**Kent**

**Early Years and**

**Childcare Service**

**Delivery Plan**

**For**

**Registered**

**Early Years**

**and**

**Childcare Providers**



# KENT IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY FOR REGISTERED EARLY YEARS & CHILDCARE Providers

1. **BACKGROUND**

The government published ‘More Great Childcare’ in January 2013 strengthening the inspection regime, making Ofsted the sole arbiter of quality. The subsequent publication of ‘More Affordable Childcare’ sets out how local authorities can complement Ofsted’s role, as the sole arbiter of quality, by supporting the weakest providers to improve following inspection. We know from research that children who attend good or outstanding early year settings are better placed to achieve positive outcomes in their school life and beyond. It is therefore our expectation in Kent is that all settings should aspire to be judged outstanding by OFSTED and have a culture of continuing improvement and promote equality of access and inclusive practice.

Kent County Council (KCC) is committed, through the Early Years and Childcare Strategy, to working in partnership with settings within the county to support them in providing high quality early learning and care. The relationship between KCC and settings has always been and still is highly valued. Many settings have stated that they had particularly valued support for; leadership and management, self-evaluation, advice on teaching and learning and preparation for Ofsted inspection. We will continue to build on strengths and support national and local priorities as well as responding to the individual needs of settings through our Improvement Services.

1. **RATIONALE AND EXPECTATIONS OF CHANGE**

Over the past twenty years, early years and childcare has embraced many changes and continues to grow. Most recently Ofsted have updated their inspection framework, which reflects the changes to ‘Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings’. Together these documents challenge us to ensure that the progress each unique child makes in relation to their starting points is good and that our safeguarding children knowledge, policies and procedures are rigorous and robust.

Research shows that only high quality early education supports good social and educational outcomes and narrows the developmental gaps between the most disadvantaged children and their peers. In Kent we aspire to and expect that every child and young person makes good progress in their development from birth, to achieve well and to have the best opportunities in life as they become young adults. Every child has the right to go to a good or outstanding early years setting and have access to the best support for their learning and achievement. No child should be disadvantaged by not being able to attend a good quality early years setting.

1. **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT IN EARLY YEARS SETTINGS**

**The Setting Owner or Organisations** have a contractual relationship with the Local Authority through the Provider Agreement and has responsibility for the overall strategic and financial direction of the setting and for the standards achieved. Owners or organisations are expected to know the strengths and areas of development in their setting and monitor and evaluate the actions taken to address areas for development and improve outcomes for children.

**The Leaders and Managers** are responsible for the leadership, direction and management of the setting within the framework set by the owner or organisation and the contractual relationship with the Local Authority. They are responsible for ensuring compliance with the EYFS learning and development requirements, assessment requirements and safeguarding and welfare requirements, and implementing systems and procedures to secure effective self-evaluation, staff training plans and improvement planning. They are also responsible for the monitoring of standards and progress of children, effective links with parents and other agencies and the provision of a stimulating learning environment. Leaders and Managers in early years settings are encouraged to develop links with other settings and schools in their locality and have opportunities to be part of a collaboration.

**The Local Authority** has a duty to focus on challenging and securing support for early years providers who ‘require improvement to be good’ or are judged as ‘inadequate’ by OfSTED. Where a provider receives a ‘requires improvement to be good’ or ‘inadequate’ rating from Ofsted, this will trigger intervention by the local authority based on the issues raised by inspection. Local authority will therefore specify that providers ‘requiring improvement’ take-up appropriate support as a condition of funding. We know that quality of provision is particularly important for disadvantaged children and guidance sets out the expectation that local authorities should only fund early learning places for two year olds in settings judged to be ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’. The Government is considering whether to require that, in future, such early education could only be delivered by providers who are at least ‘good’. Where a setting is judged as ‘inadequate’ by Ofsted the local authority will withdraw funding for any subsequent early learning places for two, three and four year olds. Continued disengagement with this process or insufficient improvement will result in withdrawal of funding. Where the Local Authority receives notification from Ofsted that they intend to cancel or suspend a registration provision the Local Authority will withdraw funding.

