

Nottinghamshire 2 Year Pilot – Providers' Feedback Topline Report

January 2011

Topline messages

- Pilot children only make up a small proportion of all 2 year olds in settings
- Initial support for a setting was mainly from Family Support Workers
- Follow-on support was mainly from Children's Centre teachers
- Settings gave their highest scores for support for the use of 'All About Me' and for support received for 'Other children's needs'
- Many said their relationship with their local Children's Centre had improved, if it had not already been good
- Most settings signposted parents to SLT or Children's Centres
- The most frequently introduced practice amongst settings, as a result of being involved in the pilot, was attendance at multi-agency meetings
- Some said they had a better understanding of local services
- Nearly all said they felt that children had benefited from being in the pilot, and almost as many said they and their staff had also benefited from being involved
- Most said there were no disadvantages to being involved in the pilot, although about 1 in 4 mentioned the challenge of the paperwork, the need for more information about family circumstances or payment not covering true costs
- The need for improvements in the pilot processes raised by the survey have been noted and some actions already made

Background

This report gives feedback about the experience of child care providers with children on the 2 year pilot, as reported in a questionnaire sent to those providers involved in October 2010. The nature of the pilot means that the number of settings will vary at any one time, because if a child finishes a placement, this setting may not be involved for the time being. Providers were asked to return the form by the end of November 2010, along with the Headcount form, which is the mechanism for payment. They were also offered a summary of the report as an incentive for completion, which was accepted by many.

Respondents and Settings

Numbers of Providers in the Pilot by District & Type of Childcare Setting (at time of survey)

District	Type of Childcare Setting					% share by district
	Day Nursery	Pre-school / Playgroup	Child-minders	Children's Centre	Total	
Ashfield	9	4	1	0	14	18%
Bassetlaw	9	8	0	0	17	22%
Broxtowe	7	4	1	0	12	15%
Gedling	3	0	2	0	5	6%
Mansfield	8	1	2	2	13	16%
N&S	10	3	4	0	17	22%
Rushcliffe	1	0	0	0	1	1%
Total in pilot	47	20	10	2	79	100%
% of setting type in pilot	59%	25%	13%	3%	100%	

To date (10/1/2011), **39 completed questionnaires** have been returned out of the total of 79 childcare settings being used at that time in the pilot. This means that nearly half of all of these providers completed the questionnaire, a response rate of 49%.

The type of childcare setting responding to the questionnaire is as shown below, with 26 responses received from Day Nurseries being the highest (67% of all responses, compared to being 59% of all providers in the pilot at the time).

Type of Childcare setting responding to questionnaire

Type of Setting	No of responses	% of all responses	No of setting type in pilot	% of setting type in pilot	% of providers
Day Nursery	26	67%	47	59%	55%
Pre-school / Playgroup	9	23%	20	25%	45%
Childminders	3	8%	10	13%	30%
Children's Centre	1	3%	2	3%	50%
Total	39	100%	79	100%	49%

The number of responses by district in the table below shows that all 5 providers in Gedling returned completed questionnaires, while the lowest response rate was from settings in Broxtowe, with only 1/3 sending back completed questionnaires.

Numbers of Responses by District

Type of Setting	No of Responses	Total no of pilot providers	% response by district
Ashfield	9	14	64%
Bassetlaw	7	17	41%
Broxtowe	4	12	33%
Gedling	5	5	100%
Mansfield	7	13	54%
N&S	7	17	41%
Rushcliffe	0	1	0%
Total	39	79	49%

Average number of children at setting

The average number of children on the pilot amongst these respondents for most settings is 4, and is about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the total number of two year olds in a typical setting, but this is variable depending on the number of children eg childminders tend to have fewer children than nurseries or playgroups.

In turn, the number of 2 year olds is typically just under $\frac{1}{3}$ of all children (averaging 57) at a setting. This suggests that for most settings the children on the pilot are likely to be a small proportion of all children at a setting.

