

Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Annual Update

March 2010

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Approved by Janet Hicks, Head of Early Childhood Services

1.0 Introduction

The London Borough of Newham carried out a childcare assessment in 2008. The aim of the assessment was to identify gaps in the childcare market and plan how to address these in consultation with parents, childcare providers and the wider community. This assessment enabled us to meet the statutory requirement in the Children Act 2006, for authorities to assess and secure sufficient childcare within their local area.

Newham carried out this assessment in 2008 and identified a number of gaps in childcare provision. This report provides an update for each of the gaps and provides information on key pieces of work that Children & Young People Services have been focussing on over the last couple of years that relate to childcare in Newham. We have also undertaken to provide the latest information on the population of Newham.

2.0 Gaps Identified during the 2008/09 Assessment

The childcare assessment identified a number of gaps when mapping supply to demand. This section sets out what progress has been made to address these.

Gap 1 – Affordability

Although childcare in Newham is cheaper than the outer London average, cost is still referred to as a barrier to using formal childcare by parents.

Newham is one of 152 local authorities delivering a targeted free Early Learning and Family Support Programme to disadvantaged two year olds and their families. The offer is for 15 hours of (term time) childcare, with parent access to family support. During the year April 09 to March 10 170 children have taken up places on the scheme.

Newham also takes an active role in publicising the offer of 12hours free entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds. From September 2010 all local authorities will be offering an extended free entitlement for 15 hours per week (term time), with greater flexibility to better meet parents' needs. As at January 2010 Newham has 57 of the 63 private and voluntary sector free entitlement providers delivering the new enhanced offer and 19 of the 65 maintained sector free entitlement providers delivering the new enhanced offer. We aim to raise this number significantly over the coming months.

Across children centres we offer a range of employment and benefits session for parents, these are delivered through the Early Childhood Service employment advisors, Newham Workplace, Job Centre Plus and other key employment partners. Our employment advisors offer advice on back to work expenses including the working families element of tax credits to support their childcare costs in order to address affordability.

Gap 2 – Suitability/accessibility

Further work with parents with children with additional needs would need to be carried out. Currently, this group has low awareness of childcare services available in the borough.

The Early Years and Childcare Service has been developing stronger links with the Aiming High Team in the Children and Young Peoples Service, with a view to more joined up working to support disabled children and families. We have been co-ordinating resources to enhance information and support for both professionals and parents.

Gap 3 – Age range

Low levels of formal childcare for children over the age of 8 were identified. Further consultation with children of this age would need to be carried out to establish and meet their needs.

Funding from the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCFS) and Big Lottery Fund in 2009/10 has enabled us to complete a number of play sites for children over eight. The funding was linked with local funds and the Aiming High grant to enable 'accessible' play spaces to develop in Newham. A further eleven sites are now being developed for 2010/11.

The Government objective of lifting children out of poverty and improving outcomes for them and their families is using extended schools as a key vehicle for delivery. An extended school works with the local authority and other partners to offer access to a range of services and activities which support and motivate children and young people to achieve their full potential.

These services and activities are:

- a varied range of activities, including study support, sport and music clubs, combined with childcare in primary schools before and after school,
- community access to school facilities including adult and family learning, ICT and sports grounds,
- swift and easy access (referral) to targeted and specialist services,
- parenting and family support.

In Newham we have 100% of schools delivering the Extended Schools Core Offer to their children, young people and families. Each school is offering the full core offer either on site or nearby through other agencies and partner organisations. The target for all local authorities to reach 100% is by September 2010. Newham has reached this target by March 2010, in advance of the deadline.

DCSF commissioned a project called The Safe Place to Be (SPTB) to look at the current provision of childcare for older children (age 11-14years) across secondary schools in three designated boroughs in East London and one rural area in Kent. The aim of the project is to develop sustainable childcare provision between 3-6pm on school days and from 10-4pm in the holidays. Newham along with Tower Hamlets and Hackney are the three East London boroughs involved.

Three secondary schools were identified in Newham to participate; Kingsford, Langdon and Brampton Manor. Consultation with parents (89), schools staff (99) and students (103) to determine need and demand has been successfully carried out at the three selected schools. We will be able to provide an update on the findings in the next review 2011.

The SPTB project provides an opportunity to look at the current trends in supply and demand of childcare for older children and provides evidence that there is a need for sustainable childcare provision between 11-14years, especially for lone parents who seek to go back to work.

Gap 4 – Level of provision

The findings were that for parents with children over the age of 5, only 50% felt that their childcare needs were being met. Further investigations into the needs of parents with older children would have to be carried out.

Engagement and consultation are key and the Newham Play Team within the Early Childhood Service have developed a programme of outreach to local schools to engage children, young people, parents and professionals in the benefits of after school and holiday play provision. Once this work is underway we will be looking into developing continuing consultation from families and young people in the services on offer.

