

## **The Dudley Sure Start children's centres offer**

### **1. Introduction**

There has been an overwhelming response to the consultation in respect of Sure Start children's centres in Dudley.

The Council acknowledges the value that is placed upon the work that is undertaken through its children's centres. This has been clearly emphasised from the number of responses received during this consultation. Many suggestions have been made during the process and these have been taken into account and will be further developed in determining the way forward for the delivery of the children's centre offer in Dudley.

It is vital that the Council sets out a model of children's centres service delivery which is sustainable for the long-term future to meet the needs of children under 5 and their families.

The results of the consultation process have been taken into account and the Council has re-considered its proposals for the future delivery of the children's centres offer.

The **draft model** proposes that:

- All centres remain open
- The children's centres should be clustered into 5 clusters across the borough
- The Council should work with partners to maximise the use of the children's centres buildings

The model would aim:

- To continue to offer sufficient provision via children's centres to meet statutory obligations
- To maintain the early years, learning and development of children as a priority
- To ensure we continue to give support to those children and families who are in greatest need

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- To focus our resources on front line delivery
- To ensure that the needs of the different localities may be met
- To further develop the integrated approach in working with partner agencies and organisations to ensure that children under 5 and their families receive an holistic range of services
- To deliver savings of £1.5 million

## **2. Proposed Draft Model**

The model would be based on clustering the 20 children's centres into 5 clusters across the 5 townships of the borough:

**Brierley Hill, Dudley Central, Dudley North, Halesowen and Stourbridge.**

<b>Cluster</b>	<b>Cluster Centres</b>	<b>**Primary Schools in Reach area</b>	<b>Wards covered</b>
<b>Brierley Hill Cluster</b>	Brierley Hill Bromley Pensnett Kingswinford Wordsley	Ashwood Park Belle Vue Blanford Mere Brierley Hill Brockmoor Bromley Hills Bromley Pensnett Brook Church of the Ascension Crestwood Park Dawley Brook Dingle Fairhaven Glynne Hawbush Maindensbridge St Marks CofE St Mary's CofE St Mary's RC	Brierley Hill Brockmoor & Pensnett Kingswinford North & Wall Heath Kingswinford South Wordsley
<b>Dudley Central cluster</b>	Kate's Hill and Sledmere Netherton Park Woodside	Blowers Green Dudley Wood Jessons Kates Hill Milking Bank Netherton Park Nursery Netherbrook Netherton CofE Northfield Rd	Castle & Priory (part) Netherton Woodside & St Andrew's Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood (part) St James's (part) St Thomas's

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		Russells Hall Sledmere The Church of England primary school of St Edmunds and St John St Josephs RC Woodside	
<b>Dudley North cluster</b>	Wren's Nest  Priory  Coseley  Queen Victoria  Gornal	Alder Coppice Bramford Christchurch Cotwell End Foxyards Hurst Hill Priory Queen Victoria Roberts Redhall Straits St Chads Wallbrook Wrens Nest	Castle & Priory (part) Coseley East Gornal Sedgley St James's(part) Upper Gornal and Woodsetton
<b>Halesowen cluster</b>	Butterfly  Little Hands  Olive Hill  Tenterfields	Caslon Colley Lane Cradley CofE Halesowen CofE Hasbury CofE Howley Grange Huntingtree Hurst Green Lapal Lutley Manor Way Newfield Park Olive Hill Our Lady and St Kenelm Rufford Wollescote Tenterfields	Belle Vale Cradley & Wollescote (part) Hayley Green & Cradley South Halesowen North Halesowen South Lye & Stourbridge North(part)
<b>Stourbridge cluster</b>	Stourbridge  Hob Green  Peters Hill  Quarry Bank	Amblecote Gigmill Ham Dingle Hob Green Mount Pleasant Oldswinford CofE Pedmore CofE Peters Hill	Amblecote Cradley and Wollescote (part) Lye and Stourbridge North Norton Pedmore and Stourbridge East Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood (part) Wollaston and Stourbridge Town

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		The Ridge The Thorns Quarry Bank St Josephs St James Withymoor	
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The "Wards covered" is an assessment of where families are likely to come from who access the particular cluster. There may need to be a reorganisation of boundaries for data purposes.

*\*\*Children's centres have to work very closely with schools in their reach areas to achieve a narrowing of the gap in early year's outcomes as required through the core purpose and Ofsted framework.*

### **3. Clusters**

- The centres will be clustered around localities as in the above table on a geographical basis to meet the needs of the 5 townships within the borough.
- Initially the cluster model will replicate the current reach areas of the children's centres in the cluster
- The cluster arrangements are based on existing natural cluster arrangements that have established practices either with parents/families, schools or other agencies that have demonstrated significant impact
- Staff will work across the cluster to provide a menu of services to meet local need
- The further development of volunteers will be explored in relation to meeting some of the universal service provision
- A charging policy for some services will be considered

### **4. Budget**

- The model will deliver the necessary savings of £1.5million
- Budgets will be allocated on a cluster basis
- The funding formula will continue to be used to give a baseline for funding for the cluster and staffing levels will be aligned to this budget

## 5. **Staffing**

- The 5 clusters will have a core staff group to include:
  - a manager (responsible for either 4 or 5 centres in the cluster)
  - family support co-ordinator(s)
  - teacher(s)
  - early intervention social worker(s)
  - family support worker(s)
  - early years practitioner(s)
  - cluster admin/finance manager(s)
  - data and admin staff
  - caretaker(s)
  - cleaner(s)

## 6. **Buildings**

- The children's centre buildings are not used all day, every day for direct, public facing, service delivery. Consequently there is capacity within the existing capital infrastructure to support increased activity from partner agencies. (Work is continuing to consider the feasibility of other services being either delivered or co-located within the children's centres.)
- The specific opening times of each centre will be determined so that they reflect the needs in the areas and the services provided and the usage by other services/agencies.

## 7. **Governance and inspection**

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- There will be one advisory board per cluster, responsible for providing advice, assistance and support to enable the planning, monitoring and evaluation of services.
- Each of the cluster centres will have representation on the new cluster advisory boards including parents, schools and other partner agencies.
- There will be a single Ofsted inspection per cluster.

**8. Conclusions**

- Considerable value is placed on the children's centre offer by both families accessing the service and professionals
- The consultation has re-enforced the fact that there needs to be greater consistency across the borough in relation to service delivery and practices.

The Council will ensure that:

- The buildings are used to their full potential to ensure access to services as required.
- Further work is done with partners to consider how services may be better integrated to meet the holistic needs of families.
- The further development of volunteers is explored in relation to meeting some of the universal service provision.
- Consideration is given to a charging policy for some services.