	Average	% of total	
largest number of children on pilot	4	23%	% of pilot of usual 2 yr olds
usual number of 2 year old children	16	29%	% usual 2 yr olds of all registered
total number of children registered	57	-	

Range of children at setting

The most frequently occurring number of children on the pilot at a setting is 3, but this ranges from 1 to 11 across all the settings who responded, so the situation is very variable.

Similarly the usual number of 2 year olds ranges from 2 to 38, but most frequently there are 16 of this age at a setting.

The total number of children registered at all settings who responded, range from 2 to 134, with the average (most frequently occurring) being 40 per setting.

	Mode (most frequent)	Min	Max
largest number of children on pilot	3	1	11
usual number of 2 year old children	16	2	38
total number of children registered	40	2	134

Gender split

The gender split shows that boys are most likely to be on the 2 year pilot, with over ½ of settings saying they have mostly boys, and just under ¼ having about the same number of boys and girls. In other words, girls are likely to make up about 1/3rd of all pilot children.

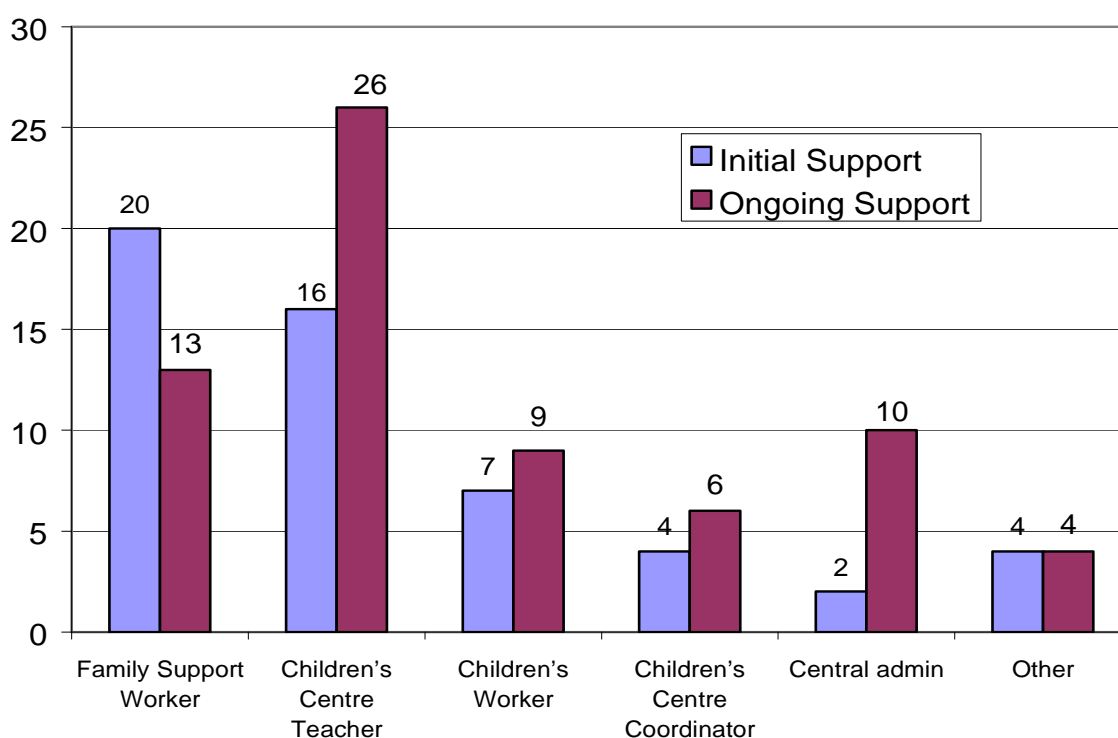
Mainly boys	21	54%
Mainly girls	9	23%
About the same	9	23%
Total	39	100%

Support for the setting

Asked who had been their main support with the pilot, respondents were able to indicate anybody they had used, both initially and ongoing, from a list provided or suggest others.

The main initial contact for over ½ of respondents was the Family Support Worker at the Children's Centre, dropping to 1/3 ongoing. The Children's Centre Teacher was the initial support for 16 providers, but became the main ongoing support for more than 2/3. In other words, the importance of the support offered by these two roles appears to swap over time.

