



Nottinghamshire
County Council

Annesley Woodhouse Children's Centre Community Consultation – Main Report

Written for: the Sure Start Children's Centres Team
Nottinghamshire County Council

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Main Report

1 Background to the Research

- In line with the government's current initiative to introduce Sure Start Children's Centres into communities which fall within the top 20% and 30% of disadvantaged wards nationally, Nottinghamshire was given the go-ahead for 21 centres to be completed by March 2006, with 3 more to be started in Round One, but completed in Round Two by March 2007. A further 25 have followed in Round Two, and will be completed by March 2008.
- Children's Centres are intended to provide services and support to children, aged from 0-5 years, their parents and carers, based on partnerships between statutory, voluntary and private organisations and the local authority. Partnership with local parents and their early involvement in planning of Children's Centres is an essential part of the ethos of the Children's Centres programme.
- It is the government's policy to develop Children's Centres within partnerships. Some may be based on a 'strong link' partnership, bringing together existing facilities (e.g. neighbourhood nursery, primary schools, family centre, library, health centre, community centre). Some may involve a new building, creating a one-stop centre attached to or on a school site. Even with a new 'one stop building', there will be a need for sound partnerships with other providers throughout the area.
- All Children's Centres areas will have child care available for 50 weeks a year, 8am – 6pm offering care integrated with education, for children aged 0-5 years.
- Children's Centres are built on the successful practice of Sure Start Local Programmes, which have now all been integrated into the Children's Centres programme.
- Depending on the variable position in childcare, education and other support in local communities, parents/carers and other residents are likely to have different experiences, and therefore will have variable views and feelings about the advent of a Children's Centre in their community.
- Understanding the views of both users and providers, who may be affected in the short and longer term by the implementation of the programme, is vital to ensure that the rollout of Children's Centres is successful and well received within communities.
- Central to the development of Children's Centres is parental involvement and participation in the planning, delivery, evaluation, management and governance of the centres, as appropriate structures emerge.
- Development of the Children's Centres is for families with children under 5; the centres have the potential for wider community use however and could develop into 'community centres for children' serving a wider age-range and incorporating, for example, after school care, holiday clubs etc in partnership with the Extending Services In and Around Schools programme.
- Annesley Woodhouse consultation was conducted in an inclusive manner, to enable any parent, worker or member of the community who wished to take part in the consultation to do so. The team aimed to comply with equal opportunities policies and principles throughout the consultation.
- Where possible, "hard-to-reach" families have been included, where service providers or other agencies were able to give contact details and encourage participation.

2 Aims and Objectives of the consultation

- Overall Aims:
 - to find out parents' and carers' views and opinions of existing services on offer for families and young children in their area and how best their requirements can be met in the future with the development of Children's Centres;
 - to involve community members and partners in planning together to develop the optimal Children's Centre services for the community.

Specific objectives are:

- i. To identify current provision of child care, education, health services, family support, leisure facilities and other services relevant to young children and their families, through existing sources where these exist, such as Children's Information Service (CIS), databases or local knowledge
- ii. To identify gaps in the current provision of these services through the involvement and knowledge of service providers, and through discussion with local parents and the community
- iii. To determine which known services on offer are used by parents/carers
- iv. To determine levels of use of services amongst local parents/carers
- v. To gather information on how parents/carers rate the current services used and to seek views on how service delivery could be improved locally
- vi. To understand the likely take-up amongst local parents/carers of the proposed Children's Centre
- vii. To determine an appropriate mechanism for receiving and disseminating information from different local groups
- viii. To identify local anxieties/perceptions/expectations and potential problems for a new Children's Centre amongst parents/carers and partners
- ix. To establish appropriate benchmarks for future research and evaluation
- x. To conduct communications with parents in such a way that future involvement and participation in Children's Centres is encouraged and promoted
- xi. To use the information gathered in the consultation to help create the delivery plan

3 Methodology

- The consultation consisted of face-to-face interviews with parents, through completion of a questionnaire; a questionnaire distributed to local service providers and key stakeholders, who were also invited to include a list of services in the area; and a focus group with parents recruited via the questionnaire. Parents at the focus groups also completed a mapping exercise of local services.
- The Annesley Woodhouse ward covered by this consultation includes Annesley, Annesley Woodhouse, Kirkby Woodhouse and Nuncargate.

3.1 Partners' Questionnaire

- Partners, key stakeholders and service providers were informed about the planned consultation in Annesley Woodhouse at a meeting on 12th September at the Acacia Community Centre. The partners' questionnaire was handed out to all who attended to complete at the meeting or return by 28th September 2007. In addition it was sent to partners who did not attend the meeting and to pre-school playgroups, day-care providers and registered childminders in the area.
- A mapping exercise was included as part of this questionnaire, asking for details of any services of which they were aware for the under 5s and their parents, in the Annesley Woodhouse area, with times and contact details. It was used to develop a map of services available in the area, to identify any service provision gaps or overlaps and to help identify locations for interviewing parents.
- The opportunity to give contact details was given on the questionnaire so that the team could make contact in the future; most respondents completed this section.

