

Gateshead

'Journey to Quality'

Gateshead Quality Improvement Programme



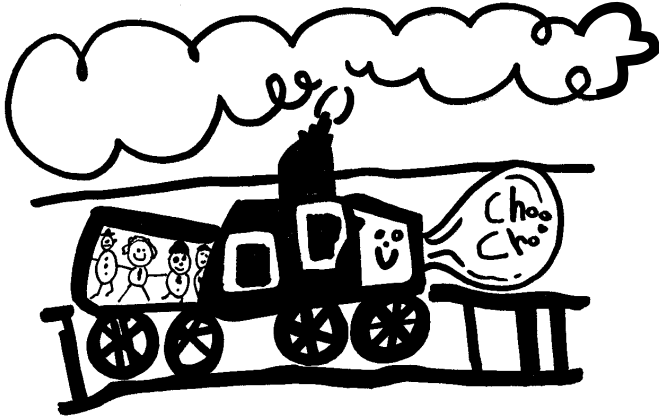
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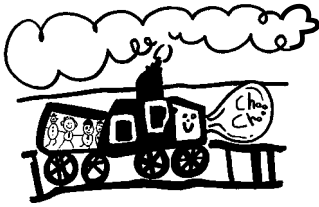
 **Gateshead**
Council
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A Framework for Quality Improvement

Contents

	Page
Foreword	2
Introduction	3
What is quality improvement in Gateshead?	4
What is the framework for quality improvement in Gateshead?	5
Quality improvement Programme: Process	6
Quality Improvement Programme: Modules	9
Contact details of Gateshead Quality Improvement Partners	10





Foreword

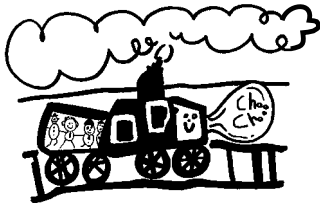
The launch of this material represents a significant milestone in the development of quality services for children and young people in Gateshead. We would like to thank and acknowledge the work of colleagues involved in the development of 'Journey to Quality', the Gateshead framework for Quality Improvement. The framework has demonstrated a commitment to working in partnership, drawing on the strengths and skills evident within the early years and childcare sector.

Striving for high quality services is a challenge for all of us working with children and young people. Research tells us that good quality learning, care and play experiences from birth are crucial in laying firm foundations for lifelong learning. In developing services for children, young people and their families, quality represents an essential strand for raising achievement.

We hope that children and young people's service providers working through 'Journey to Quality' will find the process a positive developmental experience, which stimulates debate, discussion and reflection.

Paul Carvin
Head of Raising Achievement Service

Chris Nevis
Head of Children and Young People's Service



Introduction

Welcome to the Gateshead Quality Improvement Programme 'Journey to Quality'. In Gateshead we are committed to provide the best for all children, so they enjoy their childhood and grow into confident, happy, young people who recognise the opportunities available to them and who achieve their ambitions. Delivering quality provision is crucial and we must get it right. In order to achieve this, local authorities and private, voluntary and independent providers must work in partnership to provide a range of high quality services for our children, young people and their families, that appropriately meets their specific needs.

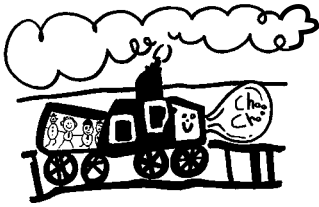
The Gateshead Quality Improvement Partners (QIPs) have consulted with childcare staff, other local authorities and reviewed recent research, to establish this quality framework. Gateshead providers piloted the Sheffield Quality Assurance Kitemark, and, from this pilot, the Quality Improvement Programme was developed.

Early learning is the foundation for lifelong learning. When children and young people access services beyond the home, those who work with them have a key role in ensuring all their needs are met. Therefore those who provide services to children should be dedicated to continually improving the quality of their provision through reflection, evaluation, challenge and change. It is vital that children's experiences from the very earliest time are positive and as good as they can be. *"To be 'good enough' is not enough. The best quality services are those which are not complacent but which are always looking for ways to improve"* (Goldsack, Sheffield Quality Kitemark, 2003).

As practitioners become more confident and develop their expertise, the quality of the provision they offer should ensure more positive outcomes for children, young people and their families. Gateshead Early Years and Childcare and Raising Achievement Services have joined together to become QIPs with the private, voluntary, independent and local authority providers. Quality Improvement is an ongoing process, promoting a continuous ethos of self-evaluation, reflection and development.

The Quality Improvement Programme modules provide the quality standards for all early years and childcare providers in Gateshead. The Quality Team, based within the Council, will use this framework to improve quality.

Once the Quality Improvement Programme has been completed providers will have an opportunity to progress to Quality Assurance status.