1. **VISITS**

**Requires improvement Judgement**

Where a setting receives a ‘requires improvement to be good’ rating from Ofsted, this will trigger intervention by the local authority based on the issues raised by inspection. It is extremely important that settings make good use of the support provided and make swift improvements in accordance with the Provider Agreement. Therefore, where a setting makes two cancellations within a term the Senior Improvement Adviser will contact the setting to establish and discuss any difficulties that are preventing setting engagement. When a registered setting causes the Local Authority concern related to children’s safety the Local Authority has a duty to share these concerns with Ofsted.

**The Senior Early Years and Childcare Improvement Adviser will:**

* Visit the setting quarterly to monitor, review and evaluate progress to date
* Agree a strategy for swift improvement focused on the Ofsted actions and recommendations including support from the Local Authority Advisers. The Senior Improvement Adviser will then monitor the settings improvement each month along with the support, advice and challenge provided by the Local Authority Advisers.
* After the visit follow up agreed actions in a note of visit ensuring that it is e-mailed to the setting and allocated Improvement Adviser

Should the report contain actions for the management committee, the Sufficiency and Sustainability team will provide support and advice in relation to these actions

**The Childcare Sufficiency Officer will:**

* Visit the setting to agree a strategy to enable swift improvements focusing on Ofsted actions and recommendations
* After the visit, follow up agreed actions in a note of visit ensuring this is emailed to the setting and shared with the Senior Sufficiency Officer
* Undertake monthly monitoring to support this action until the next Ofsted inspection

**4.1 Inadequate Judgement**

Where a setting receives an inadequate rating from Ofsted**, this** will trigger intervention by the local authority based on the issues raised by inspection. When a registered setting causes the Local Authority concern related to children’s safety the Local Authority has a duty to share these concerns with Ofsted.

**The Senior Early Years and Childcare Improvement Adviser will:**

* Contact the setting at the earliest opportunity following the publication of the report. Inform them of the allocated Improvement Adviser and Childcare Sufficiency Officer and agree a date and time for an introductory visit.
* Confirm the agenda with the setting
* Read the setting’s Ofsted report
* Agree a strategy for swift improvement focused on the Ofsted actions and recommendations including support from the Improvement Adviser
* After the visit, follow up agreed actions in a note of visit ensuring that it is e-mailed to the setting, allocated Improvement Adviser and Childcare Sufficiency Officer.
* Plan dates for monthly monitoring visits to focus on the improvement strategy
* Monitor, review and evaluate progress each month. Where the Senior Early Years and Childcare Improvement Adviser thinks there is more to do, further actions may be set.
* Request a visit from the Equality and Inclusion team where appropriate
* Request a visit from the Sustainability and Sufficiency team to help assess the settings sustainability during this time

**The Setting will:**

* Make necessary arrangements for the visit and inform others who need to know of the visit e.g. Owner, Trustee, Directors, Nominated Person, Area Quality Manager for chain
* Alert staff to the visit so appropriate plans can be put in place
* Send the Improvement Adviser, by e mail, the most recent Setting Improvement Plan
* E mail the self-evaluation to the Improvement Adviser
* Take prompt and effective action to address the points for improvement

**Newly Registered Providers**

* 1. Where a setting is newly registered this will trigger support from the Local Authority. The Senior Early Years and Childcare Improvement Adviser will allocate an Improvement Adviser who will contact the settings and undertake bi-monthly visits up until the first inspection. The bi-monthly visits will focus on your self–evaluation.

The Senior Childcare Sufficiency Officer will allocate a Childcare Sufficiency Officer who, if not already known, will make contact offering business and general support.

When a newly registered setting causes the Local Authority concern related to children’s safety the Local Authority has a duty to share these concerns with Ofsted. Setting who re-register and were previously good or better will be able to access support and training through Threads of Success.

1. **Support for all other settings**

The Government published More Affordable Childcare which sets out how local authorities should work with early years and childcare providers. Ofsted is singularly responsible for judging the quality of registered early years and childcare provision. Whilst KCC continues to be committed to supporting the highest quality early years and childcare provision for our children and their families, as a result of the changes driven by More Affordable Childcare, the Early Years and Childcare Service work with providers in a different way.

Integral to this way of working with you, we offer the following support and advice to all providers at no cost:

• Regular, comprehensive bulletins, forums and network meetings (the first bulletin is due to be with you shortly)

* Centrally funded Annual Conversations with an Improvement Adviser

• Access to the Kent Education, Learning and Skills Information (KELSI) website

• Centrally Funded support and advice to ensure that KCC meets its statutory duties to establish sufficient and sustainable early years and childcare provision

• Advice, support and training to support the implementation of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (2015) and Kent SEND processes.

