

**REPORT TO:** Children & Young People Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 6<sup>th</sup> January 2011

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Children & Young People

**SUBJECT:** Kingsway Children Centre OfSTED Inspection

**WARD(S)** Borough-wide

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

**1.1 To feedback to the CYP PPB on Halton's First Children's Centre OfSTED Inspection and subsequent action plan**

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That:  
See attached action plan**

**3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**3.1** There were many positives that were highlighted in the inspection:-

- Quality of partnerships
- Good engagement of parents
- Promotion of personal and emotional development of parents
- Good safety promotion
- Strong targeted services
- Equality and diversity in particular the efforts to engage fathers
- Work with vulnerable groups

**3.2** Preparation for OfSTED Inspections of Children Centres in Halton started in April after the completion of the efficiency review of services. Since then a lot has been achieved and a number of key features that were missing have been addressed but it remains that the preparation for inspection has been a relatively short process.

**3.3** This first Children's Centre inspection has allowed us to calibrate our expectations around future inspections and has confirmed the areas that we need to do more work on.

**3.4** The issue that dominated the inspection was our difficulty in producing reach area data on some of the health related Children Centre performance indicators in particular:

- percentage of mothers initiating breastfeeding (NIS 53 and children's centre key performance indicator)

- percentage of mothers sustaining breastfeeding at 6 weeks
- smoking cessation – for women who are pregnant and other members of the family
- immunisation rates

3.5 The Inspectors quite rightly were not interested in Halton level data, they were interested in the needs analysis for the Kingsway reach area, how that needs analysis was reflected in planning and then how local data was used to evaluate effectiveness and set reach area targets. We knew that this was going to be a problem because much of this data isn't available at anything other than a Widnes or Halton level.

3.6 The effect of this on the inspection was that whilst their judgement was that the quality of provision was good and the outcomes for children and families were good the overall effectiveness was limited to satisfactory.

This comes about because without the local level data it is impossible to show that planning reflects local needs, that targets are local, that provision reflects those needs and local evaluation is then used to judge effectiveness of provision within that reach area. The way that the OfSTED judgement schedule for Children's Centre's works is that this leads to Satisfactory for Leadership and Management, that then links and limits the judgement on capacity to improve to Satisfactory which then links and limits the overall judgement to Satisfactory.

This needs to be addressed as unless it is possible to shift this is going to be a limiting factor all Children's Centre Inspections in Halton.

3.7 During the inspection the Inspectors were asked what they were finding in other areas, as this team has done a number of Children Centre inspections around the North West, and we were told that they were seeing this level of data in many places elsewhere.

3.8 There are also some issues that we need to look at in terms of services we commission reporting in sufficient detail to be used in reach area planning and evaluation.

3.9 Other issues that were raised were that OfSTED felt there were issues with the building in Kingsway regarding accessibility for parents.

3.10 Whilst local level health data was not available the issue of local level data on Children centre reach areas has been made much more difficult because the reach areas do not always follow ward

boundaries as a consequence of the DCSF insisting through the 2009 restructuring of Halton Children Centres that each reach area contain 1200 0-5 year old children.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None

5.0 **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

5.2 This inspection shows a need to work closely with the PCT to ensure that health data is available down to local areas

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton:  
Children's Centres are central to national and local thinking around early intervention and prevention

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton  
Children Centres work closely with Job Centre Plus and Adult Learning to increase the employability of centre users.

6.3 A Healthy Halton  
Many key children centre targets are health related and shared with the PCT

6.4 A Safer Halton  
The current anti-social behaviour family intervention project is located in Kingsway Children Centre

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal  
None

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 The key risk is that the lack of health data impacts on subsequent Children Centre inspections and that this is then reflected in the Annual Children's Services Assessment

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 Children Centres exist to increase the availability of opportunity for all.

9.0 **REASON(S) FOR DECISION**

10.0 **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

11.0 **IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

12.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer