Work Focussed Services in Westminster Children's Centres

Approach, challenges and progress

City of Westminster

"Our shared vision for Westminster is that by 2016 it will be the best city to live in, work and visit in the UK, a vibrant city with great quality of life, strong united communities and excellent services, offering real opportunities for everyone to achieve a better future".

Westminster City Plan 2006 - 2016

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Background Information

- 230,00 Residents
- 42,000 Children and Young People
- 12,500 Children under the age of 4
- 17,500 aged 5 – 14
- Over 17,000 residents with no qualifications
- 9940 children under 15 living in households dependent on workless benefits
- Queen’s Park ward has LSOA 1st in CP Index
- Employers 46,957 – Dec 2007
- Employees 576,794 – Dec 2007

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Approach

- Through LAA in partnership with JCP
- Child Poverty Pledge signed up Sept 08
- Director of Children's Services CP Champion
- Working in partnership
- Local Area Renewal Partnerships
- Westminster Works

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Westminster Works

Westminster Works represents the City's strategy to tackle unemployment and to provide people with the skills and opportunities they need to find and sustain employment.

The aim is to bring all training and employment initiatives in Westminster under the Westminster Works network to ensure continuity, maximise resources and avoid duplication of services.

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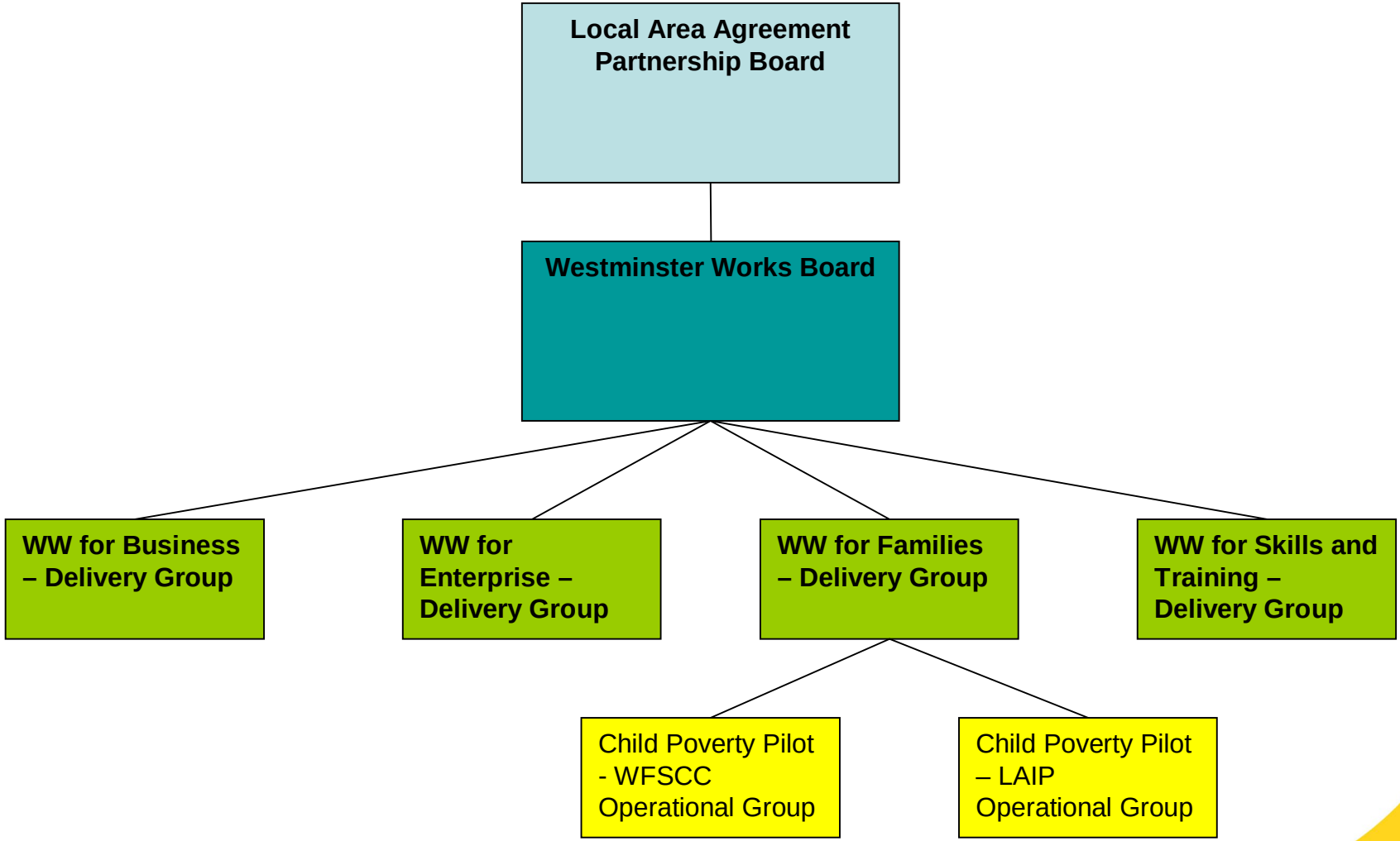

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Child Poverty Pilots 2009 -11