The Safe Place to Be (SPTB) project involved consultation that looked into the needs of children aged 11-14 years old and their parents; see above for details.

Gap 5 – Quality

Using Ofsted information, quality of childcare services is lower than the national average. Continuous monitoring of quality to tackle parents' concerns and promote choice is needed.

From September 2008 Newham Early Childhood Services carried out a training audit on Ofsted registered childminders to ensure all childminders were complying with Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) welfare requirements.

The childminder audit focussed on the core requirements, which are safeguarding children, food hygiene, first aid paediatric, health and safety, introduction to EYFS and level of qualification. All childminders identified in the audit that had not completed the minimum core requirements were invited to attend training.

In 2008 we carried out a mapping exercise and linked all childminders to their nearest children centre, within a 10 minute walking distance from their registered address. Most children centres have now recruited childminder co-ordinators to work with childminders in their area to raise quality of provision and offering training and support. Qualified teachers based at children centres assist each childminder co-ordinator in delivering Early Years Foundation Stage training.

From September 2009 Newham implemented a Quality Improvement Programme, entitled "Quality Matters", to identify the quality of provision across all settings in the private, voluntary and independent sectors in receipt of Nursery Education Grants.

All settings are graded as red, amber or green based on information in relation to their last Ofsted inspection outcome, setting self evaluation audit (completed in conjunction with their link Early Years Adviser), business support, staff qualifications and involvement in targeted programmes.

Review groups with representation from Early Years Advisory Team, Early Childhood Services and Children's Centre Qualified Teachers meet each term to agree and review ratings. Settings are informed of their RAG judgement in writing.

Gap 6 – Awareness

Throughout all of the consultations carried out, the findings were that awareness of services available to parents/carers in the borough was low. Further promotion of the Children's Information Service to parents/carers would be needed.

As part of the Marketing Plan 2009/10 for the whole of the Early Childhood Service we set three priorities for the Family Information Service to reach families through a range of different publications and planned assertive outreach sessions.

The new publications are:

1. Children Centre Booklet - a generic booklet advertising the 20 children centres and 4 outreach centres, explaining what these are and what services they offer showing a map of where they are.
2. Choosing Childcare Booklet – a guide to help parents know the questions to ask when choosing childcare.
3. Family Information Service Leaflet – a leaflet describing the services of the Family Information Service and advertising the free phone number.

The Outreach team delivers sessions to help raise awareness of childcare availability, give information on the cost of childcare and benefits available to working parents. In each quadrant of the borough there will be at least 2-3 outreach sessions held within children centres. These sessions are pre-arranged and advertised in the activity booklets of each children centre.

We realise that there are benefits of communicating with community professionals about the Family Information Service. As a service, we may not be reaching all parents in the borough, but every parent will come into contact with a community professional i.e. health visitors, social workers, nursery staff and children centre staff. So we now work closely with community professionals to ensure that these groups are well aware of the Family Information Service and are in a position to direct their clients to it.

Each enquiry that comes into the Family Information Service is monitored with the aim of providing data to inform the continued development of the service to meet the needs of users and children/young people within the local area. This data together with the enquiry data enables the FIS to identify areas of future development for the service, for example:

- Geographical areas in need of outreach work or publicity as not currently being served by the service.
- Main areas in need of updating due to demand
- New areas of information or packs to assist particular groups, for example new parents
- Areas in need of more childcare/support services as unable to assist current enquirers

