training including bursaries;
- regular 'in house' outreach from a Jobcentre Plus Lone Parent Advisor and Working Links;
- a sexual health advice service including pregnancy testing and condoms;
- a dedicated staff team offering benefit and tax credit advice, including support with completing forms. This is funded through the Social Inclusion Unit at Plymouth City Council and includes working with a wide range of partner organisations including the Citizen's Advice Bureau.

Clients are always encouraged to return to the service if they need further support at a future stage.

Promoting information services

7.8 Local authorities are encouraged to promote their FISs to all parents, and particularly to those groups cited in paragraph 7.3 above who might find it difficult to access information.

7.9 It could be costly, and potentially wasteful, for all literature produced by information services to be produced in a wide range of languages irrespective of local demographics. The Children's Information Service Guidance (the *CIS Strategy*, published in 2003) asks for written materials to be provided in a range of formats to reflect the needs of local communities. The recommendation is that these arrangements should continue.

Data protection and security

7.10 Local authorities and their FISs must ensure that they comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 when providing information to other outlets. For example, the implications of sharing information on childminders will need to be considered. If the FIS needs guidance on how to ensure compliance with the Act, they should consult the local authority's legal service. Further information on data protection is available from the Office of the Information Commissioner at www.ico.gov.uk/what_we_cover/data_protection.aspx

7.11 Where information is held which identifies individuals, whether childminders or parents, FISs should ensure that the information is held securely and that robust systems are in place to limit access to appropriate members of staff only. LAs' information security policies should provide for procedures and mitigations to deal with this data.

Service users

7.12 Section 12 requires information, advice and assistance to be provided to 'parents or prospective parents'. Section 12 (9) defines these terms:

- 'parent'¹⁴ means a parent of a child of young

person and includes any individual who:

- (a) has parental responsibility for a child, or
 - (b) has care of a child;
- 'prospective parent' means a pregnant woman or any other person who is likely to become, or is planning to become, a parent.

Local authorities are required to make sure that information is available to all prospective parents and parents of children up to their 20th birthday in their area.

7.13 Parents who do not live with the child are included in the definition of parents contained in the 2006 Act. This means that discussions of individual children/young people's needs should not be restricted to people with parental responsibility/care of the child. The service can be offered to everyone who is a parent as defined. However, FIS staff should consider the risk of inadvertently disclosing information about individual children and young people received from earlier discussions with, e.g. another family member. FISs should also avoid becoming involved in any conflict between parents. In cases where parents are unable to resolve issues between them, the information service might want to suggest that the parent seeks independent legal advice about obtaining a court order setting out exactly what decisions each parent can make in respect of the child. In dealing with parents, FISs should take account of the principles contained in the *Schools, Parents and Parental Responsibility* guidance at www.parentscentre.gov.uk/educationandlearning/rightsandresponsibilities/parentalresponsibility

7.14 The active interest of fathers (whether resident or non-resident) in all aspects of their children's life and development is important. FISs should make efforts to assess the information needs of fathers in their area, who may not be accustomed to using many of the services available, and make specific

14. 'Parent' includes any individual who:

(a) is a natural parent, whether they are married or not; and

(b) any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child; and

(c) any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child.

efforts to make information available in formats and through routes which are likely to engage them.

7.15 Section 12 (4) of the 2006 Act gives local authorities a discretionary power to provide information 'to such persons as the local authority consider appropriate'. The expectation is that the information will be accessed predominantly by parents and prospective parents.

7.16 However, FISs should also provide information to people who are acting on behalf of the parent, including grandparents and other relatives, friends and other intermediaries. FISs should ensure that intermediaries are given information that is in the public domain only, including contact details for services which could help the parent. FISs should not discuss information about individual children with anyone other than their parents, as defined above, or with individual young people or children if they are considered to be sufficiently mature. FISs should not discuss details of particular parents, children and young people with those enquiring on parents' behalf.

Chapter 8

Service delivery



Management and organisation of the Families Information Service

8.1 Section 12 (1) of the 2006 Act requires English local authorities to establish and maintain services providing information, advice and assistance.

It will be for local authorities to determine the most appropriate delivery arrangements for their area. Many authorities will wish to build on the expertise already in place in Children's Information Services.

The following models could form part of FIS delivery arrangements:

- the FIS acting as an information hub, maintaining and updating the data, acting as the expert adviser and distributing information to front line delivery points such as Sure Start Children's Centres and extended schools. The information hub could be responsible for providing training to other outlets. It would be for the local authority and its FIS to decide on the mechanisms for delivering the service to the public, but these could include kiosks, 'hot-line' telephone connections, outreach visits and 'surgeries' from the central hub and provision of information electronically for access at the outlets;
- the one stop shop model where a range of information services is provided in a centrally

located shop front facility. Typically this would include the active involvement of staff, perhaps from the non early years part of the LA or from voluntary organisations, providing information on subject areas to supplement the childcare and early years information. This is likely to be most practical in geographically compact areas such as unitary authorities, but may need to be backed up by outreach services;

- the call centre model whereby initial queries are taken by a generic call centre. In this model it is essential for the local authority and its FIS to ensure that the more in depth service set out above on early years and childcare is made available. It may be good practice for specialists in early years, childcare and parenting issues to review details of all calls to identify those that need a more specialist approach;
- variations and combinations of the above to suit local circumstances.

