



Coventry City Council

6.1.1

Public Report

Report to Cabinet
Council

24th February 2009
24th February 2009

Report of Director of Children, Learning & Young People

Title

Improving Services for vulnerable children, young people and their families.

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To outline proposals for the development of new multi- disciplinary teams to provide targeted help and support to families and children.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to agree:

- 2.1 The proposals outlined in 4.1, 4.4 and 4.9 are taken forward to establish multi-disciplinary teams using existing resources from Behaviour Education Support Teams and the Children and Families Education Service.
- 2.2. That officers develop detailed proposals for the staffing of the new service for formal consultation with staff and Trade Unions prior to implementation.
- 2.3 That following the consultation Cabinet delegates to the Director the authority to decide on the final structure of the service and its implementation.

3. Introduction/Background

'Every Child Matters' emphasises the importance of early intervention and prevention. Integrated working helps to identify vulnerable children with additional needs who may require early intervention. This intervention can prevent difficulties becoming more entrenched which may lead to incidents of abuse and neglect. There is an emphasis on early identification to predict children who may require services at the onset of difficulties. In Coventry there is currently a gap in the provision of family support for children who have additional needs which will be addressed through the development of new teams working closely together to support some of the city's most vulnerable children and their families.

- 3.1 The Council and its partners are already successfully using many of the key tools of integrated working, including the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), a standardised assessment tool available for use nationally for all children's workers

to help them understand the particular needs that a child may have. This is widely used in Coventry and informs the support that should be offered to a child and its family. Once a CAF has been completed a family support meeting is arranged where professionals from different agencies, the parents and the child come together to plan the services and support that can help. At the end of the family support meeting one professional is identified to act as Lead Professional to co-ordinate the multi-agency working and ensure that the plan is reviewed and updated as required. The parents and child are key to this whole process and any work that is undertaken is with their full support and involvement.

3.2 The natural progression of this work is to develop more integrated structures for service delivery at the front line. Multi-disciplinary teams are nationally recognised as good practice in delivering these interventions. Establishing multi-disciplinary teams will require redirection of existing resources and development of an ethos and protocol for working across the city. The resources that can contribute towards this agenda are the two existing Behaviour and Education Support Teams (BESTs) and the children's work resources within the Children and Families Education Service (CAFES).

3.4 The two BEST teams were originally funded for three years through the Behaviour Improvement Programme (BIP) and current funding is via the Area Based Grant. They were initially set up in the North East and North West of the city to pilot and trial multi-agency working as a move to integrated service delivery and their focus was to work with the two Excellence Clusters, (which includes 4/5 secondary schools and 10 primary schools). The two teams have worked closely with schools to offer a range of family support interventions to children with additional needs. This has included direct work with children around their behaviour, work with parents to help them with parenting skills, counselling support to both parents and children and co-ordinated multi-agency packages of support to families. This work has had a very positive impact for the families and has been well regarded by local schools and the DCSF both at a regional and national level.

3.5 The current staffing resource for the two teams is:

- 2 managers
- 2 clerical staff
- 4 learning mentors
- 1 family support worker

This is funded from the Area Based Grant and the equivalent amount of resources will transfer to the proposed MDT budgets. In addition there are two education welfare officers, two part time primary mental health workers and a personal advisor seconded in from the Education Welfare Service, CAMHS and Connexions respectively.

3.6 Coventry is the only Council in the country currently providing this wide-ranging service, which has three distinct funding streams; the Learning and Skills Council which funds family learning, grants which fund specific time limited projects, and core Council funding, which funds the children's work and the two play centres at Eagle Street and Edgwick.

3.7 The services that are provided via the core CAFES city council funding of £1,135,885 are non-statutory with no aligned national indicators. Although

targeted at high need areas of the city, they have been universal in their focus, providing:

- Children's clubs to primary schools in areas of high need and to some community venues. These are open access clubs providing activities for children. They are run by part time staff usually twice a week. There are currently 13 children's clubs, 7 of which operate from school sites and 6 in other community settings. These are activity clubs, not a child care provision and are being used by 262 children each week. These clubs are heavily subsidised by the Children and Families Education Service. Parents pay a nominal fee of 40p per 2 hour session whilst the true cost is £18.08 per 2 hour session, which does not include any normal Council on costs. This provision predated the development of the Extended School agenda. Appendix 1 shows the location and numbers currently registered at the existing children's clubs.
- Delivery of 'working together' programmes in primary schools which are self esteem programmes delivered to whole class groups.
- Participation/involvement work with primary aged children
- Summer play schemes linked to primary schools – last summer 21 play schemes were delivered across a range of schools and community settings and each scheme ran for one week at a heavily subsidised cost of 80p a day, reaching 771 children in total over the six week holidays. The true cost of this provision was £18.32 per 4 hour day (£4.58 per hour).
- Management of SEN play partners - previously funded from Excellence in Cities (EIC)
- Play centres – two play centres transferred from culture and leisure in Foleshill and Hillfields. These play centres are open six days a week through the summer holidays and have an average of 300 children on their registers.