3.0 Demographic Information

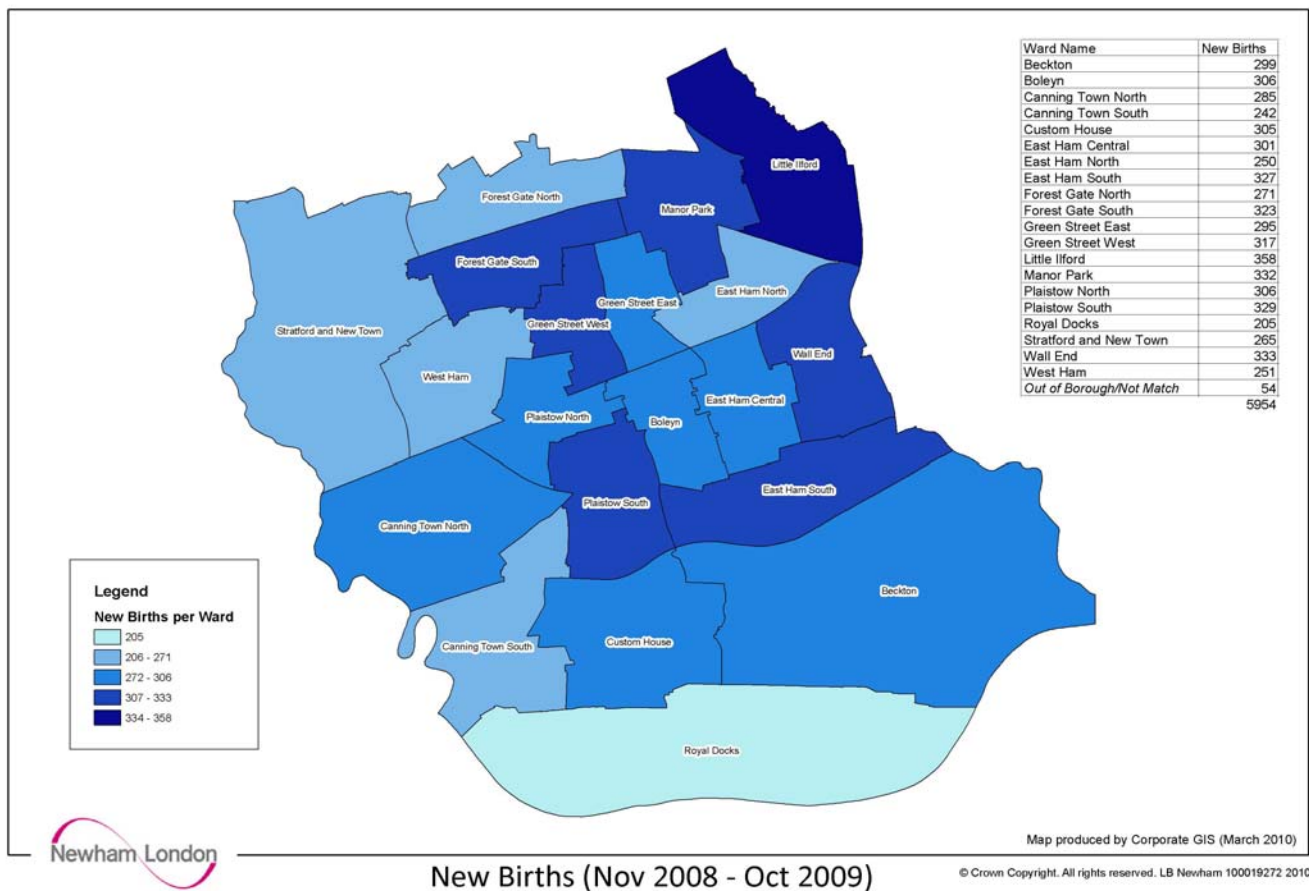
Population Figures

Newham's population is diverse, young and growing. Newham has one of the largest and most diverse mix of ethnic minority groups in the country, 28% of the population is under 20 years of age, and there is a projected 3% increase in population every year due to a combination of high internal migration and high birth rate. In addition there is a high turnover of population with an estimated "churn" of 20% per year. This also makes getting reliable estimates of the population difficult and estimates from Office of National Statistics (ONS), GLA and local GP registration data vary widely from 250,000 to 320,000.

In November 2009, ONS released statistics saying that Newham's population is 245,800. The London Borough of Newham (LBN) believes the current ONS estimates and projections do not reflect its population. The GLA figure is 268,459 (2008). Independent researchers Mayhew support the LBN view that the ONS has been undercounting the number of residents in Newham and estimate that we have at least 270,100 people living in the borough.

Birth Rates

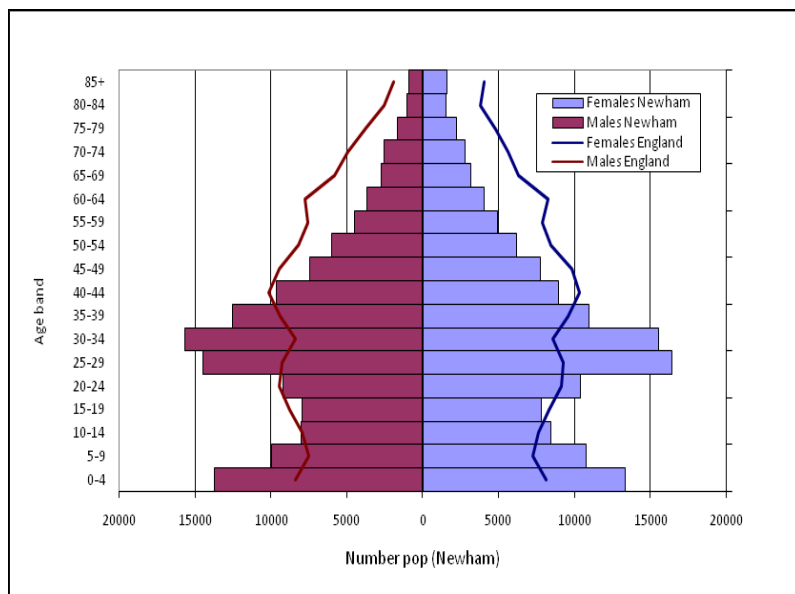
According to the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (2007) Newham has the highest birth rate in the country, with 5,523 live births in 2006. More recent figures¹ show that there were 6,221 births in Newham over a 12 month period (Nov 08 to Oct 09), with 52 deaths. Additionally 226 children were born outside of Newham but transferred into the Borough after birth, and 444 transferred out of the Borough after birth², taking the total to 5,954. This is almost 8% increase from 2006. The diagram below shows the new births in the Borough are spread across the wards.



