

# **FAMILIES FIRST STANDARDS**

FOR SURE START CHILDREN'S CENTRES





## FOREWORD

**Niall McVicar, Chair, NAFIS**

All Children's Centres staff know that information is a key tool for parents and carers, providing options and possibilities that might otherwise remain unknown and therefore inaccessible. High quality information, advice and support services that reach out to parents and carers are key to making these possibilities a reality.

The Families First Quality Assurance Scheme is both an opportunity to show case good practice and improve quality and can be used by individual or groups of centres. This will enable centre staff and advisory boards to have a positive experience through quality the improvement process, whilst (at the same time) meeting their commissioner's requirements.

It is a quality improvement tool designed to complement the Ofsted inspection framework, and can be used by Local Authority (LA) commissioners, and Children's Centre managers, staff and parents' advisory boards.

Families who attend a Sure Start Children's Centre with the Families First Quality Award can be confident that it's geared up to meet their needs. Our assessors consider a wide range of evidence including observing the way information is communicated to families, the approaches of individual staff and the way services are targeted, planned and monitored.

The standards provide a consistent national benchmark for quality together with the flexibility for LA commissioners to ensure that any local requirements are met. They help Children's Centres demonstrate how they keep families at the heart of their practice, support children through the EYFS and work with LA Families Information Services and a range of other partners to meet the needs of the most vulnerable.

The Family and Childcare Trust and NAFIS hope all Sure Start Children's Centres and Local Authorities will make full use of opportunities, such as that provided by the Families First scheme, to improve the quality of their services.

The Family and Childcare Trust would like to thank Suffolk County Council for their support in developing these Standards.



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# INTRODUCTION

## ABOUT THE FAMILIES FIRST QUALITY AWARD

The Families First Quality Award recognises Children's Centres that demonstrate excellence in providing information, advice and assistance to local families.

The Award is suitable for Children's Centres at any stage of the developmental journey. Undergoing the Award works as a quality improvement tool; in order to achieve accreditation participants are supported to develop any areas that need enhancing.

Achievement of the Families First Quality Award recognises Children's Centres that exceed the requirements set out in the Childcare Act 2006 and provide information and assistance of the highest quality.

The Award is a competence-based assessment similar to that of an NVQ. Assessments are carried out by accredited Families First Assessors who will work with Local Authorities and Sure Start Children's Centres to identify suitable examples of evidence that demonstrate competence against the individual elements of the standards.

The standards have been designed so that local commissioning or organisational requirements can easily be included into the existing Families First framework. Assessment of groups of Sure Start Children's Centres via the Families First Award ensures consistency and quality.

The standards allow an organisation to define unique evidence requirements specific to their local area, and to ensure consistency across a number of Children's Centres.

The aim is to ensure that, while an organisation reaps the rewards of the Families First Standards journey, they never lose sight of the needs and well being of the individuals they seek to support.

The Families First Standards enable staff and advisory boards will fulfil these requirements through a quality improvement process, supported by a qualified Families First Assessor.

The award is verified by qualified Families First Internal Verifiers. The award is standardised nationally in accordance with the NAFIS Families First internal verification strategy and which is overseen by the Family and Childcare Trust and the NAFIS Advisory Board.

## WHAT IS INFORMATION, ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE?

Providing Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) covers a range of activities that equip parents, prospective parents and family members with what they need to make informed choices about the care, health, education and recreation of their children, including those with specific requirements. Each LA has a duty to provide IAA to families (Duty 12 of the Childcare Act 2006).

### IAA CAN BE DEFINED AS:

- Information – accurate, up-to-date and objective information about childcare, health, recreation and learning opportunities, progression routes, choices, funding and where to find help and advice and how to access this
- Advice – activities that help parents, prospective parents and family members to gather, understand and interpret information and apply it to their own situation
- Assistance – provision of an impartial signposting, brokerage and referral service to specialist support to help parents, prospective parents and family members to meet their information needs and make progress

The Core Purpose of a Sure Start Children's Centre is to improve outcomes for young children and their families, with a particular focus on families in the greatest need of support in order to reduce inequalities in:

- Child development and school readiness;
- Parenting aspirations;
- Self esteem and parenting skills; and
- Child and family health and life chances.