• Prime Importance of Communication and Language training jointly delivered with Speech and Language Therapists.

Also continuing for all providers at no cost is:

• Support from the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service in line with established ways of working

• Safeguarding Telephone Consultation

**Welfare Requirement Notices**

There are occasions when Ofsted notify KCC that they have issued a ‘Welfare Requirement Notice’ (WRN). When we receive notification of a WRN for an early years and childcare setting a member of Early Years & Childcare Service will contact you to arrange a support visit to review and evaluate any necessary actions you need to take.

All other support and services not mentioned above will be available on a chargeable basis.

1. **Early Years and Childcare Service**

Kent Early Years and Childcare Service has a suite of services and products in one simple, easy to access site -Threads of Success.

Whether you are an early years childcare setting or an out of school club we can work with you to support you on your journey to excellence.

Our highly skilled and experienced team has combined their expertise and working knowledge of the sector to bring you a range of services and products which will ensure you offer the very best provision to children, young people and families.

You can select from the menu and discuss and agree a bespoke package of support from our website:

[www.threadsofsuccess.co.uk](http://www.threadsofsuccess.co.uk)

1. **Compliments and complaints**

Where a manager, owner trustees or directors would like to formally compliment an officer of the Early Years and Childcare Team or considers that the action of any officer of the Early Years and Childcare Team does not meet the spirit of this strategy, please share this with the officer. Alternatively, please contact the relevant Manager: Jane Nolan – Early Years and Childcare Manager Improvement and Standards [Jane.Nolan@](mailto:Jane.Nolan@Kent.Gov.Uk)theeducationpeople.org Debbie Henderson – Early Years and Childcare Sustainability Manager Debbie.Henderson@theeducationpeople.org

**8. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

Regular monitoring and evaluation will be carried out of this Improvement Strategy that will be reported to senior staff and included in cabinet reports.

The final part of this document outlines our commitment of support in the form of flow charts.

*Please note that any training identified as a continuous professional development need must be purchased through the improvement services:* [Threads-of-Success-professional-training-and-support](http://www.kelsi.org.uk/support-for-children-and-young-people/early-years-and-childcare/improvement-and-standards/professional-training-and-support)

***New registration flow chart of support***

Senior Improvement Adviser (SIA) is notified of a setting new registration

IA contacts the setting to make an appointment to visit within five days.

SIA allocates the setting to an Improvement Adviser (IA) within three days

Visit 1, 2 & 3

Share information about the improvement services. Share SAW folder. Introduce a self -evaluation folder. Focus on the safe guarding and welfare requirement audit & developing a training and development plan making any relevant recommendations in a note of visit. Share information related to prevent training and the ‘Early Help’ process. Signpost to equality and inclusion support.

Visit 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8

Review and evaluate recommendations from previous visit and evaluate all of the grade descriptors with the provider/manager in relation to the setting and make any recommendations in a note of visit. Conduct a two year old audit. Share information related to other relevant audits. Signposts to CSO if any business concerns highlighted

IA visits setting bi-monthly to support getting to good at their first inspection and support the provision to enable children to achieve a good level of development

Further Visits

Review and evaluate recommendations from previous visit and support setting to develop an action plan in relation to OfSTED recommendations. Support setting to develop a training plan and share information in relation to improvement services.

Visit 9,10,11,12 & 13

Review and evaluate recommendations from previous visit and evaluate the characteristics for effective teaching with the provider/manager in relation to practitioners within the setting and make any recommendations in a note of visit. Conduct a SSTEW audit to contribute to improvement plans.

Setting receives a good OfSTED judgement and notifies the IA

Setting receives an OfSTED judgement requires improvement to be good

\*Settings who re-registered following a good or better Ofsted judgement will receive a centrally funded annual conversation. All training and improvement visits will be chargeable through Threads of Success.