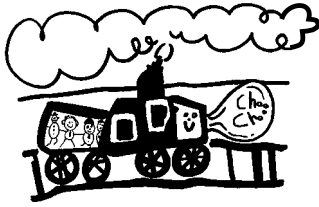
What is quality improvement in Gateshead?

Quality improvement is the process of raising the quality of experiences enjoyed by children, young people and their families. Quality can be improved through:

- Learning new skills and extending our knowledge;
- Making changes in the way we work;
- Becoming clearer about our values and beliefs;
- Setting goals or targets for improvement;
- Adapting the way we relate to and communicate with children, young people and families.

What are the benefits of continuous quality improvement?

- The provision continually strives to achieve, maintain and further develop quality.
- Having a shared vision, a common understanding and a commitment to improve quality.
- Raising the confidence of practitioners in their own abilities.
- Raising staff morale through increasing self worth and feeling valued for the work that they do.
- Encouraging a whole team approach.
- Recognising that practitioners are striving to provide a service of high quality for children and young people and their parents/carers.
- Reassuring parents and carers that a setting always strives to reach high standards in every respect.
- Promoting the provision as a rewarding place to work.

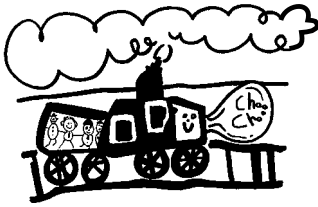


What is the framework for quality improvement in Gateshead?

- To provide a team of QIP's within the local authority.
- To work together in partnership with all early years and childcare providers to agree a common understanding of quality.
- To provide the Gateshead Quality Improvement Programme.
- To embed national Quality Improvement Principles.
- To support providers to reflect, evaluate and put in place actions, in order to improve quality.
- To provide a structured programme of training, support and monitoring.

Who is quality improvement for?

- Childminders
- Children Centre nurseries
- Crèches
- Day nurseries
- Independent nursery schools
- Nannies
- Nursery classes
- Nursery schools
- Out of school provision
- Play schemes
- Pre-schools
- Reception classes



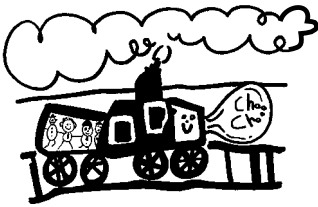
Quality Improvement Programme: Process

Quality Improvement Programme - Stage One

- Each provider receives a 'Start Up' Pack. This details what the Quality Improvement Partners will do, and what the provider will do.
- The majority of support from the QIP to providers will come through workshops. These will usually be held monthly.
- The Gateshead Quality Improvement Programme consists of eight modules, divided into standards.
- For each of the eight modules the provider carries out a thorough audit through self-evaluation.
- The attached QIP will visit the provider to discuss the self-evaluation and give support to the provider in developing an action plan for improvement.
- From this the provider can work through the three stages of quality:-
 - Emerging Practice;
 - Developing Practice;
 - Established Practice.
- The provider works towards established practice with supporting evidence. Evidence seen is 'signed off' by the QIP and the provision is encouraged to save evidence in a module file. Evidence will include at least one observation by the QIP.
- A certificate is awarded for each module where established practice has been reached.
- A document to show how established practice is to be maintained and developed is signed by the QIP and the provider. This is reviewed annually.