Families should be able to get all the early childhood services they need through a Sure Start Children's Centre including access to quality early education and childcare. This means working in an integrated way with other services (and with each other) to share information appropriately and identify and support families in greatest need.

## WHY IS GOOD QUALITY IAA IMPORTANT?

Staff working in Sure Start Children's Centres are in an excellent position to provide face- to-face IAA to some of the most needing families in their area. Good quality IAA supports parents, prospective parents and family members to make informed decisions about childcare and other services that they may want or need to access.

By providing IAA, Children's Centres staff support parents and help their children to achieve the following outcomes: to be healthy; stay safe; enjoy and achieve; make a positive contribution and achieve economic well being.

## HOW DO SURE START CHILDREN'S CENTRES PROVIDE IAA?

In delivering their Core Purpose Sure Start Children's Centres provide IAA as an embedded part of their practice. For example, families receive IAA about services directly provided by the Children's Centre, those run by its local partners and are routinely referred to specialist services, such as charities providing support to people who have experienced domestic violence or drugs and alcohol abuse.

Sure Start Children's Centres and Family Information Services working together to provide IAA. Family Information Services (FIS\*) in England and Wales are in a unique position to work together with Sure Start Children's Centres to assist them in providing IAA. FIS's are another key Local Authority service and like Children's Centres they have a remit to provide information, advice and assistance to children and families. How the FIS is run will vary from area to area but most FIS's operate a helpline and online service directory (website), others also do outreach work.

**\*For the purposes of this document the acronym 'FIS' will be used to refer to Family Information Services in England and Wales.**

Local Authorities in England and Wales can make better use of these services by encouraging joined up working. Sure Start Children's Centres provide high quality information to families in their reach area. In particular Children's Centres can work closely with Early Years Foundation Stage providers in a local area in order to improve outcomes and help families access their free early education entitlement.

By developing strong links with their local FIS, Sure Start Children's Centres can help more families access the information and support available to them (for example, publications and Internet based directories of childcare and families services and activities). The Families First Award encourages joint working between Children's Centres and FIS's.

## BENEFITS

As well as strengthening the links with their FIS, and a range of other partners the Families First framework has the flexibility to allow Children's Centres to meet their local commissioning and annual conversation requirements. The benefits of these standards for commissioners and Third Sector organisations delivering Children's Centres on behalf of a Local Authority are:

- Individual accreditation (accreditation is not dependent on every centre in your group achieving the award; each children's centre has the opportunity to work toward and achieve the award in their own right).
- A positive experience – Families First fosters a supportive and enabling experience for all staff and stakeholders involved in undertaking the award.
- Quality improvement and consistency across a number of Sure Start Children's Centre locations both in a local authority area and nationally.
- National standards from a nationally recognised organisation (NAFIS Family and Childcare Trust). As a quality assurance and improvement scheme the Families First Standards can be extremely helpful in supporting positive Ofsted outcomes.



- **Flexible:**
  - Standard 12 is designed to ensure all commissioning and organisational requirements are met.
  - A mandatory evidence requirement prescribed by a LA commissioner or organisational lead can be assigned to individual elements of the standards. For example, a copy of the annual action plan, SEF, single central record of staff or particular policies.
- **Flexible reaccreditation plan:** the standard reaccreditation period is 3 years but the renewal period can be shortened or particular standards and elements to be re- accredited on an annual/biannual basis.
- **Cost effective:** using a national accreditation scheme gives economies of scale.
- **Independent:** The Family and Childcare Trust and NAFIS board independently verify centres against the standards, avoiding any conflict of interest or questions of impartiality that might otherwise arise.

## HOW TO SIGN UP

Commissioner or lead submits an expression of interest to Family and Childcare Trust by completing an expression of interest at [www.daycaretrust.org.uk/nafis](http://www.daycaretrust.org.uk/nafis). We'll reply and with a Guidance Document.