It is unlikely that one of the above models alone will meet the full needs of parents within the local community.

8.2 Section 16 of the Childcare Act brings all the new local authority duties in the Act within the remit of the Director of Children's Services, Lead

“By working with partners and taking a strategic approach to the development and commissioning of parenting support services we will be more effective at meeting the needs of parents...”

Beverley Hughes, *Parenting Support Guidance for Local Authorities in England* – October 2006

Member for Children’s Services, and the Children’s Trust and CYPP arrangements. The strategic lead for delivery of the information duty should be within Children’s Trusts.

8.3 Information should be provided as part of a joined up and co-ordinated offer to parents with other support services including health, education and parenting support services. Within the overarching children’s trust arrangements, this approach is taken a step further with the duties in sections 1- 4 of the 2006 Act which require local authorities to work with their NHS and Jobcentre Plus partners to deliver integrated early childhood services. The service delivered through the section 12 information duty is one of those early childhood services. The statutory guidance on the outcomes duty, *Raising Standards – Improving Outcomes*, contains more details and is available at www.surestart.gov.uk/improvingquality/guidance/raisingstandards/

8.4 Local authorities should ensure that, as part of their parenting strategy, their FISs are commissioned and operate in the context of the joint planning and commissioning approach set out in *Parenting Support Guidance for Local Authorities in England* available at www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources-and-practice/search/IG00169/

Quality

8.5 Information should be delivered by suitably trained and qualified staff.

8.6 It will be for the local authority and its FIS to determine appropriate training and qualifications for FIS staff. NVQ level 3 or equivalent qualifications in a relevant area would be appropriate for front-line staff. Examples of appropriate qualifications include:

- the Level 3 NVQ in Advice and Guidance; and
- the Level 3 Certificate in Information, Advice and Guidance offered by the National Open College Network.

Local authorities will wish to consider higher level qualifications for staff working in specialist roles, such as brokerage.

8.7 FISs will need to have systems in place to ensure the accuracy and quality of the information they provide on available local services. Information should be updated as frequently as is appropriate to its content and format. FISs are recommended to update all information at least annually. They should ensure that any changes notified are updated on their systems as soon as is reasonably possible.

Consultation with parents, review and evaluation

8.8 The operation of the information service and the management and content of the information it is

able to provide should be reviewed to ensure they are appropriate and effective. Local authorities should consider carrying out regular checks of the service provided by their FISs including by means of mystery shopper exercises. Local authorities should ensure that their FISs are evaluated as part of their internal quality assurance systems and develop strategies to ensure continuous quality improvement of the services delivered. Parents should be consulted about the information they need and how they prefer to receive it.

8.9 The information duty is within the scope of existing arrangements for assessing and inspecting children's services (Ofsted's annual performance assessment, and multi-inspectorate joint area reviews). New arrangements, the comprehensive area assessment (CAA), will be introduced in 2009-10. Inspectorates are currently developing their proposals for CAA, and expect to consult on full proposals in summer 2008.

Complementary delivery

8.10 Services provided under the s12 information duty should complement other statutory and non statutory services for parents. Authorities should provide strategic support to help facilitate joined up delivery and may wish to consider developing protocols as part of this process. The services with which links should be established include:

- **Services for young people** Some local authorities may wish to run integrated information services to meet the needs of both parents and young people. If authorities opt to do so, they should ensure that this arrangement does not deter either parents or young people from accessing the service, and that suitably qualified and experienced staff are available to meet the needs of both client groups. Where services are run separately they should maintain close working relationships to ensure that good referral systems are in place and to avoid duplication of information directories.
- **Communications strategies** It is recommended that local authorities establish and maintain communication strategies to ensure a joined-up approach to provision of information for both parents and children.
- **Information Advice and Guidance** FISs should be able to inform parents and carers about the content of the quality standards for young people's Information Advice and Guidance (IAG). The standards recommend that 'Parents and carers know how IAG services can help their children and know how these services are accessed'. The quality standards are available at www.cegnet.co.uk.
- **Services provided under local authorities' duty to provide advice and assistance to parents when expressing a preference of school for their child** For transition from primary to secondary, local authorities should provide this service through Choice Advisers, targeting those parents most likely to need extra help navigating the admissions system. (Section 42 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (which amends s81 of the SSFA 98) refers.)
- **Accessing positive leisure time activities** Local authorities' duty to secure young people's access to positive leisure time activities, including youth work, recreation, volunteering and cultural activities. Section 507B of the Education Act 1996 refers.
- **Early Years Outcomes Duty** Section 12 services should be planned and delivered as part of integrated early childhood services set out in sections 2 and 3 of the 2006 Act – the Early Years Outcomes Duty. These early childhood services must also actively identify excluded families and encourage them to take advantage of the services which could benefit them. Including information services in the early years partnership working will allow local authorities to exploit links with their NHS and Jobcentre Plus partners to maximum effect, and work with outreach workers in Sure Start Children's Centres, to ensure information services reach excluded families.
- **Area SENCOs** (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators) supporting approximately 20 non-maintained childcare settings to develop and promote inclusive early learning environments in early years settings through effective early intervention programmes, to reduce the

