

# Inspection of children's centres

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## Inspection findings

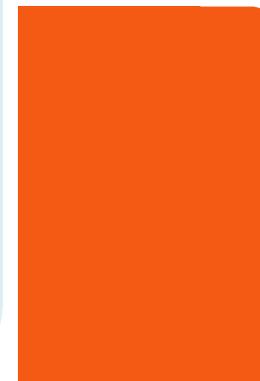
- Official statistics released quarterly set out our inspection findings
- Annual Report included results from 710 settings inspected September 2010 – end August 2011
- 73% judged to be good or outstanding
- Phase 1 centres perform markedly better than phase 2 centres



## Features of outstanding practice

### Outstanding centres:

- identify children and families in their reach area
- target those families in most need at the earliest stage and engage with them
- have excellent partnerships at strategic and operational levels
- use data and other information to evaluate the success of their services and plan for the future
- listen to parents, take account of their views and shape activities to meet their needs



# Evidencing outcomes through data

- The make up of the reach area
- Identification of families in target groups and those in most need of intervention and support
- Needs analysis of the families in the reach area
- Agreed targets and service level agreements
- Evidence of how participation rates are improving over time especially in relation to target groups
- Evidence of how services and activities have been adjusted in relation to consultation with parents
- Data in relation to the agreed key performance measures including outcome measures



# Changing face of children's centres

- A shared commitment to give local areas greater autonomy and flexibility to develop children's centre provision
- Local authorities are having to make difficult funding decisions and there is a lot of change in the wider commissioning environment
- The Government has consulted on a core purpose for children's centres and has set out its vision as part of a statement on early years
- Consultation on revised statutory guidance and piloting of payment by results



# Inspection in a changing landscape

From September 2011 revisions to existing framework to remove repetition and to give greater focus to:

- how well the centre knows its community
- how well the services and activities it provides or signposts are matched to the families in that community
- how well the centre encourages families from its target groups to participate in services and activities
- how effective the centre is in narrowing the gap and improving the wellbeing of children from target groups



## More change ahead

Proposals for a new inspection framework that:

- allows inspections of groups of centres where local authorities organise their centres in groups that share management
- has fewer judgements with revised grades
- is aligned with the Government's core purpose for children's centres and the proposed performance measures linked to payment by results
- reduces notice periods
- retains optional self-evaluation.



# How will this work?



- Inspection of a group of centres where they share leadership and management
- Inspection of individual centres where there is a single centre model or centres work collaboratively
- Larger inspection team will check the accuracy of leadership's evaluation of delivery and improved outcomes across the group of centres through a sampling approach
- One report for the group



# Next steps



- Testing new arrangements in May
- Consulting on changes in late spring/summer
- Pilot inspections in individual centres and different group arrangements in June and July
- Ongoing work with Department for Education on changes to regulations and on alignment with any national performance measures
- Publication of new guidance by end October
- Dissemination and training in November/December
- Start date January 2013

