

# **Sure Start Children's Centres**

**Kent**

## **Governance Arrangements for Sure Start Children's Centres in Kent**

**August 2010**

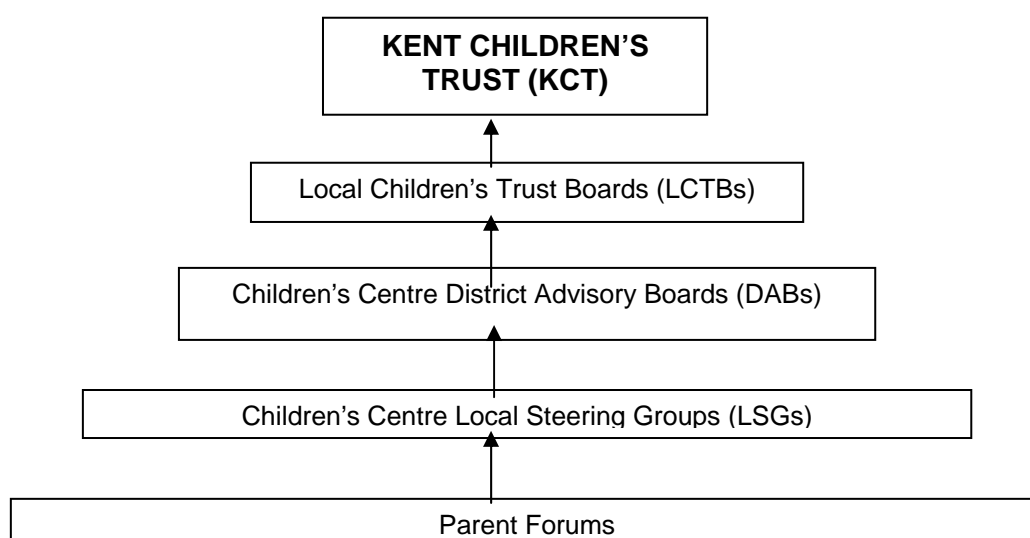
# Governance Arrangements for Sure Start Children's Centres in Kent

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Sure Start Children's Centres are part of the local system of universal children's services, providing easy access to a range of community health services, parenting and family support, Early Years Foundation Stage provision and links to training and employment opportunities for families with children under the age of five. They are a key mechanism for delivering the Government's *Every Child Matters* initiative to improve outcomes for young children, while reducing inequalities between the most disadvantaged children and their peers. By March 2011, all of Kent's children's centres will be fully operational, ensuring all children under five and their families have access to integrated Children's Centre service provision. The range and extent of services offered by Children's Centres will vary according to local need but all centres will offer some level of core activity outlined above.
- 1.2. The 2009 Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning (ASCL) Act amends the Childcare Act 2006 by defining Sure Start Children's Centres in law, and places a duty on local authorities with regard to the development and delivery of children's services through Sure Start Children's Centres. The ASCL Act also puts local authorities under a statutory duty to make governance arrangements to secure that each of its children's centres is under the remit of an advisory board.
- 1.3. While it is recognised that the precise governance arrangements for children's centres will vary from centre to centre and District to District, reflecting local circumstances, the need for effective governance arrangements is common to all centres. Set within the over-arching context of Children's Trust arrangements (see diagram below), Children's Centre advisory boards will play a key role in the governance of centres at locality / District level.
- 1.4. The diagram below shows how Children's Centre governance arrangements link in to the Children's Trust structure, providing a line of accountability and a means of critical support and challenge for Children's Centres. The governance of children's centres in Kent will be achieved via a two tier structure. There will be 12 District Advisory Boards (DABs). These will be supported by Local Steering Groups (LSGs) which have a direct interest in overseeing the services being delivered at each individual Children's Centre. These Local Steering Groups are already operating around Kent, sometimes known also as steering boards or implementation groups. They in turn rely on feedback from the Parent Forums which represent the views of Children's Centres' users – parents, carers and their children under 5 in each locality.
- 1.5. This two tier governance structure is based on the conclusion that, given the number of Children's Centres across Kent (and within each individual District), a single tier system would be unable to fulfil the detailed scrutiny role on its own. The Advisory Boards themselves are likely to be too removed from the day to day activities taking place in each centre. They will need the Local Steering Groups to undertake much of the scrutiny role on their behalf, particularly in relation to the self-evaluation and performance management processes. The District Advisory Boards will rely on information and assessments from their Local Steering Groups when making judgements, and this will allow the Board to concentrate on its more over-arching, strategic role of ensuring good outcomes across the District.