3.2 Parent's Questionnaire

- The initial phase of the consultation with parents consisted of interviews with them in various locations in the area. It was planned to include:
 - Parents/carers with children under 8 years of age at local schools
 - Parents/carers who used the local library or who were seen by Health Visitors in the two weeks prior to the interview day
 - Parents/carers living locally
- The majority of interviews were conducted on 12th October 2007. The venues were:
 - Annesley School and nursery
 - Kirkby Woodhouse School and nursery
 - In the streets around the area
 - In home with parents recruited via Health Visitors
 - Kirkby in Ashfield town centre
- Some additional interviews were conducted by library staff in the two weeks prior to the main fieldwork day.
- Interviewers were recruited from the Partners' meeting held on 12th September. They included workers from Newstead Children's Centre, Kirkby Nursery

Centre and the district council, along with four professional interviewers. Including the researchers, twelve interviewers were interviewing for at least part of the day. A briefing session was held on 25th September but only one person required training since they had not taken part in a Children's Centre consultation before. This familiarised them with the questionnaire, addressed issues such as confidentiality and possible low literacy levels amongst some parents when interviewing, and provided an opportunity to clarify any questions arising.

- The questionnaire included an incentive prize draw for a gift voucher, and an invitation to take part in the planned focus groups. Contact details were taken where given, with permission for inclusion on the Children's Centre database for future contact, but this sheet was kept separate from the completed questionnaire to preserve confidentiality.

3.3 Focus Groups

- Respondents for the focus group were recruited from the contact sheet of the parent's questionnaire, from those who said they would be interested in taking part. Overall, 46% of parents interviewed were interested in attending a focus group.
- Parents who had definitely or possibly agreed to come along to the focus groups were contacted by telephone if possible to confirm whether they should do so, although tight timescales, incorrect telephone numbers or lack of a contact phone number sometimes prevented this. Those with children under five were given priority, and we tried to include a good spread of use of the two schools and of residential areas.
- Nottinghamshire County Council provided a free crèche for the children of those parents wishing to use it and a £10 Argos gift voucher was given as a thank-you.
- A letter confirming venue, time details, crèche requirements and incentive was sent to parents beforehand and they were contacted the day before the group to remind them to come.
- Eleven parents agreed to come along to the focus group which was held at the Acacia Community Centre on 30th October between 9.30am and 11am. The day prior to the group one parent was no longer able to come. Four parents came on the day.
- A mapping exercise was completed as part of the focus group to gather knowledge about existing services for them and their children in the area.
- During the group, an explanation about Children's Centres was given by the local Sure Start Children's Centre Co-ordinator. This enabled the groups to have a wider understanding of the concept of Children's Centres and ask questions about what might be provided as the discussion progressed. A worker from the Children's Information Service also attended this group and explained the role of this service.

4 Observations on the Samples

4.1 Parent's Questionnaire

- 91 interviews were completed with parents/carers at the various interviewing points.
- 80 respondents (88%) were female and 11 (12%) were male.
- 34% of respondents were aged under 29, while 48% were between 30 and 39. 18% were aged over 40.
- 68% of those interviewed had at least one child under the age of 5 in the household. 49% had just one child in this age group, with 14% having two and 2% having three.
- The total number of children aged under five in families interviewed was 77.
- Eight parents (9%) reported that they were currently expecting a baby.
- 66% of those interviewed had one or more children aged between 5 and 16 years of age. 34% had one child in this age range, 27% had two and 4% had three or more.
- The total number of children aged five or over in families interviewed was 94.
- Three respondents had one or more children aged 16 plus in their household.
- Between them, respondents had 175 children of all ages; the number of families with one child was 25, 41 families had two children, whilst 17 families had three children. Three families had four children and one had five children in the household. Two said they had no children living in their household (although they might have been expecting a baby) and two did not reply to this question.
- Of the 91 interviews completed, the 87 who answered this question had an average number of 2.0 children per household.
- While only 11% of respondents were working full time, 44% were working part time and only 5% described themselves as unemployed. Half (53%) said they were a parent/carer, one person said they were a grandparent and one person was another relative or friend.
- 84% were either married or partnered, while 13% described themselves as single.
- Four-fifths (80%) of households had two adults aged over 18 living together in the household, while 12% lived in households with only one adult. Just 3% reported having three or more adults in the household (four did not answer this question). The average was 1.9 people in the household aged 18+.
- 96% of respondents described themselves as white, while 1% were of mixed race and 1% 'other'.
- All except three respondents' postcodes fell into NG17, being in NG15, while 4 did not answer this question.

4.2 Partners' Questionnaire

- Seven completed questionnaires were received from service providers in the Annesley Woodhouse area, five of which gave contact details.
- As the table below shows, responses were from a range of partners, including those involved in pre-school care, health and support organisations for families.