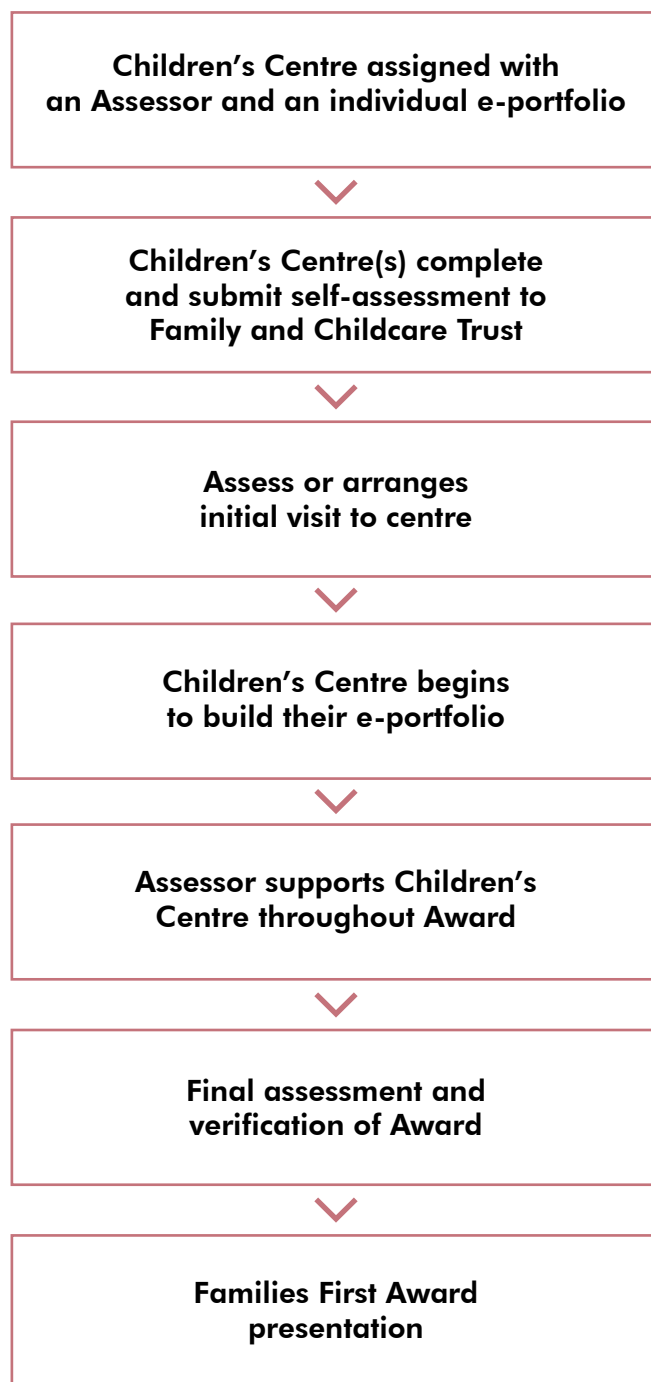
Commissioner / lead completes the requirements section in the Guidance Document and submits to Family and Childcare Trust. Family and Childcare Trust will agree an action plan with Commissioner / lead based on the requirements and issue an invoice.



## THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

When you have signed up to the Families First Award you will follow the assessment process outlined below, with the support of your Assessor. Your submitted assessment will go through an Internal and External Verification process. Please contact us if you require any further information about the assessment process or how to sign up.

**FIGURE 1.1 FAMILIES FIRST ASSESSMENT PROCESS**



## ASSESSORS

The Families First Assessor will be your guide and main point of contact through the award. They will contact you from the start as well as guide you through the e-portfolio, schedule the initial visit as well as conduct the midterm review. They will also sign off on the award at the final visit and negotiate a timescale that is mutually acceptable. Your assessor will help you plan what you want to get from the award including an improvement plan. All of the assessors are based in the regions and have lots of experience both with local authorities and the award so they are likely to be local to you.



## INTERNAL VERIFICATION

Assessors are also internal verifiers for the other regions. Upon sign off from your assessor, the internal verifier steps into make sure the assessor has adequately assessed the evidence and provide a report to NAFIS for the final checking stage prior to accreditation.

## EXTERNAL VERIFICATION

The final stage of the process is external verification where the assessor and internal verifier work is checked before the final award is given. The EV group will be steering group colleagues or FCT staff and this is in place to ensure that the award is of the highest standard and meets the needs of clients.

## TIMEFRAME

The recommended completion time is 3 to 6 months and there is flexibility of start dates to suit you and your team. Once you begin you are required to complete your award within 12 months, unless there are special circumstances.