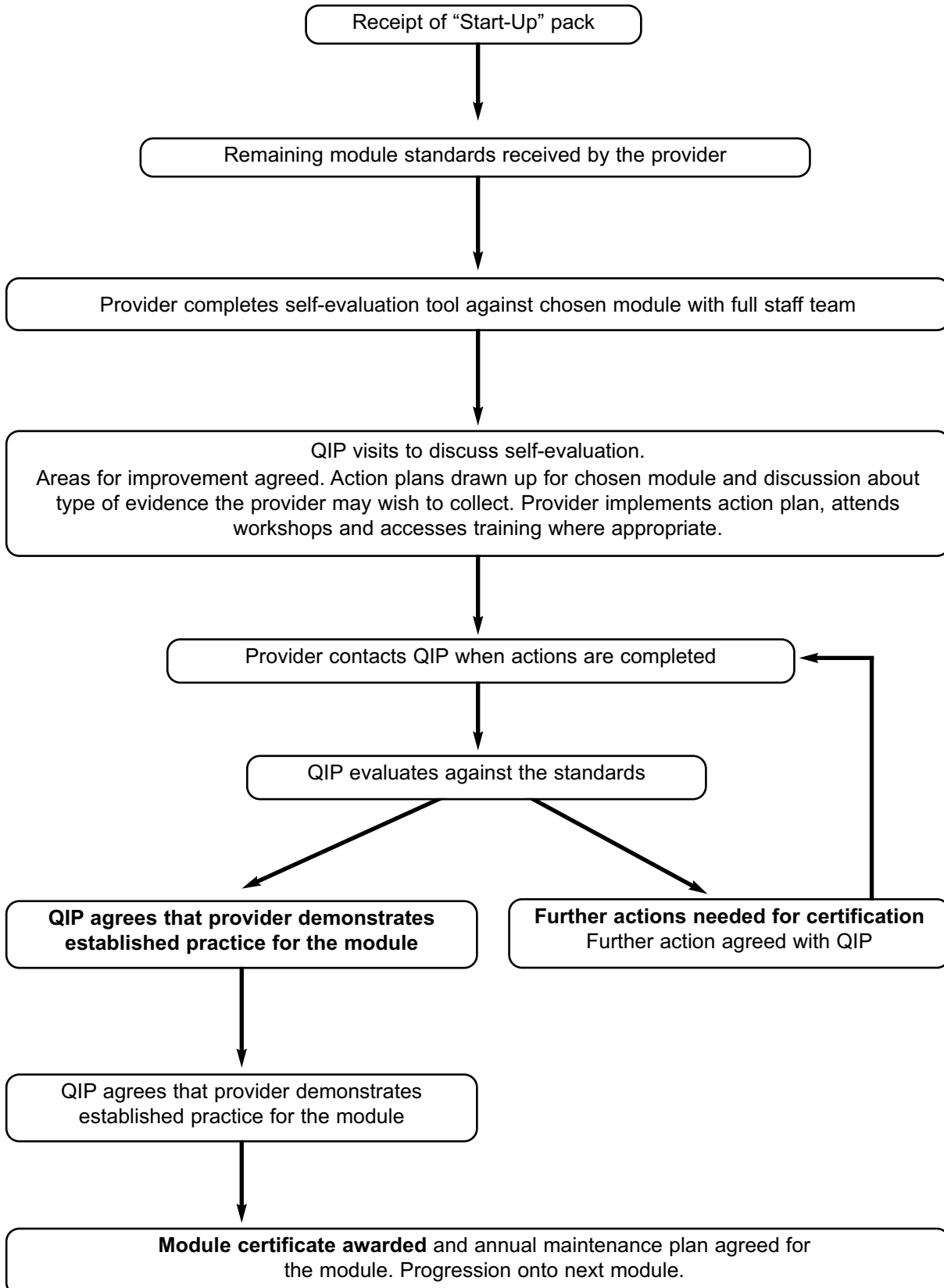
Quality Improvement Programme - Stage Two

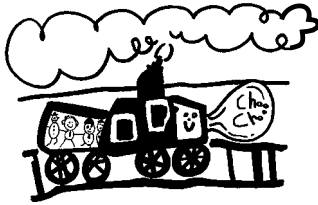
- Each module will have a Maintenance Plan in place. Each module must have an annual review that demonstrates established practice is being maintained and developed.
- For Quality Assurance, a 'Portfolio of Evidence' for the modules is created by the provider.
- Once completed, each module is internally verified. If verification confirms the provider has maintained Established Practice for all eight modules, they will be awarded Quality Assurance Status, given a plaque, and can use 'Journey to Quality' logo on their documents.
- The Maintenance Plans will be reviewed annually by the QIP. These will be used as a monitoring tool.



Journey to Quality

Gateshead Improvement Process





Quality Improvement Programme: Modules

Quality Improvement Modules

Module One	Leadership (Core)
Module Two	Management
Module Three	Business and Finance
Module Four	Meeting Everyone's Needs (Core)
Module Five	Opportunities and Experiences
Module Six	Supporting Personal, Social and Emotional Development
Module Seven	Relationships with Parents/Carers and the Wider Community
Module Eight	Promoting Healthy Lifestyles

Costs

The Quality Improvement Programme comes with no costs attached.

Providers who are using the Quality Improvement Programme may want to purchase materials, pay for additional training or support staff meetings by paying overtime. These costs must be met by the provider.

Once the provider has been 'Quality Assured', they will be able to display the Gateshead 'Journey to Quality' plaque. They will also be able to use the logo in their correspondence and marketing materials.

The plaque will come at no cost to the provider, but adaptation of documents to incorporate the logo will be their responsibility. The logo will be provided, free of cost, electronically. This logo will be for the sole use of the individual provision that has been awarded Quality Assurance status.

Workshops

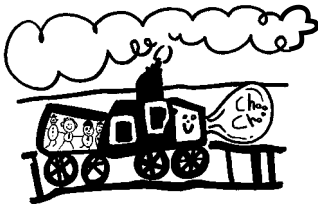
The QIP's will provide support for the Quality Improvement Programme through workshops. These will enable practitioners to meet with the Quality Team to get information, advice, guidance and training.

Providers **must** book to attend a workshop through the administrator. The workshops can also offer space to groups for practitioners to meet together for mutual support and networking.

Training

The centrally based training programme will support providers to implement the Quality Improvement Programme.

Providers should take note of their identified areas for improvement when planning staff training.



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