¹ Data produced and supplied to us by the PCT.

² The transfer in and out only account for children who move in or out of borough within a very short period following their birth and do not account for all the children moving in and out of borough.

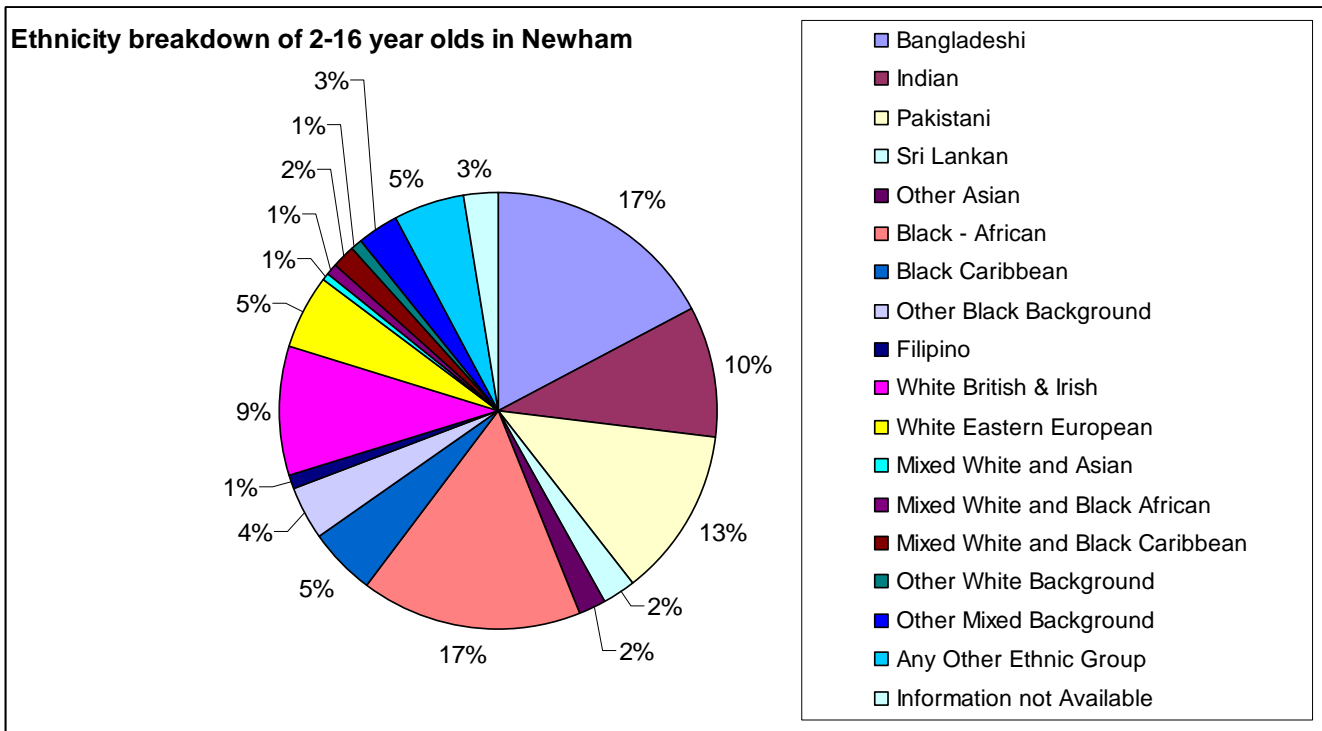
Newham has one of the highest proportions of young people in the country and numbers are expected to grow. The age structure of the Newham population is predominantly young. This is reflected in the population pyramid where Newham's population age and gender structure is compared to the structure for England (below). This shows that Newham has proportionally more children aged 0-10 than the England average, and a higher proportion of population aged 25-39 than the England average.



Source: 2006 ONS pop projection (England) and 2008 GLA pop projection (Newham)

Ethnicity

Population by ethnic groups has been based on PLASC school data for 2-16 year olds (2009), which provides a more accurate reflection of the ethnic diversity of the borough than the last Census data.