- 1.6. The two tier governance structure is therefore intended to provide crucial support and challenge for Children's Centres as they seek to deliver high quality services to the children and parents / carers in their localities as well as helping and advising those managing the Centres to prepare for their Ofsted inspections under the terms of the ASCL Act 2009.
- 1.7. Each part of the governance structure will have its own particular role to play. Parent Forums are for parents and carers to be involved in local decision-making and also provide a mechanism for ensuring that Children's Centres meet local needs. The Forums give an opportunity for informal consultation and enable individuals to voice opinions, discuss proposed plans and feed views up to the Local Advisory Board which will also have parent representation within its membership.
- 1.8. The Local Steering Group (LSG) – known in many areas as a Steering Board or Implementation Group – is the body that provides critical support to the management of the Children's Centre and its delivery of services. It will do this by helping the Manager prepare the Centre's business / development / delivery plan, ensuring that it is fit for purpose, is resourced, and reflects the needs of the local 0-5 population and their families. The LSG's membership will include local service providers from the various key agencies who are familiar with the local area and the community served by the Centre. It will work closely with the Children's Centre Manager to achieve continuous improvement in the quality of services being provided, and help, when necessary, to prepare the Centre for its Ofsted inspection. The LSG will play an important role in the Centre's self-evaluation process (via the Self-Evaluation Form or SEF) and in the overall performance management of the Centre. It will have a balanced membership drawn from parents as well as the voluntary and statutory sectors and the LSG will periodically need to review levels of parent satisfaction with the services being delivered. It will also provide information and advice to the District Advisory Board to enable that body to evaluate Children's Centre services and performance across the District.
- 1.9. The District Advisory Board (DAB), as its name suggests, takes more of a strategic, district-wide monitoring role. Its role will be to provide strategic direction for its Children's Centres in line with the Children and Young People's Plan (C&YPP) adopted by the Kent Children's Trust. It is intended that the 2011-2014 C&YPP will adopt a very strong localities approach and include 12 District plans. The DAB will receive Children's Centre Managers' reports (or an overall summary of these reports) to monitor how effectively the Centres are delivering early childhood services to families with children under 5 across the district. It will scrutinize and sign off business / development / delivery plans and will evaluate the impact of Children's Centre services for families across the district as part of its performance management role. This will be achieved via consideration of the individual SEF summary reports submitted to the DAB by each Local Steering Group. The District Advisory Board will also monitor and sign off any service level agreements (SLAs) submitted to them by the LSGs that relate to services delivered by agency partners in each Children's Centre catchment area. Above all, the District Advisory Board will represent each Children's Centre with Ofsted, the local authority and other statutory agencies as appropriate, supported where necessary by members of the relevant Local Steering Group. Each DAB will be accountable for Children's Centre service delivery to its own Local Children's Trust Board.