underachievement gap and enable all children to reach their full potential.

- **Library services** Libraries are well placed to manage information as well as acting as delivery points for parents.
- **Other support services** – including teenage pregnancy co-ordinators, the Youth Service, health professionals including CAMHS, YOT teams, housing teams and anti social behaviour teams.
- **Services provided through Parent Know How**
The programme will draw together existing and new initiatives into a co-ordinated programme to provide support for parents through telephone helplines and new channels like instant messaging, social networking tools and improved internet use. The first phase of Parent Know How projects will start in spring 2008.

Complaints

8.11 Each local authority should consider appropriate complaints arrangements for its FIS. Whether it runs the service itself or contracts it to a provider the local authority remains responsible for the information duty. Local authorities are not expected to set up a complaints system in relation to the information duty covered by this guidance over and above their existing procedures.

8.12 If the service is provided by a contracted organisation, the local authority should ensure that the organisation has an equivalent procedure to its own. Parents should be able to complain to the authority, as the organisation with the statutory responsibility for securing the service, if they are not satisfied with the outcome of a complaint to the contracted organisation. Information on how to use the local authority's complaints procedure should be readily available.

8.13 If the complaint is about another local authority service, for example a complaint about lack of childcare places, the information service should be able to direct parents to the appropriate formal complaints procedure.

Funding

8.14 Local authorities should draw on funding in the Sure Start, Early Years and Childcare Grant in order to provide the broader services envisaged in this guidance. Provision of information and advice to parents is included within the 'childcare sufficiency and access' element of the Grant and local authorities should ensure that adequate resources are allocated to fulfilling the information duty. Allocations for each local authority can be found at www.surestart.gov.uk/publications/index.cfm?document=1925

Annex 1

Summary of actions

The guidance sets out a number of key activities which local authorities and their FISs will need to take to fulfil the information duty in section 12 of the Childcare Act 2006. A summary is set out below:

Activity	Reference
LAs must run a service to provide comprehensive information to parents of children and young people aged up to 20 – known as the Families Information Service (FIS)	Introduction and Chapter 1 – 1.6 and 1.8
FISs must provide parents with comprehensive information on registered and non registered care which might be suitable for their children	Chapter 2 – 2.1 to 2.11
FISs must provide parents with the categories of information prescribed in the regulations about registered childcare where this is available either from Ofsted or other sources	Chapter 2 – 2.3 to 2.6
FISs must provide parents with the categories of information prescribed in the regulations about non-registered childcare where they are able to obtain the information	Chapter 2 – 2.7 to 2.10
For registered and non-registered childcare, FISs should provide parents with any other information they have which may help them to decide on the suitability of care where appropriate	Chapter 2 – 2.11
FISs should ensure that parents can obtain the information they need about childcare provision in other areas without having to travel to neighbouring authorities	Chapter 2 – 2.13

Activity	Reference
FISs should provide information on childcare and on other local services, facilities and publications to the system, centrally provided by the Department, to facilitate national data access	Chapter 2 – 2.14
FISs must provide advice and assistance to parents seeking childcare where this is needed. In practice FISs should establish and run brokerage services for parents having difficulty in finding childcare that meets their needs	Chapter 3
<p>FISs should ensure that brokerage services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • help parents to understand the childcare system • help parents to reassess needs and widen their childcare search • help identify sources of funding support • consider acting as an intermediary between parents and providers 	Chapter 3 – 3.1
FISs should ensure there is a system in place for the brokerage service to feed back information about ‘gaps’ in childcare provision in their area to inform the duty to secure sufficient childcare	Chapter 3 – 3.5 to 3.6
FISs should ensure that parents seeking childcare have the information they need to safeguard their children, including registration status of potential providers and questions parents may wish to ask them	Chapter 4 – 4.1 to 4.6
FISs should inform parents about forthcoming arrangements to help prevent unsuitable people from working with children	Chapter 4 – 4.7 to 4.9
LAs should consider whether they should undertake CRB checks on FIS staff (depending on their role)	Chapter 4 – 4.10 to 4.11
FISs must provide parents with information on other (non-childcare) services, facilities and publications which might be of benefit to them in their parenting role	Chapter 5
FISs should maintain directories of local services and facilities available to parents, and make the information available to them in an informed manner. The services should include education, employment, health, leisure and parenting	Chapter 5 – 5.3 and 5.8

