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Subject	Programme details
Integrating services for young children and their families	
Early education	Nursery Education scheme ▶ Annexe 1
Children's Centres	Children's Centres – core offer ▶ Annexe 2
Sure Start local programmes	Sure Start local programmes – delivery arrangements ▶ Annexe 3
Developing existing provision (nursery schools and classes, play-groups, EECs, Neighbourhood Nurseries)	Nursery schools development/Playgroup conversion ▶ Annexe 4
Creating and sustaining childcare	
Childcare place creation ▶ Out of school ▶ Childminders/home childcarers	Defining childcare ▶ Annexe 5 Out of School scheme/extended schools ▶ Annexe 6 Start Up Grant/Support Childminders ▶ Annexe 7
Sustainability ▶ Business support ▶ Sustainability scheme	Sustainability Grant ▶ Annexe 8
Affordability	Affordability and employment ▶ Annexe 9
Information to parents	Children's Information Service ▶ Annexe 10
Quality, access and inclusion	
Children with special needs and disabled children	Area SENCOs + Inclusion ▶ Annexe 11
Supporting Children's Learning – Foundation Stage/Birth to Three	Early Years and Childcare Training/ Involvement of qualified teachers ▶ Annexe 13
Developing the workforce	
Recruitment and Retention	Recruitment ▶ Annexe 12
Early Years and Childcare Training	Early Years and Childcare Training ▶ Annexe 13

Code: Education Formula Spending is funding routed through local authorities. General Sure Start Grant is a ringfenced direct grant provided to local authorities for specific purposes identified in this guidance. Within the grant some elements are specifically ringfenced.

▶ Further details of arrangements are summarised in Annexe 14.

Funding source

Education Formula Spending

General Sure Start Grant
(Children's Centres)

Grant to Sure Start local programmes
(to accountable body)

General Sure Start Grant
(Neighbourhood Nursery strand)

General Sure Start Grant

As above

As above

General Sure Start Grant
(Sustainability strand)
As above

Working Tax Credits

General Sure Start Grant (but see conditions)
and Education Formula Spending

Education Formula Spending
General Sure Start Grant (SEN)

General Sure Start Grant
(Workforce Development)
Education Formula Spending

General Sure Start Grant
(Workforce Development)

As above

Introduction

This section contains details of the various elements of Sure Start at a local level. Details of services and activities that the Unit recommends are contained in Annexes 1 to 13. Details of funding arrangements for 2004–2006 are available in Annexe 14.

Integrating services for young children and their families

Local authorities should be developing high quality integrated local services in disadvantaged areas (and elsewhere where possible). This means bringing together early education, childcare, health and family support services so that families have one point of access. New childcare places could be created by integrating childcare with existing early education places and local authorities can encourage health partners to deliver services from these settings. Wherever possible, the Sure Start Unit (SSU) would like to see high quality early education and childcare provided as a key element of a wider offer to families that includes health and family support services.

1.1 Early education

Local authorities have responsibility to secure the provision of early education in their local area. Local authorities should ensure that all three and four year olds will be able to access a free, part-time early education place from April 2004. Free places can be provided in a variety of settings in the maintained, private, voluntary and independent sectors.

Since April 2003, local authorities have funded free nursery education places from their Education Formula Spending share. When providing free nursery education places, they must have regard for the guidance laid down in 'A Code of Practice on the Provision of Free Nursery Education Places' which is available from DfES Publications on 0845 6022260 (Quote reference LEA/0105/2003).

- ▶ Further details on the provision of free nursery education places can be found in Annexe 1.

1.2 Children's Centres

The Start Up Guidance for Children's Centres issued in February 2003 has already advised local authorities of the requirements for developing Children's Centres between 2004 and 2006. Local authorities should still refer to this guidance, taking into account additional information provided below.

- ▶ The core requirements for Children's Centres are included in Annexe 2.

Designating Children's Centres and the long term

The SSU recognises that it will not be possible in all cases to achieve both the core offer and full integration immediately. This should not prevent the designation of Children's Centres where a good range of services are available. Local authorities should ensure that a basic 'offer' of full day care suitable for working parents, delivery of the Foundation Stage curriculum,

some parent support and a link with Jobcentre Plus are available on designation. Centres will need to meet full requirements within a two year period of designation; local authorities should also review regularly the extent to which centres continue to meet both the core offer and deliver appropriately integrated services.

The Government recognises that lasting improvements of the sort envisaged through Children's Centres must be planned over a period of time and will take a while to embed. The Government is also committed to extending the network of Children's Centres over time so that every child living in the 20% most disadvantaged wards has access to their services. Although we cannot prejudge the outcome of future spending reviews nor give any guarantee of future levels of funding, we would expect local authorities to be planning their provision for the long term.

Quality and support for children's learning and development

Local authorities should ensure that proposed Children's Centres will have in place strong support for learning and the teaching offered. The Sure Start Unit expects Children's Centres to employ a teacher – in the first instance this can be half time. The teachers employed should have relevant early years training or experience. Centres offering this minimum level of teacher involvement should build on it over time. As for other elements of the core offer, it is recognised that this may not be achievable immediately – this should not prevent designations. Local authorities should expect centres to work towards this level of teaching input by March 2006.

Support for childminders and Home Childcarers

Children's Centres should play a role in supporting the recruitment and retention of childminders and Home Childcarers. There are a range of activities Centres could support, including:

- ▶ directly employing a number of childminders or Home Childcarers;
- ▶ employing a network coordinator;
- ▶ ensuring children (including disabled children) cared for by childminders or Home Childcarers can take part in activities provided by the Centre.

Where childminders or Home Childcarers are providing childcare places as part of a centre's core offer, these places should be fully integrated into the centre e.g. the places are allocated via the centre, childminders are included in curriculum planning and training, and the children are accessing Centre-based activities.

- ▶ **Childminders offering early education need to be part of a network accredited by Ofsted – see Annexe 7.**

Rural centres

The Sure Start Unit recognises that Children's Centres operating in rural areas are likely to need greater flexibility than those in urban areas. Given the nature of rural areas – dispersed settlements with small numbers of children – the same services may need to be repeated for small groups of families in convenient local venues. Full use should be made of community facilities such as school premises, parish churches and community centres.

The Sure Start Unit expects local authorities to develop more flexible models of childcare for centres in rural areas. A supported network of childminders may offer a suitable alternative to centre-based, care but they should have access to training, a base where they can share experience and a supply of age-appropriate learning materials. Where the network needs to provide early education it should be Ofsted approved.

- ▶ **See Annexe 7 for further information.**

Other issues local authorities may take into account include:

- ▶ use of mobile facilities to take both services and equipment to more remote communities – e.g. health visitors and family support workers can travel with a play bus to offer drop-in advice to parents;
- ▶ use of technology such as internet or videophone communication to provide advice and consultancy support by various specialists;
- ▶ focussing on delivering a few core services well rather than attempting to deliver a wide range of services and spread resources thinly e.g.:
 - antenatal and post natal care for mothers and babies;
 - special needs support;
 - parenting advice;
- ▶ link services for under-fives and their families with services provided for older children; this may involve the dual use of both premises and staff.

The Sure Start Unit has a small, centrally-held pot of funding to provide limited extra support. Local authorities which the Countryside Agency has identified as having rural wards have been offered a small amount of additional funding to facilitate Children's Centre development in their rural wards.

Involvement of voluntary sector

The SSU expects Children's Centres across the country as a whole to draw upon the expertise and experience available within the voluntary sector. The Unit is also concerned that the programme demonstrates ways in which the voluntary sector can deliver high quality services that will enhance the Children's Centre offer e.g. building on existing family centres. The Unit is currently considering how its funding of the voluntary sector at a national level can be used strategically to support this objective. The Unit will be monitoring the extent to which local authority plans for Children's Centres involve the voluntary sector.

Contact centres

The Government is developing a strategy for a national network of child contact centres (supported and supervised) that will provide an increased number and range of safe and neutral venues where a child can maintain contact with their non-resident parent and wider family.

One of the key features of the Government's strategy in developing child contact services is to signpost families involved in contact disputes to other family services, which can help them move on to managing contact themselves safely. Local authorities are encouraged to develop Children's Centres as a base to both provide child contact facilities and assist families through co-located children's services.

Monitoring

The Sure Start Unit will collect monitoring information on Children's Centres from local authorities. This will include regular information on progress in designating and setting up Children's Centres as well as some information to monitor activity. This is likely to include information on the number of childcare places provided and usage. Individual Children's Centres will need to submit information to local authorities. This will include Children's Centres in Sure Start local programmes (SSLPs). Other requirements for SSLPs will continue as at present. Final monitoring requirements are still being established and local authorities will be informed of these as soon as possible.

Total funding to support Children's Centres of £435 million (including capital) has been made available over the two year period 2004–06. These funds include provision to support the creation of 42,950 new pre-school centre-based childcare places in the 20% most disadvantaged wards. Those local authorities who will receive funding for Children's Centres have been advised of their indicative revenue and capital allocations in Naomi Eisenstadt's letter of 21 February 2003.

- ▶ **Details of the core offer for Children's Centres are available in Annexe 2.**
- ▶ **Funding for Children's Centres in disadvantaged areas is separately ringfenced within the General Sure Start Grant. See Annexe 14.**

1.3 Sure Start local programmes

Annexe 3 summarises arrangements for Sure Start local programmes. Local authorities should refer to Wave 6 Guidance for Sure Start local programmes for more detailed information about their operation. Local authorities should ensure that they are familiar with their local programmes and develop strategies to support them strategically, especially where there are several programmes in operation across the authority.

Sure Start local programmes will play a key role in developing Children's Centres – these will necessarily involve local partnerships. Local authorities and health trusts will also want to continue to work in partnership with programmes to ensure that the lessons from local programmes are taken on board in relation to early years, out of school and health services.

Funding for Sure Start local programmes is provided directly to the accountable bodies for the programmes.

- ▶ See Annexe 3 for a summary of arrangements for Sure Start local programmes.

1.4 Developing existing provision

Nursery Schools, Nursery Classes, Playgroups, Neighbourhood Nurseries and day nurseries, Early Excellence Centres

These forms of provision have a considerable contribution to make to the development of integrated provision and the creation of childcare places.

- ▶ For childminders see Section 2.6 and Annexe 7.

Early Excellence Centres provide a range of services to pre-school children and their families. Neighbourhood Nurseries and other day nurseries play a key role in increasing the supply of daycare in disadvantaged areas – detailed guidance issued in March 2001 still applies. Neighbourhood Nursery development should be taken fully into account when developing the local authority strategy for Children's Centres. This should include reviewing plans for nurseries which have yet to be completed under this programme, to see whether current building and service delivery plans can be adapted to facilitate their becoming Children's Centres.

In many areas, existing provision has a long history of delivering services to the local community, but now needs to develop to meet the changing needs of families. In disadvantaged areas, local authorities may decide that nursery schools, playgroups, Early Excellence Centres and Neighbourhood Nurseries should form the basis of a Children's Centre and allocate funds to achieve this. Alternatively they may want to consider how these forms of provision, in particular Early Excellence Centres, can inform wider local approaches to integrating daycare and early education.

The SSU is continuing to make funds available for nursery schools to extend their offer and for playgroups that wish to extend their opening hours and offer care for parents who wish to work. Schools may well want to extend the offer from a nursery class by integrating early education with childcare – either directly themselves or in partnership with others.

Funding totalling £10 million will be made available within the General Sure Start Grant to local authorities with maintained nursery schools. It is expected that any funding allocated to nursery schools in the 20% most disadvantaged wards will be focused on assisting nursery schools in becoming Children's Centres. Therefore the criteria for funding these nursery schools will be the same as for Children's Centres, i.e. the core offer and features of integration. The funds will continue to be allocated at a flat rate based on the number of nursery schools and pupils in each local authority area.

Capital funding is available to support playgroup conversion. £21.45 million has been included in the General Sure Start Grant (2004–6) to support 24,150 places (14,500 of which will be in disadvantaged areas). The funds will be allocated based on the 0–4 population projections for each local authority at 2004.

It is proposed that SSU funding for EECs (£28 million) will form part of the General Sure Start Grant. In which case, local authorities will be expected to delegate this funding directly to individual centres. Further details on this proposal will be issued in due course.

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For the existing Neighbourhood Nursery programme some £240 million (including Capital) has been made available for the three years 2003–06 and the balance of this (£140m), taking account of current anticipated spend in 2003–04, will be distributed for 2004–06. Local authorities will be notified of their allocations based on profiles of new nurseries opening.

- ▶ **Annexe 4 provides information about developing nursery schools and extending playgroups.**
- ▶ **See Annexe 14 for details on General Sure Start Grant including capital funding.**

Creating and sustaining childcare places

Local authorities and their partners already have considerable experience and expertise in developing new places. Over the next two years, it will be just as important to ensure sustainability of existing (and newly created) provision. Existing childcare providers will need support as they become established and develop. Local authorities will also need to take action to stimulate demand for childcare through marketing activities and support for regeneration. In some situations they will need to support the creation of childcare in advance of demand for places

The SSU will not be requesting submission of plans from local authorities. However, local authorities will need to continue to regularly review current levels and distribution of provision, analyses of parental demand and workforce planning. This should allow local authorities to plan for the creation of new places and to prioritise support services according to need.

2.1 Creating new childcare places

Targets

Local authorities received a letter on 25 July 2003 setting out the allocated childcare place targets individually. The SSU is introducing a greater element of flexibility in the development of childcare places so that local authorities are able to determine both the type of childcare they create and where it is located. This is intended to facilitate a more responsive approach to meeting local needs. Accordingly, we have simplified and reduced the number of childcare

place targets. To this end we will have provided local authorities with a target for the number of childcare places that must be created authority-wide. This is broken down into two parts:

- ▶ the number of places to be developed in the 20% poorest wards – as defined by the Index of Multiple Deprivation and based on 1998 ward boundaries – or in pockets of disadvantage;
- ▶ the number of places to be developed across the rest of the authority.

These mirror the national childcare targets for Sure Start. In addition, a proportion of the number of childcare places to be created in areas of disadvantage is to be developed specifically for children aged 0–5. This particular target has already been given to local authorities¹ in February 2003 as part of the guidance on developing Children’s Centres and should be familiar. Local authorities will also be able to create places in pockets of disadvantage outside these areas. The Sure Start Unit will expect local authorities to have analysed need in such situations and also to ensure the most disadvantaged wards are prioritised. Local authorities that do not have wards among the 20% poorest in the country have been allocated only the overall target for the whole authority-wide area.

Type of childcare

As a rule, the SSU is not prescribing the type of childcare places to be created. Local authorities should decide this in light of their audit of existing places and their analysis of local market conditions, including the findings of consultation with parents. Local authorities will also need to take into account local factors that will influence the pattern of delivery – for example, childminders may be more appropriate in rural areas.

Nevertheless, parental choice is a key consideration. We would therefore expect parents to have access to a range of provision and be able to exercise choice.

The one exception to this rule is the childcare place target for 0–5 year olds in disadvantaged areas that was initially provided in February 2003. We expect this particular target to be largely centre-based, either within a children’s centre or in a stand-alone nursery – capital funding was made available on this basis. However, please note that if a local authority provides childcare for young children in disadvantaged areas **in excess** of this target, the nature of those additional places is for that local authority to determine. It is possible for a proportion of childcare places in Children’s Centres to be provided by childminders – local authorities should discuss such proposals with Sure Start Regional Teams.

Funding

In order to simplify the funding arrangements, the Sure Start Unit is adopting a standard formula for supporting new childcare places. There will be a grant per place based on the categories described above – disadvantaged area place, disadvantaged area 0–5 year old place and non-disadvantaged area place.

This means that for every place local authorities create for each of their targets, they can draw down a set amount of funding regardless of the type of place – for example, a childminder place or a centre-based place in a non-disadvantaged area will both attract the same unit of funding. Local authorities will have flexibility to decide how the funding is allocated locally to the different types of childcare actually created.

¹ 12 local authorities were not provided with a childcare or reach target because of the small number of disadvantaged wards – their targets have been discussed individually on a case by case basis. A further 14 local authorities do not have wards among the 20% poorest on the IMD.

An amalgamated strand has been set up to allow greater flexibility in the creation of new childcare places. The funds will cover the costs associated with Out of School childcare, Childminder Start Up and childcare provision in Further and Higher Education institutions. £78.802 million of revenue funding is available to support the creation of some 171,000 new places (approx. 68,200 in disadvantaged areas) between 2004 and 2006.

Funds will be allocated based on what is considered a realistic target for each local authority in order to achieve the national target. Local targets have been determined by taking account of the information supplied by local authorities in their plans setting out expected stock levels and childcare places per 100 children (penetration rates) at March 2004. Every local authority is being allocated a number of places estimated to maintain anticipated 2004 stock levels plus real growth of 4% of stock. To determine the allocation of the remaining planned growth in new places for 2004–06, we have identified all those local authorities that, after the above allocation, still fall significantly short of the expected average penetration rate across England at 2006. The balance of places has been distributed across these local authorities based on how far they fall below the national average, ie. the further below the national average they are, the greater the proportion of additional places. Finally, each local authority's target for 2004–06 has been split between disadvantaged and other areas, again based on notified penetration rates. These targets have then been applied to the unit costs for disadvantaged and other areas to arrive at funding allocations by local authority.

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- ▶ Details of funding for pre-school childcare places in disadvantaged areas (February 2003 target) is provided in the notes box at para 1.2. More information about revenue funding for these places will be provided.
- ▶ Annex 5 provides details of definitions of childcare places.

2.2 Retained functions and pathways to registration

Local authorities have a legal duty (under Section XA of the Children Act 1989, as inserted by the Care Standards Act 2000) to secure the provision of information, advice and training to childminders and day care providers. Local authorities should ensure they have arrangements in place to provide these services in accordance with the guidance: 'Care Standards Act 2000 – Part VI – Local Authority Information Advice and Training Functions'.

In order to meet local childcare place targets, they will need to develop a pro-active, planned, coordinated and systematic approach to the recruitment, registration, support and training of providers. Most authorities will already have begun to put appropriate systems in place. In September 2002, the Sure Start Unit issued a 'Pathways to Registration Toolkit', providing guidance on how authorities might track, monitor and support providers' progress towards registration and beyond. The Unit has sought feedback from authorities to enable it to update this guidance to reflect developing practice in local areas. Authorities will also need to continue to develop local working protocols with all interested parties, including Ofsted Early Years Directorate staff. In June 2003, a letter was sent to local authorities

that identified some specific ways in which they could support the registration process.

2.3 Out of School places and extended schools

Out of School

The new Sure Start Out of School scheme needs to create at least 95,000 out of school places by 2006 with revenue funding directly from the Government. There will also be a modest capital fund for disadvantaged areas. With the new programme, local authorities will have a great deal of freedom to plan and develop out of school childcare in their areas according to local needs and priorities, with support being provided as they consider appropriate.

Extended schools

An extended school is one that provides a range of services, often beyond the school day, to help meet the needs of its pupils, their families and the wider community.

The extended schools programme will be rolled out over the next three years, so that by 2005–06 each local authority will be receiving funding for coordination of school-based services, including childcare, across the authority. Funding for place creation in extended schools is set out in Annexe 6. The childcare funding should be used to coordinate, plan, develop, manage and maintain childcare services in schools, so that heads and teachers are not over-burdened.

Children's Play

The Sure Start Unit and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport have jointly sponsored a Children's Play Review which will inform a proposed lottery spending programme to

improve play opportunities for children and young people aged 0–16, including making provision accessible to disabled children. A final report will be published in Summer 2003 and the main funding is likely to come on stream in late 2005. The report and subsequent spending programme will make recommendations about the role of local authorities in the provision of children's play opportunities. Local authorities will need to ensure there are strong links between any local developments as a result of this new funding and their childcare strategy.

Revenue funding for out of school places will be provided from the new places element of the General Sure Start Grant (see notes box at para 2.1). The out of school childcare funding is not ring fenced within the childcare places element of the General Sure Start Grant.

A capital amount of £8.488 million will be made available to support the creation of over 25,000 new Out of School places in disadvantaged areas. Given that 20% of the overall disadvantaged area target nominally relates to out of school places, this percentage has been applied to each local authority's disadvantaged areas target.

- ▶ For Extended Schools, funding of £15.029 million is being made available for 2004–06 and local authorities have already been notified of funding allocations. See Annexe 6.
- ▶ Annexe 6 sets out details of the out of school and extended school programmes, including information about funding for the Extended School programme.

2.4 Childcare in further and higher education institutions

Since 1998 the Learning and Skills Council has managed funding to create childcare places in further education institutions. From April 2004, funds will be available directly to local authorities through the General Sure Start Grant to create childcare places for student parents studying in maintained further and higher education institutions.