- 1.10. The relationship between the District Advisory Board and the Local Steering Groups may well vary from District to District with the responsibilities being shared between the two bodies. The most important consideration is that the functions of an advisory board, as set down in the legislation (see paragraph 1.2) and the accompanying statutory guidance, are fully reflected in the arrangements existing within each district.
- 1.11. From October 2010 the existing Local Children's Services Partnerships (LCSPs), introduced in 2008, will be pairing up and working towards the formation of 12 new Local Children's Trust Boards (LCTBs). These will follow established District boundaries. The management of Kent's Children's Centres will be via these LCTBs. They will have the task of ensuring that best practice is carried forward and resources best utilised across their respective areas. It will be the responsibility of each District Advisory Board to report to its Local Children's Trust Board concerning the delivery of Children's Centre services and highlighting significant areas of strength and weakness. The DAB should in particular engage with the representative of Children's Centres on the Local Children's Trust Board to maintain and improve the quality of services for parents and children under 5 throughout each District. LCTBs are accountable to the Kent Children's Trust.
- 1.12. The Kent Children's Trust (KCT) was set up in September 2006, and brings together all services for children and young people in Kent, based on the duty to co-operate in the Children's Act 2004, to focus on improving life chances for all children and young people. The 2009 Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act placed the Children's Trust Board on a statutory footing from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 and this means that responsibility for preparing, publishing and revising the Children and Young People's Plan (C&YPP) is transferred from the Local Authority to the Children's Trust Board and all partner agencies. The Trust has a key role in ensuring there are services that provide early intervention and preventative support to children, young people and their families. The KCT Executive Commissioning Group meet 8 times a year and provide the County Board with Strategic direction.



## GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

- 1.13. The Childcare Act does not require one advisory board per Children's Centre. Where it makes sense locally to do so, several Children's Centres can cluster together and share an advisory board. But there must be an advisory board that performs the role for each Children's Centre, even if that advisory board also does so for other Children's Centres.
- 1.14. The legislation defines the role of advisory boards by saying: "an advisory board must provide advice and assistance for the purpose of ensuring the effective operation of the children's centre within its remit". The role is to support and advise those responsible for operating the centre, usually the centre manager, who will be responsible to the local authority or other body operating the centre. There is a clear distinction between governance and the detailed day to day operational or management activity and control of the centre budget.
- 1.15. The legislation does not create advisory boards as distinct legal bodies, with legal personality. Advisory boards do not have their own legal identity and will not be given any particular legal powers or duties.
- 1.16. Advisory boards will not be in a position to commission services, control the children's centre budget or take decisions relating to day to day operations or management of the Children's Centre.
- 1.17. In line with Sure Start Children's Centre guidance and local Trust arrangements, the advisory board will be a sub-group of the Local Children's Trust. The arrangements for this will be a matter for local interpretation but Children's Centre advisory boards will have clear mechanisms for feeding into the wider Children's Trust governance framework.
- 1.18. Where two or more centres are covered by one advisory board, individual centres must have a Local Steering Group to ensure local, relevant issues are addressed. Local mechanisms will need to be in place to ensure that individual LSGs feed into the over-arching District Advisory Board.
- 1.19. There is no formal requirement on centres to have Parents' Forums. However, consideration must be given to how centres secure wider parental involvement in the governance of the centre. This can often be achieved most effectively through a Parents' Forum, but there will need to be local mechanisms that are clear and visible and ensure the views of parents feed into the overarching governance arrangements.
- 1.20. During 2009, the Governance Working Group, made up of representative children's centre managers and locality co-ordinators, together with Kent County Council (KCC) officers from the central Children's Centre Project Team met regularly to develop the basis for this governance framework. The framework itself draws on the 2009 ASCL Act, previous DCSF Governance Guidance for Sure Start Children's Centres and Extended Schools and on support materials from Together for Children, an agency working on behalf of the then-DCSF to support local authorities in delivering the CC agenda. The framework has been developed in consultation with KCC's School Governance Unit.

1.21. This framework aims to set out the core purpose of both District Advisory Boards and Local Steering Groups in terms of Children's Centre governance, and includes:

- Membership
- Terms of Reference
- Meeting arrangements
- Suggested areas for training and development for Advisory Board
- Statement of values and declaration of interest (Appendix 1)