Table 1 – Partners' disciplines

Discipline	No of responses
Nursery	1
Children's Centre/PLA ¹	1
Education	1
Library service	1
Health visiting	1
Community	2
TOTAL	7

- The roles of service-providers are shown below.

Table 2 – Partners' roles

Libraries area coordinator
PLA district coordinator
Head of service, health visiting and school nursing
Head teacher
Rural officer
Day nursery owner
Senior community development officer

- The respondents varied in the length of time in their current roles, from two to 15 years. In total they had 39 years of experience, with an average of six years each.

4.3 Focus Group

- Four mothers attended the focus group.
- Between them, they had 11 children, eight of whom were aged five and under. One was also expecting a baby.
- One had four children, two had three children and one had two children.
- All were from two-parent families and none were currently in paid work.
- Within the group there was a mix in terms of length of time resident in the area and their area of residence.

¹ Pre-school Learning Alliance

Main Findings

5 Parent's Questionnaire

- A total of 91 questionnaires were completed, well in excess of the target of 64. Given that there were around 256 under fives in the area, and 77 under fives lived in the families of respondents, the research reached a respectable 30% of this population.
- Nearly nine in every ten respondents (87%) said they had heard about Sure Start. 8% had not heard of it and 4% were not sure.
- A quarter (25%) of respondents were aware of the proposed Children's Centre to be developed in their area.

5.1 Services Ever Used

- All respondents were asked which local services they had ever used, using a showcard (see Appendix 2). Their responses are shown in Table 3 below, ranked by number of mentions. Responses are shown for all respondents, and for comparison purposes, those who claimed to be aware of Sure Start and by age.
- Shaded cells represent a significant difference from the total for all respondents.
- Care must be taken when numbers responding are low, as these may not typically reflect the views of all local people in this sub-group (eg we only spoke to 16 people aged 40+).
- Health services were most often reported as being used by at least seven in ten respondents (85% used GPs, and 69% each used Health Visitors and midwives), with the notable exception of antenatal classes, used by a third (32%), and reducing further to a fifth (21%) of those aged 30-39. The proportion using midwives was highest in the youngest age group, with 84% of those aged under 29 having used them.
- Nurseries in schools were used by 60%, whilst the Children's Library Service was used by 57%. The library services were least likely to have been used by those aged under 29 (35%), rising to 70% of those aged 30 or older.
- Family members (44%) were the most commonly used childcare, while a quarter (25%) relied on friends and 10% used a registered childminder.
- 22% used a day nursery and a similar proportion (21%) used a pre-school playgroup.
- Breakfast Clubs were used by 16% and After-School Clubs were used by 13%.
- Job Centres were mentioned by 14%.
- 12% had used Speech Therapists, and the home safety equipment scheme.
- 11% of parents said they had had a home visit, and the same proportion had accessed a breast feeding group.
- Toy libraries were mentioned by 10%.
- All other services were used by less than 10% of parents overall.

Table 3 – services ever used

Service	% ever used service (N = 91)	% Sure Start-aware using service (N=79)	Age		
			<29 N=31	30-39 N =43	40+ N =16
	%	%	%	%	%
GP Practice	85	85	90	84	75
Health Visitors	69	73	81	60	69
Midwife	69	68	84	65	50
Nursery in a school	60	62	52	67	56
Children's Library Service	57	58	35	70	69
Family member	44	41	45	51	25
Toddler group	40	43	35	42	44
Antenatal sessions	32	34	42	21	38
Friends	25	23	29	23	25
Day nursery	22	20	29	23	6
Pre-school playgroup	21	20	13	26	25
Breakfast club	16	15	10	21	19
Job Centres	14	14	16	19	0
After school club	13	11	16	16	0
Speech therapists	12	13	10	9	19
Home safety equipment	12	14	10	14	13
Home visits	11	9	16	9	6
Breast feeding group	11	13	19	9	0
Registered childminder	10	10	10	9	13
Toy library	10	10	6	9	19
Parenting advice and guidance	9	9	3	9	19
Further education	8	9	3	9	13
Story time sessions	7	8	6	5	13
Homestart	7	8	3	9	6
Family Centre	5	6	6	5	6
Dietician/nutritionist	4	5	3	2	6
Children's Information Service	3	4	3	0	13
Crèche	2	3	3	2	0
Independent school	1	1	0	2	0
Welfare rights sessions	1	1	0	0	6
DK/NR	2	2	0	2	6

Shaded cells represent a significant difference from the total for all respondents.

5.2 Usefulness of Services

- Respondents were then asked how useful they had found each of the services they had used.
- Responses are shown in Table 4 for each of the services mentioned, listed by amount of use to correspond with Table 3 above.