The funding can be used to create childcare facilities, primarily for the students' children. This may include:

- ▶ setting up childcare arrangements on site;
- ▶ setting up arrangements such as childminder networks in the community which link to the institution;
- ▶ setting up provision close to the home of student parents (rather than based at the educational institution) to help parents who study predominantly from home or at an outreach centre;
- ▶ staffing costs, including training, to establish the service in the initial start-up period.

However, the funding may not be used to provide free or reduced-cost childcare for students, nor may it be paid directly to students to buy childcare elsewhere.

All places created should be within or linked to maintained further or higher education institutions to provide care for the children of students in education or training. Students must have the first call on the places. However, spare places may be offered to the children of staff and the wider community. Funding should not be used to create places in private colleges.

- ▶ Funding for this element of the programme is contained within the new places element of the General Sure Start Grant as for all childcare place creation. See notes box at para 2.1.

2.5 Childcare for teenage parents

Enabling teenage parents to participate in education is a key Government aim and local authorities will have their own targets for this. The Sure Start Unit has been piloting the provision of childminding to teenage parents, via specialist networks and will be disseminating guidance based on the lessons learnt.

The Department for Education and Skills is introducing a new scheme from April 2003 to support the costs of childcare for teenage parents returning to work or entering education – the Care 2 Learn scheme. This scheme will be available for young parents aged 16–19 from August 2003 and will be expanded from August 2004 to cover under 16s. The scheme will make up to £5000 available per academic year to cover childcare and any associated transport costs. This can be used to support the use of any registered or approved childcare.

Local authorities will need to consider the impact the scheme may have on the need for childcare. It will be important to liaise with FE colleges and those involved with the local teenage pregnancy strategy to identify the impact and consider any necessary action.

2.6 Childminders

Childminders provide a uniquely flexible and supportive service to children and their families. Local authorities will need to continue to take steps to recruit and retain childminders if overall childcare targets are to be achieved and parental choice maintained. A new scheme to use existing childminders as 'support' childminders will be a key part of the services that help to recruit and support the registration of new childminders.

▶ This is described in Annexe 7.

Local authorities need to work with the Sure Start Unit to:

- ▶ make childminding more attractive as a career;
- ▶ target recruitment campaigns;
- ▶ reduce barriers to entry to childminding;
- ▶ provide more support to childminders.

For the Support Childminder scheme, £20 million is being made available for local authorities for the period, and each local authority will be allocated £25,000 to support coordination, with the balance being allocated based on the 0–14 population projections for each local authority at 2004.

- ▶ Details of ways in which to recruit, support and retain childminders and Home Childcarers are contained in Annexe 7.
- ▶ Funding for creating new childminder places is contained within the new places element of the General Sure Start Grant. See notes box at para 2.1.

2.7 Home Childcarers

From April 2003 there has been a new option for registered childminders – to be approved as a Home Childcarer. Childminders who become Home Childcarers may not wish to continue to operate as childminders and some people may seek to become registered as a childminder solely in order to become a Home Childcarer.

The Inland Revenue advise that Home Childcarers should be employed by parents, even if they continue to be self-employed when childminding other children. Local authorities may need to consider ways to support both Home Childcarers and parents in this.

Home Childcarers can be supported in the same way as childminders, e.g. by start-up grants and inclusion in networks.

2.8 Sustainability of childcare provision

All local authorities will need strategies to support the sustainability of local childcare provision. This should include:

- ▶ support for business planning for local providers;
- ▶ marketing of childcare services;
- ▶ ensuring good quality information is available to parents and carers;
- ▶ action to improve and sustain the quality of provision and staff;
- ▶ encouraging local employers to support parents and carers, encouraging flexible working;
- ▶ supporting campaigns to encourage take up of working tax credits and other forms of financial support;

- ▶ workforce development – including recruitment and provision of qualification and professional development training;
- ▶ planning new provision sensitively so as to assess the impact on existing provision;
- ▶ bringing funding streams together to support childcare;
- ▶ leading and supporting regeneration of disadvantaged areas and economic development across their local area.

The Sure Start Unit is actively supporting local authorities in a number of these areas. In addition, it has a number of schemes specifically targeted at supporting sustainability.

Sustainability scheme

For 2004–06, local authorities will receive funding for the support of group-based provision and childminders in disadvantaged areas (including pockets) and for the creation and ongoing support of childminder networks in all areas. The previously separate funding streams for childminder sustainability and the creation of childminder networks are thus combined into one new funding strand. The primary purpose of sustainability schemes is to provide short-term support during occasional periods of threatened business viability after start up funding has expired.

Eligible provision includes all of the following when sited in disadvantaged areas/pockets of disadvantage:

- ▶ out of school clubs;
- ▶ Neighbourhood Nurseries;
- ▶ day nurseries providing full daycare;
- ▶ childminders.

NB. Sessional care is not covered by the sustainability fund. However, in a situation where a playgroup is experiencing a short term threat to business viability, the authority may provide temporary support from its General Grant. This should only be where the local authority regards the playgroup as essential in order to meet the nursery education guarantee or to ensure parental choice. This route should not be taken where there is an option of developing the playgroup to provide full daycare.

▶ See para 1.4 for further information.

Support should be made available to voluntary, private and maintained sectors (including, in due course, schools setting up their own provision).

Local authorities will need to determine administrative arrangements – this guidance should assist them in devising these.

Providers receiving the grant (including childminders receiving the childminder sustainability grant) must be willing, if required, to make empty places available on a short term basis and free of charge to the children of parents who are seeking to move into work under the New Deal. This also applies to those seeking to ‘test out’ formal childcare with a view to moving into work once assured of the quality of provision available. The local authority must agree local arrangements for liaison with the Jobcentre Plus Childcare Partnership Manager over the availability and filling of these places.

Local authorities should already have the capacity to monitor local provision via childcare development officers and may often be able to identify cases where viability appears in doubt before an approach by the provider. In many cases direct financial assistance may not be the most appropriate answer. Help with marketing, business training, financial planning etc. might well provide better medium and long-term benefits. The wider business support programme is therefore crucial in sustainability considerations. It might be appropriate to make acceptance of relevant development or training a condition of receiving sustainability funding.

Allocation of the Childcare Sustainability Grant through the General Sure Start Grant is based on the stock of places in disadvantaged areas at March 2004. This strand provides revenue funds to sustain Neighbourhood Nurseries, Out of School places and childminders, as well as including funding for Childminder Networks. Total funding available for these areas is £30.280 million for the 2004–06 period. Allocation is on the basis of stock of childcare places in disadvantaged areas at March 2004, including a nominal sum for the creation of new and support of existing Childminder Networks where appropriate.

- ▶ Fuller detail of the use of the fund to support group-based childcare in disadvantaged areas is given in Annex 8. Details of sustainability funding for childminders and networks are given in Annexe 7.

2.9 Business support

Business support is essential to help childcare providers become viable and sustainable businesses, without long-term dependence on public funding. This could take the form of advice, training, coaching, mentoring or signposting to other organisations.

All local authorities currently have a Business Support Officer in place. Local authorities need to ensure that there is a strong focus on business support – expecting a wide variety of development officers to undertake this along with other duties is unlikely to achieve the desired outcome. However, it is accepted that there may well be flexible ways of delivering business support particularly in smaller local authorities. Local authorities also need to work with existing sources of business advice to ensure that it is relevant for childcare providers.

A programme of professional endorsement will be available to Business Support Officers, together with a programme of development through the national Business Support and Development Programme, Business Success for Childcare.

2.10 Promoting affordability and helping parents into work

As part of an overall sustainability strategy it will continue to be crucial that local authorities encourage take up of the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit (WTC) and other financial support.

One of the key objectives of the Sure Start programme is to assist parents into employment, specifically reducing the number of young children living in households where no one is working. Even when parents do not see employment as an immediate option, Sure Start local programmes and Children's Centres can help them lay the foundation for an eventual entry or re-entry to the labour market by making a range of learning opportunities available, alongside childcare.

Local authorities should develop strong relationships with Jobcentre Plus. Jobcentre Plus has now employed at least one Childcare Partnership Manager (CPM) in each Jobcentre Plus district. Local authorities should also develop Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with Jobcentre Plus to ensure effective working.

Local authorities do not have specific additional funding allocated to support these activities. However, the Delivery Support fund within the General Sure Start Grant can be utilised. Funding for Childcare Partnership Managers is provided through the DWP direct to Jobcentre Plus.

- ▶ **Annexe 9 sets out strategies local authorities can adopt in promoting the childcare element of WTC. It also summarises the role of Childcare Partnership Managers and the purpose of Memoranda of Understanding between local authorities and Jobcentre Plus.**

2.11 Children's Information Services/ information to parents

Good information for parents is a crucial element of the Sure Start strategy – it ensures parents can make choices about services. Every local authority should set out improvement objectives for its Children's Information Service (CIS) to ensure:

- ▶ increased awareness and take up among parents of CIS services;
- ▶ improved quality and consistency of CIS services;
- ▶ greater parental satisfaction with information provided by CISs.

Future development

It is apparent that the quality of service provided by Children's Information Services varies considerably across the country.

On 10 September 2003, we wrote to local authorities and CISs setting out a proposed strategy on a number of key development areas including:

- ▶ local marketing of CIS Services;
- ▶ developing clearer service requirements;
- ▶ a model CIS;
- ▶ national and local support for CISs.

Funding for CISs is available within the General Sure Start Grant. For 2004–06, £31.2 million is being made available. As in the past, funding for Children's Information Services is broken down into a fixed sum of £30,000 (which all local authorities receive) plus a further variable sum based on 0–14 population projections for 2004. It is important to note that, while these sums are not ringfenced, local authorities are expected to treat the combination of these two amounts as the minimum input to their CIS. The reason they are not ringfenced is that it is expected that local authorities will also contribute directly to the CIS. Depending on the size of the LA contribution, it may be feasible to release some of the above CIS funds for other approved purposes. Any proposal to spend less than the combination of the fixed and variable amounts on CIS will not be acceptable.

- ▶ **The current core service requirements for CISs are set out in Annexe 10.**
- ▶ **Funding for CISs is available within the General Sure Start Grant: see Annexe 14.**

Ensuring quality, access, equality and inclusion

Good quality early years and childcare provision helps children's personal, social and emotional development, as well as their intellectual development. This is clearly demonstrated by the research evidence, which also shows that whilst good quality provision is important for all children, the impact is particularly marked for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

A recent major study shows that whereas one third of the children followed were at risk of having special educational needs on entering pre-school, the proportion had dropped to one fifth by the end of pre-school. The effect was even more marked in high quality integrated provision. The National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding provide a basis for the registration and inspection of settings for under 8s. However, these are minimum standards below which no provider should fall, and settings should be seeking to ensure the quality of their provision is much higher.