Admin support from Mansfield Business Centre was said to give ongoing support by ¼ of respondents, from a low initial score.



Other support is as shown below:

Other Support	Initial	Ongoing
PVI / EY specialist teacher	2	1
Childminder support	0	1
Teacher of the deaf	1	1
SLT	1	1
Total	4	4

In Round 3 CC centres

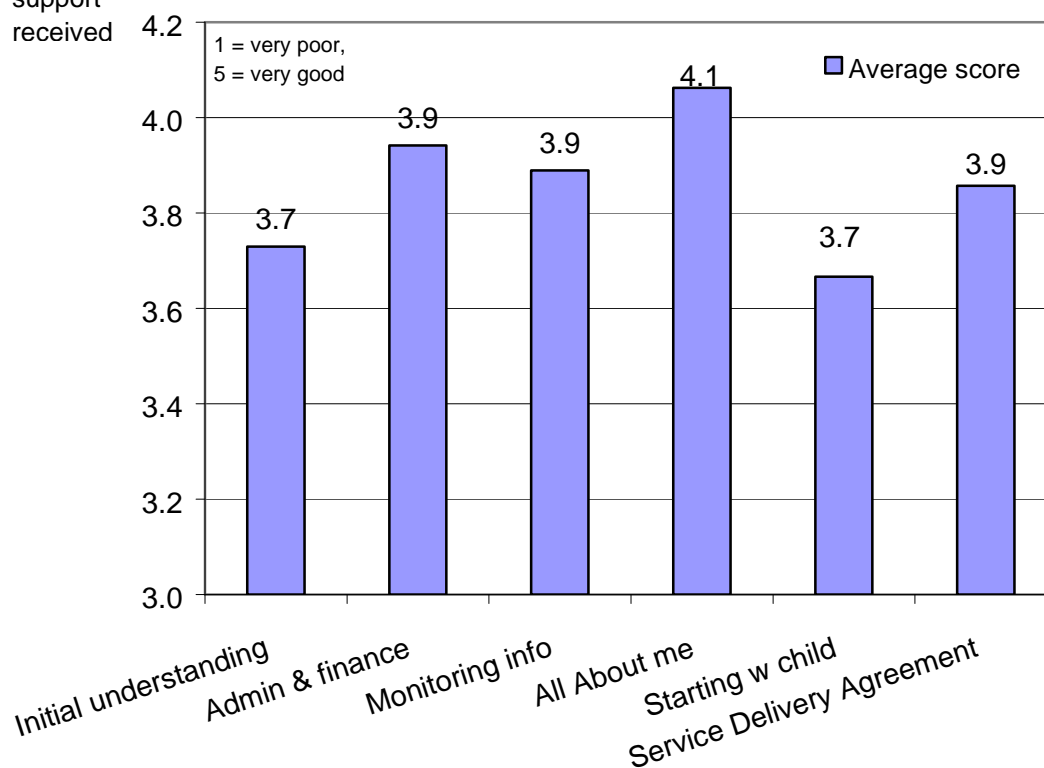
Type of Support given

Respondents were asked to indicate the type of support they had received, and score this on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = very poor support and 5 = very good support. It is not clear whether this question was understood by all respondents and not all sections were completed.

Support in the form of processes were generally scored quite well, with a score around 4 being 'good', although not all respondents scored all types of support as shown below. The highest need for support was for 'Initial understanding about the pilot', as indicated by 37 out of the 39 respondents, giving an average if 3.7. 'Responsibilities under SDA' were scored by only 21 providers, which might indicate a need to ensure this is understood, although one did mention it as being 'very informative'.