Newham is a particularly diverse, 84% of children living in the borough are from a non white ethnic group, 4% more than in 2008. The majority of 2-16 year olds living in Newham are from an Asian background (44%). The Asian population in Newham is predominantly Bangladeshi (17%), Pakistani (13%) and Indian (10%).

26% of the Newham's 2-16 year old population are Black, this group is predominantly from a Black African (17%) origin. The White population (14%) is made up of predominantly White British and Irish (9%) and 5% of Eastern Europeans.

Language

In 2008 we reported that there were over 140 languages spoken in Newham (DfES). In 2009 the PLASC data indicates that more than 180 languages are spoken in Newham.

The table below shows the top ten languages spoken in Newham according to PLASC in order of most widely spoken. Also included is the top ten languages requested at Newham Language Shop.

PLASC 2004	PLASC 2009	Newham Language Shop
1. English	1. English	1. Bengali
2. Bengali	2. Bengali	2. Urdu
3. Urdu	3. Urdu	3. Somali
4. Gujarati	4. Gujarati	4. Tamil
5. Punjabi	5. Somali	5. Polish
6. African – other	6. Tamil	6. Punjabi
7. Somali	7. Punjabi	7. Portuguese
8. Yoruba	8. Portuguese	8. Gujarati
	9. Lithuanian	9. Romanian
	10. Yoruba	10. British Sign Language

Economic Issues

As one would expect in a deprived borough there are high rates of child poverty and it is estimated that over 50% of children are living in poverty and one in 10 are living in intense poverty.

The socioeconomic profile of the borough is a challenging one. Newham is the 6th most deprived borough in the country and all of the super output areas are in the most deprived 40%; 64% are in the worst 10% for income deprivation. In parallel with this, there are higher rates of unemployment, poorer quality and more overcrowded housing and higher crime rates (for many categories of crime) than the London and national averages.

4.0 Disabled Children

Childcare for disabled children presents a number of challenges that need to be addressed but equally there are additional areas of support that can be considered to be childcare as they provide some assistance with looking after their child/ren. Here we focus on the short break support available for disabled children.

Since January 2009 Newham Children's Right's service (NCRS) has been consulting with children and young people about short break services. Children, young people and their families have been telling us how Newham should increase and create access, and improve the quality of services they receive.

The Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC) Programme was introduced in 2007 by the Government and is a three year programme of work, in line with funding allocations through the Sure Start, Early Years and Childcare Grant. The largest investment component in the 'Aiming High' programme is for the transformation of short break services, to give severely disabled children and their families' access to a wide range of services that reflects their needs.

Newham is being supported and monitored by Together for Disabled Children appointed by the Government. For Phase 2 (2009-2010) Newham received £367,400 in revenue and £185,400 in capital with a further 90K from Newham NHS. In Phase 3 (2010-2011), Newham will be receiving £1,185,000 in revenue and £432,700 in capital. The priority groups that the Government has asked all local areas to prioritise are:

- Children and young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder with severe learning difficulties and/or challenging behavior,
- Children and young people with complex health needs, including disabled children with life limiting conditions, those requiring palliative care,
- Disabled children with complex needs including cognitive, physical and sensory impairments associated with other impairments,
- Children and young people aged 11+ with moving and handling needs that require equipment and adaptations.

The Aiming High for Disabled Children Short Breaks Programme in Newham was delivered mainly through individual budgets in 2009/10. The number of disabled children receiving short breaks during 2008/09 was 325. Our overall short breaks target for 2009/10 was to provide a further 119 (making a total of 444) disabled children receiving short breaks. We successfully met this target and have provided 147 short breaks to disabled children with complex needs and their families. This included 93 individual budgets, 22 community group based activities (Saturday club) and 32 individual short break services.

For 2010/11 we are projecting a further 400 new short breaks services to be provided to disabled children (bring the total to 844) offering a menu of choice including individual budget, direct payments, community group based provision (Saturday schemes, after school club, holiday schemes) that is universal and specialist. We will also look at investing in community play sites that provide added value to disabled children, specialist and adapted equipment. The final recommendations for the 2010/11 budget are currently being developed and will be reported on in the 2010/11 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment.

Consultation

Over the last 18 months, there has been a programme of comprehensive consultation with disabled children and young people and their families about what kind of short breaks services are needed in Newham. NCRS was commissioned by Newham Children's Commissioning to lead on the participation and involvement process with children and young people. NCRS' brief was to work creatively with children and young people with special education needs (SEN) and other disabilities to ascertain from them where this new funding should be spent in order to provide a range of different services and activities to fill gaps in services and enhance current provision.

The NCRS participation workers worked in partnership with a creative arts project worker who has extensive experience with disabled children and young people. There was also joint work with an organisation called DISCOVER to develop participation activities and workshops to capture the views of children across a wide age range and level of disabilities to deliver meaningful and creative pieces of participation work in order to inform future short breaks service provision.