4. Proposals/Options

4.1 It is proposed that the resources from the existing BEST (Behaviour Educational and Support Teams) and resources from core budgets funding children's work should be used to develop multi-disciplinary teams (MDTs) within Neighbourhood Services, which will engage in work involving practitioners within universal services such as schools. There are separate proposals contained within the budget report for 2009/10 for savings of £300K from the core City Council funding of the Child and Family Education Service. The impact of these savings is not covered by this report but within the 2009/10 budget report.

4.2 There has been extensive discussion with stakeholders on the proposal to develop multi-disciplinary teams and on the general strategic approach of strengthening multi-disciplinary early intervention services in the city. This consultation has particularly - but not exclusively - focused on schools. Consultation with service users of the CAFES service has not taken place - as the proposal is to end the service and as the alternative is not a comparable service it is very difficult to frame a consultation question that would have been helpful.

4.3 Scrutiny Board 2 expressed concern that stakeholders, service users and parents had not been consulted on the proposals and had not been informed about future service provision. The concerns of Scrutiny Board 2 can be met by ensuring as part of the implementation of the proposals contained in this report that users of the current service are informed about alternative provision. We are confident that provision can be found or developed through the extended schools programme for the great majority of children currently receiving services.

4.4 To develop these teams the existing Children and Families Education Service needs to be replaced by a new Child and Family Support Function. This will encompass elements of the old service such as Family Learning, the Eagle Street and Edgwick Play Centres and externally grant funded projects as well as the newly formed MDTs. The focus of the new service will be on family support interventions rather than community education which will seek to reduce incidents of abuse and neglect and intervene earlier to address problems such as poor school attendance, behaviour problems and threat of family breakdown. This change in focus will require changes to the ethos of the service, staffing structure and job descriptions of the children's workers within the Children and Families Education Service and:

- The closure of all children clubs currently run by the service
- Working in partnership with extended services, other community resources and play centres to explore alternative delivery for summer play schemes.
- Stopping the universal delivery of working together programmes in schools
- Substantial remodelling of the current workforce to reflect the revised requirements of delivering the new service

4.5 With the development of accessible services through the Extended Schools agenda there are many more after school activities and initiatives for children within schools that are planned by schools rather than the Council. Most schools are now providing access to a varied menu of after school activities with schools working together to plan and audit the provision needed to meet the core offer of extended services, including:

- Varied menu of activities
- Access to child care
- Swift and easy access to services
- Parental support and family learning
- Community access

All primary schools have provided a range of activities (some charged, some free) after school. Some primary schools also provide before school activities, usually in the form of breakfast clubs. While Coventry schools have had a history of this kind of provision for many years, this has been enhanced via the extended services agenda with an emphasis on cluster working (where a group of schools work together to provide services), wider use of partners and increased awareness of the importance of targeting particular groups. This is based on research highlighting the benefits of inclusion in these activities in relation to attainment. As part of the core offer, schools also signpost to activities taking place elsewhere in the cluster, if they are unable to provide them on site. Appendix 2 shows the various types of provision across the city.