Type of Support – Processes

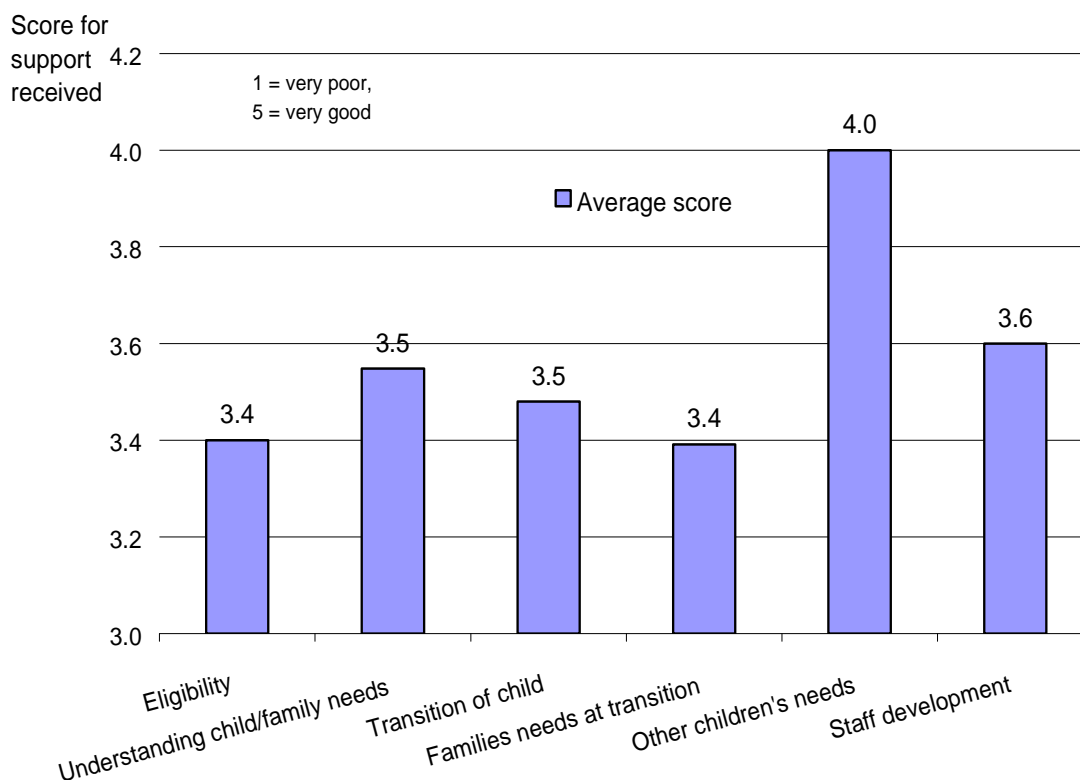
Score for support received



Processes	Average score, from 1 to 5	No of responses, n= 39
Initial understanding about the pilot	3.7	37
Admin & finance ongoing support	3.9	34
Monitoring information	3.9	36
Use of 'All About Me'	4.1	32
Use of 'Starting with the Child'	3.7	30
Responsibilities under Service Delivery Agreement	3.9	21

Asked about support relating to the people involved in the pilot, the scores and number of responses were also slightly lower than those for processes. The highest number of respondents indicated this was mostly needed around the 'eligibility of the child and family to take part in the pilot', and 'understanding their needs', from 30 and 31 of providers respectively. The best scored support was for the needs of other children in the setting at 4.0, indicating that providers may be benefiting from the input from the Children's Centre teacher for all children.

Type of Support – People



People	Average score, from 1 to 5	No of responses, n= 39
Eligibility of child/families to take part in pilot	3.4	30
Understanding families / child's needs	3.5	31
Transition of child at end if pilot	3.5	25
Families needs at transition	3.4	23
Needs of other children in setting	4.0	19
Staff development needs	3.6	20

Comments on the need for future improvement focused on:

- better communication between setting and Children's Centre

The PVI teacher came out just once at beginning of March to explain what the paperwork involved, but has not been out since to support us; since initial set-up of a place we haven't seen Family Support Worker. Day Nursery, Broxtowe

Initial transition from family worker to setting - more information with regard to family background. Day Nursery, Mansfield

- greater knowledge of family circumstances and child's needs

There is no one person who knows the pilot children and can act as support for the setting. Each child has arrived with different Health workers saying different things about the pilot and whereas one Health worker was very supportive, another was not and actually closed the case without telling us. This child was still on Child Protection Plan at the time. Day Nursery, Broxtowe

More background information on children on the pilot. Playgroup, Gedling

- better understanding about eligibility of children and families

Providing setting with more information on eligibility & paperwork. Day Nursery, Broxtowe

Monitoring information, eligibility of child/families. Pre-school, N&S

Criteria for eligibility to be given to child care placement to support parents to go and speak to Children's Centre. Pre-school, Bassetlaw

Eligibility - process for requirements for the pilot. Pre-school, Gedling

- greater overall understanding about pilot, especially the processes

A step by step guide explaining who should fill in which form and when would be very useful. Also who needs copies and who doesn't. The family support workers and the teacher at the Children's Centre have tried to help but both admitted that they were not familiar with the process.