1. Work Focussed Services in Children's Centres

2. Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot

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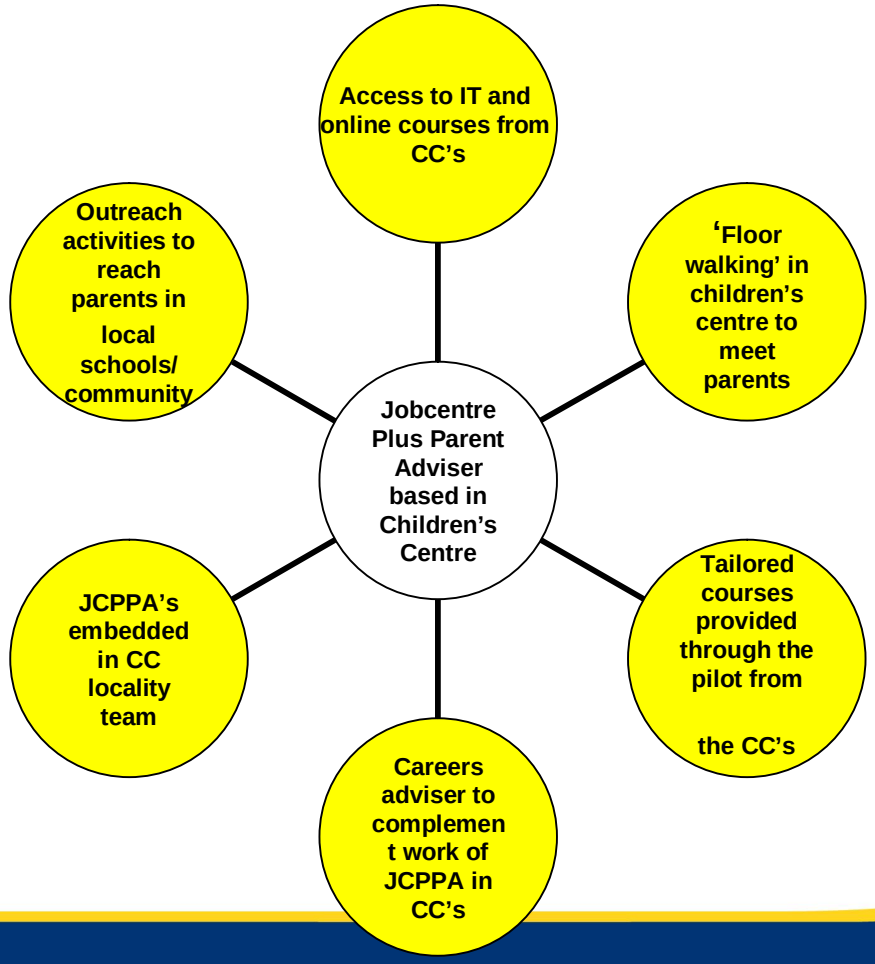
Work Focussed Services in Children's Centres



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JCP PA and WFSCC Adviser – key differences

Children's Centre environment is family friendly

Attendance and Participation in the Pilot is not mandatory

Caseload time with Customers is at the Advisers' discretion

Longer and more regular interviews result in more engagement and participation.

Instant access to Children's Centre Services

Advisers are embedded within Children Centre's and involved they're activities, which increases familiarity, trust and engagement with Parents previously disenfranchised.

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Work Focussed Services in CC

There are a number of interrelated outcomes from the project:

- Clear, convincing evaluation evidence to model how JCP advisers embedded in children's centres best impact on parents of children living in poverty to engage with employability services
- Identification of best practice for partnership working with Local Authorities, children's centres, Jobcentre Plus and other local partners;
- Identification of best practice to help parents/carers who are likely to be furthest from the labour market, move towards employment.

Work Focussed Services in CC's

Activities to date:

- **3 full time Jobcentre Plus Parent Advisers working from Queen's Park, Church Street and Harrow Road Children's Centres meeting parents in children's centre settings**
- **Next Steps Careers Adviser**
- **Elearning opportunities for parents**
- **Accredited courses tailored to the needs of parents**
- **A pack developed by NIACE aimed at training/learning providers offering practical tips on making their services accessible to parents**
- **Parent focus groups informing exit of the pilot by StC**
- **Resources to support job search activities in the children's centres**
- **Advice on Childcare**

Related Initiatives

- Family Recovery Programme
- Westminster Works ESF/London Councils programme
- 2 Year Old Childcare Pilot
- Extended Schools Disadvantage Subsidy
- School Gates Initiative
- CAP ‘09

Partners

- Jobcentre Plus
- Women Like Us
- Paddington Development Trust
- Local Colleges
- Workers Education Association
- Working with Men
- Action for Children
- Save the Children
- Local Schools
- Libraries
- Preschools
- Nurseries

And many more!

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Exit Strategy

- Commissioning Priorities
- Mainstreaming
- Reshaping services
- Community Budgets
- Linking related work
- Child Poverty Needs Assessment and Strategy

- Contact Lucy Taylor, Child Poverty Pilot Lead, Westminster City Council ltaylor1@westminster.gov.uk
- Leon Ranson, Parent Team Manager, Jobcentre Plus, Leon.Ranson@Jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk

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