## **2.0 District Advisory Boards (DABs)**

### **2.1 Core Purpose**

2.1.1 The role of the District Advisory Board is to:

- ensure that the big strategic issues are taken to the Local Children's Trust;
- provide advice and assistance for the purpose of ensuring the effective operation of the Children's Centres within its remit;
- ensure high quality challenge and scrutiny of the self-evaluation process and to support children's centres in their improvement ambitions;
- support Local Steering Groups and managers to lead and deliver some of the changes required for improvement;
- to work with Local Steering Groups and Children's Centre Managers to identify priorities through effective consultation;
- To receive and sign off the individual Children's Centres' business, development and delivery plans ensuring that they are fit for purpose, are resourced and reflect the needs of the local 0-5 population and their families;
- evaluate the impact of Children's Centre services for families in need by updating, reviewing and refreshing self-review and self-assessment as part of the performance management arrangements for each Children's Centre;
- ensure the services on offer meet the local needs and contribute to improving children's outcomes across the District;
- ensure that parents/carers are key drivers for Children's Centre services.

2.1.2 District Advisory Boards can also be involved in:

- staffing processes such as the appointment of a Children's Centre Manager;
- advising on planning and commissioning; budgets and resources;
- leading on consulting and involving the local community.

*(Adapted from the Governance Guidance for Sure Start Children's Centres and Extended Schools)*

### **2.2 Membership**

2.2.1 The District Advisory Board needs to be large enough to be representative and not so large that it becomes unwieldy. The 2010 statutory guidance relating to the ASCL Act suggests that a board of around 10-15 members is an appropriate and workable size.

2.2.2 Parental members of the District Advisory Board should as far as possible be drawn from the local community, and efforts made to involve disadvantaged parents as members. Where one DAB exists for more than one Children's Centre (which will

be the norm in Kent) then each Children's Centre must have their own opportunities for seeking parents' views in a way that can be represented to the advisory board. This can be achieved through parental involvement at Local Steering Group level.

2.2.3 The District Advisory Board should have an independent chair. This person should ideally be someone who is *not* from (a) a body with accountability for Children's Centres or an organisation commissioned to run a Children's Centre on behalf of the accountable body; (b) an agency with responsibility for providing "core offer" statutory services (i.e. KCC, Health/PCT and Job Centre Plus); or (c) an organisation that is deriving a financial benefit as a result of Children's Centres' commissioning services from them. In particular, the Chair cannot be a Children's Centre Manager, a Children's Centre Locality Co-ordinator or a Preventative Services Manager, given their direct responsibility for managing the Centres. The Chair should have the casting vote if an issue arises on which the Board is unable to reach a decision. The Chair will also need to ensure that there are good links at all times between the Children's Centre Manager, the local authority and other agencies providing services at the Children's Centre.

2.2.4. Sure Start guidance suggests that the Children's Centre Manager should always be given the option of attending the District Advisory Board for all or some of the time. The Children's Centre Manager is not a DAB member, but reports to the Board (it is expected that the Children's Centre Managers will provide a written report to the District Advisory Board). Where there is a Children's Centre Locality Co-ordinator, he / she may report to the Board on behalf of the other Children's Centre Managers, with the latter attending for specific agenda items, where appropriate. Like the Children's Centre Managers, Locality Co-ordinators report to the DAB but are not members of it.

### 2.3. Membership Criteria

2.3.1. Representatives must have a strategic role within their organisation/agency at the local level and be of sufficient seniority to enable them to:

- Speak for their agency with authority
- Commit their agency on service development and practice matters
- Influence the development of their agency's practices
- Ensure that children's needs are presented in agency decision-making regarding resources
- Contribute to the development of robust and effective monitoring and performance functions.

*(Kent Children's Trust, Local Children's Services Partnership, Partnership Agreement, September 08)*

### 2.4. Core Membership:

2.4.1 Parents/Carers. The District Advisory Board should consist of parent representatives, preferably from each Children's Centre area. These representatives are representing the interest of all families within their catchment area.

#### 2.4.2 Statutory Sector- this **may** include:

- JobCentre Plus Manager
- PCT/NHS Trust to include:
  - Health Visiting/School Nursing
  - Midwifery
  - Speech and Language
- Children's Social Services
- Preventative Services Manager
- Local Children's Trust Board representative
- Early Years Services
- Extended Services
- Local Council
- Police
- Head Teacher
- Local or County Councillors

It may be that all the statutory agencies meet to decide which 3 or 4 agencies will represent the statutory sector on the District Advisory Board and how they will communicate with each other.