Pre-school, Gedling

Had only one hour to view paperwork together; payments slow; SDA very informative; could do with more information re family. Childminder, N&S

Staff need support to fill in the paperwork as it is overwhelming on top of what is already expected. Day Nursery, Ashfield

- better support for settings

Network meeting of all child care providers in area to gain mutual support and get group training. Pre-school, Bassetlaw

I feel that termly meetings should be held with FSWs to discuss children's development & progress. Pre-school, Bassetlaw

If the support for settings is improved, then the value of the scheme will be assured overall. Day Nursery, Broxtowe

Development of relationship with Children's Centre

Apart from 2 respondents who were based in Centres, all others gave a score to indicate how much the relationship with their local Children's Centre had developed, from 1 (very little) to 5 (a great deal).

Some indicated that the relationship had not developed as it was already good to start with – for which some only gave a low score, but others a midpoint score. The average including all respondents was 3.3, which would indicate little development, but this may be

misleading. Just over ½ (19) gave a score of 4 or 5, which would indicate improved relationships with Children’s Centres.

Score	Number	% of total respondents
1 = very little	7	19%
2	4	11%
3	6	16%
3.5	1	3%
4	11	30%
5 = great deal	8	21%
Total	37	100%
Average	3.3	

Of these, most were Day Nurseries, but all childminders and over ½ of Pre-schools and Playgroups responding also scored 4 or 5.

	% of setting type	Number scoring 4 or 5, 5= a great deal
Childminder	100%	3
Pre-school / Playgroup	56%	5
Day Nurseries	44%	11
Total	51%	19

Positive comments included:

We know Children’s Centre staff team better, & the work they do, to pass on to families; we attend E&A & locality meetings. We have created SSCC Notice board & Working in Partnership board in setting. Pre-school, Bassetlaw

*Very good relationship with Children’s Centre - liase weekly; PVI is very good & meets with us regularly.
Day Nursery, N&S*

More open door - building greater relationships with family support and health visitors based in the Children’s Centre. Playgroup, Gedling

We are building stronger bonds, we are attending regular sessions, they are using us for crèche care and a worker attends our setting every week. Day Nursery, Mansfield

We have more involvement with the local Children’s Centre due to sharing information related to the child. They had spent time with the child and seen his abilities and worked with the child’s parent, and they informed us about the child and the parent’s needs. Pre-school, Ashfield

Less positive comments included:

Since initial contact, we have had no contact with them. I have had to contact EYST for help and advice on paperwork, eligibility & any other information I have needed. Day Nursery, Broxtowe

Contact for information, nothing else. Day Nursery, Bassetlaw

Apart from having a couple of core group meetings at the Children’s Centre, we have had very little involvement. Day Nursery, Broxtowe

Only see EYST & odd visits from FSW. Day Nursery, Mansfield

Other services engaged with, for signposting parents for support

Respondents were asked to indicate any services listed which they have worked with; multiple choices meant that many were selected and others suggested, as follows, however 8 did not indicate any, with one of these saying:

*Not applicable. Families already have a lot of agencies working with them.
Day Nursery, Broxtowe*

The Speech and Language service was the most commonly chosen as the service to which parents were signposted, selected by 23 respondents.

Signposted service	Number
SLT	23
Children's Centre	22
Schools	14
Health Visitor	13
Other Child Care providers	12
Job Centre +	7
Other Health Care	5
Social care	3

The total number of services selected by providers varied, with 5 respondents choosing just one, (SLT by 2 respondents, Children's Centre, Health Visitor or Other childcare each by 1 person), through to 3 providers choosing 7 different services from the list.