One of the ways in which providers can ensure the standard of care they are providing is of good quality and constantly improves is through participating in a Quality Assurance scheme. Quality Assurance schemes have been developed specifically for the childcare sector and many settings have benefited from the support provided by them in developing good working practices. There is now a diversity of such schemes and, to help providers and parents, Investors in Children ensures the quality of schemes which meet its rigorous and transparent criteria. Local authorities should continue to promote participation in Quality

Assurance schemes, focusing on those which have Investors in Children endorsement.

Local authorities must ensure that early years and out of school provision is of high quality, accessible to all and inclusive. They should have strategies for equality and inclusion that ensure this focus is kept and monitored as the service expands to ensure:

- ▶ children's learning and development are supported;
- ▶ children and their families are actively consulted and involved in the services they use;
- ▶ children with special needs and/or disabilities are able to use local services and have their needs met;
- ▶ children and families from black and other minority ethnic groups can access and receive local services that are acceptable to them.

Local authorities should consider how to monitor progress in these areas e.g. through contract monitoring arrangements, analysing data on usage of services. The Sure Start Unit nationally is developing policy and practice in a number of other areas such as parenting support, increasing access to childcare and supporting children's health development. Information about such developments will be disseminated to local authorities with regular opportunities to share good practice.

Equality consideration

Given the diversity of communities, it is to be expected that the needs of families will vary. Local authorities will need to be aware of the differing needs and expectations of parents and children when developing existing services or creating new ones. The Sure Start Unit is

currently funding four Inclusion Pilot Projects that look at barriers to under-represented families when accessing childcare provision and employment. Results of these projects will be available early in 2004. After an evaluation of the findings, information and advice on inclusive practice will be disseminated to local authorities. Local authorities will also need to be aware of current equality legislation such as the Race Relations (Amendments) Act 2000 (RRAA) and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) and the impact this will have on settings. Guidance on the RRAA is currently in the process of being developed and will be available later this year. Local authorities should already be considering the background/culture/religion/ability of children and their families in their communities, ensuring that equality considerations are at the forefront of decisions about services.

3.1 Supporting children's learning and development

Our aim is to raise the quality of learning and development opportunities from birth to five and give children the best possible start to their learning journey. The focus is on equipping practitioners with the skills necessary to provide stimulating environments for babies and children from birth to age three. Children aged from three to five should benefit from an effective curriculum in the range of Foundation Stage settings. The Foundation Stage (now part of the National Curriculum) and the introduction of the Birth to Three framework reinforce the Government's commitment to support these early stages of learning and development. Local authorities should monitor and respond to Ofsted inspection reports to target quality improvement help.

More accessible and high quality services are expected to have a positive impact on both children's speech/language and their social/emotional development. In addition to this, local authorities are encouraged to develop specific services that will support children's speech and language development – Children's Centres and Sure Start local programmes will be well placed to do this. The Birth to Three Framework should also form part of this strategy for children in their earliest years.

3.2 Children with special needs and disabled children

Identifying and supporting all children's individual needs early is crucial if they are to reach their full potential. Local authorities and health trusts should develop and support collaborative working so that there is a strategic, holistic and child-focused approach to both early identification of needs and appropriate interventions to respond to those needs.

The starting point is increasing the confidence and capability of frontline services. Staff should have skills in identification, referral, working with other professionals and parents, and taking interventions that are appropriate and deliverable within the setting. Local authorities should support this through appropriate training, including multi-disciplinary training, and by continuing to develop networks of setting and area SENCOs.

Local authorities should also work to ensure that children who have special needs identified and their families receive coordinated packages of support.

- ▶ The guidance 'Together from the Start' will be of assistance in planning and developing effective services on these lines (see bibliography).

Children's Centres, Sure Start local programmes and emerging Children's Trusts should all support this. Local authorities and others should also consider participating in developments under the Early Support Pilot Programme, which will increasingly be looking for partners in developing instruments aimed at supporting better early interventions.

The new Home Childcarers scheme has a particular role where parents prefer to have their disabled children looked after in their own homes. This enables parents to benefit from tax credit support if they employ approved Home Childcarers. This is also available if they use domiciliary care provided by a registered agency.

Funding for SEN and Inclusion (Disability) are separately ringfenced within the General Sure Start Grant. Available funds for local authorities will be £47.6 million for 2004–06. These funds will be allocated on the basis of deprivation and population as in previous years, but this method will be kept under review.

- ▶ For further details see Annexe 14.
- ▶ Details of requirements in respect of area SENCOs and qualified teacher involvement are available in Annexes 11 and 13 respectively. Annexe 11 also describes how local authorities can support inclusion and training of SENCOs with ringfenced funding.

3.3 Using libraries

A positive home learning environment – for example, where parents read to children from their earliest months – is highly supportive of children’s learning and development (as powerfully confirmed by the recent EPPE research). Local libraries can do much to support this. Local authorities should therefore work to increase the use of libraries by families with young children in line with the Sure Start SDA target. Many Sure Start local programmes have developed innovative strategies and approaches to support local libraries. This work should continue in order to make libraries more accessible, welcoming and responsive to local community needs. Consultation with local communities should form part of development plans. We will provide further guidance on this target and disseminate good practice in 2004.

Developing the workforce

Developing the workforce is a critical part of the overall delivery of Sure Start objectives.

We need to:

- ▶ recruit and retain enough workers to support the expansion of services;
- ▶ develop the skills that the workforce need to support children's physical, intellectual, social and emotional development;
- ▶ develop the skills to lead and deliver services effectively, including in more integrated settings such as Children's Centres;
- ▶ work to ensure the workforce better reflects the ethnic and gender composition of the local community that it serves.

As their remit widens, local authorities will need to ensure connections have been made with agencies working on recruitment to allied professions (e.g. health and social work). Workforce issues in these areas will have an important impact on the ability to deliver integrated services. Local authorities may find it useful to work with NHS Workforce Development Confederations which focus on the health workforce.

4.1 Recruitment and retention

In order to meet targets for the expansion of childcare provision nationally, the SSU estimates that childcare providers need to recruit 175,000–180,000 new staff over the three years from 2003 to 2006. Around half of this total is to replace people leaving the workforce; the other half supports estimated growth in the workforce of 8–10% each year. Local authorities have a key strategic role in supporting recruitment and retention within their areas.

Childcare recruitment is supported by a national childcare recruitment campaign. The SSU will issue regular updates to local authorities giving advance notice of national media campaigns.

Key objectives for 2004–06:

- ▶ Focusing on supporting people throughout the recruitment process from initial interest in working in childcare and early education (including parents and carers) right through to people actually taking up jobs.
- ▶ Developing effective systems for tracking and proactively following up enquiries at regular intervals (which should be linked effectively to the Pathways to Registration work).
- ▶ Building and strengthening partnership working with key local partners, particularly Jobcentre Plus Childcare Partnership Managers and Connexions.
- ▶ Maintaining the drive to recruit and retain men, people from minority ethnic groups, people with disabilities and older workers.
- ▶ Supporting improved retention of childcare/early education workers, wherever possible.

A total of £14 million will be allocated for 2004–06 based on a fixed sum for each local authority, plus a variable element based on 0–14 population. This is included within the total of £129.9 million for workforce development. Many local authorities also make use of the Delivery Support Fund within the General Sure Start Grant.

- ▶ **Annex 12 includes a short summary of the key activities local authorities should undertake.**
- ▶ **Funding for recruitment is included in the General Sure Start Grant – see Annexe 14.**

4.2 Workforce training and development

To support the growth and development of the childcare sector and to meet the qualification requirements of the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding, we estimate that 130,000–150,000 people will need to be trained to levels 2 and 3 over the three years from 2003 to 2006.

To support good outcomes for young children in the Foundation Stage, local authorities should aim to deliver an average of four days training and development per year for all Foundation Stage practitioners. They should also ensure the effective involvement of qualified teachers in running or advising all Foundation Stage settings (with a ratio of at least one teacher per ten non-maintained settings).

The continuing professional development of early education and childcare workers is important in developing the skills that will secure good outcomes for children and families, and in promoting sustainable, well-managed provision. In planning for training, local authorities should take account of both the national priorities set out in Annexe 13 and a robust assessment of local needs.

To support training for childcare and early education workers it is essential to work in partnership with the local Learning and Skills Council. The key guidance on this is contained in the letter of 17 April 2003 from Naomi Eisenstadt and Michael Stark to all local authorities and local LSCs. Local authorities should note that resources for childcare training have been substantially increased for 2004–2006 and this should be reflected by a significant increase in the level of activity.

Local authorities should consider supporting students on the Early Years Sector-Endorsed Foundation Degree e.g. by helping with fees, childcare and bursaries. They should also support leadership programmes for leaders of integrated centres.

This funding incorporates a number of previous funding strands: Training for Childcare Workers, Early Years Training and Development, and Foundation Stage Training, and will also replace the current ESF project on Unblocking Barriers to Training when it expires. Within the overall total of £129.9 million over two years (which also includes funding for recruitment) resources for childcare training in 2004–5 are doubled and are due to nearly double again in 2005–6, with the other training elements in the budget continuing at the same level as 2003–4. The funds will be allocated based on the 0–7 population projections for each local authority at 2004 and the numbers of Foundation Stage settings (both maintained and non-maintained).

Local authorities receive funding to ensure the involvement of qualified teachers through EFS.

- ▶ **Annexe 13 contains details of priorities for training and expectations in respect of Foundation Stage training.**
- ▶ **Funding for Workforce Training and Development is available from the General Sure Start Grant – see Annexe 14.**

Annexes

Annexe 1

Free early education for three and four year olds

Section 118 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 places a duty on local authorities to ensure sufficient provision (whether or not by them) of nursery education for their area for children who have not attained compulsory school age but have attained the prescribed age.

Regulation 2 of the Education (Nursery Education and Early Years Development) (England) Regulations 1999 prescribes the age of the children in relation to whom this duty applies. From April 2004, the regulations will be amended to extend the duty to three year olds as well as four year olds.

When carrying out their duties under Section 118 of the School Standards and Framework Act, local authorities should have regard to The Code of Practice on the Provision of Free Nursery Education Places for Three and Four Year Olds.

▶ Available from DfES Publications
on 0845 6022260 – quote reference
LEA/0105/2003.

Local authorities, after consulting local partners, should set up reciprocal arrangements with neighbouring authorities. This means they agree to fund children resident in neighbouring areas to attend providers in their area, in recognition of the fact that the other authorities are operating the same arrangement for children from their area. Local authorities fund free nursery education places from their Education Formula Spending share (EFS), which is calculated

according to pupil numbers. The amount of funding they receive via EFS will, therefore, reflect the fact that they provide places for out of area children.