Table 4 – usefulness of service

Service	Numbers using service	Very useful	Quite useful	Not useful/not at all useful	Average score*
		%	%	%	
Homestart	6	100	0	0	5.0
Crèche	2	100	0	0	5.0
Independent school	1	100	0	0	5.0
Family member	40	95	3	0	4.9
Breast feeding group	10	90	10	0	4.9
Nursery in a school	55	85	13	0	4.8
Friends	23	87	4	0	4.8
After school club	12	92	0	0	4.8
Story time sessions	6	83	17	0	4.8
Family Centre	5	80	20	0	4.8
Dietician/nutritionist	4	75	25	0	4.8
Midwife	63	81	6	3	4.7
Toddler group	36	72	22	0	4.7
Breakfast club	15	80	13	0	4.7
Toy library	9	78	11	0	4.7
Antenatal sessions	29	76	10	7	4.6
Pre-school playgroup	19	74	21	5	4.6
Home safety equipment	11	73	18	0	4.6
Parenting advice and guidance	8	63	38	0	4.6
Children's Library Service	52	71	13	6	4.5
Day nursery	20	70	20	10	4.5
Further education	7	57	29	14	4.3
Children's Information Service	3	67	0	0	4.3
Home visits	10	50	30	10	4.2
Health Visitors	63	54	21	11	4.1
Speech therapists	11	45	36	9	4.1
Job Centres	13	38	31	8	4.0
Registered childminder	9	44	33	22	4.0
GP Practice	77	43	19	13	3.9
Welfare rights session	1	0	0	0	3.0

* Of those giving a response, excluding 'Don't know/no response', average = mean score where 5 = very useful, 4 = quite useful, 3 = neither, 2 = not useful, 1 = not at all useful

- The average (mean) score indicates the level of usefulness found by respondents. The closeness to 5.0 indicates the level of satisfaction. However, care must be taken where numbers using the service are low, as resulting percentages are not necessarily representative of the views of all. We have therefore commented only on services used by ten or more respondents, and on sub-groups eg those aged 30-39, where 50 or more respondents overall have used the service and where the sub-group comprises 10 or more respondents.

- Amongst those services used by ten or more respondents, most useful were the family member for childcare and the breastfeeding group (both scoring 4.9).
- The nursery in a school, the support of friends and the after school club were all also rated as very useful, each scoring 4.8.
- The Midwife, toddler group and breakfast club all scored 4.7 overall, followed by antenatal sessions, the pre-school playgroup and the home safety equipment scheme, all scoring 4.6.
- The children's library service and day nursery were equally rated overall at 4.5.
- Whilst still rated as useful, home visits were rated 4.2 overall, Health Visitors and speech therapists 4.1, and Job Centres 4.0. GPs were rated 3.9.
- Where base sizes were sufficiently large to comment on sub-group differences, no significant differences by sub-group were found.

5.3 Reasons given for services mentioned as being not useful

- If respondents rated any service as not useful or not very useful (codes 1 or 2) they were asked why this was. The response to this question was low (26 people responded in total), reflecting the generally high level of satisfaction with available services.
- The Health Visitor service received the most mentions, but this should be considered in the context of this being one of the most commonly used services.

Table 5 – reasons why service not useful (where more than two mentions)

Type of comment	Number of comments*
Health visitor poor/not needed/unreliable	6
No appointments/waiting too long for appointment	4
GP not helpful/not very good/problems with GP	5
Problems with Midwife	2
Other	8
Don't know/No response	1

* Some respondents made more than one comment
(For full comments see Appendix 5)

- 'Other' comments were single comments about individual services and are not detailed here because they would be unrepresentative of the views of most users.

5.4 Child-friendliness of Services

- Respondents were asked how child-friendly they had found each of the services they had used.
- These are listed in Table 6 below by ranking of average score (for services used by 10 or more respondents).

Table 6 – child-friendliness of service

Service	Numbers using service	Very child-friendly	Quite child-friendly	Not child-friendly/not at all child-friendly	Average score*
		%	%	%	
Family member	40	98	3	0	5.0
Friends	23	100	0	0	5.0
Nursery in a school	55	89	7	0	4.9
After school club	12	83	0	0	4.8
Children's Library Service	52	77	13	2	4.7
Toddler group	36	75	19	3	4.7
Breakfast club	15	80	13	0	4.7
Midwife	63	75	11	2	4.6
Pre-school playgroup	19	68	21	5	4.6
Home safety equipment	11	73	9	9	4.6
Home visits	10	60	20	0	4.6
Day nursery	20	75	5	10	4.5
Health Visitors	63	57	24	3	4.4
Breast feeding group	10	60	10	0	4.4
Antenatal sessions	29	55	24	0	4.3
Speech therapists	11	55	18	0	4.3
GP Practice	77	40	23	14	3.9
Job Centres	13	31	0	46	3.0
Registered childminder	9	78	0	11	4.6
Toy library	9	67	22	0	4.8
Parenting advice and guidance	8	63	13	0	4.6
Further Education	7	86	0	0	4.7
Story time sessions	6	83	0	0	5.0
Homestart	6	100	0	0	5.0
Family Centre	5	60	0	0	5.0
Dietician/nutritionist	4	75	25	0	4.8
Children's Information Service	3	100	0	0	5.0
Crèche	2	100	0	0	5.0
Independent school	1	0	0	0	0.0
Welfare rights session	1	100	0	0	5.0