Activity	Reference
FISs should provide information on national sources of support, provided by public and third sector organisations	Chapter 5 – 5.4 to 5.5
FISs should assist parents of children with disabilities and special educational needs to find information about the services they need	Chapter 6 – 6.1 to 6.7
FISs should ensure that their services are available to and accessible by parents with disabilities	Chapter 6 – 6.8
FISs will need to identify and meet the varying information needs of parents in their area	Chapter 7 – 7.1 to 7.2
FISs must ensure that information is accessible to people who might otherwise have difficulty in accessing the services they need. In practice this includes ensuring information is available to disadvantaged groups in the local area	Chapter 7 – 7.3 to 7.4
FISs should ensure that key people working with children in care have access to the same information as that available to parents	Chapter 7 – 7.5
Information should be made available through a wide range of outlets, particularly in places frequently visited by parents, including Sure Start Children’s Centres and schools	Chapter 7 – 7.6 to 7.7
FISs should be promoted to all parents, but particularly to those who might otherwise find it difficult to access information	Chapter 7 – 7.8 to 7.9
FISs must ensure that they process (including storing) personal data so as to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998	Chapter 7 – 7.10 to 7.11
FISs are required to make sure that information is available to all prospective parents and parents of children up to their 20th birthday in their area. They should target the service predominantly on parents, but should make information available to other users where appropriate	Chapter 7 – 7.12 to 7.16
The strategic lead for delivery of the information duty should be with Children’s Trusts. Information should be provided as part of a joined up and co-ordinated offering to parents with other support services including health, education and parenting support services	Chapter 8 – 8.1 to 8.2

Activity	Reference
It is recommended that LAs establish and maintain communication strategies to ensure a joined-up approach to provision of information for both parents and children	Chapter 3 – 8.3 to 8.4
FISs should ensure that information is delivered by suitably qualified staff	Chapter 8 – 8.5 to 8.6
LAs should evaluate the effectiveness of their FISs on a regular basis, including consulting parents – paying particular attention to more disadvantaged parents – and including by means of mystery shopper exercises where appropriate	Chapter 8 – 8.8 to 8.9
LAs and their FISs should ensure that the information duty is delivered in a way which complements other local statutory and third sector services	Chapter 8 – 8.10
LAs should ensure that arrangements are in place to deal with complaints from parents about the delivery of FIS services under section 12	Chapter 8 – 8.11 to 8.13

Annex 2

New registration arrangements and Foundation Stage

1 Part 3 of the Childcare Act 2006 introduces new arrangements for the regulation and inspection of childcare.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

2 The Act removes the existing distinction between childcare and education in the early years to better reflect the way young children learn and develop. For young children, learning and care happen together and are indivisible. The term 'early years provision' is used to refer to the provision of integrated care and education.

3 With certain exceptions (see below), all settings catering for children aged from birth to the end of August following their fifth birthday will be required to deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage – including maintained and independent schools, day nurseries, playgroups, pre-schools and childminders.

4 The Early Years Foundation Stage is a new quality framework which sets the standards for the learning, development and care children should receive outside the family home. It builds on and replaces the existing national standards for day care and childminding, Birth to Three Matters Framework and Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage.

The Early Years Register

5 Registration on the Early Years Register (EYR) will be compulsory for providers who care for children aged from birth to the 31 August following their

fifth birthday, unless they are exempt from registration. All those on the EYR must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage (subject to any exemptions). The EYR will begin operating in September 2008.

6 However, childcare provided by a school's governing body, on or off the school site, for children aged three and over, where at least one pupil from the school attends is exempt from registration and will be inspected as part of the school inspection system. All other provision for children in this age group will be required to be registered.

The Ofsted Childcare Register

7 The General Childcare Register (which is commonly known as the Ofsted Childcare Register or 'OCR') has two parts: the compulsory part (Part A) and the voluntary part (Part B). Registration on the compulsory part of the Ofsted Childcare Register ('cOCR') will be compulsory for providers who care for children from 1 September following their fifth birthday (i.e. the end of the foundation stage) up to the age of eight. Again, some providers may be exempt from registration.

8 Providers can join the vOCR if the childcare is provided:

- in respect of a particular child for a continuous period of at least two hours, or

- as part of arrangements whereby childcare is provided:
 - for a period ending at the start of normal school hours, or beginning at the end of normal school hours, or
 - for a continuous period of at least two hours.