## USING THE FAMILIES FIRST STANDARDS

As a Children's Centre looks at the criteria explained on the following pages, they need to ask themselves, if an assessor is visiting our organisation for the first time:

- What would they need to see, hear or experience to demonstrate that the criteria are being met?
- How can we evidence the quality and impact our practice and services we provide?

Establishing the starting point is an essential first step in using the standards to drive continuous improvement.

Sure Start Children's Centres are set up in different ways and have different resources available to them. The Sure Start Children's Centres may sit outside the local authority (for example, a commissioned Third Sector organisation). There may be particular key policies, plans or documents that commissioners require centres to provide as evidence. When an organisation goes for assessment against these standards, NAFIS will ensure that the assessor accommodates these differences and assesses a Children's Centre accordingly.

## SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL

A self assessment tool is available to help Sure Start Children's Centres decide whether they are ready to go for assessment. Organisations can use this independently or with partners. It will also identify areas for further development as well as providing an initial overview of the service to the assessor. An online e-portfolio is used by each individual centre going for assessment, it is easy to upload, store and view evidence collected against each standard.

## EXCLUSIONS

When an LA or Sure Start Children's Centre applies for assessment against the Families First Standards, ALL organisations must complete Standards 1 to 8, and Standard 11.

In addition LA information services in Wales must evidence Standard 10 and LA information services in England must evidence Standard 9.

Standard 12 is mandatory for clusters and optional for individual Children's Centres.





## GETTING STARTED

1. Review the standards and consider what evidence may already exist that demonstrates the standards are being met. Evidence may include: management information, including needs assessments; self-evaluation and assessment forms and reports; external reports on the quality, coverage and impact of local services on outcomes for parents, prospective parents and families (for example, from inspections and assessments). To assist in this task a Self Assessment Workbook will be provided.

## NEXT STEPS

2. Having considered current evidence and identified areas for development, plan how action on these will be taken forward. Establish priorities and agree objectives and targets with staff and partners. Decide what needs to be done, who will do it and by when.

3. Monitor the task to make sure they progress; identify any issues or risks at an early stage and make sure these are addressed as they arise.

4. Feed the outcomes and any feedback into the next review and planning cycle.



## GLOSSARY

Brokerage Service is typically provided via a LA FIS or sometimes via staff based in Sure Start Children's Centres and is a Duty in the Childcare Act 2006. The service must provide further assistance to parents who have had particular difficulties finding childcare that readily meets their needs. Children's Centre staff may also provide brokerage more generally speaking in terms of helping families by brokering access to a range of services provided by a range of partners. Brokering involves helping the family by acting as an intermediary when, for any reason, a family might find it difficult to access the service themselves.

Clients are defined throughout as parents (mothers and fathers), prospective parents, family members and grandparents, children or young people. It includes anyone who is acting on behalf of the client (for example, another practitioner) or local authority that is looking to access information on provision outside of their geographical boundary.

Enhanced Childcare Database a database (usually maintained by FIS) containing all Ofsted registered childcare providers and childminders, with additional information added by the providers themselves (such as opening hours and fees). Information in the directory usually covers the LA's geographical area and is accessible via the Internet and by phoning a FIS helpline. Not all childcare providers choose to have their details published on the Internet.

Family Services Directory a database (usually maintained by a LA and often by a FIS) containing a range of services for parents, children and young people that have been added by a LA or by the organisations running the services. Information in the directory usually covers the LA's geographical area and is accessible via the Internet and by phoning a FIS helpline. The directory may be advertised using a particular title or brand that has been determined by the LA.

Parents are defined in the Childcare Act 2006 as a parent of a young child, and includes any individual who—

- (a) has parental responsibility for a young child, or
- (b) has care of a young child

Prospective parents are defined in the Childcare Act 2006 as a pregnant woman or any other person who is likely to become, or is planning to become, a parent.

Transition is used to describe the natural progression of a child or young person through a number of stages as they grow and develop. Often, they will also be expected to cope with changes such as movement from primary to secondary school and for children with disabilities or chronic ill health, from Children's to Adult Services.