LEAs should ensure free places are available at a variety of settings in order to allow maximum opportunity for parental choice and to best meet the needs of children. They should also ensure that there are sufficient 'stand alone' free places for parents who want them, i.e. places at settings which do not require that children's parents take up additional services or care.

The Code of Practice makes clear that parents should not be required to pay any fee for their child's free nursery place and that any fee which would normally be payable should be abated or refunded as appropriate. Parents should not be required to make any up-front payment in respect of a free place. The Code of Practice will be amended accordingly. This may mean local authorities will need to review the arrangements they have in place for funding providers.

Annexe 2

The core offer for Children's Centres

All Children's Centres must offer access to the following core services:

- ▶ early education integrated with child care;
- ▶ family support and outreach to parents;
- ▶ child and family health services.

In addition, they will act as a service hub within the community for parents and providers of childcare services for children of all ages – offering a base for childminder networks and a link to other day care provision, out of school clubs and extended schools. Centres will also have links with local training and education providers, Jobcentre Plus and Children's Information Services.

Children's Centres core offer

Early education integrated with day care:

- ▶ Early education integrated with day care for babies and children until they reach school age.
- ▶ Day care suitable for working parents – a minimum of five days a week, 48 weeks a year, ten hours a day.
- ▶ Nursery places will be open to all, not just families in the immediate area, to provide the best educational outcomes for all children (admission and fee policies will be determined locally).
- ▶ Support for childminders, who may also offer linked care.
- ▶ Early identification of children with special needs and disabilities, with inclusive services and support for their families.

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Family support and parental outreach:

- ▶ Visits to all children in the catchment area within two months of birth.
- ▶ Access to specialist services.
- ▶ Parenting support and information, as well as specific support for families in need and 'hard to reach' families.
- ▶ Providing information and advice on parenting skills at significant transition points for the family (e.g. pre birth, early days, settling into childcare).
- ▶ Increasing parents' understanding of their child's development.
- ▶ Increasing the involvement of fathers.

Child and family health services:

- ▶ Antenatal advice and support for parents.
- ▶ Information and guidance on breast feeding, hygiene, nutrition and safety.
- ▶ Identification, support and care for those suffering from maternal depression.
- ▶ Speech and language and other specialist support.
- ▶ Smoking cessation interventions.

Links with schools and Children's Information Services (CIS):

- ▶ Links to local schools, extended schools and out of school activities (holiday play schemes, before/after school play & learning).
- ▶ Information to parents/carers about CIS.

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Links with Jobcentre Plus:

- ▶ Linking in with local arrangements (e.g. via the local authority's service level agreement) for collaboration with Jobcentre Plus Childcare Partnership managers.
- ▶ Encouragement and support for parents and carers who wish to consider training and employment.

Parental involvement should include:

- ▶ consultation with parents and carers, including fathers on what services to offer, and systems to get user feedback on services;
- ▶ ongoing arrangements in place to ensure parents and carers have a voice;
- ▶ mechanisms that enable parents and carers to self-refer for services;
- ▶ specific strategies to include fathers;
- ▶ ensuring family support and health advice is available at times suitable for working parents and carers.

Children's Centres may well offer a range of other services, including:

- ▶ effective links with further and higher education institutions, and with local training providers;
- ▶ training for parents and carers, including English as an Additional Language where relevant, Basic Skills, or parenting classes;
- ▶ specialist services for children with disabilities;
- ▶ benefits advice, including maternity benefits;
- ▶ childcare and other services for older children;
- ▶ toy libraries.

Funding for these services may need to be accessed from other sources.

Sure Start funded Children's Centres must be located in or serve families from one of the 20% most disadvantaged wards and/or pockets of disadvantage. Children's Centres will bring together locally available services but will not necessarily be developed on one site. However, if a number of sites are used, local authorities must demonstrate that they are closely linked and that users will be able to access them easily. The services offered should be integrated whether or not they are offered from a single site.

Integration

The SSU places great emphasis on the need for services from Children's Centres to be integrated. When considering proposals for individual centres local authorities should assure themselves that:

- ▶ children and families will be able to receive an integrated service from the centre across early education, childcare, support services and health advice; families should have clear and ready access to these services, more than just signposting and information about other agencies;
- ▶ early education and childcare are integrated so that there is continuity of staffing and support for the children's development and experience;
- ▶ where services are to be provided from more than one location they reflect an integrated approach to the planning of activities and a shared management ethos;
- ▶ management arrangements are sufficiently robust to support and lead integration;

- ▶ where full integration has not yet been achieved there is a plan in place that will move services towards this over a two year period;
- ▶ every worker, within health, education, social services or the voluntary sector who has contact with a family living within the catchment area of the children's centre should consider themselves to be part of the Children's Centre hub of local provision.

Annexe 3

Sure Start local programmes

There are 524 Sure Start local programmes throughout England. These are area-based programmes located in the most disadvantaged parts of the country, typically serving between 400 and 800 children under the age of four and their families.

Local programmes aim to promote the physical, intellectual and social development of babies and young children so that they can flourish at home and when they get to school – in doing so, helping to break the cycle of disadvantage for the current generation of young children.

Core elements

- ▶ **Outreach and home visiting** – this is to ensure that services are accessible to all families, particularly those who are most isolated (either geographically or socially) as they are often the ones who are reluctant to use mainstream services but need them the most. All programmes must contact families of new-born babies within two months of the child's birth. Part of this visit's aim is to inform parents of the wider local services that are available to them.
- ▶ **Support for families and parents** – this covers a range of issues relating to the wider family. Areas of focus include: developing adult literacy and numeracy; access to training for employment and advice about job-seeking, links with Jobcentre Plus;

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advice on finance and benefits and relationship counselling; support for those suffering domestic violence or substance misuse; befriending schemes, especially for families who are facing emotional stress. Particular emphasis is placed on involving fathers.

- ▶ **Access to good quality play, learning and childcare experiences for children** – programmes need to ensure that there is affordable childcare for parents to enable them to use services, undertake training, development and work. A strong element here is supporting parents to help their children learn. This is achieved through reading initiatives such as Bookstart, family literacy programmes and stay-and-play or story-telling sessions.
- ▶ **Primary care and health, including advice about child health and development** – this covers activities to improve the health of both children and their parents. Work involves antenatal support, advice and encouragement on breast-feeding and giving up smoking; developing a better understanding of nutrition and healthy eating; education about dental health; advice on child safety, including the provision of safety equipment such as stair gates and finger protectors; support for parents with depression; access to speech and language therapy.

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- ▶ **Support for children and families with special needs, including access to specialised services** – the key aim here is to ensure that all children and families have access to the services they need. Where another agency is providing specialist support, the programme may provide other practical support such as transport to and from appointments, emotional support and care for siblings.

How programmes are managed

Local programmes are run by a partnership, which includes parents, statutory agencies, voluntary and community organisations. Most will have a representative management or executive board that makes the key decisions about the strategic direction of the programme and ensures it works to the PSA and SDA targets. However, this body must have mechanisms for checking plans with the local community to make sure services continue to be appropriate and responsive – often done through consultation with a parents' forum or wider stakeholders' group. Some of the partners will have specific roles – the accountable body, for example, will receive and distribute the Sure Start grant and advise on financial issues generally – but no one partner should have a greater say than another. Each programme has to draw up a set of management arrangements to show how it will be governed.

Monitoring

Local programmes provide the Sure Start Unit with regular monitoring returns to show their progress against the PSA and SDA targets. Information ranges from the number of children and families seen each month to the number of childcare places (and their type) that have been established. Many programmes have developed protocols and systems both to share information across the agencies involved and to collect data to be returned to the Unit. In local authority areas where there are multiple programmes, the systems have often been developed together so that there is compatibility across the district.

Interface with local authority

Local authority departments that are key service providers will be represented on the partnership. Some may take on the role of accountable body (or lead partner during the planning and early implementation period). Their representatives should be in a position to advise the partnership about the strategic direction across the whole district and to make sure that their programme moves in the right direction. Local programmes will retain their autonomy, however, and they will need to work closely with local authorities, particularly as Children's Centres are being planned. There are a number of ways that local authorities and Sure Start local programmes can work together, e.g. sharing information (including monitoring data), strategic planning for early years, training and good practice dissemination, shared building projects.

Annexe 4

Maintained Nursery Schools and playgroups

Nursery schools

Current Government policy has provided a clear focus on the reform and development of nursery school services. It draws on the best of the sector's traditional role and supports the enhancement and wider dissemination of the innovative practices and activities taking place throughout the sector. Where nursery schools are performing and delivering to their full potential they can be at the forefront of early years and childcare practice. More than half of the Early Excellence Centres are nursery schools.

The **Education Act 2002** includes provisions that put nursery schools onto a similar statutory footing as other maintained schools. In particular, this will mean all Maintained Nursery Schools (MNS) having governing bodies from September 2003 and fully delegated budgets from April 2004. This should not prevent nursery schools from becoming Children's Centres; many Children's Centres are likely to incorporate nursery schools. The SSU will be disseminating ways in which these have been developed. Local authorities will also need to bear in mind the presumption against closure (Schools Organisation Regulations 2003) recently introduced by the Government.

The nursery school development grant available over the last three years has enabled a number of nursery schools to offer enhanced services. In planning strategic development of integrated early years services, local authorities will need to

consider the contribution that nursery schools can make. Nursery schools may form the basis of Children's Centres or be able to extend the availability of services in less disadvantaged areas.

With effect from April 2004, funding from the general Sure Start Grant can be used strategically to support the delivery by existing Maintained Nursery Schools of some or all of the elements of the core offer for Children's Centres.

► Outlined in Annexe 2.

There is no requirement that this funding be used solely in disadvantaged areas, although many nursery schools are in these areas. This funding should be used to provide additional services, not to replace previously planned local authority expenditure.

Playgroup development

For many playgroups, a particular obstacle to providing an enhanced service is lack of equipment, facilities or accommodation. It may be necessary to assist playgroups wishing to extend their services to full day care by providing capital funding. In order to create additional childcare, funding can be made available to playgroups who wish to extend their hours to provide full day care. Capital funding can support playgroups in the voluntary, private, independent or mainstream sectors.

Capital funding should enable the conversion of playgroup places to provide four or more hours of daycare; it cannot be used to support the lengthening of existing daycare places e.g. from four to eight hours. The anticipated average grant per place converted is included in the funding allocation letter as a guideline for local authorities. There are two anticipated average grant levels; one for disadvantaged areas and pockets, one for other areas.