- 4.6 21 of the 85 primary schools have also developed holiday provision on a self funding basis and there is potential to provide such services on a substantially self funded basis via extended schools, linkages with other summer holiday provision and the two play centres at Eagle Street and Edgwick.
- 4.7 To ensure effective use of resources there is a need for most of the core funded CAFES resources to be refocused to where there are gaps in services, unmet needs and to meet the needs of children and families at risk of developing serious and substantial difficulties and thus prevent abuse, neglect, anti-social behaviour and criminal activity.
- 4.8 Information about alternative provision will be provided:
- Children currently attending existing clubs will be signposted to alternative after school activities via extended school clusters
 - Summer activities / play schemes will be co-ordinated via extended services working closely with schools, play centres and other providers
 - Play partners provision will be funded by 'Aiming High for Disabled Children' funding with the potential to expand if need is evidenced
 - The two headteachers of the clubs within the two special schools have indicated their interest in exploring alternative options for delivery
- 4.9 To deliver on the development of multi-disciplinary teams within the resources available the existing structure and staffing will need to be reviewed. Children and Families education staff are employed under JNC youth and community worker pay and conditions and so their current job descriptions do not meet the needs of the focus of work within the MDTs, which is more akin to the family support role undertaken by children and families workers within social care. In addition the JNC salary for the Children and Families education staff is higher than the NJC children and families pay scale used in Social Care and within the Youth Offending Service.
- 4.10 The new teams will work with children, young people and their families where significant needs have been identified early on and have been assessed at level 2 or 3 of Coventry's 'promoting children's and young people's well-being' model (appendix 3). This means that children and young people who have needs assessed at level 2 **may** go on to have poor outcomes and life chances if services are not provided and be at increased risk of abuse and neglect. Children and young people who have needs assessed at level 3 have more complex needs and **will** have poor outcomes and life chances if services are not provided. These children and young people are highly likely to come to the attention of specialist services such as social care and Youth Offending Service and suffer abuse and neglect. The MDTs will be able to deliver packages of family support and work in an individual and group work basis (See appendix 4 for suggested make up of teams).
- 4.11 These teams will explicitly **support integrated working and have a preventative focus**. They will support the use of CAF, team around the child / family support meetings (FSM) and lead professional role. The CAF co-ordinators will promote and support the completion of lower level CAFs and the staff within MDTs will promote and support the completion of the more complicated CAFs.

4.12 The MDTs will have both a **geographical and school focus**. This means that they will work with children who attend schools located within the geographical neighbourhood even though the child or young person may live in another neighbourhood. At the same time they will work with children and young people referred by other agencies who reside in the geographical neighbourhood. This is to facilitate easy access by school and other professionals.

- They will support schools with the preventative family support agenda especially those within the National Challenge.
- They will contribute to the appropriate referrals being made to social care hopefully resulting in a reduction in referrals.
- They will contribute to the community safety agenda and the reduction of anti-social behaviour and crime.
- They will work with children 0-19 and promote the 'Think Family' agenda with effective partnership working across children's services and promote and develop partnership working across adult services.
- They will have an advisory and delivery role, (assisting in the completion of CAFs) and deliver services on an individual or group basis as part of the family support plan.
- MDT workers may assume the lead professional role where there are more complex needs and/or there is a wide age range of children and young people within the family.
- They will manage transitions, passing cases to and from targeted services where necessary by using the transference of the lead professional role.

4.13 Neighbourhood family support panels will also be established to assist effective resource commitment to plans and collaborative working across age ranges and all agencies. They will work with specific clusters, newly created MDTs, Children's Centres, Integrated Youth Support and social care to provide integrated management and oversight of resources. They will also oversee transitions to more specialist interventions such as social care.

4.14 These proposals and the savings proposed in the 2009/10 budget will affect 45.5 staff including 3 children's workers whose contracts come to an end in March 09, part time children's workers and assistant children's workers who run the after school clubs. There are the equivalents of 24.6 WTE in the service currently. This includes 11.5 who work full time, 3 who work full time whose contracts end on 31.3.09 (due to fall out of grant funding) and 31 part time staff working between 6 – 33 hours per week.

4.15 However by establishing a new service with 12.5 WTE children and family worker posts based on the NJC conditions at grade 5 there will be redeployment opportunities for staff affected by this reorganisation. The proposal to change the focus of this service should not, in itself, lead to reduction in staff numbers.

Reductions in staff numbers will result from the saving proposed in the 2009/10 budget that is the subject of a separate report to Cabinet and Council.

- 4.16 If existing staff are recruited to the new posts, their salaries will be protected. Any salary protection is based on the Security of Employment Agreement (SOE). The protection limit is based upon 10% of the former earnings level for a period of three years or until the new earnings reach the former level, whichever is the sooner. Should all of the posts be filled by the redeployment of existing staff this may, in the short term, affect the total number of WTEs that would be affordable in the new structure.
- 4.17 This may also be affected if some staff chooses to take retirement or redeployment opportunities outside of the new service and there is success in drawing down new external funding streams in the New Year.
- 4.18 Redundancy costs would also need to be met from central budgets and potentially there may be changes in premises costs depending on the location of the teams.
- 14.19 The proposals regarding changes in job roles, terms and conditions will be subject of formal consultation with staff and Trade Unions.