9 The categories of providers who can apply for registration include:

- home-based care (nannies and au pairs or home based care for disabled children);
- activity-based care (such as sports, drama, language or arts clubs);
- care for children aged eight and over (such as childminders or care provided in out of school clubs, holiday playschemes and open access play provision).

10 Providers who do not satisfy these requirements will not be able to join the vOCR. The vOCR began operating in April 2007 and the cOCR will begin operating in September 2008.

Exemptions from the requirement to be registered on the EYR or cOCR

11 Certain types of childcare will be exempt from compulsory registration on the EYR and cOCR. Exemptions from registration will be set out in a statutory instrument prior to September 2008.

12 The exemptions will mean that some crèches which are currently required to be registered will no longer be required to be registered in the future. However, any provision which is not required to be registered may join the Ofsted Childcare Register on a voluntary basis providing it meets the necessary requirements, e.g. that it runs for at least two hours.

13 Although provision made directly by schools for pupils aged three and over is neither required nor eligible to be registered, parents will still be able to claim financial support through Working Tax Credit.

14 The new arrangements will mean that more childcare providers will be able to register so there will be a wider range of registered provision for information services to point parents towards, particularly group care for children aged eight and over. These arrangements will be in force from September 2008.

Annex 3

Services, facilities or publications which may be of benefit to parents, young people or children

The list below gives examples of services, facilities and publications which may be of benefit to parents, children and young people and, where available, how the information can be obtained. Much of the information would be held by the FIS, for example in the children's services directory. For some types of complex information, it will be appropriate for the FIS to signpost parents to other parts of the local authority, or to external organisations from which the information can be obtained.

The local authority's strategy for supporting children, young persons and their parents

How to obtain:

- local authority/Children's Trust strategy for supporting children and parents
- Children and Young People's Plan
- any documentation setting out the local authority's early years strategy

Schools and other educational services or facilities including those providing further or higher education

Education services/schools

- location of schools
- schools' composite prospectus
- age range of children catered for

- arrangements for selecting a school
- how to access school places, including local choice advice arrangements (the Choice Advice Guidance refers)
- performance and quality measures (Ofsted reports and inspections refer)
- levels of authorised and unauthorised absence
- opportunities for participation in children's learning
- entitlement to regular reports about the child's progress at school and schools' arrangements for providing these
- support and engagement (consultation processes, complaints procedures, volunteering, school governors)
- after school provision
- behaviour units
- out of school activities
- elective home education.

Education Welfare Services

- what the Education Welfare Service is and details of the service provided
- contact information and opening hours

NB As the majority of referrals to EWS are by the child's school, the information given should refer parents to the school in the first instance.

How parents can get involved in shaping the provision of schools

- parents' right to make representations seeking changes to the provision of schools and to have a considered response from the LA. (The Duty to Respond to Parental Representation Guidance at www.dcsf.gov.uk/schoolorg)
- how parents can obtain sufficient and clear information about how the school system works to allow parents to make their views on proposals for new schools or changes to schools known
- information (or how to obtain information) on arrangements local authorities have in place to inform parents of current plans for provision, the ways in which they can make their voice heard, what they can expect of the authority and where to go if they are not satisfied with the result

Higher education/further education

- information available at www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/14To19/index.htm and at www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/index.htm
- information about the local 14-19 prospectus available at www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19/index.cfm?sid=41

Financial support for learners

- financial support available for students including:
 - student finance for higher education as outlined in the Quality Standards for Young People's Information, Advice and Guidance
 - Education Maintenance Allowance
 - hardship funds, transport provision
 - subsidies
- the Care to Learn childcare scheme for teenage parents (a scheme which provides support for Ofsted registered child care and associated travel costs to enable parents aged under 20 to engage in publicly funded learning)

NB Parents should be referred to <http://moneytolearn.direct.gov.uk/> for information about financial support for learners including Care to Learn.

Bookstart is the national programme which aims to encourage parents to enjoy sharing books with babies and young children and for their children to develop a lifelong love of books. More information is available at www.bookstart.co.uk

Booktime is providing a book pack to every reception pupil in England in autumn 2007 to promote the pleasure of reading and encourage parents and carers of children in reception classes to read aloud with their children. Booktime aims to develop children's broader educational development across the curriculum, including language, literacy and communication skills. More information is available at www.booktime.pearson.com

Booked Up is providing free books to all Year 7 pupils in England this autumn, aiming to encourage enthusiasm about reading for pleasure and independent choice. Every 11 year old will be able to choose their own free book from a list sent to their school. The scheme will also provide an accompanying website, children's magazine and a range of add-on activities. More information is available at www.bookedup.org.uk

NB Information for parents about supporting their child with reading is available on the Family Reading Campaign website at www.familyreading.org.uk

Educational opportunities which children or young persons and their parents can participate in together