Annexe 5

Definitions of childcare places

These definitions are included to assist local authorities in determining expenditure and completion of SSU quarterly returns.

Childcare does not include early education provision for three and four year olds, whether or not that provision is receiving a nursery education grant. It does, however, include childcare provision before and/or after such early education provision. For 0–2s (pre-school) childcare (and for three and four year olds not attending early education provision), from April 2004 it will mean any childcare place lasting four hours or more per day **except** where this place is provided as part of the Children's Centres or Neighbourhood Nursery programme. This provision must have the capacity to deliver a minimum of ten hours care per day.

Day nurseries provide care for under-fives for a period up to the length of the adult working day. They can be run by a variety of organisations, e.g. local authorities, voluntary organisations, private companies or individuals, co-operatives, employers and schools.

Children attend part time or full time depending on their parents' needs. Day nurseries have to comply with the National Standards and be inspected by Ofsted.

Pre-schools/playgroups provide sessional care for children between three and five years old. Sessional care does not count as childcare.

Childminders look after under-fives at any time and school-age children outside school hours and in the school holidays. They usually care for the children in their (the childminder's) own home. The parent and childminder negotiate the terms and conditions of employment and care themselves. Under the Children Act, childminders must comply with the National Standards if they are caring for children who are under eight years old.

Childminder places should be worked out by recording the maximum number of places registered for each childminder.

Home childcarers are registered childminders also approved to care for children in their parent's home. They should be assumed to offer three places if there is uncertainty.

Out of school childcare provides for school-age children (3–14) good quality care, based around a programme of well-planned activities suitable for the age range. This category includes:

- ▶ **holiday schemes**, which provide all-day care during some or all of the school holidays;
- ▶ **out of school childcare clubs (or kids' clubs)**, which provide term-time care for four or five days a week either before school (breakfast clubs) or after school (after-school clubs);
- ▶ **integrated care**, which provides care that is integrated with an early education session;
- ▶ **all-year services**, which combine out of school care or integrated care with holiday care;
- ▶ individual **childminders** offering out of school care to young children attending early education sessions elsewhere and older children around school hours.

Out of school childcare does not usually include 'out of school hours learning' programmes, provided or initiated by the school (unless specifically included within a care service). These programmes consist of learning activities and are an extension of the school's educational provision. They are normally free and available on the basis of the needs of and the likely benefits to individual children.

Local authorities should use the following method to count new out of school childcare places:

- ▶ A new place at a before and after school service with the same provider counts as one place.
- ▶ A new place at an after school service counts as one place.
- ▶ A new place at a before school (breakfast club) service counts as one place.
- ▶ A new place at a holiday service counts as one place.
- ▶ A new place at a term-time (before and/or after school) and holiday service, all with the same provider counts as one place.
- ▶ A new integrated place for a three or four year old in a day nursery counts as one place.

Summer holiday places should only be counted if they last for three weeks or more. Holiday places which run year after year with the same provider should be counted as one place running on a continuous basis, and should not be reported as closing and reopening.

Annexe 6

Out of school and extended schools

Local authorities will need to put in place arrangements for managing their own Out of School scheme to create places funded from the General Sure Start Grant. They will need to ensure they have systems in place, including:

- ▶ setting a timetable and criteria for selecting which proposals to support – local demand for out of school provision and the prospects for its sustainability should be among the key criteria;
- ▶ preparing and issuing local guidance and application forms;
- ▶ inviting proposals;
- ▶ decision-making arrangements;
- ▶ monitoring achievement against targets.

National support for the new programme covering these issues will take the form of guidance, problem-solving surgeries, tailored support and software. The anticipated average grant per place created is included in the funding allocation letter as a guideline for local authorities. There are different levels for disadvantaged and other areas. The former assumes a revenue grant over three years and including a modest capital element.

Extended schools

This funding will initially be concentrated in the most disadvantaged local authorities, but by 2005–06 will cover all local authorities. Local authorities receiving funding in 2003–04 were notified of their allocations in Barbara Scorer's letter to Lead Officers of 7 April 2003. £25,500 will be available for the 14 authorities receiving funding in 2003–04. In addition to the 25 LEAs receiving Pathfinder funding, £26,000 will be available to the 28 authorities receiving funding in 2004–05 and each authority will receive £26,500 in 2005–06.

In parallel with this, a specific category of full-service extended schools is being created. Funding will be available to create up to 240 such schools across England by 2006, initially in the most disadvantaged areas, but by 2005–06 each local authority will have at least one full-service extended school. Each full-service school will receive start-up and recurrent annual funding to provide a prescribed core set of services, including childcare. For the childcare element, £25,500 will be available for each of the 61 schools in the programme in 2003–04. £26,000 will be available to the 106 schools in the programme in 2004–05 and 240 schools will receive £26,500 in 2005–06. The funding will be paid to local authorities via the General Sure Start Grant and the appropriate amount must be delegated to the nominated school. Local authorities receiving funding in 2003–04 were notified of their allocations in Barbara Scorer's letter to Lead Officers of 7 April, which should be read in conjunction with Michael Phipps's letter to Chief Education Officers and the accompanying guidance, sent in March 2003.

Annexe 7

Childminders

Childminder recruitment

Local authorities will need to continue recruitment campaigns and activities directly targeted at recruiting new childminders. Support to prospective childminders through the registration process is key to successfully establishing a childminder.

- ▶ **Paragraph 2.2 refers to local authority responsibilities to support and advise providers prior to registration; the Support Childminder scheme will also assist.**

Local authorities could explore ways in which they can recruit childminders through Jobcentre Plus – they should be able to establish arrangements to allow them to notify Jobcentre Plus of any opportunities for people to become childminders.

Start Up Grants

Start Up Grants are likely to continue to be key to attracting and supporting new childminders. Local authorities should note that the level of funding made available has not assumed that all childminders will need to receive a grant or that all should receive the same level of funding. Local authorities will be able to determine the best way of using childminder grants during the registration process – some items of expenditure might be better addressed prior to registration.

Experience shows that the maximum grant payable to new childminders should be around £300, with the ability to spend up to £600 for those living in disadvantaged areas or supporting disadvantaged groups, e.g. shift workers, or lone parents.

Childminder Start Up Grants can cover:

- ▶ toys and equipment;
- ▶ NCMA or equivalent membership;
- ▶ insurance;
- ▶ minor premises adaptation (guards, fences, safety glass etc);
- ▶ any registration and inspection fees (at no more than currently charged rates);
- ▶ initial induction/training, including first aid training etc. (again at no more than currently charged rates);

This list is not exhaustive but simply indicates the types of costs coverable by the grant.

The basic principle is that local authorities should use the Start Up Grant in the most appropriate way to remove barriers to recruitment. Simply using the grant to provide a standard package for prospective childminders may not represent the best use of it.

Support Childminder Scheme

The Sure Start Unit is introducing a new scheme from 2004 to involve experienced childminders in recruiting and supporting new ones. The key aim of this scheme will be to provide support from initial interest through the registration process, training and early days of childminding.

As this is a new scheme its funding is ringfenced. Local authorities must set up a scheme with the following elements:

- ▶ A set of 'Support Childminders,' each supporting a group of new/prospective childminders (depending on the priorities in each area) until they become operational.
- ▶ At least one 'Support Childminders Coordinator'.
- ▶ Contact with potential childminders through informal grapevines, contacts outside schools etc.
- ▶ Coordination of Support Childminders and management of any payments made to them, or any recognition scheme.

Local authorities can decide whether to directly employ Support Childminders, use volunteers or contract out the scheme to another organisation. The scheme may be enhanced by the provision of support materials and funding can be used for this purpose. Initial evidence suggests that the greatest impact results from the scheme operating on an 'opt out' basis – all prospective childminders are included unless they refuse.

During 2003–04, the Sure Start Unit will be setting up model versions of this scheme in major cities – pathfinders. Good practice models will be disseminated as a result of this.

Childminder sustainability

Funding is available within the new sustainability grant to ensure that childminders serving areas of disadvantage do not stop childminding because of a short-term lack of children.

Childminder sustainability

Funding can be used in a variety of ways, so long as it increases the sustainability of childminders by addressing their vacancies. Examples are:

- ▶ Grant scheme – for individual childminders at the rate of up to £100 for five weeks (with any one childminder able to have up to two payments in any 12 months). To qualify the childminder must give evidence of at least a two week vacancy and advertising of that vacancy, and live or operate within a disadvantaged area.
- ▶ Providing funds to address the needs of childminders who may have difficulty filling vacancies because of lack of suitable toys, customer service or marketing skills (e.g. by paying for a childminder to attend a course on marketing).
- ▶ Creating facilities for marketing childminders and their vacancies.
- ▶ Enhancing other support for existing childminders, e.g. new toys in local toy libraries.
- ▶ Developing business skills of childminders.
- ▶ Employer schemes – encouraging employers to reserve places with childminders and guarantee some income.

Childminder networks

Local authorities should consider how the use of childminder networks will assist them in meeting their targets and ensuring parents have choice. They may use funding within the sustainability scheme to support existing networks, supplemented by external support from employers or other bodies where possible, or to establish new ones depending on local needs. Funding for childminding networks can extend to all areas.

Criteria for networks

The Sure Start Unit is not prescribing the exact format of childminder networks; in many cases they will be NCMA-approved networks, but this is not mandatory. However, the network should normally meet broadly similar criteria. Local authorities, in agreeing to fund networks, should ensure the following components are present:

- ▶ A group of childminders who each have a development programme.
- ▶ An employed coordinator whose role is to support the childminders on a regular basis.
- ▶ The coordinator monitors the quality of care provided by the networked childminders and identifies training needs that result, providing coaching where appropriate.

Experience has suggested that networks of between 20–40 childminders will need a full time coordinator; smaller networks will need less input. Childminders who wish to deliver early education and enable parents to benefit from the Nursery Education Grant will need to belong to an Ofsted-accredited network (Children Come First or similar). The support of a network can be particularly valuable in enabling childminders to

deliver more specialist care for particular groups such as Children in Need, disabled children or teen parents. Networks can also include Home Childcarers or others providing care in the parents' home.

Annexe 8

Sustainability

Use of sustainability fund to support group-based care in disadvantaged areas and pockets.