14.20 Conclusion

The proposals outlined in this report reflect the high priority that the Council places on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable children. The proposed delivery is in line with the preventative agenda as outlined in 'Every Child Matters'. Locally this would ensure that children with additional needs at levels 2 and 3 of the Coventry promoting children and young people's well-being model would be in a position to receive services more quickly. Furthermore this would reduce the need for more specialist services such as social care to be involved and in turn release capacity for social workers to work the most vulnerable children and young people at high risk and subject to formal child protection plans.

5 Other specific implications

	Implications (See below)	No Implications
Best Value	✓	
Children and Young People	✓	
Climate Change & Sustainable Development		✗
Comparable Benchmark Data		✗
Corporate Parenting		✗
Coventry Community Plan	✓	
Crime and Disorder	✓	
Equal Opportunities	✓	
Finance	✓	

	Implications (See below)	No Implications
Health and Safety	✓	
Human Resources	✓	
Human Rights Act		✗
Impact on Partner Organisations	✓	
Information and Communications Technology	✓	
Legal Implications		✗
Neighbourhood Management	✓	
Property Implications	✓	
Race Equality Scheme		✗
Risk Management	✓	
Trade Union Consultation	✓	
Voluntary Sector – The Coventry Compact	✓	

5.2 Best Value

The development of multi-disciplinary teams constitutes value for money as there will be less duplication of services as part of the core offer of extended services is access to a varied menu of after school activities. This has been on offer as well as children's clubs in some schools. In addition the new MDTs will promote early intervention and family support work thus reducing the need for more expensive specialist services.

5.3 Children and Young People

These proposals will move resources from universal provision to more targeted interventions for Children, Young People and their Families with additional needs and ensure early intervention to offer assistance before problems become more entrenched.

5.4 Community Plan

The proposals of this report will enable services for children young people and their families to enhance the contribution to the objectives of the Community Plan

5.5 Crime and Disorder

The proposals within this report will ensure that services for Children and Young People will be better targeted earlier on at those who are disadvantaged, at risk of becoming disengaged and of drifting into anti-social behaviour and / or crime.

5.6 Equal Opportunities

The proposals will ensure that resources are more effectively targeted at those Children, Young People and their families with additional needs provide non stigmatising interventions which will be based on the needs identified through the CAF process.

5.7 Finance

As part of the budget setting process for 2009/10 £300,000 of savings has been identified to be met within the Children and Families Education Service. The net budget for the service for 2009/10 is £835,885 subject to the proposals in the Budget Report for 09/10. This will fund the two existing play centres at Eagle Street and Edgwick and the remaining £673,000 will be combined with the existing budget for the two existing BEST teams (which are funded from ABG) to fund the three multi-disciplinary teams.

5.8 Human Resources

The proposed redirection of resources to the MDTs will result in the need for staff to be redeployed as their current jobs will become redundant. The proposals contained within this report outline the establishment of a new child and family support function comprising of the city wide family learning service, special grant funded projects, the play centres and three multi-disciplinary teams. It is proposed that new posts of Children and Family Workers be created on NJC pay and conditions. It is expected that redeployment will be offered to those staff whose existing jobs are made redundant. Full consultation with staff and the Trade Unions will be undertaken. The City Council's Security of Employment agreement will be observed. It is expected that any net loss arising from the change of focus of the service will be dependant on how many staff are redeployed into the new posts on protected salary arrangements.

5.9 Impact on Partner Organisations

Schools will have access to a range of family support provisions delivered via the MDTs and there will be some staff seconded into the teams from agencies such as Health. The teams will work closely with all agencies including Adult Services such as Probation, Housing and Community Mental Health Services.

5.10 Property Implications

The new MDTs will need suitable accommodation and will need to be based in the neighbourhood office that they serve. Consideration will need to be given to these requirements in any future proposed developments.

5.11 Trade Union Consultation

The appropriate Trade Unions will be fully consulted about implementation of the proposals and plans outlined in this report as there are significant staffing implications that will impact upon their members.

6. Monitoring

The project team will plan and monitor the progress of the development of the MDTs.

7. Timescale and expected outcomes

It is expected that the new teams will be established in the spring and that this new approach to family support for children and young people and their families subject of the

CAF process will begin to bring about better outcome and prevent the need for more crisis interventions. The impact of these proposals will not be apparent immediately but it is anticipated that within the first twelve months that favourable indicators of success will become evident.