Information was sent to families and organisations that work with and/or provide services for disabled children, young people and their families to ensure a good mix of ages, BME and types of disability in order to reflect the views of a good cross section of children and young people. The age range of the children and young people that currently attend and participate at the forums is 10 – 19 years old, covering a variety of disabilities (including autism, Asperger's syndrome, learning difficulties, physical disabilities, Down's syndrome, deaf and ADHD).

The following questions were put to all participants:

- What leisure activities do you want to do in your spare time?
- Where would you like to do the activities?
- Who would you like to do the activities with?
- Why do you like these leisure activities?
- When do you like to do them?

Consultation Outcomes

The common theme was about flexibility and having choice. Disabled children and young people want to participate in ordinary activities such as:

- youth clubs,
- leisure centres,
- adventure activities,
- having sleepovers with their friends, and
- having a carer/support worker that is young and shares the same interests as the child.

This was evident in the take up of individual budgets as families were purchasing universal services for their children to access i.e. horse riding lessons, swimming lessons, going to a theme park, weekend camping trips, employing a personal assistant to support and access cultural sites and attractions. The individual budget allowed the families to be creative in what they could purchase to facilitate a short break for their child i.e. touch screen laptop with education programmes, sensory toy equipment, adapted bicycles, and duplicate equipment such as a bunk bed to facilitate the child's friend to sleepover on weekends.

5.0 Quality Improvement Support Programme (QISP)

The aim of the Early Years Advisory Team (EYAT) and Early Childhood Services Team (ECS) is to develop and improve the quality of provision for all children from birth to five. A key way to achieving this is the Quality Improvement Support Programme.

The Quality Improvement Support Programme aims to raise and sustain the quality of early years' experiences for all children and families in Newham. It is part of a broad strategy to ensure the local authority fulfils its duty to improve outcomes for all young children and reduce inequalities between them (Childcare Act 2006).

The core aspect of the Quality Improvement Support Programme is the Pathway to Quality that is the assessment of quality and the level of support the setting needs to improve. This involves:

- Completion of a self review audit
- Reviewing self evaluation forms, welfare requirements and any action plans in place
- Agree an initial level of support
- Develop an action plan and agree priorities
- Progress reviews

All settings are assigned a level on the QISP which ensures the appropriate support can be given by the Early Years and Early Childhood Services Teams.

The support levels are:

Green The setting is entitled to regular support

Amber The setting will receive targeted support

Red The setting will receive intensive support

The Early Years Advisory Team will offer:	Green	Amber	Red
Number of minimum visits per term	1	2	4
Telephone/email support	✓	✓	✓
Access to EYFS training as laid out in Newham's Childcare and Playwork Training Programme	✓		
Priority booking for one place on identified Enjoy and Achieve training		✓	✓
Monthly managers' forums	✓	✓	✓
Self evaluation workshop each term	✓	✓	✓
Four communication language and literacy development cluster meetings per year	✓	✓	✓
Two setting closure days between April to March each year (three if a Children's Centre)	✓	✓	✓
Support to setting Special Needs Co-ordinators	✓	✓	✓
Support with completion of Pathway to Quality	✓	✓	✓
Access to loan resources	✓	✓	✓
Attendance at OFSTED inspection feedback	✓	✓	✓

The assigning of a QISP level is done by the Quadrant Review Group, which consists of representatives from the Early Years Advisory Team, Early Childhood Services and qualified teachers based in Children's Centres.

The criteria used to measure each setting are:

1. Securing high quality environments for learning
2. Supporting progress and learning
3. Strengthening leadership for learning
4. Developing practitioner learning
5. Facilitating partnerships for learning

When measuring each setting against these criteria the Quadrant Review Group consider a number of things that assist them in determining a QISP level, these are:

- Outcomes of the self review audit
- OFSTED Self Evaluation Form
- Current OFSTED inspection outcome
- Early Years Advisers' visit notes
- Business planning and support
- Level of staff qualifications

The Quadrant Review Group carry out a review of each setting and their progress along the Pathway to Quality, considering:

- Further OFSTED inspection outcomes
- Progress against the OFSTED action plan
- Progress against the Pathway to Quality action plan
- Early Years Advisers' visit notes
- Significant staff changes/new owners

A setting which receives an OFSTED inspection outcome of inadequate (1 or 2) will automatically receive a rating of red to provide the appropriate level of support required. This will be reviewed at the end of the first monitoring visit or re-inspection visit, whichever takes place sooner.

Where settings are not making any progress towards improved quality Nursery Education Grant (NEG) funding may be withdrawn and the setting removed from the Family Information Service (FIS).

