**Frequently Asked Questions: Repurposing of 6 Birmingham Children's Centres**

**1. Which services are in scope**

A: The services in scope for this community consultation are those which Birmingham City Council (BCC) has directly commissioned to deliver elements of ‘Early Childhood Services’, which are defined in Section 2 of the Childcare Act 2006. Specifically in scope in this consultation are the 0-5 early years services commissioned by Birmingham City Council as part of its statutory duties under the Childcare Act 2006, including those aligned with the national Healthy Child Programme. These include core support services such as family and childcare advice, parenting support, health visiting, stay and play sessions, and other targeted family and child services delivered by BCHC and partner organisations.

**2. Why is this consultation taking place**

A: The consultation is being held to ensure that any changes to local services and buildings reflect the needs and priorities of families and communities, and as these services fall within the definition of 'Early Childhood Services' under Section 2 of the Childcare Act 2006, the law requires the Council to consult before making significant changes to the services provided through our Children’s Centres and before anything is done that would result in a relevant children's centre ceasing to be a children's centre..

It gives residents a chance to share their views and help inform how support is delivered in the future.

 **3. Will the buildings still be used to support children and families?**

A: That is the intention. The consultation is helping to identify how these spaces can continue to benefit local families, either directly or indirectly, but it may mean that some centres are no longer known as ‘Childrens Centres’. Existing services not in scope of this consultation will continue, and additional organisations may wish to move in and deliver from these venues. Final decisions will be made after the consultation concludes and we have reviewed all of the feedback.

**4. Will services you are consulting on which are currently offered at these 6 centres be discontinued?**

A: No. The Council is proposing to relocate or adapt the delivery of these services. The intention is to maintain access to essential support, though the format or venue may change. Final decisions will be made following the consultation.

**5. Where can I access these services after they move, if this is agreed?**

A: Services will continue to be available to meet the needs of the community through Family Hubs, health centres, and other community venues within the local area. A full list of alternative locations will be provided once the transition plan is finalised.

**6. How will this affect my child’s current support or care plan?**

A: The Council aims to ensure continuity of care. Families whose children have active support or care plans will be contacted directly regarding any changes and how their needs will continue to be met.

**7. Will there be any disruption to early years or SEND services?**

A: The Council is committed to maintaining these services. Any changes will be communicated clearly, and support will remain available from alternative locations or through other channels.

**8. Are Family Hubs replacing the Children's Centres? What’s the difference?**

A: Family Hubs offer a broader range of services for children aged 0–19 (or up to 25 with SEND), including health, education, and parenting support. They are designed to be more integrated and accessible than traditional Children's Centres. Family Hubs are intended to support the Council in meeting its statutory obligations under the Childcare Act 2006, while also offering extended services for children and young people aged 0–19 (or up to 25 with SEND).

**9. How far are the nearest Family Hubs or alternative services?**

A: Each of the 6 Children’s Centres which are named in this consultation has nearby Family Hubs or satellite centres, plus other potential venues. A map and list of locations is available in the consultation plan.

**10. Will opening hours or availability of services change?**

A: Some changes may occur, but the aim is to maintain or improve access. Details will be confirmed after the consultation outcome is decided.

**11. How are parents and carers being consulted in this decision?**

A: The formal consultation process is underway which this FAQ relates to, including surveys, and face to face consultation sessions. Your feedback is vital and will be used to directly influence decision making. No decisions have been made regarding the relocation or repurposing of services. The consultation process is designed to gather views from families and carers, which will be carefully considered before any decisions are finalised.

**12. Can the community have a say in how the buildings are repurposed?**

A: Yes. The consultation includes opportunities for residents to suggest ideas and express preferences for future use of the buildings, as there would be space if the services described in this consultation moved out, so please tell us how you feel they could be used. The Council is not currently proposing to dispose of any of the existing sites.

**13. Will there be future opportunities to help influence local services?**

A: Absolutely. The council is committed to ongoing engagement with families and communities to ensure services evolve to meet local needs.

**14. What exactly do you mean by ‘re-purposing’?**

A: Repurposing refers to potential changes in how the buildings are used, including who manages them and which services are delivered from them. Any changes will be subject to consultation outcomes and further planning.

**15. How does this link to Central Government’s plans to expand the Family Hub programme through additional funding**?

A: On 11 June the Chancellor set out plans for spending and public sector reforms through the Spending Review 2025. The budget announcement stated, “the government will continue to invest in and expand the Family Hubs programme, working with parents to help give children the best start in life.”

 The details of budget allocations are still being determined. Central government will share further information about what the Spending Review settlement means for the Family Hubs and Start for Life programme in Birmingham as soon as possible.

The services in scope in this consultation are not funded by the Family Hubs programme, they are Public Health funded. This means that changes to our Childrens Centres are still necessary, even if additional funding is made available for the Family Hub programme.

**New FAQs**

**16. What’s the difference between a Children’s Centre (CC) and a Family Hub (FH)?**

A: Children’s Centres mainly support families with children aged 0 to 5, focusing on early years services like play sessions, parenting support, and health checks. Family Hubs, on the other hand, offer support for a wider age range, from 0 to 19 years old, and up to 25 for young people with SEND needs. This means Family Hubs can help with early years, school-age children, teenagers, and whole-family support, all in one place.

**17. Will the nursery and Stay & Play sessions still be available?**

A: Stay & Play is recognised as an essential service. The aim is to continue providing this, but it may be delivered at a different location, such as a nearby Family Hub. We’re working to keep this and other services accessible for families. The nursery’s connected to some of the centres are independent and not in scope for this consultation, this means that they will remain as they are separate entities.

**18. Will I have to travel further to get support?**

A: We know many parents don’t drive or find travel difficult, especially with young children or children with SEND needs. We’re trying to keep services as local as possible, but some families may need to use a different centre or Family Hub. Your feedback will help us plan for the best locations.

**19. What will happen to the staff and familiar faces at my centre?**

A: Staff may move to other venues, but the core team and services will continue. We understand how important trusted relationships are and will do our best to keep familiar staff involved.

**20. Why are these changes happening?**

A: The changes are about making sure families can still get the support they need, using resources in the best way. By bringing services together in Family Hubs, we hope to offer more support in one place.

**21. How will these changes affect the sense of community?**

A: We know the centres are more than just buildings, they’re places where families connect and support each other. We’re committed to keeping that sense of community, even if some services move.