#### 2.4.3 Voluntary Sector- this **may** include: (to act as a representative of the sector rather than one agency).

- Homestart
- Parent Consortium
- NCMA
- Faith Representative
- Local Community Group
- Childcare Provision

It may be that all the voluntary agencies meet to decide which 3 or 4 agencies will represent the voluntary sector on the District Advisory Board and how they will communicate with each other.

#### 2.4.4. There must be at least one member from each Children's Centre Local Steering Group on the District Advisory Board.

#### 2.4.5 The District Advisory Board can co-opt members as and when this is required.

#### 2.4.6 The District Advisory Board may decide to establish sub-groups which have a particular focus and can engage a wider range of agencies. Examples of sub-groups may include service delivery, governance and finance and inclusion and diversity. Where possible the sub-groups would consist of at least one member of the District Advisory Board. The sub-groups will feed into the District Advisory Board and be required to provide regular reports.

### 2.5 Responsibilities

Representatives on the District Advisory Board will be expected to undertake the following roles and responsibilities.

- Represent their agencies and bring experience and knowledge about other sectors and organisations; however, their primary duty will be to act in the interest of local children, young people and families.



- Ensure that the 'duty to co-operate' is understood and acted upon within their agency.
- Ensure that staff within their agency who work in the locality and who have contact with children are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Ensure that actions to support the delivery of Children's Centre services are clearly understood and firmly embedded within their agency.
- Ensure their agency makes an appropriate contribution to the resourcing of the Children's Centre.
- Ensure that the reports, procedures and decisions of the District Advisory Board are disseminated in an effective way within their agency and acted upon.
- Contribute to the development of robust and effective monitoring and performance arrangements and be open to scrutiny.
- Bring key multi-agency strategic issues to the attention of the Advisory Board.
- Commit to attending District Advisory Board meetings – if members fail to attend more than two consecutive Board meetings without good reason they will be disqualified.
- Nominate a named deputy who also meets the membership criteria to attend up to one meeting a year on the member's behalf.
- Read all documents prior to meetings and consult with appropriate personnel within their agency as appropriate.
- Be available for consultation between meetings to facilitate the business of the District Advisory Board.
- Declare any interest in a particular topic or issue preferably before a meeting.
- Support the work of the District Advisory Board by identifying people within the organisation to join sub-groups or to undertake any necessary research or additional work.
- Actively contribute to external inspection activity of children's services in their area.

*(Adapted from Kent Children's Trust, Local Children's Services Partnership, Partnership Agreement, September 08)*

## 2.6. Terms of Reference

- To work with KCC and partners on the development of Children's Centres within the District and ensure the delivery of high quality services in accordance with relevant guidance and legislation
- To provide challenge and scrutiny of the self-evaluation process and to support children's centres in their improvement ambitions.
- To provide scrutiny of the way in which the Children's Centres manage their resources to meet the needs of users and the wider community and to encourage efficient and effective use of those resources.
- To receive and sign off the individual Children's Centre SEFs and business plans ensuring that they are fit for purpose, are resourced and reflect the needs of the local 0 – 5 population and their families.
- To receive, consider summary reports from Children's Centre Managers ensuring that they include evaluative information, and to highlight and consider challenges identified within the District.
- To support and challenge the Children Centre Managers and Local Steering Groups in monitoring the performance of the Children's Centres in meeting outcomes required by the national indicators and Every Child Matters (ECM) outcomes as measured by the self-evaluation forms (SEFs) and data collection.