	Yes	No
Key Decision	✓	
Scrutiny Consideration (if yes, which Scrutiny meeting and date)	Scrutiny Board 2 on 4th February 2009	
Council Consideration (if yes, date of Council meeting)	24th February 2009	

List of background papers

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Papers open to Public Inspection

Description of paper Public Report

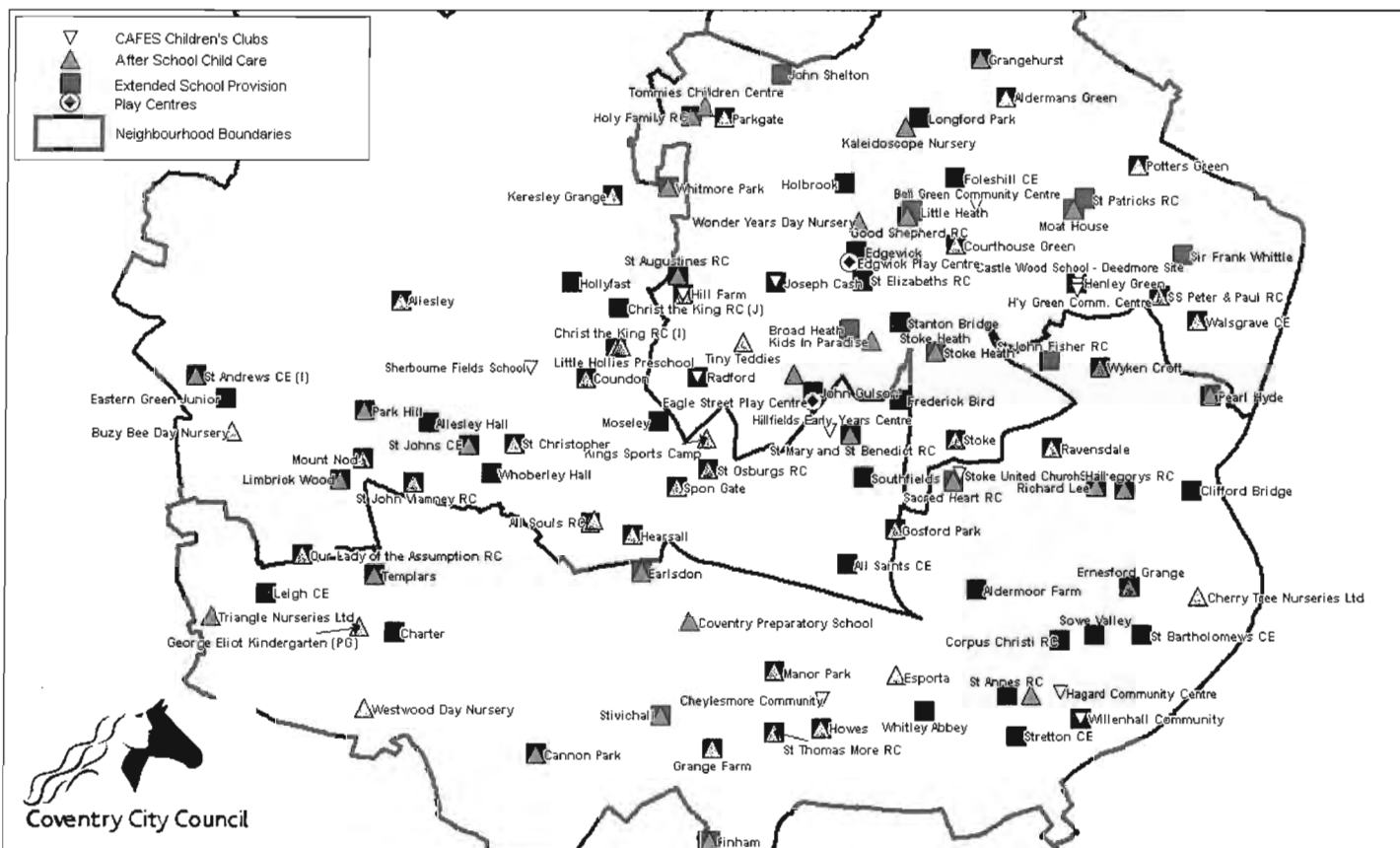
Location Governance Services
Coventry City Council

Appendix 1

Location of current children's clubs and numbers of children on the register.