* Of those giving a response, excluding 'Don't knows/no response', average = mean score where 5 = very child-friendly, 4 = quite child-friendly, 3 = neither, 2 = not child-friendly, 1 = not at all child-friendly

- This time, closeness to 5.0 indicates child-friendliness. Once again, where base numbers are low, they cannot be seen to reflect the views of all parent/carer users. We therefore have not commented where users numbered less than 10.
- Most services we asked about scored 4.0 or above, showing a high level of child-friendliness with these services.
- Services ranked as most child-friendly were family member and friends (both 5.0) followed closely by nursery in a school (4.9) and after school club (4.8).

Children's library service, toddler group and breakfast club were all rated quite highly for child-friendliness at 4.7.

- Least child-friendly were Job Centres (3.0), and GP practice (3.9).
- There were no significant differences by sub-group.

5.5 Reasons given for services mentioned as being not child friendly

- Where respondents said a service was not very or not at all child-friendly, they were asked why this was.
- 23 respondents commented. The type of comment is shown in Table 7, with most comments relating to not having a play area or toys to amuse children.

Table 7 – reasons why service not child-friendly

Type of comment	Number of comments
No/old/poor/ toys/No play area	6
Not appropriate/Not suitable for children/nothing for them to do	6
Not helpful/no interest/no patience with child	6
Long wait for appointment/still waiting	1
Other	1
Don't know/No response	3

- Other comments were specifically about individual services so are not included here, but are available in Appendix 5.

5.6 Comparisons of usefulness and child-friendliness

- Matching the average scores of respondents' views of parent and child's needs gives the results shown in Table 8.
- A plus score in the 'difference' column indicates that a service was rated as more useful than child-friendly, while a minus score indicates that a service was rated as more child-friendly than useful.
- Scores with a difference of 0.2 points or more (and rated by ten or more respondents) are shown in bold.
- The following were all rated as more child-friendly than useful: Home visits (-0.4), Health Visitors (-0.3), speech therapists, children's library service and friends (all at -0.2 difference).
- Job Centres were rated as far more useful than child-friendly (1.0 difference), along with breastfeeding group (0.5) and antenatal sessions (0.3 difference).

Table 8 – comparison of parents and child average (mean) scores

Service	Average score usefulness	Average score child-friendliness	Difference
Independent school	5.0	0.0	5.0
Job Centres	4.0	3.0	1.0
Breast feeding group	4.9	4.4	0.5
Antenatal sessions	4.6	4.3	0.3
Midwife	4.7	4.6	0.1
After school club	4.8	4.8	0.0
Toddler group	4.7	4.7	0.0
Breakfast club	4.7	4.7	0.0
Pre-school playgroup	4.6	4.6	0.0
Home safety equipment	4.6	4.6	0.0
Day nursery	4.5	4.5	0.0
GP Practice	3.9	3.9	0.0
Parenting advice and guidance	4.6	4.6	0.0
Homestart	5.0	5.0	0.0
Dietician/nutritionist	4.8	4.8	0.0
Crèche	5.0	5.0	0.0
Family member	4.9	5.0	-0.1
Nursery in a school	4.8	4.9	-0.1
Toy library	4.7	4.8	-0.1
Friends	4.8	5.0	-0.2
Children's Library Service	4.5	4.7	-0.2
Speech therapists	4.1	4.3	-0.2
Story time sessions	4.8	5.0	-0.2
Family Centre	4.8	5.0	-0.2
Health Visitors	4.1	4.4	-0.3
Home visits	4.2	4.6	-0.4
Further Education	4.3	4.7	-0.4
Registered childminder	4.0	4.6	-0.6
Children's Information Service	4.3	5.0	-0.7
Welfare rights session	3.0	5.0	-2.0

5.7 Most helpful service to parent

- Respondents were asked which service they had used was most helpful to them as a parent. Table 9 shows those mentioned in frequency order.
- The most helpful services were a mixture of childcare and healthcare: family member (mentioned by 16%), Midwife (mentioned by 15%), the nursery in a school and breakfast club were rated as most helpful by 8% each and the GP practice by 7%.

Table 9 – single service most helpful to parent – all respondents

Service <u>most</u> helpful to parent	% mentions all respondents (N= 91)
	%
Family member	16
Midwife	15
Nursery in a school	8
Breakfast club	8
GP practice	7
Health Visitors	5
Day nursery	5
Toddler group	5
Friends	4
After school club	4
Homestart	4
Children's library service	3
Registered childminder	3
Breastfeeding group	2
Further education	2
Pre-school playgroup	1
Speech therapists	1
Family centre	1
Home safety equipment	1
Dietician/nutritionist	1
Don't know/No response	5

- The analysis above is based on all respondents and is therefore biased towards services with high numbers of users, and against more specialist services with fewer users. Therefore another analysis was undertaken to reduce the bias by calculating the percentage of **users for each service** who saw this service as their most helpful service. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 10 overleaf.

