

**ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S SUB GROUP MEMBERS**

1.	Meeting:	Children and Young People’s Sub Group
2.	Date:	11 October 2005
3.	Title:	Children’s Centre Outreach Development Project Wards affected: Dinnington Ward Boston Castle Ward Rotherham West Ward Maltby Ward Rawmarsh Ward Wath Ward Valley Ward Hoover Ward Silverwood Ward
4.	Programme Area:	Children and Young People’s Services

5. Summary

The Children’s Centre Outreach Project has been operating for six months. £95,983 from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund is being used to fund activities aimed at supporting the participation of hard to reach, families in areas where Children’s Centres are not yet meeting the full range of core services.

6. Recommendations

That members received and approve the report.

7. Proposals and Details

The Children's Centre Outreach Project commenced on 1st April 2005.

The Project aims to support local families to participate in local services, within the Children's Centre initiative, in designated areas where Children's Centres are not yet meeting the full range of core services. Activities undertaken to date include:

- Play and Learn Bus
Rotherham Play and Learn Bus have a proven track record of removing barriers to access hard to reach groups by taking services into the community in a non threatening environment. From 1st April 2005 to 30th September 2005 they have delivered sessions in: Wath, Dinnington, Greasbrough, Meadowbank, Dalton/Thrybergh and Canklow. From 1st September the service was extended into Swinton. Within the first three months of the Project over 200 adults and 200 children accessed the Play and Learn Bus. These sessions will continue to be funded until 31st March 2006.
- Children's Information Service Outreach Project
The Project has funded a Children's Information Service Outreach Officer, until 31st March 2006, to provide information about childcare and other child and family services and activities, to families within each designated Children's Centre area. This Officer works closely with The Play and Learn Bus, attending selected sessions and providing information and raising the profile of childcare in Rotherham. The Play and Learn Bus have developed their facilities to include internet access on the Bus, and workers have been trained to access the national Childcare Links website.
- Family Support
Four Family Support Workers have been funded through the Project since September 2005, to enable families with young children who are in significant need to enhance their self esteem and parenting skills and support them to access good quality childcare services. They are based at Wath Victoria Junior and Infant School, Dinnington Community Primary School, Rockingham Junior and Infant School and Kimberworth Infant School. Priorities for the first four months of the Project are to make links with local families, groups and agencies, promote their local Children's Centre within these groups and gather information about future services and activities that are needed within the community.

A fifth Family Support Worker to be based at Thrybergh Primary School / Dalton Foljambe Infant School is in the process of being recruited.

This Project is fundamental to the future impact Children's Centres will have in their community. It ensures the early involvement of families, and will support them to develop self esteem and raise personal aspirations, laying the foundations for the Children's Centres to play a major role in the regeneration of the community and the government's pledge to eradicate child poverty by 2020.

8. Finance

The total cost of the Outreach Project will be £224,083

This will be funded through:

Neighbourhood Renewal Fund £95,983

Children's Centre Initiative £128,100

9. Risks and Uncertainties

- Should the Play and Learn Bus be unable to deliver the service delivery will take place at community venues.
- Robust monitoring arrangements will be in place to ensure successful outcomes.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The Project will:

- Provide quality play activities for children
- Work with vulnerable families and help reduce health inequalities by both interaction with families and by helping to reduce child poverty
- Help build self esteem and raise the personal aspirations of families.

The work of this Project will impact on priority themes within the Corporate Plan and Community Strategy and the outcomes for children and families identified within Every Child Matters

Corporate Plan / Community Strategy	Every Child Matters	
Priority Theme	Outcomes for children and families	Impact
Achieving	Achieving Economic Well-being	The Project will help to raise the self esteem and personal aspirations of families, break down barriers preventing parents from accessing employment, thus improving the quality of life for families and contributing to the regeneration of the community.
Learning	Enjoy and Achieve	Family support and access to good quality services and activities will help parents to help their children, increase personal aspirations and educational achievement.

Alive	Be Healthy	Activities delivered in partnership with health professionals aim to reduce health inequalities. Activities aimed to raise self esteem and personal aspirations also promote mental well-being.
Safe	Stay Safe	Access to parenting support and information will increase the ability of parents to provide for the differing needs and the safety of their children. The increased number of professionals from different agencies working together will enable the earlier identification of child protection issues.
Proud	Make a Positive Contribution	Raising self esteem and personal aspirations amongst local families will enable parents to make informed decisions and participate in the planning, and ultimately, the delivery of local services.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Rotherham Children's Centres Strategy
Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy

Contact Name :

Sandra Wright
Early Years and Childcare Partnership Coordinator
Telephone: ext 2420
Email: sandra.wright@rotherham.gov.uk