- i** Other than for grants of £500 or below, in the case of any organisation receiving these funds, the local authority must obtain and retain for inspection (by District Audit, the SSU or its agents when reasonably required) an income and expenditure statement from the organisation, showing where the funding is required to meet the shortfall in income. The grant cannot be used to maintain profit margins.
 - ▶ See below.
- ii** The organisation must also provide a business/financial plan showing how the support forms part of a progressive move towards viability. This must be retained with the income and expenditure statement.
- iii** For sums of £500 or below, the level of business information required is at the discretion of the local authority, but they must be satisfied that the grant is necessary and will be effective in maintaining the viability of the business.
- iv** Private sector providers may receive the grant but must meet all the conditions. This includes the provision of a balance sheet showing that they do not have reasonable funds in reserve to meet the position and statements to show that (a) they are running temporarily at a loss and therefore face the real possibility of closure and (b) the grant funding will not result in them making a profit beyond reasonable wage costs (assuming the owner is actually working in the facility).

- v** Sustainability of provision can be assisted through support of appropriate expenditure items of which the following are examples, but not exhaustive: staffing costs, rent, heating and lighting, consumables.

- vi** Full parameters of local schemes are for local authority decision.

The authority must ensure that the case for each local sustainability scheme is fully made and recorded for future evaluation and audit.

Reasons for each decision to give the grant must be clearly recorded and kept for inspection by the relevant auditor and/or evaluator.

- vii** The sustainability grant is ringfenced within the General Sure Start Grant and cannot be used other than to sustain childcare provision,

▶ As outlined in this guidance at paragraph 2.8.

This does not mean, however, that the grant can only be used to support specific, identified providers. LAs are encouraged to think creatively about how their local childcare businesses can be sustained. The grant can therefore also be used to support LA's wider sustainability strategy.

Annexe 9

Tax Credits and Jobcentre Plus

Promoting Working Tax Credits

Local authorities should find ways to encourage the take up of the childcare element of the WTC by:

- ▶ CISs giving enquirers tax credit information;
- ▶ offering training to providers (especially in disadvantaged areas) and letting them have promotional materials on tax credits, through workshops, events, seminars etc;
- ▶ working with local Jobcentre Plus, the Inland Revenue and other relevant partners;
- ▶ ensuring Ready Reckoners and other materials are available and disseminated in a range of formats and languages.

As part of a strategy to increase take up of the childcare element of the WTC, local authorities may establish baseline data so that they can monitor local trends and set targets to increase take up.

Helping parents into work

Childcare Partnership Managers (CPMs) will be working towards improving the fit of childcare provision so that it meets the needs of jobseekers with children. This will be done by working with local authorities and Children's Information Services to foster the growth of local childcare provision. The role of CPMs includes:

- ▶ improving provision of childcare information to advisers, parents and employers;
- ▶ ensuring advisors are able to advise parents appropriately about childcare;
- ▶ assisting Jobcentre Plus to aid the recruitment of childcare workers;
- ▶ assisting local authorities in their assessment of parental demand for childcare;
- ▶ providing feedback to local authorities about parents' experience of childcare;
- ▶ ensuring specific advice and support is available to Children's Centres;
- ▶ collating and analysing information to assist local and national planning.

Jobcentre Plus/local authority arrangements

The SSU expects all local authorities to establish good relationships with their local Jobcentre Plus. They should establish a Memorandum of Understanding between them. This should be tailored to individual needs but could contain:

- ▶ details of arrangements for collaboration;
- ▶ arrangements for monitoring progress, e.g. towards locally agreed targets for increasing employment;
- ▶ arrangements for providing support and advice on employment matters to Children's Centres;
- ▶ arrangements for coordinating the activities at local/community level;
- ▶ arrangements for monitoring input of CPMs;
- ▶ details of mutual efforts to increase recruitment to the childcare workforce;
- ▶ arrangements for analysing information about demand and availability of childcare;

Agreements should be reviewed regularly and should include specific lists of actions.

All Children's Centres and Sure Start local programmes should be aware of these arrangements and be able to exploit these links for the benefit of parents in their local areas. Many Children's Centres and Sure Start local programmes will also offer a wide range of learning opportunities (or links with FE/HE providers) from Basic Skills input through to qualification training.

Annexe 10

Children's Information Service

Local authorities should ensure that they have a Children's Information Service in place that:

- ▶ meets the minimum service standards;
- ▶ contributes to planning and development of childcare;
- ▶ can contribute to other elements of the local Sure Start strategy.

Core service requirements for CISs

- ▶ **Detailed/core information on local services available** – information that will give enquirers enough detail to make informed decisions without further signposting.
- ▶ **Supporting information** on how to choose suitable childcare.
- ▶ **Signposting** – to other bodies or organisations.
- ▶ **Information management** – there should be an information strategy that fulfils criteria set down in the protocol between Ofsted, SSU and CISs.
- ▶ **Delivery** – the CIS should deliver information in the ways most appropriate to the area. This should include evaluating how the service is used to find the best ways of delivering information.
- ▶ **Accessibility** – making information accessible to all the public is the overall aim of the CIS.

...continued

- ▶ **Communication** – the CIS should aim to communicate its aims and its information as clearly and as accurately as possible. This should include communication with providers, partners and enquirers.

In addition, local authorities should plan to ensure that each CIS has at least one person who has achieved a qualification (minimum NVQ Level 3 or equivalent) covering Children's Information by March 2006.

Local authorities should have plans for working with other key organisations, including Jobcentre Plus Childcare Partnership Managers and NHS childcare co-ordinators. Authorities should ensure that other organisations are clear about the role of the CIS and, in particular, how referrals from Jobcentre Plus will be handled. Further development to the criteria for CISs will take place over 2003–06. It is very important that local authorities increase the proportion of parents using their CIS. The national target is to at least double the usage. In discussing proposed development for CISs with local authorities we will also wish to consider how CISs, on an individual basis, can best contribute to this national target. Although we will not be setting specific targets for each CIS at the outset, we will negotiate individual targets for each CIS with LAs over the coming months and would expect to agree an acceptable level of usage that could be attained by 2006, taking into account local factors.

Annexe 11

Area based SENCOs and Inclusion (Disability)

Every local authority is expected to have in place a network of area SENCOs, with a ratio of one area SENCO to 20 non-maintained settings delivering funded early education. Funding for area SENCOs is allocated to local authorities via EFS.

In practice, local authorities adopt a range of models for their Area SENCO teams which fall into two categories: those that require posts to be filled by a full time qualified teacher with SEN experience and those that operate on a multi-disciplinary team basis.

Role

Area SENCOs fulfil a number of roles, the most typical are outlined below:

- ▶ Providing advice and practical support for the application of the graduated approach to identification and intervention within the SEN Code of Practice.
- ▶ Providing day to day support for setting-based SENCOs in drawing up and implementing an SEN policy, covering areas such as inclusion and admissions of children with special needs.
- ▶ Building links between the settings and LEA, Social and Health services.
- ▶ Supporting the development and delivery of training both on an individual setting and wider basis.
- ▶ Developing networks for SENCOs; developing and disseminating good practice.

- ▶ Advising settings on working with parents to support the development of children's needs.
- ▶ Working with the local authority to develop and improve the resource strategy to support children with SEN in early years settings, and its transparency on how and when it can be accessed.
- ▶ Developing links with voluntary and other organisations to promote the effective use of all resources available locally.
- ▶ Developing links with SENCOs in schools to ensure a smooth transition into reception class.

Inclusion Support (Disability)

The Inclusion (Disability) grant is a combination of previous strands of funding and is designed to facilitate greater inclusion of children with SEN/disability in early years settings. The grant should not be used to replace funding for services that traditionally have been funded by the local authority, rather it is intended to augment and resource existing SEN activities at local level. Local authorities are expected to develop a long term strategic and integrated approach towards family support, education, play and childcare for children with SEN/disabilities.

In planning services, we ask local authorities to prioritise around these key areas:

- ▶ training for others working in the sector e.g. childminders, play leaders etc;
- ▶ developing and extending the range and capacity of existing support services for children with severe and complex needs;
- ▶ improving therapy provision for children with SEN/disability in conjunction with the NHS and voluntary sector;

- ▶ improving structures that support a policy of early intervention e.g. flexible working arrangements with health and social services such as key workers, multi-agency structures;
- ▶ supporting partnership working with parents and carers;
- ▶ ensuring that parents and carers receive accessible information on childcare options, support services and tax credits;
- ▶ promoting direct payments for those parents who want to arrange their own package of childcare and support;
- ▶ establishing equipment (including toy) loan schemes for providers;
- ▶ considering subsidies and grants for start up costs to cover the additional costs of childcare for children with SEN/disabilities;
- ▶ addressing transport issues, particularly but not exclusively in rural areas.

Annexe 12

Childcare and early education recruitment and retention

Experience suggests an effective local authority strategy for childcare and early education recruitment is likely to include all or most of the following elements:

Key elements of Sure Start recruitment strategy

- ▶ A clear local strategy for supporting recruitment and retention, shared with key local partners.
- ▶ A dedicated recruitment officer/retention officer.
- ▶ Local marketing and publicity, which might include local radio and newspaper advertising (some in a variety of relevant languages); information packs, leaflets, posters, videos, CDs and tapes; recruitment fairs and roadshows; web-based information; targeted advertising for specific under-represented groups (using case studies).
- ▶ A well-publicised local recruitment helpline, providing information on work in childcare, training opportunities, and relevant information (such as on tax credits).
- ▶ Regular taster sessions or orientation courses (such as Making Choices) to provide more in-depth information, and to help people choose the right career for them.

...continued

- ▶ Updated information on further training opportunities. Joint working with the LSC, local colleges and Connexions.
- ▶ Support in finding jobs – some authorities run group job adverts for providers, or operate vacancy lists. Joint working with Jobcentre Plus is crucial.
- ▶ Targeting specific ethnic groups and other under-represented groups by offering advice, support and information locally.
- ▶ Tracking, monitoring and follow-up of people who express an interest to ensure they are getting the help and support they need, and to reduce 'drop out'; an effective link to the authority's work on Pathways to Registration.
- ▶ Partnership working with key local partners such as Jobcentre Plus, the Connexions service, local Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs), providers, and sector organisations to provide a seamless service at local level to provide practical help to potential recruits.
- ▶ Links with local agencies with employment and careers interest, and with local community groups who have a specific focus, for example, working with the disabled.
- ▶ Strong links with related strands of work on childcare development, childcare training and childcare business support.
- ▶ Strategic oversight by a group including key partners (often this has been a combined training, recruitment and retention committee of the EYDCP).
- ▶ Regular strategic monitoring and evaluation of recruitment and retention efforts to maximise effectiveness.