- Courses provided by local authorities for joint learning through Personal and Community Development Learning (PCDL), often known locally as Adult and Community Learning or Adult and Community Education
- Other LSC funded provision, including literacy, language, numeracy, internet safety and special needs classes
- Opportunities for parents to participate in their children's learning – parents should be given information on how to support their children's learning at home, facilitating access to DVDs, CDs, written publications, websites and telephone help lines where available

Library services

- location
- opening hours
- services available (reference, children's books, multimedia including computers, special support)
- activities undertaken (reading groups, homework clubs, early years provision and special events)
- public information (including information about the provision of other types of activity)

Physical and mental health

Health services

- how to access all local universal health services such as maternity services, hospitals, GP surgeries, educational settings, health visitors and school nursing teams. Information should include:
 - hours services are available
 - emergency out-of-hours arrangements
 - appointments and referral system
- local Primary Care Trust websites for information on local services
- NHS Choices website also has information on local services

Healthy Schools Programme

- information on Healthy Schools status, or how to obtain the information
- website links to the Healthy Schools Programme at www.healthyschools.gov.uk
- contact details of local Healthy Schools Co-ordinators
- protocols for parental engagement
- involvement of extended schools

Health/nutrition/exercise/healthy choices

- breastfeeding
- weaning
- services available at Children's Centres
- Healthy Start scheme providing healthy food for low income families
- '5 A DAY' initiative (leaflets and posters etc available from www.5aday.nhs.uk)

- healthy lifestyles – information contained on the NHS Choices website – www.nhs.uk and on www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk
- how to access/be referred to specialist services including:
 - healthy eating
 - food safety
 - physical activity (should include contact details for Healthy Living Centres and overweight and obesity services where appropriate)
 - speech and language therapy services
 - major organisations providing information to the public including the Food Standards Agency and the British Heart Foundation

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

Any service that contributes to the mental health care of children and young people, whether provided by health, education, social services, the voluntary sector or other agencies. Information should be available on all types of provision and intervention, or on how to access the information, including:

- mental health promotion and primary prevention
- how to access local services, including, emergency out-of-hours arrangements, provided by, for example, hospitals, GP surgeries and educational settings
- specialist community-based services and very specialist care as provided by in-patient units for young people with mental illness
- maintaining good mental health
- identifying early warning signs of deterioration of mental health so that effective early intervention can take place.

NB The nature, severity, complexity and specificity of the child's mental health problem will help determine where the child is best seen and by which service. Where the problems are uncommon or particularly complex, the child or young person may require referral on to highly specialist services.

Sex and relationships

- how to obtain information and support for parents – from primary through to teenage years – to help them talk to their children about sex and relationships
- facilitate access for parents to Parentline Plus Time to Talk – www.parentlineplus.org.uk/index.php?id=182. Provides a range of resources with signposting to Parentline Plus and other national helplines and websites for information about contraception and sexual health
- information about local community programmes to support parents in discussing sex and relationships – for example Time to Talk and the Family Planning Association's (fpa) Speakeasy programme.

Smoking

- understanding the effects of smoking in pregnancy – a helpline for pregnant smokers is available on 0800 169 9169
- effects of passive smoking on children and others
- the dangers of smoking to people generally, young people particularly who are vulnerable to asthma and shortness of breath if they smoke and teenage mothers
- services and publications including:
 - the organisation 'QUIT'
 - the British Heart Foundation's 'Give up before you clog up' campaign
 - the NHS Stop Smoking Service
 - the NHS Smoking Helpline which includes details of local stop smoking services 0800 169 0169
 - online help from www.gosmokefree.nhs.uk

Alcohol

Information to assist families affected by alcohol misuse including:

- Alcohol Concern – the national agency – can also give information to the public on local services
- Drinkline helpline 0800 917 82 82
- material in preparation, i.e. DH literature and

website for young people on alcohol and DCSF guidance on what is and what is not safe and sensible. (More details will be provided to FISs when available)

Drugs

Information on specialist substance misuse services for young people available from the national drug information service, FRANK. Information is available from:

- the website www.talktofrank.com
- the helpline 0800 77 66 00

FRANK contains information about the effects and risks of taking illicit drugs, alcohol and volatile substances. It gives advice and provides details of appropriate support services. Materials are available to help parents and children.

Child development

Referral to appropriate articles and publications on the following sites:

- the Family and Parenting Institute website
- Contact a Family
- the Parenting UK website and telephone helpline
- Parentline Plus
- Directgov website

Child safety

Accident and injury prevention

Information and advice including from:

- health professionals such as health visitors and GPs
- school nurses
- social care professionals
- consumer services
- local authority services such as environmental health and trading standards
- fire and utility services
- police
- the voluntary sector
- Child Accident Prevention Trust – www.capt.org.uk

- Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents – www.rosipa.com
- Staying safe – NSPCC literature
- The internet Green Cross code compiled by BT and children's charities, aimed at children
- Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) website for parents and children 'ThinkUKnow' – www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- DCSF CD Rom 'KnowITAll for Parents' available from www.childnet-int.org/safety/parents.aspx
- Get I.T.? Got I.T.! Good! – a family guide to getting to grips with technology featuring Dick and Dom – www.nch.org.uk/information/index.php?i=209
- Childnet a range of publications and resources for parents and children on internet safety – www.childnet-int.org including the following downloads:
www.childnet-int.org/downloads/chatGuide.pdf
www.childnet-int.org/downloads/searchGuide.pdf

NB There will be additional information and sources of advice on Government and Government Agency websites depending on the safety aspect concerned.

Sporting, play and recreational opportunities

Local sports/play and recreational facilities which are open to children and families including:

- facilities and services offered by sports centres/clubs
- location opening hours
- age groups
- prices
- disabled access

Information should be available on:

- things to do
- places to go, e.g. on local arts, sports and play provision, child friendly heritage sites
- galleries and museums.

National services, facilities and publications including

- www.activeplaces.com – Sport England's website/database of sports facilities available to the general public
- Active Places Power site which provides LAs with more detailed information on sports facilities
- information held in directories published by national sports association's site – www.24hourmuseum.org.uk
- the parents section of the Show Me site – www.show.me.uk/parents/parents.html
- www.playengland.org.uk

Parenting and relationships

Parenting support – local services and facilities

- location and opening times of parenting groups, including provision delivered by Children's Services, Children's Centres, NHS or voluntary sector and informal courses available from parent support groups and services
- sources of support for families experiencing particular challenges, such as group-based antenatal and post-natal support, tailored support for teenage mothers and young fathers
- how to access structured parenting programmes, home visiting and specialist services such as family therapy
- how to access support for parents of teenagers and pre-teens. Sources of advice and guidance for parents undergoing separation
- how to access Children's Services departments:
 - details of the specific services provided
 - information on support and early intervention provision
 - self referral arrangements

Parenting support – national sources of information

- Government policies on support available through Sure Start Children’s Centres and extended schools
- Other sources including:
 - the Family and Parenting Institute
 - Homestart
 - National Childbirth Trust
 - Sure Start
 - Parenting UK’s Education and Support Forum

Bullying

This is the most common issue raised by parents using the Parentline Plus helpline information on anti-bullying available at:

- www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Yourchildshealthandsafety/WorriedAbout/index.htm
- information Parentline Plus at www.parentlineplus.org.uk/bullying (0800 800 2222)
- the ACE helpline (0800 800 5793)
- Comprehensive anti-bullying guidance, ‘Safe to Learn: embedding anti-bullying work in schools’ from www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying

Bereavement

- Help is at hand: a resource for people bereaved by suicide and other sudden, traumatic death

This Department of Health guide is aimed at the wide range of people who are affected by suicide or other sudden, traumatic death. It aims firstly to help people who are unexpectedly bereaved in this way. It also provides information for healthcare and other professionals who come into contact with bereaved people.

The guide can be found online, go to www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4139006

Support services for young people including advice on careers

- *The Guide for Parents and Carers* – www.connexions-direct.com/parentcarer – offers parents an impartial guide on what services may be available locally for young people making decisions regarding their future learning and careers
- accessing local services, including the Connexions Service which can provide help and support to young people and on how to access the local arrangements supporting parents in exercising school choice through School Choice Advisers
- accessing youth services – Provision of youth clubs, centres, drop-ins and advice shops, telephone, web or text services – how to access, location, availability
- How to access local 14-19 prospectuses

Jobcentre Plus

- Jobcentre Plus is part of the Department for Work and Pensions
- Provides advice and information on a range of employment and training issues for people of working age
- Provides advice on the eligibility conditions for in work and out of work benefits, as well as details on how to make a claim

More information can be found on the Department for Work and Pensions and Jobcentre Plus websites: www.dwp.gov.uk and www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk

Youth Offending

Youth Offending Team

- description of service provided
- advice and early intervention services
- how to self refer
- contact details

Tackling Gangs Action Programme

- material to make parents aware of behaviour which might show that their children are involved in gangs is in preparation and will be made available at www.crimereduction.gov.uk

- how to access any locally produced material for parents and teenagers

Financial and legal issues

Tax credits (Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit)

- how parents can obtain information about their entitlements
- how parents can make a claim for both tax credits, including the childcare element of Working Tax Credit

Information from the following sources:

- 'Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs' website, www.hmrc.gov.uk including its tax credits pages and on line calculator
- the tax credits helpline (0845 300 3900). Information services should also be able to provide parents with tax credit leaflets

Employer-supported childcare

Information should be available on how parents can obtain guidance, via the HMRC Employer helpline on 0845 7143 143 and the 'Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs' website, www.hmrc.gov.uk/childcare

Work life balance and entitlement to request flexible working

Information is available on the Direct.gov website at www.direct.gov.uk/en/Employment/Employees/WorkingHoursAndTimeOff/DG_10029491