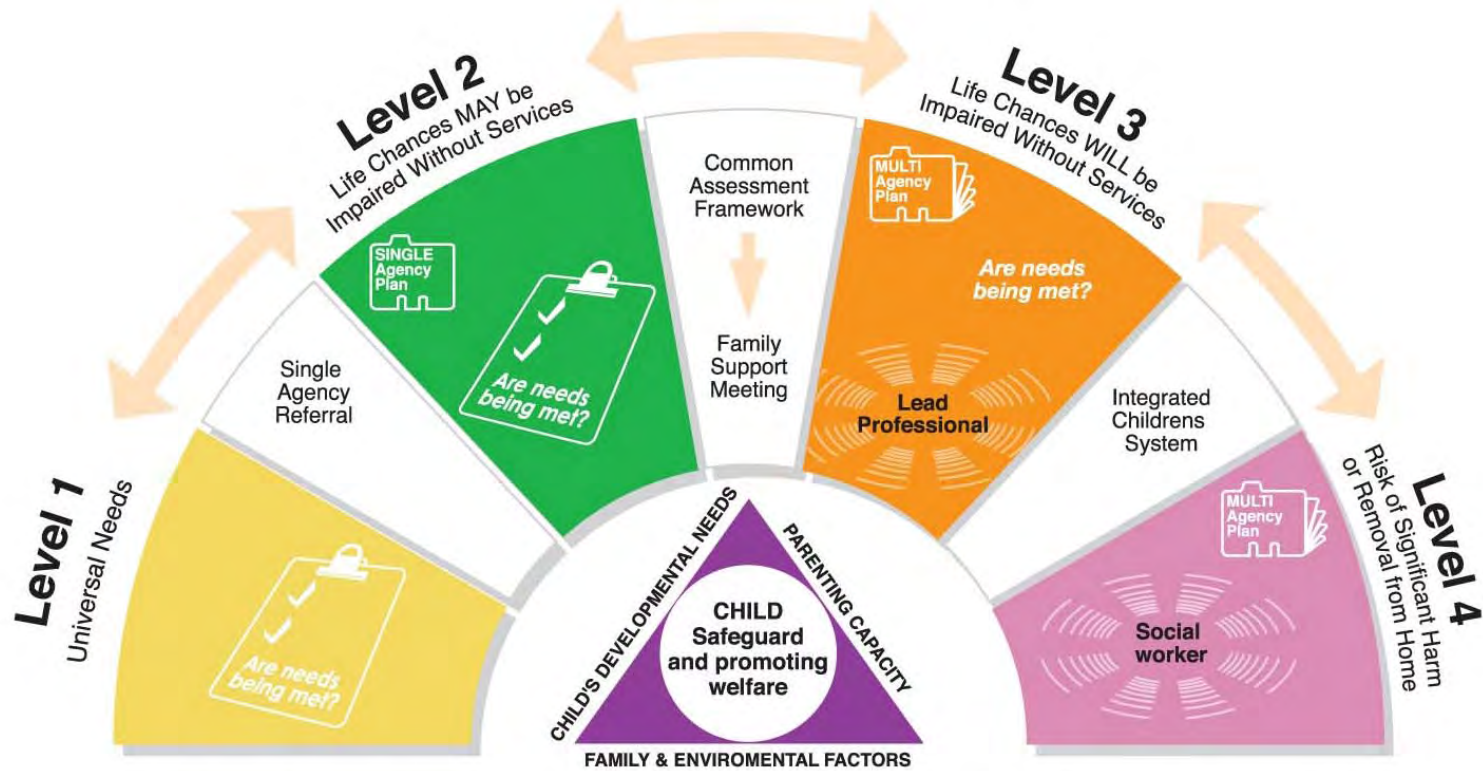
After School Club	Registered Children
Henley Green Community Centre	20
Henley Green School	25
Bell Green Community Centre	18
Joseph Cash School	25
Hill Farm School	24
Castle Wood School Deedmore site	10
Radford School	20
Sherborne School	12
Hillfields Young People's Centre	30
Stoke United Church Hall	24
Hagard Community	15
Middleride Willenhall School	16
Cheylesmore Community	23
Total	262

APPENDIX 2 - MAP OF PROVISION



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If in doubt, consult *If in doubt, consult*

Go straight to Level 4 as soon as risk of significant harm suspected

APPENDIX 4