- To promote the work of the Children's Centres throughout the District and to represent Children Centres when required
- To ensure that every Children's Centre is fully inclusive and that all children and their families are able to participate in all activities.
- To ensure there is effective sharing of data between agencies in relation to the children and families who use the District's Children's Centres.
- To contribute to the reshaping of services for children under 5 and their families across the District.
- To take on the role of critical friend to Local Steering Groups and to contribute to a culture of challenge and support, in order to provide consistently high quality services to families across the District.
- To carry out the above responsibilities in an objective, open and transparent way and to conduct all business by showing respect for colleagues, staff and stakeholders.
- Terms of reference and membership will be reviewed annually.
- Contribute to Ofsted inspections of the District's Children's Centres.

## 2.7. Meeting Arrangements

- The board will meet a minimum 4 times a year.
- A minute taker must be provided by one of the Children's Centres for the meeting.
- Agendas and reports for all meetings should be sent one working week prior to the meeting.
- Arrangements must be put in place to allow parents to attend District Advisory Board meetings, including childcare arrangements and costs of travel and training.

## 2.8. Training Programme

Suggested areas for training and development for District Advisory Board members are as follows:

- Working as a team.
- Effective meetings.
- Terms of reference.
- Roles and responsibilities.
- Reaching the most excluded groups.
- The voice of your parents.
- Your children's voices.
- ECM outcomes and performance indicators.
- Interpreting reports/data.
- Performance management, monitoring and evaluation.
- Improving outcomes.

- Challenge and support/critical friend role.
- Continual improvement.
- Health and Safety.
- Safeguarding responsibilities.

## 3.0 Local Steering Groups (LSGs)

### 3.1. Core Purpose

3.1.1 To design, deliver, monitor and evaluate services at every stage in the development and delivery of the Children's Centre. To work closely with the Children's Centre Manager to drive continuous improvement of high quality services that impact on the lives of local families and improve outcomes, as defined in Every Child Matters.

3.1.2. This will include looking at:

- local issues – leading on consulting and involving the local community
- service delivery
- operational issues
- staffing processes such as the appointment of a Children's Centre Manager;
- improving links with all schools and early years providers within the catchment area
- how the Children's Centre gets involved with what is happening within the community
- supporting the Children's Centre Manager in achieving full core offer status (if applicable)
- supporting the Children's Centre Manager in the self evaluation form and business plan
- linking with Extended Services to promote joined up delivery

3.1.3. It is envisaged that there would be one Local Steering Group per Children's Centre but where two Children's Centres are serving the same community, it may make more sense to have one Local Steering Group overseeing two or more Children's Centres. Local Steering Groups have in many areas also been known in the past as steering or implementation boards.

### 3.2 Membership

3.2.1. The Local Steering Group needs to be large enough to be representative and not so large that it becomes unwieldy. It is suggested that a group of around 10-15 members is an appropriate and workable number. Members of this group need to be familiar with local issues and work with the local community. Parents / Carers should always be represented on the Local Steering Group.

3.2.2 Membership is open to all service providers that have input to Children's Centre families and **may** include:

- Extended services co-ordinators
- Housing
- Linked and all other early education and childcare providers
- Childminders
- Voluntary sector providers
- Residents association
- PCT/NHS
- Community Police Officer/Warden
- Representatives from all schools in the catchment area, e.g. Head Teachers, Governors, Family Liaison Officers, Parent Support Advisers

- Private Sector
- Local Council
- Faith Groups
- Representatives of staff from the Children's Centre

3.2.3 The Local Steering Group should have an independent chair. However, it is the responsibility of the Children's Centre Manager to establish the Local Steering Group and it may be that the Children's Centre Manager chairs the first few meetings, until an independent chair has been identified and if necessary undertaken relevant training. An independent chair for a Local Steering Group would be someone who does not have direct management responsibility for a Children's Centre.

3.2.4 A job description for the Local Steering Group Chair can be found in the Appendix.

### 3.3 Responsibilities

Representatives on the Local Steering Group will be expected to undertake the following roles and responsibilities.

- Represent their agencies and bring experience and knowledge about other sectors and organisations to the Local Steering Group.
- Ensure that minutes and any reports of the Local Steering Group are disseminated in an effective way within their agency and acted upon.
- Contribute to the development of robust and effective monitoring and performance arrangements and be open to scrutiny.
- Commit to attending Local Steering Group meetings.
- Read all documents prior to meetings and consult with appropriate personnel within their agency as appropriate.
- Be available for consultation between meetings to facilitate the business of the Local Steering Group.