# THE FAMILIES FIRST STANDARDS

## **STANDARD 1** – Clients know how Children’s Centres can help them.

- 1.1 Clients will have knowledge of:
- (a) the service that they can expect from the Children’s Centre and FIS
  - (b) their own responsibilities in relation to the use of the Children’s Centre,
  - (c) where they can go to for help if they are not getting the service that they can reasonably expect.
- 1.2 The benefits of the Children’s Centre and FIS are promoted to all potential clients. Up to date information about where and how to access the Children’s Centre and FIS is available in a range of suitable formats, settings and media channels used by potential clients.
- 1.3 Clients can access an extended range of IAA services delivered in a variety of formats. [see 2.4]
- 1.4 Clients are aware of and know how to access appropriate local and national information and services.
- 1.5 Clients know how to access universal early years services including high quality and affordable early years education and childcare (in the local area).



## **STANDARD 2** – Clients have the information they need to make informed and realistic decisions about services available.

- 2.1 High quality, up to date and impartial information is provided as listed in the Guidance for Local Authorities on the Childcare Act 2006: Duty to Provide IAA.
- 2.2 Children’s Centres must provide clients with access to information prescribed in the regulations about registered childcare published by Ofsted (England) or CSSIW (Wales). This can be provided directly by centre staff or by signposting to the LA Families Information Service (FIS).
- 2.3 Children’s Centres provide clients with the categories of information prescribed in the regulations about non-registered childcare where they are able to obtain the information (either directly or via the FIS).
- 2.4 Information is provided in a range of formats reflecting the different ages, needs and capabilities of clients. [see 1.4]
- 2.5 Information provided reflects the different ages, needs and capabilities of clients. Children’s Centres will ensure that clients can obtain the information they need about childcare provision in other areas without having to make contact with neighbouring authorities (either directly or via the FIS).
- 2.6 Both client and intermediary views on the adequacy of information supplied are sought and acted upon.
- 2.7 Clients are appropriately signposted or referred to other specialised services for further support and information.
- 2.8 An immediate referral for specialist assessment and support is undertaken where a Children’s Centre has reason to believe a client or child is at risk from harm.
- 2.9 Referrals to specialist services and/or multi-agency teams are monitored and passed on to FIS or the relevant local authority department.



### **STANDARD 3 – Clients are enabled to access the service.**

- 3.1 Children's Centres understand and respond to the needs of clients in their local community.
- 3.2 Children's Centres tailor the information they provide about services to the needs of clients in their local community.
- 3.3 Communications with clients take into account the needs of mothers and fathers, the vulnerable, disadvantaged or excluded.
- 3.4 Communications with clients are adapted to reflect different needs (for example, in relation to basic skills needs, impairments, English as an additional language).
- 3.5 Clients are informed about safe practices when accessing services found on the Enhanced Childcare Directory or Family Services Directory (for example, advice on checking credentials, Ofsted reports, references, etc).
- 3.6 Clients are informed about other specialist services that can help their family and how these services are accessed.
- 3.7 Advice and assistance services are delivered flexibly at times, in places and through media channels that are convenient for a range of clients.
- 3.8 Clients are made aware of the LA FIS data systems: Enhanced Childcare Directory and Family Services Directory and how to access them.
- 3.9 Clients in greatest need are provided with targeted evidence based early interventions in the context of integrated services.

### **STANDARD 4 – Children's Centres collect, monitor and review equalities data as well as promote equality of opportunity, celebrate diversity and challenge stereotypes in the delivery of the service.**

- 4.1 Children's Centres reach as many potential clients in the local community, including disadvantaged and marginalised groups, as possible.
- 4.2 Services are sensitive to the faith, cultural and family background from which people come from.
- 4.3 Information, advice and assistance is impartial and provided confidentially (Unless a child or young person is perceived to be at risk of significant harm, in which case the local processes for raising such concerns with the relevant agencies will be followed. This would also apply if a partner service such as childcare provision failed to meet legal or quality requirements).
- 4.4 Stereotypes are challenged where appropriate.
- 4.5 Active efforts are made to ensure that the Children's Centres workforce and partners reflects the diversity of the wider community.
- 4.6 The Children's Centre works proactively with key partners to ensure that all children in the EYFS can benefit from high quality care and education.
- 4.7 The Children's Centre understands the impact of poverty on children's learning and development and takes measures to ensure children (especially from financially hard pressed families) take advantage of their full entitlement (15 hours). (Specific measures might include providing support via community parent, referring to the FIS Brokerage Service.)