No of services selected	Number of providers
1	5
2	7
3	7
4	6
5	2
6	1
7	3

The correlation between those who said they had an improved relationship with the Children's Centre, as shown by a score of 4 or 5, and the service they most engaged with for signposting parents for support, indicated this stronger relationship, with Children's Centres showing the highest score, followed by SLT service. Those with a less improved relationship with centres tended to signpost to Health Visitors, schools or other childcare providers.

Signposted service	CC relationship score			total
	4 or 5	3 or 3.5	less than 3	
Children's Centre	15	5	2	22
SLT	13	6	2	21
Schools	8	3	3	14
Other Child Care provider	7	3	2	12
Health Visitors	4	6	2	12
Job Centre +	5	1	1	7
Other Health Care	4		1	5
Social care	2			2

Changes at the setting

Providers were asked about any changes they had made to their setting, as a result of being involved in the pilot. They were asked to choose from a list of things which they had already been doing and which they had introduced.

Out of the total 39 respondents, the following shows those things which they said they were already doing and those that had been introduced.

	Already doing	Introduced
Induction for child and parents	36	1
More flexible working arrangements for staff	25	3
Different working patterns for staff	18	4
Using additional / different staff	19	4
More flexible access to childcare for parents	29	4
Using additional resources eg toys, equipment	33	0
Attending more multi-agency meetings	23	11
Greater involvement / understanding of local services	25	8

As can be seen, some had introduced new ways of working, but the most striking difference is the introduction of attendance at multi-agency meetings and some increase in greater involvement and understanding of local services.

The process has allowed us to work more directly with multi-agencies to meet the needs of children in the Sure Start area. Day Nursery Ashfield

One had also introduced training on cochlear implants for staff as a result of having a child on the pilot with this requirement.

Benefits to being involved in the 2 year pilot

Asked whether taking part on the pilot had been beneficial to anyone, most providers responded, although 4 did not, so are not included in the table below.

Beneficial	Yes	% of total, n= 35
Children	32	91%
You	31	89%
Parents	30	86%
Your staff	29	83%
Your setting	29	83%

This shows that providers were almost unanimous about the benefits to children and themselves, but slightly less for parents, staff and the setting.

For those seeing the benefits for all of these groups (24 out of the 39), some comments were as follows:

More awareness of family/child support working in partnership with other professionals. Helped to keep our group sustainable. Parents receive support/ respite. Social, emotional, intellectual, physical needs are met within the group. Pre-school, Bassetlaw

The pilot has given the nursery a better understanding of different families and the children involved in the pilot have enjoyed their time at nursery and progressed in the individual development.

Day Nursery, Ashfield

Myself and the staff have been able to develop new skills and strategies through working with the pilot. The parents and children have been able to develop relationships within the group and make friends who have transferred to new settings with them. Pre-school, Gedling

Me - more paperwork; Staff - given experience of dealing with more challenging families & children; Parents - seen parents develop and engaging; Children – definitely.

Day Nursery, Ashfield

Giving children opportunities they may not usually get has helped to bring on the children in my care, and being supportive and giving advice to parents has helped their confidence.

Childminder, N&S

Disadvantages of being involved in the pilot

Asked about whether there have been any disadvantages to being involved in the pilot, over 2/3 of providers said there was not, although over ¼ disagreed.

Disadvantage	Number	%
No	26	67%
Yes	11	28%
No response	2	5%
Total	39	100%

Some comments from those who found disadvantages were largely to do with the paperwork.

Paperwork and amount of it. Knowing what to send back when. Children starting part way through funding terms. Day Nursery, Ashfield

Filling in forms. It's ok doing the forms termly, but remembering to send them to Children's Centre & MBC, & keeping copy for us can sometimes lead to mistakes being made & copies not sent to correct places. Day Nursery, N&S

But from a provider who claimed there were no disadvantages to the pilot:

But paperwork needed is a bigger task than anticipated and has to be completed outside of staff's paid work hours. Pre-school, Bassetlaw

Not being fully aware of the child's or family circumstances was another issue mentioned previously as well.