Table 10 – single service most helpful to parent – service users

Service <u>most</u> helpful to parent	Number of users of service	Number of mentions as most helpful	Percent of users rating most helpful
			%
Homestart	6	4	67
Breakfast club	15	7	47
Family member	40	15	38
After school club	12	4	33
Registered childminder	9	3	33
Further education	7	2	29
Day nursery	20	5	25
Dietician/nutritionist	4	1	25
Midwife	63	14	22
Breastfeeding group	10	2	20
Family centre	5	1	20
Friends	23	4	17
Toddler group	36	5	14
Nursery in a school	55	7	13
Speech therapists	11	1	9
Home safety equipment	11	1	9
GP practice	77	6	8
Health Visitors	63	5	8
Children's library service	52	3	6
Pre-school playgroup	19	1	5

- So we had the five most helpful services in the **all respondent** analysis in Table 9:
 - Family member
 - Midwife
 - Nursery in a school
 - Breakfast club
 - GP practice

- Compared with the five most helpful services in the **user** analysis in Table 10:
 - Homestart
 - Breakfast club
 - Family member
 - After school club
 - Registered childminder

- Table 11 below summarises how the position of the perceived parent-helpfulness of the services changes between the two analyses.
- In this case Dietician/nutritionist, Homestart, registered childminder, Further Education and the Family Centre all move to a higher position on helpfulness because 20% or more of their users (albeit a small number of respondents) chose them as the most helpful service. These might therefore be considered to be helpful emerging services that are not yet used by a large number of parents.
- GP practice, Health Visitors, nursery in a school, children's library service, toddler group and Midwife, all traditional services used by a relatively large number of respondents, drop to lower relative positions. This is an indicator that there is scope for these services to increase their perceived parent-helpfulness amongst users.

Table 11 – helpfulness of the services for parents – changes in rank position

	Relative position on helpfulness: All Respondents	Relative position on helpfulness: Users Only	Change in rank position
Dietician/nutritionist	16	7	9
Homestart	9	1	8
Registered childminder	12	4	8
Further education	14	6	8
Family centre	16	10	6
After school club	9	4	5
Breastfeeding group	14	10	4
Breakfast club	3	2	1
Speech therapists	16	15	1
Home safety equipment	16	15	1
Day nursery	6	7	-1
Family member	1	3	-2
Friends	9	12	-3
Pre-school playgroup	16	20	-4
Midwife	2	9	-7
Toddler group	6	13	-7
Children's library service	12	19	-7
Nursery in a school	3	14	-11
Health Visitors	6	17	-11
GP practice	5	17	-12

5.8 Most helpful service to your child/children

- Respondents were then asked which service they had used was most helpful to their child. Table 12 overleaf shows those mentioned in frequency order.
- Most helpful services for children were said to be nursery in a school (30%), family member (11%), day nursery, toddler group and breakfast club all at 8%, all forms of childcare.

▪ **Table 12 – single service most helpful to child – all respondents**

Service <u>most</u> helpful to child	% mentions all respondents (N= 91)
	%
Nursery in a school	30
Family member	11
Day nursery	8
Toddler group	8
Breakfast club	8
Children's Library Service	7
Health Visitors	4
Pre-school playgroup	3
Speech therapists	3
Midwife	3
Registered childminder	2
Friends	2
Home Safety Equipment	2
After school club	2
GP Practice	1
Independent school	1
Family centre	1
Dietician/nutritionist	1
Homestart	1
Don't know/No response	5

- As with services most helpful for parents, we then repeated the analysis to remove the bias created in the usefulness ratings by high numbers of users. This analysis reduces the bias by calculating the percentage of **users for each service** who saw this service as their most helpful service. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 13 below.

Table 13 – single service most helpful to child – service users

Service <u>most</u> helpful to Child	Number of users of service	Number of mentions as most helpful	Percent of users rating most helpful
			%
Independent school	1	1	100
Nursery in a school	55	27	49
Breakfast club	15	7	47
Day nursery	20	7	35
Speech therapists	11	3	27
Family member	40	10	25
Dietician/nutritionist	4	1	25
Registered childminder	9	2	22
Family centre	5	1	20
Toddler group	36	7	19
Home Safety Equipment	11	2	18
After school club	12	2	17
Homestart	6	1	17
Pre-school playgroup	19	3	16
Children's Library Service	52	6	12
Friends	23	2	9
Health Visitors	63	4	6
Midwife	63	3	5
GP Practice	77	1	1

- So we had the five most helpful services in the **all respondent** analysis in Table 12:
 - Nursery in a school
 - Family member
 - Day nursery
 - Toddler group
 - Breakfast club
- Compared with the five most helpful services in the **user** analysis in Table 13:
 - Independent school
 - Nursery in a school
 - Breakfast club
 - Day nursery
 - Speech therapists
- Table 14 below summarises how the position of the perceived child-helpfulness of the services changes between the two analyses.
- In this case the independent school, dietician/nutritionist, the Family Centre, speech therapists and Homestart move to a higher position on child-helpfulness because 17% or more of their respective users (albeit a small number of respondents – only one in the case of the independent school) chose them as the most helpful service for their child. The dietician/nutritionist, Family Centre, speech therapists and Homestart can be considered to be helpful services that are not currently used by a large number of parents in this area.

