

NDNA works with a range of local authorities to develop bespoke solutions to help them meet their local childcare challenges



Quality Improvement for Lancashire County Council

Lancashire County Council identified a need to provide targeted, individual support to nursery settings that would deliver a measurable impact on quality, in line with the Childcare Act 2006.

NDNA Solution: A Leadership Development Programme

Under a SLA, NDNA was appointed to design and deliver a Leadership Development Programme, which was aimed at nurseries in Lancashire identified as “Red” under the council’s “Red, Amber and Green” audit system for quality. By improving the leadership skills of nursery managers and owners, the programme ultimately aims to improve settings to a “Green” standard.

- Managers of settings that had scored “Red” were visited by the NDNA Development Officer to identify their specific needs and reflect on current practice
- Managers were invited to attend a workshop designed to address those specific training needs identified in the visit
- Managers were provided with relevant literature and learning aids, including leadership and management theories, spreadsheets, practical tools and business techniques
- Attendees were able to swap and share ideas and techniques to put into practice in their setting
- NDNA provided continued support both face-to-face and over the phone

Quality Outcomes

NDNA has found that managers and owners can often feel isolated in their roles and swamped by administrative tasks. To tailor support and training to the needs of individual managers has proved to be a far more effective way of improving leadership and therefore quality.

- Between March and November 2009, 33 nurseries were visited individually, with 24 of those re-assessed in that period according to the EQISP audit for quality
- 9 nurseries progressed from “Red” to “Amber”
- 1 nursery progressed from “Red” to “Green”
- On average the nurseries improved by 4.25 “quality points” with 2 improving by more than 10 points
- More informed, proactive managers and owners, who have gained confidence and increased their assertiveness throughout the leadership programme

“I’ve managed a team of seven for two and a half years and always felt insecure in my ability. Now, what a revelation! I feel confident and able to approach various situations in a knowledgeable and professional manner, all thanks to you!”

Judith Lymer, Manager of Sparrow Playgroup, Morecambe