*Please note that any training identified as a continuous professional development need must be purchased through the improvement services:* [Threads-of-Success-professional-training-and-support](http://www.kelsi.org.uk/support-for-children-and-young-people/early-years-and-childcare/improvement-and-standards/professional-training-and-support)

***Setting requires Improvement to be good flow chart for support***

SIA allocates the setting to an Improvement Adviser (IA) within three days

IA contacts the setting to make an appointment to visit within five days

Senior Improvement Adviser (SIA) is notified of a setting receiving an OfSTED judgement ‘requires improvement to be good’

Visit 1 & 2

Share information about the improvement services. Review the SAWR. Focus on the actions and recommendations from OfSTED to establish a robust improvement plan making any relevant recommendations in a note of visit. Ensure that the setting are aware of prevent. Ensure setting are familiar with the Early Help process. Signpost to equality and inclusion team and sufficiency and sustainability where appropriate

IA visits setting fortnightly/monthly to support getting to good at their next inspection and support the provision to enable children to achieve a good level of development

Visit 3

SIA accompanies IA to evaluate improvement to date based on impact for children and makes any further recommendations in a note of visit. Begin to evaluate the grade descriptors within the Ofsted evaluation schedule.

Visit 7 & 8

Review and evaluate recommendations from the previous visit and the improvement plan. Continue to focus on the actions, recommendations from OfSTED and establishing a setting training & development plan and make any further recommendations in a note of visit. Agree the best time to conduct a SSTEW audit to contribute to improvement plans.

Visit 6

SIA accompanies IA to evaluate improvement to date

(See Visit 3)

Visit 4 & 5

Review and evaluate recommendations from the previous visit and the improvement plan. Continue to focus on the actions, recommendations from OfSTED and make any further recommendations in a note of visit. Continue to evaluate the grade descriptors within the Ofsted evaluation Request equality and inclusion visit where relevant.

Visit 10 & 11

Review and evaluate recommendations from the previous visit. Review OfSTED report with owner/manager to reflect on further changes needed and capture in a note of visit

Visit 9

SIA accompanies IA to evaluate improvement to date

(See Visit 6)

Visit 12 and 13

Reflect on recent OfSTED report, help establish a robust improvement plan and share information about improvement services.

*Please note that any training identified as a continuous professional development need must be purchased through the improvement services:* [Threads-of-Success-professional-training-and-support](http://www.kelsi.org.uk/support-for-children-and-young-people/early-years-and-childcare/improvement-and-standards/professional-training-and-support)

***Inadequate setting flow chart for support***

IA contacts the setting to make an appointment to visit within two days

SIA allocates the setting to an Improvement Adviser (IA) on the same day

Senior Improvement Adviser (SIA) is notified of a setting receiving an Inadequate OfSTED judgement

SIA & IA visit setting and establish a programme of support which includes a monthly monitoring note of visit. Senior Improvement Adviser shares process including the intention to withdraw FF2 funding if insufficient improvement is made. SIA refers to sufficiency and sustainability for a business review to be undertaken within five days

Improvement Adviser

Visit 2

Share information about the improvement services. Focus on the actions and recommendations from OfSTED to establish a robust improvement plan making any relevant recommendations in a note of visit. Provide support establishing a setting training plan

Senior Improvement Adviser sends setting a note of visit with actions and recommendations drawn from the OfSTED report, copying in the Improvement Adviser. Improvement and Standards Manager sends setting letter outlining process of support including withdrawal of FF2 funding

Monthly Monitoring Visits

SIA accompanies IA to evaluate improvement to date based on impact for children and makes any further recommendations in a note of visit. If insufficient improvement is made SIA triggers process for withdrawal of funding.

Subsequent Visits

Review and evaluate recommendations from the previous visit and the improvement plan. Continue to focus on the actions, recommendations from OfSTED, Review OfSTED report with owner/manager to reflect on further changes needed and capture any further recommendations in a note of visit. Request equality and inclusion visit where relevant. Conduct a SSTEW audit to contribute to improvement plans when appropriate.

Improvement Adviser Visit 3

Continued focus on the actions and recommendations from OfSTED, the robust improvement plan and the setting training plan making any relevant recommendations in a note of visit. Ensure setting are aware of prevent training. Share information about the Early Help process. Signpost to sufficiency and sustainability and equality and inclusion where appropriate

Following OfSTED Re-inspection

Reflect on recent OfSTED report, help establish a robust improvement plan and share information about improvement services.

(Where a setting receives a RI judgement see relevant flow chart) Where a setting receives a good Ofsted judgement add to the Annual Conversation Programme.