We feel we are not fully informed about child's family circumstances. Day Nursery, Gedling

We did not have correct information given to us about some children and their involvement with social care. Day Nursery, Mansfield

If we had been told at the beginning about the family circumstances we would have been better prepared and much more able to support the children and the family members we have contact with. Day Nursery, Broxtowe

More than one provider said the payment did not cover the real cost of providing the service, especially if a child did not attend for a full session. Others felt that payment took too long.

Money side didn't cover staff costs. Day Nursery, Mansfield

Payment - having to keep chasing it and it taking so long. Should be paid direct into bank before term as originally we were told it would be. Childminder, N&S

The funding does not cover our normal fee costs unless the child attends for 5 hours in one session. The children who are currently attending have been doing 3-4 hrs per session, which means that we have less money coming in for that place than we would normally have. This would be very significant to a smaller setting. Also there is the point of staff cover to attend Core Groups etc. Day Nursery, Broxtowe

Dealing with other parents (of non-pilot children) also caused one provider concern.

We have a large waiting list so some parents feel leap-frogged for pre-school places. Pre-school, Bassetlaw

Other comments reflect some previously mentioned and can be grouped as follows:

Positive comments - benefits to children, families, individual and the setting

Enjoy being part of scheme. Feel a lot of children in disadvantaged families have really benefited from being part of group setting. Have worked with wider group of professionals and are now more aware of services available to young children. Pre-school, Bassetlaw

It has been an experience which has enhanced my working practice by being involved with families and children who need additional support. Children's Centre, Ashfield

Our EYST has been very good throughout the pilot and helps us to find out information from the Children's Centre and FS. Day Nursery, Mansfield

Children are developing well by mixing with children their age; parents are gaining confidence to ask for help & support; hours are flexible to meet the children's needs. Day Nursery, Mansfield

It's a pleasure & heart warming feel[ing] to see the children grow from first coming in to going to school after pilot. Day Nursery, Mansfield

I think the 3 children we have had on the pilot and their families have benefited greatly. These children would otherwise nor have accessed a local setting and would probably have got further behind by the time they started school or nursery. Pre-school, Gedling

We have really noticed the difference that the 2 yr pilot has played in one child's life. He has developed and progressed really well when I personally believe he would not have done if he wasn't given the opportunity to attend nursery. Day Nursery, N&S

Overall a very good scheme and very beneficial. Hayley Burton in admin has been a very good help to me personally. Childminder, N&S

I am a key person to one of the children and I found having a CAF in place and attending meetings have been very helpful, giving me insight into multi agency working and how this is beneficial to all concerned, in helping the child and the family in the best way possible. Pre-school, Ashfield

Suggestions for improvements to the scheme from providers

Process:

I feel the initial monitoring of children is carried out too soon; children need greater time to settle in order to get a true picture of their needs. This can cause a false result of data.

Day Nursery, Ashfield

The letters prompting for headcount are a good idea. Sometimes feel more explanation could have been given at the start - how to complete development forms etc. But it has benefited the children so much!

Day Nursery, Mansfield

It would have been better experience for all involved if we had had a better introduction to the 2 yr pilot, the process, the paperwork, implications, etc; more information for parents as to why their child is on the pilot and what they can expect.

Day Nursery, Ashfield

In order for the child / family to be fully supported we need to know more information re the child.

Day Nursery, Ashfield

Continuous liaison with the support worker to share information about the child and CAF in place ASAP.

Pre-school, Ashfield

More help for parents:

Feel that parents should be more involved with their children whilst attending 2 yr pilot eg training on their children's development needs; interaction with their children's playing activities.

Day Nursery, Bassetlaw

I feel that we have not made the opportunity or understood if or what we could do with parents to support them. Our setting the parents drop the child off and leave them, on the initial questionnaire to parents their feelings etc. I don't feel I have helped them, but we know we have supported the child.

Pre-school Gedling

Finally, 31 respondents have requested to receive feedback in the form of a summary report by giving contact details, which indicates an ongoing interest in their involvement in the pilot.

Janet Lang
January 2011