## STANDARD 5

### – Professionals within a Children’s Centre understand their individual roles and responsibilities under the Information Duty.

- 5.1** The requirement for the provision of information, advice and assistance services is set out in a written statement that makes clear the need to meet the requirements of the Information Duty.
- 5.2** Local partnership agreements, with appropriate services, clearly set out the respective roles and responsibilities of each partner.
- 5.3** Children’s Centre professionals can demonstrate an awareness of relevant guidance and statutory documentation.
- 5.4** Children’s Centres have and implement policies on:
- (a) Promoting equality (including age, gender, disability, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation)
  - (b) Impartiality
  - (c) Assessing and meeting the needs of individuals for Information, Advice and Assistance
  - (d) Engaging with mothers and fathers and their families
  - (e) Data protection and data sharing
  - (f) Information management and quality assurance
  - (g) The monitoring and evaluation of information, advice and assistance provision
- The impact and implementation of these policies are reviewed at least annually with action taken to rectify areas for development.
- 5.5** Appropriate training to Children’s Centre staff and partners is provided on the requirements of Sections 12 (England) and Section 27 (Wales) of the Childcare Act 2006.
- 5.6** Children’s Centre staff are familiar with and understand current Ofsted or CSSIW regulation and inspection of childcare.
- 5.7** The Children’s Centre staff enable families with eligible children (especially those from multiple-disadvantaged backgrounds) to access a grant funded early education place. (Ensuring children access their full entitlement of 15 hours wherever practical).
- 5.8** The Children’s Centre support the progress of children in their reach area throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), directly and via their partnerships with other services.





## STANDARD 6

– Staff providing information, advice and assistance services are appropriately trained and qualified and participate in continuous professional development.

- 6.1** Recruitment policies and practices comply with local and national safeguarding and equal opportunities best practice standards and legislation.
- 6.2** Suitable training programmes are developed and delivered with suitable frequency. All staff in Children's Centres delivering information, advice and assistance as part of their role have the skills, knowledge and qualifications to:
- (a) deliver a high quality service
  - (b) deliver information, advice and assistance to diverse client groups and challenge stereotyping
  - (c) know where to access specialist advice services from the independent, private & voluntary sectors
  - (d) adhere to their relevant professional codes of conduct
  - (e) have access to a range of continuing professional development opportunities and have structured opportunities for the evaluation of professional practice
- 6.3** Multi-agency working and collaboration is underpinned by joint working when appropriate.
- 6.4** Annual audits of staff training needs are undertaken to inform training plans.
- 6.5** Arrangements are made to share good practice with other Children's Centres. Children's Centres have a policy on training and development of staff providing information, advice and assistance and the impact and implementation of this policy is reviewed annually with action taken to rectify areas for development.





## STANDARD 7

– Children’s centre services are planned, monitored, reviewed and evaluated and prompt actions are taken to improve services and meet client needs.

- 
- 7.1** Systems are in place to enable decisions to be made at a strategic level regarding the planning of services to deliver information, advice and assistance to families.
- 
- 7.2** Children’s Centres have strong links with their LA FIS and, wherever practical, share systems that facilitate clients’ access to information about services held on the Enhanced Childcare Directory and the Family Service Directory.
- 
- 7.3** Children’s Centres contribute to the information by their LA FIS by informing them about changes to their own services, local services they commission, and any changes to services they become aware of.
- 
- 7.4** Children’s Centres proactively engage the local community in the design, planning, delivery, quality assurance and evaluation of the service.
- 
- 7.5** The design, planning and delivery of Children’s Centres services takes into account the needs of a varied range of clients in the local community as well as non-users.
- 
- 7.6** The accessibility, take-up and effectiveness of provision is monitored, regularly reviewed and evaluated and used to inform service improvement plans. Targets are set and data is collected and can be disaggregated to identify the take up of the service by specific user groups such as mothers, fathers, single parents, and families with disabled children.
- 
- 7.7** Strategic objectives, priorities, targets and performance indicators for delivery of information, advice and assistance are set. These support the delivery of the Children & Young People’s Plan and other local strategic objectives. These enable services to be evaluated and support improvements where necessary.
- 
- 7.8** Children’s Centres will be aware of their local population (for example, percentage of children from birth to 5 years, information about ethnicity and languages spoken) who may wish to access local services and will use this information to inform service delivery [see Standard 7.2]
- 
- 7.9** The effectiveness of referral systems is reviewed at least quarterly with providers of specialist services and action is taken to rectify areas for development.
- 
- 7.10** The development of Children’s Centres services is informed by regular (at least annual) feedback from:
- (a) childcare providers and schools delivering the EYFS
  - (b) referral agencies
  - (c) key partners (such as health and children’s social care)
  - (d) the local community (including parents)
  - (e) local authority commissioners of children’s centre services
  - (f) members of children’s centre local advisory boards
- Action taken in response to feedback is communicated back to these groups.
- 
- 7.11** Children’s Centres have an up to date SEF (Self Evaluation Framework), a business plan and action /improvement plans, which are reviewed and evaluated regularly.
- 
- 7.12** Children’s Centres routinely share expertise, knowledge and information, working in partnership with other early years settings and relevant partners to improve quality.
- 
- 7.13** Children’s Centres use their knowledge of early years and childcare settings (including relevant data) to plan services that complement and strength local provision, with the aim of improving attainment by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
-

## STANDARD 8

– **Children’s Centres provide a welcoming environment where quality information is easily accessible and well organised.**

- 
- 8.1** The Children’s Centre provides a welcoming environment for all clients accessing their premises, taking account of their differing needs.
- 
- 8.2** Vulnerable clients accessing the Children’s Centre for the first time experience friendly, approachable staff, who are able to listen, understand their needs and provide appropriate information, advice and assistance.
- 
- 8.3** The Children’s Centre maintain and display high quality, up to date information about a range of services or facilities, which may be of benefit to parents, prospective parents, children or young people.
- 
- 8.4** Children’s Centre staff who regularly meet and greet clients will take account of their individual needs and provide information, advice and assistance about a wide range of services and in a variety of formats. [see also 1.4, 2.4]
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- 8.5** The Children’s Centre reception area (wherever practical) will be well a organised, child friendly space including displays, materials, books and equipment relevant to babies and children (ages 0-5 years).
- 
- 8.6** The Children’s Centre will enable clients to access information about services and facilities in other local authority areas, either directly or via the LA FIS.
- 
- 8.7** The Children’s Centre staff will keep in regular contact with the FIS to ensure the information kept is accurate and up to date as well as relevant to the local community.
- 
- 8.8** Children’s Centre staff will take ownership of relevant Family Service Directory records (updating and maintaining these records regularly where the facility to do so is provided by a LA / FIS)
- 

## STANDARD 9

– **Children’s Centres encourage and guide clients in locating and navigating the information available to them and support those who may otherwise not access services on their own (hereafter referred to as a ‘brokerage service’). This Standard is mandatory for LA information services in England.**

- 
- 9.1** Children’s Centre staff understand the meaning of a ‘Brokerage Service’ as well as their role in its delivery.
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- 9.2** Systems and procedures are in place to support Children’s Centre clients through the brokerage service.
- 
- 9.3** Children’s Centre staff will be aware of the various factors, which may lead to the brokerage service being used.
- 
- 9.4** Clients facing barriers to accessing services are given the assistance that they need to help them overcome these barriers.
- 
- 9.5** Children’s Centres will effectively promote the brokerage service to clients. Differentiated levels of brokerage will be identified for supporting locally agreed prioritised families.
- 
- 9.6** Children’s Centres will establish effective partnerships with services that may help improve the delivery of the brokerage service.
- 
- 9.7** Children’s Centres will put systems in place for the brokerage service to feedback information about ‘gaps’ in provision in their area to inform local delivery planning.
- 
- 9.8** Referrals (outgoing and incoming) will be effectively recorded and used to inform local delivery planning.
- 
- 9.9** Staff involved in delivering the brokerage service will be suitably trained. The minimum recommended level of training for a specialist role such as brokerage would be an NVQ Level 3 in Advice and Guidance or equivalent experience, skills or abilities.
- 
- 9.10** Children’s Centre staff will take ownership of relevant Family Service Directory records (updating and maintaining these records regularly where the facility to do so is provided by a LA / FIS)
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**STANDARD 10**

– Children’s Centres and their information services encourage and promote the use of the Welsh Language. This Standard is mandatory for LA information services in Wales