- Midwife, Health Visitors, children's library service, and toddler group, all used by a relatively large number of respondents, drop to much lower relative positions. This indicates that there is scope for these services to improve parents perceptions of how useful these services are to their children.
- In contrast, the breakfast club, registered childminder and home safety equipment hold their places, showing that parents do perceive these services to be useful to their children.

Table 14 – helpfulness of the services for children – changes in rank position

	Relative position on helpfulness: All Respondents	Relative position on helpfulness: Users Only	Change in rank position
Independent school	15	1	14
Dietician/nutritionist	15	6	9
Family centre	15	9	6
Speech therapists	8	5	3
Homestart	15	12	3
Breakfast club	3	3	0
Registered childminder	8	8	0
Home Safety Equipment	11	11	0
Nursery in a school	1	2	-1
Day nursery	3	4	-1
After school club	11	12	-1
GP Practice	15	19	-3
Family member	2	6	-4
Friends	11	16	-4
Pre-school playgroup	8	14	-6
Toddler group	3	10	-7
Children's Library Service	6	15	-9
Health Visitors	7	17	-10
Midwife	8	18	-10

5.9 Help to use services more often

- A list of suggestions that might help parents to use services more often was shown to respondents (see Showcard 2, Appendix 2). They were asked which of those listed would help them most.
- Table 15 shows responses by the three main residential areas and by all respondents. 36% of all respondents felt that a more local venue would help them use services more often, reflecting the lack of services local to them. This was highest in Kirkby Woodhouse (69%) and lowest in Annesley Woodhouse (14%). 20% thought different times would help.
- Other options of childcare, better public transport, price and someone to go with were felt to be helpful for 10% -15% of all respondents.
- A third of all respondents (33%) thought that none of these suggestions would make a difference to their service use.

Table 15 – Help to use services more often

Suggestion	Total N=91	Annesley Woodhouse N=36	Kirkby Woodhouse N=16	Nuncargate N=13
	%	%	%	%
More local venue	36	14	69	46
Different times of events	20	22	19	15
Childcare	15	8	25	15
Better public transport	13	19	6	8
Better price	10	6	0	8
Someone to go with	10	11	0	8
None	33	42	25	31

5.10 Preferences in receiving information

- Respondents were also asked (using Showcard 3) how they would like to receive information about services for themselves and their children. In addition to the preferences for all respondents, Table 16 shows the preferences of each of the three main residential areas.
- For all locations the preferred way of receiving information was via a newsletter, although residents of Nuncargate felt a flyer/information sheet was equally acceptable.
- A flyer/information sheet was second favourite overall, although Kirkby Woodhouse residents preferred an article in the local paper. This was third favourite overall.

Table 16 – receipt of information

Information	Total N=91	Annesley Woodhouse N=36	Kirkby Woodhouse N=16	Nuncargate N=13
	%	%	%	%
Newsletter	64	64	63	62
Flyer/information sheet	34	33	44	62
Article in local paper	25	25	50	8
Information session at nursery/clinic/Sure Start	23	17	38	38
Via email/website	20	19	38	8
Word of mouth (Health Visitor /nursery staff/GP)	16	19	16	23
Word of mouth (friends/family/other parents)	15	17	19	15
None	0	0	0	0

5.11 Three things Annesley Woodhouse needs

- When asked what three things Annesley Woodhouse needs to make it better for parents with young children, respondents came up with a list of suggestions as shown in Table 17 overleaf.
- The most frequently suggested ideas focused on play space – better/cleaner/playgrounds and parks (25%) and more outdoor playspace/activities (15%). Organised activities such as parent and baby or parent and toddler groups were also requested by a quarter of respondents overall (25%).
- Requested improvements to parks and to facilities for older children, while outside the remit of Children' Centres, indicate the impact of lack of facilities for older children on those with very young children.

