

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

CHILDCARE ACT 2006

EXPLANATORY NOTES

COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS AND SCHEDULES

Part 1: General Functions of Local Authority: England

Section 1: General duties of local authority in relation to well-being of young children

24. **Section 1** places a duty on local authorities to improve the well-being of all young children in their area and to reduce inequalities between those achieving the poorest outcomes and the rest. This will mean that, when improving the outcomes for all children, local authorities will need to improve the outcomes of the most disadvantaged at a faster rate.
25. A child is regarded as a young child until 1st September following his fifth birthday (section 19). Well-being is defined in a way which is related to the five 'Every Child Matters' outcomes of being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being. The section allows the Secretary of State to set targets for local authorities to improve these outcomes and narrow the gaps in achievement, and requires local authorities to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State.