Annexe 13

Childcare and early years

Childcare and early education workers in each local authority area should be able to access a range of qualification training appropriate to the different types of provision, at different levels, as well as short courses and continuous professional development opportunities. These may be delivered by local colleges, training providers, including voluntary sector organisations, or by the local authority.

Childcare training

The key priority will be to ensure that there is enough training so that the leaders of all group-based childcare and non-maintained early education settings have an appropriate level 3 or higher qualification, and at least half the staff in each setting have a level 2 or higher qualification. This is a minimum requirement under the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding. It is good practice for this to include training staff to level 3 where possible, not least to provide a pool of trained people for future leaders. Qualifications should either be part of the QCA framework of nationally accredited qualifications in early years education, childcare and playwork, or be included on the Sure Start Unit's list of qualifications which are accepted by Ofsted for registration purposes ('the acceptable list').

We expect local authorities to have a strong, clear relationship with their local Learning and Skills Council, so that they work closely together to assess the training requirement in their area and ensure that sufficient training is available.

Each local area should have a Memorandum of Understanding in place, which will help promote joint local planning for training. Each local LSC and local authority should jointly develop a local target for training childcare workers and for the number of people to be trained to levels 2 and 3 between 2003 and 2006. This will contribute to the estimated national requirement of 130,000–150,000 childcare workers.

Other training activities should reflect local needs and priorities, and take account of the following national priorities:

- ▶ the need to meet other requirements of the national standards for registration, such as training in first aid, child protection, equality and inclusion, food hygiene, health and safety;
- ▶ continuing professional development to support higher quality provision, particularly training which supports the effective use of the Birth to Three Matters framework, inclusion, the development of more integrated provision, work with parents and families, progression to higher levels;
- ▶ developing the leadership and management skills of managers and supervisors and improved business skills (this work should link effectively to the Business Success for Childcare programme);
- ▶ supporting the development of training capacity (in partnership with the LSC), including integrating basic skills into training, tutor and trainer training and training for NVQ assessors and verifiers.

A key priority will be to incorporate the Birth to Three Matters framework into existing training and development programmes and dissemination of the framework to other services working with children in this age range. The Sure Start Unit will be developing a package of training

materials and funding a programme of training of trainers to support and enhance local activities.

Funding may be used to directly support the development and running of training programmes and to unblock barriers to enable people to undertake training by funding supply cover, childcare costs or other necessary expenditure.

Local authorities should also have a working relationship with Jobcentre Plus and Connexions on planning local training advice, Modern Apprenticeships and New Deal.

Foundation Stage training and QTS teacher involvement

We expect local authorities to continue to promote, fund and deliver training and development programmes in order to ensure that Foundation Stage practitioners receive an average of four days training and development per practitioner, per year. The aim should now be to improve the take-up of training and a key part of this will involve careful consultation with practitioners to help remove barriers to training.

The objective is to raise the quality of early education by improving the knowledge, skills and qualifications of Foundation Stage practitioners. Local authorities are encouraged to develop innovative ways to support and provide training and development. This could include:

- ▶ seminars on the Foundation Stage;
- ▶ exchange programmes for setting staff;
- ▶ improving the ratio of qualified teachers/ staff available to provide training or advice;
- ▶ involving qualified teachers in supporting practitioners in early years settings;
- ▶ supporting attainment of relevant qualifications.

We recommend consulting practitioners and providers on the delivery mechanism and content of planned training and development to improve take-up and help ensure that planned training courses respond to setting needs. To identify accredited courses/modules supporting professional development routes, local authorities should work closely with local colleges and universities.

QTS teachers in an advisory capacity will have a key role in supporting and improving take-up of training in the Foundation Stage and supporting follow-up action to embed effective practice. Evidence shows that outcomes for children are improved where QTS teachers are strongly involved in early education settings. To support this, local authorities should continue to work towards and beyond the benchmark of one qualified teacher to every ten non-maintained settings. We also wish to see more QTS teachers with early years expertise working directly in non-maintained Foundation Stage settings, but we recognise that this may be a gradual process as the supply of such teachers increases. The guidance on Children's Centres sets out the requirement for qualified teacher involvement in such centres.

Ways of achieving QTS teacher involvement :

- ▶ The development of partnership arrangements between a private or voluntary sector provider and a maintained school, possibly involving loans of staff.
- ▶ Allowing, and supporting where necessary, a private or voluntary sector provider to 'buy-in' consultancy support from a qualified teacher.
- ▶ Networking between a number of private and voluntary sector providers and maintained or independent schools, perhaps involving exchanges of staff and best practice.
- ▶ A peripatetic arrangement in which an advisory teacher visits a number of private or voluntary sector providers.
- ▶ A national umbrella body (such as the Pre-school Learning Alliance) engaging qualified teachers as field workers or advisors to support its members.
- ▶ Using appropriately trained qualified teachers to assist training and, perhaps, to assess vocational qualifications in the workplace for private and voluntary sector providers.

Annexe 14

Funding arrangements (General Sure Start Grant)

For 2003–04 a simplified funding process was produced with the introduction of the Early Years and Childcare Grant. The process under which this grant operates in 2003–04 will continue during 2004–06 with some changes aimed at further simplification.

From April 2004, this Grant will be known as the General Sure Start Grant, aimed at incorporating all Sure Start Unit funds made available to local authorities with the exception of funds to support Sure Start local programmes.

As in 2003–04, local authorities will be notified of their total allocation to cover the activities set out below. However, funds will be allocated for the two year period 2004–06 and the grant will be released in eight equal payments at the end of May, August, November and February each year.

Full details of individual local authority allocations together with targets for 2004–06 are provided separately. A Memorandum of Grant setting out terms and conditions will be issued in due course.

The General Sure Start Grant is ringfenced to support these activities:

- ▶ Delivery Support Fund;
- ▶ Children's Information Service;
- ▶ Workforce Development (Training and Recruitment);
- ▶ Nursery Schools Development;
- ▶ Extended Schools;

- ▶ New Places (Revenue);
- ▶ New Places (Capital for Out of School Childcare);
- ▶ New Places (Capital for Playgroup Conversion).

Provided the outputs and minimum requirements related to these strands are met, remaining funding can be used for any approved purpose set out within this Guidance. However, please note that capital lines can only be used to support capital items.

Also included within the General Sure Start Grant are separately ringfenced funds to support these activities:

- ▶ SEN and Inclusion;
- ▶ Neighbourhood Nursery Initiative;
- ▶ Children's Centres;
- ▶ Support Childminder Scheme;
- ▶ Sustainability of Childcare Places.

Delivery Support Fund

All local authorities will receive an increase in funds for this element (formerly General Purpose) of the grant compared to their 2003–04 allocation, with £170.25 million being made available across England for 2004–06.

The £170.25 million will be distributed based on 0–14 population projections for 2004.

This fund is available to support delivery of any activities within the overall General Sure Start Grant and is unlabelled to allow maximum flexibility in support of other strands. For example, it could be used for training CIS staff to NVQ standards, childcare place creation, sustainability support etc.

Details on all other strands are covered in this Guidance.

Expenditure incurred quarterly, and cumulatively in year, will be monitored as part of the Quarterly Financial Statement arrangements that already exist for the 2003–04 Early Years and Childcare Grant. The statement will be combined with the Quarterly Monitoring Report.

- ▶ Specific advice about developing building projects at a local level is contained within Sure Start local programme guidance.

Capital strategy

Many local authorities will receive significant levels of funding for capital projects that will be necessary to achieve the objectives of the overall programme. The greatest investment will be in Children's Centres/childcare for pre-school children in disadvantaged areas, but there are also funds for out of school places and playgroup conversion. Some local authorities may wish to use funding provided for nursery schools development for capital projects. Some local authorities will also need to provide support to their Sure Start local programmes in delivering their building programmes.

Local authorities will need to ensure they have a strategy in place to ensure capital projects are well planned, managed and monitored. Failure to deliver on building projects is a key risk to the whole programme.

Definition of capital and revenue

Capital relates to all built aspects of the programme and includes buying land, building a new facility or refurbishing existing facilities, including external spaces and outdoor play areas. It also includes the fitting out of a facility with furniture and equipment.

The Sure Start Unit is developing procedures to enable local authorities to access capital funding for Children's Centres (including day care in disadvantaged areas).

Funding Table 2004–2006 : General Sure Start Grant

Funding Strand	Funding available	Reference in 2004–2006 Programme Guidance
General Sure Start Grant (not individually ringfenced) includes:		
Delivery Support Fund	£170,250,000	Annexe 14
Children's Information Service	£31,200,000	Para 2.11
Workforce Development (Recruitment & Training)	£129,900,000	Para 4.1/4.2
Nursery Schools Development	£10,000,000	Para 1.4
Extended Schools	£15,029,000	Para 2.3
New Places (Revenue)	£78,802,000	Para 2.1
New Places (Capital for Out of School Childcare)	£8,488,000	Para 2.3
New Places (Capital for Playgroup conversion)	£21,450,000	Para 1.4
Other General Sure Start Grant Funding Strands (ringfenced)		
SEN and Inclusion	£47,600,000	Para 3.2
Neighbourhood Nurseries Initiative Funding (including capital)	£140,000,000	Para 1.4
Children's Centres (including capital)	£435,000,000	Para 1.2
Support Childminder Scheme	£20,000,000	Para 2.6
Sustainability of Childcare Places	£30,280,000	Para 2.9

Contact details

Local authorities should contact their regional teams if they have queries about this guidance. Regional Manager contact details are provided below. Local authorities should have received information about other contacts within the teams directly from the regional teams themselves.

Region	Name	Telephone number	Email address
Eastern	Anne Houlihan	01223 345 991	ahoulihan.go-east@go-regions.gsi.gov.uk
East Midlands	Pauline Jones	0115 971 2548	pauline.jones@dfes.gsi.gov.uk
London	Lonica Vanclay	020 7217 3160	lvancly.gol@go-regions.gsi.gov.uk
North East	Jayne Moules	0191 202 3674	jmoules.gone@go-regions.gsi.gov.uk
North West	Celia Burn	0151 224 2938	cburn.gonw@go-regions.gsi.gov.uk
South East	Stephanie Brivio	01483 882 321	sbrivio.gose@go-regions.gsi.gov.uk
South West	Cathy Benjamin	0117 900 1836	cbenjamin.gosw@go-regions.gsi.gov.uk
West Midlands	Rita Wiseman	0121 212 5449	rwiseman.gowm@go-regions.gsi.gov.uk
Yorkshire and Humber	Anne-Marie Graham	0113 283 5427	anne-marie.graham@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

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Publication	Reference number	Source	Cost*
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*If applicable.

