

*These notes refer to the Childcare Act 2006 (c.21)  
which received Royal Assent on 11 July 2006*

# CHILD CARE ACT 2006

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## EXPLANATORY NOTES

### COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS AND SCHEDULES

#### **Part 1: General Functions of Local Authority: England**

##### *Sections 1- 5: overview*

22. **Section 1** imposes a duty on local authorities in England to improve the well-being of young children in their area and to reduce inequalities between such children. Sections 2 to 5 are related to this duty. In particular, local authorities are required to make arrangements to secure that early childhood services are provided in an integrated manner. Local authorities are already involved in the provision of children's centres under the "Sure Start" scheme and it is expected that children's centres will play an important role in the provision of integrated childhood services. Children's centres are places where children under 5 years old and their families can access integrated services, information and help from multi-disciplinary teams of professionals. Typically the services include care and education, health, family support services, information for parents and employment services.
23. Under section 4, local authorities and their key partners in health and employment services will have a reciprocal duty to work together in delivering integrated childhood services to improve outcomes for young children and reduce inequalities between them. In carrying out their duties in relation to the provision of integrated childhood services, local authorities must also seek to involve providers from the private and voluntary sector and parents. They must also have regard to relevant information about the views of young children.