*(Adapted from Kent Children's Trust, Local Children's Services Partnership, Partnership Agreement, September 08)*

### 3.4. Terms of Reference

- To support the Children's Centre Manager in monitoring the SEF and Business Plan, ensuring they are fit for purpose and reflect the needs of the local 0-5 population and their families.
- To ensure effective working relationships are developed with other initiatives to ensure integrated delivery of services in the local community and best use of resources.
- To support the re-shaping of services on a local level to better meet local needs.
- To link with the extended schools agenda.
- To ensure work with families, members of the local community and other stakeholders reflects evidence of local need. This will include ensuring all sections of the community are reached.
- To ensure services are delivered, monitored and evaluated and work objectives are achieved in line with implementation and delivery plans. To access support and advice as necessary.
- To receive and consider progress reports from the Children's Centre Manager.

- To ensure that the Centre is fully inclusive and that all children and their families are able to participate in all activities.
- To proactively promote and publicise the work of the Children's Centre and its programme of activities in the catchment area.
- To be involved in recruitment of key staff and have representation on appropriate interview panels.
- To ensure that resources are being used in the best way to meet the needs of the community.
- To ensure there is effective sharing of data between agencies in relation to children and families using the Children's Centre.
- To bring issues with strategic implications for the District as a whole to the attention of the District Advisory Board.
- Contribute to Ofsted inspections of the Children's Centre.
- To ensure the Children's Centre meets health and safety guidelines and safeguarding procedures are in place.
- To monitor and make recommendations for improvements to the building so that it best meets the needs of families.
- To ensure there are clear lines of communication with the parent forum.
- To consider formal complaints and agree actions in response to complaints.
- Members will ensure that actions to support the delivery of Children Centre service are clearly understood and firmly embedded within their agency.
- Terms of reference and membership will be reviewed annually.

In addition, where the Children's Centre is on a school site;

- To ensure there is an effective working relationship and communication strategy with the school and its Governing Body.
- To ensure there are effective systems in place to clarify roles and responsibilities regarding the school, Children's Centre and school site.

### 3.5 Meeting Arrangements

- It is the responsibility of the Local Steering Group and Children's Centre Manager to ensure the frequency of meetings is adequate and appropriate.
- A minute taker from the Children's Centre must be provided for the meeting.
- Agendas and reports for all meetings should be sent one working week prior to the meeting.
- Arrangements must be put in place to allow parents to attend Local Steering Group meetings, including childcare arrangements and costs of travel and training.

## Appendix 1

### Statement of values and declaration of interest

All District Advisory Board and Local Steering Group members should declare any interest they may have in anything under discussion and leave the meeting if asked by the chair. This would not normally include interests of a strategic or general professional nature that would contribute to and enrich partnership work. However it would include, for example, a discussion of business, contracts or employment opportunities affecting the individual or his/her close family, or any other matters where there is any potential for personal gain or a conflict of interests. In these situations members of the Local Steering Group would be expected to leave the meeting for that item. The rule is, 'when in doubt declare openly and leave immediately'.

The Kent Children's Trust and Local Children's Trusts have adopted the Nolan Committee's principles of public life. It is advised that both District Advisory Board and Local Steering Group members have regard to these principles in relation to Children's Centre business. These are:

**Selflessness:** Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

**Integrity:** Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

**Objectivity:** In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

**Accountability:** Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

**Openness:** Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

**Honesty:** Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

**Leadership:** Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

*(Kent Children's Trust, Local Children's Services Partnership, Partnership Agreement, September 08)*



## **Appendix 2: Tools [ To Follow ]**

These Tools are in the process of being developed and will include:

- A Sample agenda
- District Advisory Board Chair job description
- A Sample Quarterly Summary Report Template for submission to District Advisory Board
- Parent Information Sheet
- Independent Chair Appointment Process