Care, advice or support for children or young people who are disabled

- local social services that support families with disabled children, including disabled young people experiencing the transition to adult services
- availability of specialist medical services, therapy services, support services, including materials, as set out in the 'National Services Framework for Disabled Children and Young People, and Those With Complex Health Needs', specialist help groups, tax benefits, financial advice, relevant voluntary organisations, and details of available short term breaks

Aiming high for disabled children: better support for families includes guidance on:

- a 'core offer' for parents of disabled children and young people, including clear information and greater transparency over decision making; and
- supporting disabled children and young people and their parents to shape services

The report is available at www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources-and-practice/IG00222/

Early support

What parents can expect from local early support services – plus practical materials for parents to use as they liaise with key workers. More information is available at www.earlysupport.org.uk

Parent Partnership Service

To support parents of children with special educational needs.

- how to access the service
- whether the service is all year or term-time only
- the age range covered
- website and contact details
- whether service is co-located with other parent information services or sited elsewhere
- range of services offered in addition to direct work with parents, e.g:
 - organising parent/carer fora:
 - training
 - strategic work with the LA
 - exclusions etc.

Other resources

Local support for parents can be found via the National Parent Partnership Network website www.parentpartnership.org.uk. The Equality and Human Rights Commission runs a helpline for advice about disability discrimination issues www.equalityhumanrights.com tel 08457 622 633. 'Special Educational Needs: A guide for Parents and Carers' is another useful resource and can be found at www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=3755

Disability Living Allowance and Carers Allowance

Including where these benefits may lead to extra support from:

- Income Support
- Pension Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Benefit
- Working Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit
- schemes such as Motability.

Information about these benefits can be found at www.direct.gov.uk/disability and www.direct.gov.uk/carers or by phone to the Benefit Enquiry Line on 0800 88 22 00

Direct Payments

How to access any direct payments made in lieu of social service provisions, to individuals aged 16 or over who have been assessed as needing services. 'Direct Payments Guidance – Community Care, Service for Carers' and 'Children's Services (Direct Payments) Guidance England 2003' can be found at the Department of Health website www.dh.gov.uk/en/Policyandguidance/SocialCare/Socialcarereform/Personalisation/Directpayments/index.htm

Local services provided by:

Sure Start Children's Centres¹⁵

- location
- services available
- opening hours

Extended services through schools¹⁶

- location
- additional facilities offered
- opening hours
- charges for additional services where appropriate

Local voluntary sector provision

Details of the agencies, local offices and their priorities and how to access the services

15. Children's centres are a key delivery mechanism for Every Child Matters. They operate through integrating key services delivered by local partners that include local authorities, health services, Jobcentre Plus and providers from the private, voluntary and community sectors. Centres offer a range of services for families with children under 5 depending on local need, including: access to early years provision, information and advice to parents, activity sessions for parents and children, health services, family support, outreach services for families with young children at risk of social exclusion, links with childminder networks and support for parents considering training and employment.

16 Extended schools is a key delivery mechanism for Every Child Matters. It is about schools working in partnership with local providers and agencies to provide access to a core offer of services. This core offer includes: wraparound childcare 8am to 6pm (not necessarily on the school site); parenting support; swift and easy referral to specialist services, e.g. speech therapy, behaviour support and health advice; a wide range of activities and sports, including study support; and opening up services to the community, including ICT and adult learning.

Further information

Childcare Act 2006 – www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2006/ukpga_20060021_en_1

Childcare Act 2006 (Provision of Information to Parents) (England) Regulations 2007 and Explanatory Memorandum – www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2007/pdf/uksi_20073490_en.pdf

The Children's Plan – www.dcsf.gov.uk/publications/childrensplan

Choice for parents, the best start for children: a ten year strategy for childcare – www.surestart.gov.uk/events/newsevents/news/index.cfm?news=120

Every Child Matters – www.everychildmatters.gov.uk

Every Parent Matters – www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources-and-practice/IG00219

Statutory Guidance on the Childcare Assessment Duty – www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/earlyyears/sufficiency

Statutory Guidance on the Childcare Act 2006 Outcomes Duty – www.surestart.gov.uk/publications/index.cfm?document=1949

Aiming High for disabled Children: Better Support for Families – www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources-and-practice/IG00222/

Equality and Human Rights Commission – www.equalityhumanrights.com

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Search using the ref: DCSF-00943-2007

Copies of this publication can also be obtained from:

DCSF Publications
PO Box 5050
Sherwood Park
Annesley
Nottingham NG15 0DJ
Tel: 0845 60 222 60
Fax: 0845 60 333 60
Textphone: 0845 60 555 60

Please quote ref: 00943-2007BOK-EN

ISBN: 978-1-84775-104-1

PPFMP/FOLIO/0208/53

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