- 10.1** Children’s Centres will have an effective partnership approach in place to ensure that Welsh medium and bilingual childcare provision is developed in accordance with identified needs.
- 10.2** Children’s Centres will support the Children and Young People’s Partnership and/ or EYDCP to raise awareness of Welsh language issues and ensure that there is sufficient consideration at all levels where decisions are made about Welsh medium and bilingual childcare provision funding.
- 10.3** Children’s Centres have established baselines and annually monitors progress in the provision of Welsh language and bilingual childcare settings, in all childcare sectors in accordance with definitions in Schedule 1.
- 10.4** Children’s Centres provide information to clients about the advantages of raising children bilingually and using Welsh in the family home, how to access Welsh medium literature, publications and availability of Welsh language classes.
- 10.5** Children’s Centres will ensure that parents are aware of the initiatives to support them in raising their children bilingually and using Welsh in the family home.
- 10.6** All promotional and other materials (written, web based) produced by Children’s Centres will be available bilingually in accordance with the Welsh Language Act.
- 10.7** When new policies and initiatives are being formulated the linguistic consequences are assessed.
- 10.8** There is a commitment to delivering an equally high quality service in both the English and Welsh language.
- 10.9** Clients will receive communications in the language of their choice (English or Welsh).
- 10.10** Arrangements will be made for a Welsh speaker to be available where clients wish to communicate in this language.
- 10.11** Information will be provided to clients which clearly specifies if a childcare provider operates in a:
- (a) Welsh medium setting
  - (b) Welsh medium and English medium setting
  - (c) bilingual setting
  - (d) predominantly English medium setting with some use of Welsh
  - (e) English medium setting
- 10.12** All signage in offices or for events will be bilingual with Welsh given equal prominence to English.





## STANDARD 11

### – Partnership, procurement and resourcing arrangements for the delivery of information advice and assistance improves the support of clients.

- 11.1 Any partnership arrangements formulated locally for the delivery of information, advice and assistance services are informed by detailed assessment of the numbers, profile and needs of clients and potential clients locally.
- 11.2 Any partnership arrangements formulated locally for the delivery of information, advice and assistance services are determined following consultations with clients, potential clients, service providers and other external agencies as appropriate.
- 11.3 Any partnership arrangements formulated locally for the delivery of information, advice and assistance services are informed by systematic arrangements for identifying gaps and shortcomings in existing information, advice and assistance provision.
- 11.4 The procurement and contracting of information, advice and assistance services (for example, if a LA outsources any of its Children's Centres or Children's Centre service) are open and transparent and conducted in line with relevant EU and UK law, regulations, guidance and good practice.
- 11.5 Any partnership arrangements formulated locally for the delivery of information, advice and assistance services take into account performance against these quality standards and other relevant frameworks and implementation guidelines.
- 11.6 The Children's Centre will look to secure appropriate resourcing to effectively support its partners.



## STANDARD 12

### – The Children's Centre meets organisational and /or commissioning requirements. This Standard is mandatory for clusters and optional for individual Children's Centres.

- 12.1 Children's Centre resources are deployed effectively (considering value for money) and the use of resources is reviewed in light of evaluation and outcomes monitoring.
- 12.2 Data and performance management systems and processes are robust and data is used to effectively target families in the reach area.
- 12.3 The Children's Centre advisory board demonstrates effective governance and decision making through its work with families, stakeholders and partner organisations.
- 12.4 Children's Centre staff, volunteers and advisory board members and demonstrate a sound understanding of risk management in relation to:
  - (a) Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults
  - (b) Health, safety and security (including First Aid)
  - (c) Managing risk (for example risk assessments for home visiting arrangements)
- 12.5 The Children's Centre management provide effective leadership, supervision and training / development to its staff.
- 12.6 The Children's Centre services quality assure all it's services by assessing and meeting the needs of its clients, effective evaluation against outcomes and continuous improvement planning. Particular attention is given to locally commissioned services. [see also 7.9, 7.10]

# FAMILIES FIRST STANDARDS

for Sure Start Children's Centres

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## **Family and Childcare Trust**

The Bridge, 81 Southwark Bridge Road, London SE1 0NQ E  
[info@familyandchildcaretrust.org](mailto:info@familyandchildcaretrust.org) [familyandchildcaretrust.org](http://familyandchildcaretrust.org)

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