6.0 Newham Early Years Healthy Eating Scheme

The Newham Early Years Healthy Eating Scheme (EYHES) was set up in Newham, by the Early Childhood Services Community Nutritionist Service (ECSCNS), to ensure best practice around healthy eating within nurseries and children's centres. It encourages and recognises Early Years Settings (EYS) within the borough that provide nutritious and varied food for children. The scheme is open to all EYS in the borough and provides support, guidance and free training on topics including:

- nutrition for children under 5 years,
- menu planning,
- food and allergy policies
- developing a suitable eating environment to enhance the children's social and cultural development.

The scheme works on a three tiered system and EYS are awarded either one, two or three stars depending on their level of achievement in the EYHES. All settings are re-visited every 6 months to ensure standards are continuing to be met and stars removed where standards are not maintained.

Between April to December 2009 there were 41 EYS that took part in the scheme, with an additional 15 that have shown an interest in participating. A new Food Project Officer has started and will be working with these interested settings.

Of the 41 EYS on the scheme 41% (17) achieved 3 stars, 15% (6) achieved 2 stars, and 10% (4) achieved 1 star. Nine of the settings are in the process of working towards a star award.

ECSCNS also have an After School Clubs Healthy Eating Scheme (ASCHEs), which runs in parallel with the EYHES using the same criteria and training programme.

Between April to December 2009 there were 13 after school clubs that took part in the scheme. Of these six achieved 3 stars, one achieved 1 star and the other six are in the process of achieving their award; all are expected to achieve 3 stars by April 2010.

Healthy Eating Scheme Training Programme

ECSCNS provide training on healthy eating and menu planning for child care staff in Newham. The Healthy Eating Study day for 0-5yrs and Healthy Menus Healthy Children for 0-5yrs is aimed at all early years practitioners. The Healthy Eating Study day for 5-16yrs and Healthy Menus Healthy Children for 5-16yrs is aimed at practitioners working with children aged from 5-16yrs.

Healthy Eating Study Day aims:

- To raise awareness of healthy eating principles for young children
- To give practical ideas on preparing healthy snacks
- To explore best practice in relation to food and drink

Healthy Menus Healthy Children aims:

- To develop knowledge of healthy eating principles for young children
- To understand the food based guidelines for provision of meals in nurseries
- To develop the skills needed to modify existing menus to meet new specifications

To assess the impact of the training on participant's knowledge, a pre and post evaluation is conducted and the average scores recorded. Results indicate an improvement in attendees' knowledge of healthy eating principles after all the training days.

7.0 Free Entitlement

2 Year Old Free Early Learning and Childcare

Newham is one of 152 local authorities delivering a targeted free Early Learning and Family Support Programme to disadvantaged two year olds and their families. The offer is for 15 hours of (term time) childcare, with parent access to family support.

During the year April 09 to March 10 170 children have taken up places on the scheme. A breakdown of the criteria by which children have accessed the scheme is shown below:

Child with additional needs	40	Siblings with additional needs	25
Main carer has a medical condition	41	Family in temporary accommodation	33
Family known to social services	27	Child on child protection register	8
Child with complex family issues	22	Child in care	0
Teenage pregnancy	0	Lone Parent (new from Jan 10)	7
Child is one of at least three under 5's in the family (new from Sept 09)			8

Note* Some children meet more than 1 criteria

Free Entitlement for 3 and 4 Year Olds

From September 2010 all local authorities will be offering an extended free entitlement for 15 hours per week (term time), with greater flexibility to better meet parents' needs. As at January 2010 Newham has 57 of the 63 private and voluntary sector free entitlement providers delivering the new enhanced offer and 19 of the 65 maintained sector free entitlement providers delivering the new enhanced offer. We will be increasing the number of settings involved over the next few months to meet the September 2010 deadline.

8.0 Play Developments

Funding from the DCSF and BLF in 2009 – 10 has enabled us to complete a number of play sites for children over eight. The funding was linked with local funds and the Aiming High grant to enable accessible play spaces to develop in Newham. A further 11 sites are now being developed for 2010 - 11.

Conditions of funding require us to:

- provide innovative and stimulating equipment and landscaping on sites
- involve children and young people, parents, carers and the wider community and locally elected members in the decisions about where and how funding will be spent
- ensure better access and experiences for disabled children
- ensure that children are able to travel to and from play areas in safety
- ensure that the capital investment is sustainable in terms of protection of sites against vandalism and ongoing maintenance

Linked to the capital investment has been the recruitment of the Play People in Parks team. The team of 2 senior play workers and 4 play workers are developing open access play in the community and have established sites in parks, children centres, schools and a community centre.

Engagement and consultation are key and the team have developed a programme of outreach to local schools to engage children, young people, parents and professionals in the benefits of after school and holiday play provision.

A specialist provision for families of disabled children piloted in 2009 has been established on a monthly basis with links back to the open access play developments. We have also developed with partners an environmental play project called Play Sow and Grow.

We work in partnership with the PVI sector and commission 4 other open access play projects including one after school and holiday provision that is housed next to a brand new adventure playground. Built and designed with help from children and young people and funded through BLF and Play Builder the project has expanded access for young people to a range of play experiences.

We are working with Aiming High colleagues to further develop accessible play sites and services for children and young people.

Each year we run two major and nine mini play days for children. They are very successful and are linked wherever possible to other initiatives to engage children and young people in environmental and lifestyle issues e.g. planting, healthy living.

9.0 Newham Family Information Service

Each local authority is required to run a Family Information Service and Newham has recently been commended for the quality of information available. The information held by Newham is updated twice a year. The enquirer can access information via our Free phone number, or email the Family Information Service to request information. The website is being developed to provide better access to information.

Enquiries are monitored so that we can continually develop the service to meet the needs of users and children/young people within the local area. The data is also used to inform the childcare sufficiency assessment in terms of planning and development.

The data is analysed quarterly in the following ways:

- Geographical area of enquiry
- Number and approximate age groups of child/young person
- Type of information requested
- Type of enquirer, i.e. parent, professional, youth etc.
- Reason information is required
- How the enquirer heard about the service
- Pattern of calls by day of the week and month

We also provide an evaluation form to each enquirer to find out their opinions of the service and information provided, and whether they would use the service again.

The information obtained from this monitoring and analysis has helped the Family Information Service to identify the following:

- Geographical areas in need of outreach work or publicity
- Main areas in need of updating due to demand
- New areas of information or packs to assist particular groups
- Areas in need of more childcare/support services

Outreach Work

Newham's Family Information Service has taken a pro-active approach to disseminating information and raising awareness of how to get information by doing outreach work.

These outreach sessions provide information on childcare options/early years provision and availability, advice on help with the cost of childcare and benefits for working parents or those in further education and promote careers in childcare encouraging new childcare provisions in Newham.

Outreach sessions are carried out in all the children and outreach centres in Newham. In each quadrant of the borough there will be at least 2-3 outreach sessions held within children centres. These sessions are pre-arranged and advertised in the activity booklets of each children centre.

In addition surgeries, information stands, presentations and printed publicity are used to raise the profile of the Family Information Service.

Surgeries – these are pre-advertised sessions where people can receive one-to-one attention.

Information stands – these are located at public events/locations from which publicity is distributed regarding the Family Information Service. It is also possible that one-to-one information can be provided.

Presentations - these are delivered to groups (e.g. community groups, parents groups, providers, professional forums) in order to raise awareness of the Family Information Service.

Printed publicity – arrangements have been made to distribute leaflets and booklets to 190 sites in the borough including libraries, local service centres, community centres and health sites. 36 of these sites have been identified as "key sites", where the display of leaflets is checked every 2/3 weeks.

We realise that there are benefits of communicating with community professionals about the Family Information Service. As a service, we may not be reaching all parents in the borough, but every parent will come into contact with a community professional. So we now work closely with community professionals to ensure that these groups are well aware of the Family Information Service and are in a position to direct their clients to it; some of these are:

- Health visitors
- Social workers
- Community / Midwives
- School nurses
- Connexions Personal Advisers
- Children's Centre Staff
- Job Centre Plus staff
- Family support staff
- Young carers and family support agencies
- Nursery staff
- Home Start workers

Extended School Services Information

We are developing an Extended Services in Schools booklet, which covers the range of services delivered by schools before and after school hours. It also includes organisation and services in the schools catchment area that families can be sign posted to.

This should be out during the summer term, and will be distributed to all schools, children centres and used at our outreach events.

Family Information Direct

In addition to the local information services the Government launched the Family Information Direct programme on 20 January 2010. It aims to provide more comprehensive information to parents/carers across England on a range of issues they may face in bringing up children in addition to childcare that makes the job of bringing up children a little easier, e.g. support groups, health services and youth clubs.

The Family Information Direct provides information, advice and support through a number of different channels: parents and family members can ring a telephone helpline or go online for personalised advice; they can join a social network to get support from others in similar circumstances; watch online videos for handy tips; or read articles in newspapers and magazines.

Family Information Direct is uploaded with information from the local Family Information Service database. Newham's information is above the thresholds set by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and with some work to make the systems data compatible was able to implement the upload to Family Information Direct.

10.0 Next Steps

Newham will be carrying out a further childcare assessment during 2010/11. The following areas will be considered:

- Sustainability of childcare in Newham
- Holiday scheme provision
- Childcare for disabled children
- Impact of the two year old free extended child care pilot
- Flexible childcare provision for 3 and 4 year olds
- Extended childcare offer for over 8s
- Economic impact on childcare

In conjunction with these areas we plan to carry out consultation with the following groups:

- Childcare providers
- Parents
- Children and young people