Table 17 – suggestions to make area better for parents with young children

Suggestion	Total N = 91	Annesley Woodhouse N=36	Kirkby Woodhouse N=16	Nuncargate N=13
	%	%	%	%
Better/Safer/Cleaner Playground/Park	25	28	38	38
Parent & Baby/Toddler Groups/Playgroups/Toddler activities	25	25	19	38
Outdoor/more/better play areas/somewhere to play/more activities	15	28	13	0
Indoor/Safe/Soft play area	11	8	19	0
More/Better facilities for smaller children	9	0	19	31
Swimming Pool/Leisure Facilities/Sports Facilities	8	3	6	15
Before and after school activities/clubs	7	8	0	0
Clean up drugs/litter/dog mess/youths hanging around	7	8	6	8
More/better information	4	3	13	0
Holiday activities/care for children	4	6	6	0
More child care/childminders/nurseries/crèche	3	3	0	0
More cheap/affordable facilities/activities	3	3	0	0
More/better buses/Better transport	3	0	0	8
Place to meet/groups for mums/parents to meet	3	3	6	8
Further education courses/advisers	3	3	6	8
Library improvements/opening hours	3	3	0	8
Youth club/Activities for older children/teenagers	2	0	0	8
Clinic/doctor/Health Visitor	2	6	0	0
More shops/better shops	2	3	0	0
Sure Start centre	2	3	0	0
Other	7	7	6	8

Respondents could make more than one suggestion so totals don't add to 100%. Shaded cells represent a significant difference from the total for all respondents.

5.12 Thoughts on the arrival of the Children's Centre

- Respondents were asked if they had anything else to say about the Children's Centre, from what they had heard so far.
- Half (51%) did not have anything to add but a quarter (28%) expressed enthusiasm about the arrival of the Children's Centre, with comments such as, "good idea", "great", "brilliant" and "excellent".
- Eight percent had heard that Sure Start were supportive of families.
- Six percent commented that they had heard nothing, or that more publicity was needed.

6 Partners' questionnaire

- Partners' anonymised responses are shown in full at Appendix 6. Any comments made by the author of the report below reflect these responses.

6.1 Current problems

Q1. What do you think are the current problems, or gaps in current services, for parents and young families in the Annesley Woodhouse area?

- Partners identified a number of key issues for the area, primarily around the lack of local services and public transport issues for travel to other locations.

"Proximity to Kirkby but they need transport to get there."

- A particular concern for some partners was lack of support for families locally, particularly parenting support for those who might be in difficulties but do not ask for help.

"Parenting support for those with difficulties. Parents not seeking support for children's needs."

- Lack of local free childcare was also mentioned in the context of free childcare being available at Newstead Children's Centre.

"Free childcare is down at Newstead – there is a big historical community divide."

6.2 Possible Changes

Q2. In what way do you think the advent of the Children's Centre will change the way services are delivered in the Annesley Woodhouse area?

- The partners were unanimous in being positive about the advent of the Children's Centre.
- They anticipated that one of the key changes will be greater coordination of services, through a central focal point, making services easier for parents to access.

"Bring services together – a recognised contact point. Better coordination of services and less duplication"

"It can provide a vehicle to deliver a wide range of service without being fragmented".

6.3 Biggest Challenge

Q3. What do you think is going to be the biggest challenge locally in developing the Children's Centre in the Annesley Woodhouse area?

- Partners identified two main challenges for developing Children's Centre services in the area. The first was involving parents and ensuring that services are accessible to local parents.

"Getting parents to be involved"

"Making facilities accessible to parents and then encouraging hard-to-reach families to use them."

- The second main challenge is encouraging already busy partners to fully engage with partnership working.

"Commitment from partners who already have significant pressures on their time"

"Joined up working, avoiding duplication."

6.4 Effectiveness of Meetings

Q4. If workers from different settings / services have regular meetings to discuss local issues, how useful are these? Are parents invited to these? [Please indicate how often these are held, if at all]

- There is very little evidence of mechanisms to promote partnership working in the area. However, partners are generally in favour of involving parents more in meetings.

"Useful depending on frequency. Parents could be invited to alternate meetings."

"Would be very useful to include parents as this can provide feedback on projects and ideas for new ones."

6.5 Partners' Priorities

Q5. What are your top three priorities for developing services or facilities or resources for parents and young children in Annesley Woodhouse?

- Priorities include partners supporting each-other to improve services, improving facilities at Acacia Community Centre, promoting library services and improving after school childcare without duplicating current provision.

"Use the local knowledge to support the Ashfield District Council play strategy work"

“Improving facilities at Acacia Avenue”

“Promotion of library facilities and Bookstart initiatives”

“Improved, easily accessible, locally based childcare after school.”

- In terms of services partners would like to see improved, these include outdoor play spaces, free childcare, parenting skills courses, family-based activities, and increased library opening hours.

7 Focus Group

- The discussion guide used in the focus group will be found in Appendix 4. This included areas which reflected the main sections of the parent's questionnaire:
 - Knowledge of services in the area
 - Strengths and weaknesses of current services
 - Gaps in current provision
 - Good things to come from the arrival of the Children's Centre
 - Areas for improvement in the local area
- Focus group respondents were initially invited to undertake a mapping exercise, to gather information about services and activities in the area. This can be seen in Appendix 7. The mapping is based on knowledge of parents and partners. Parents were aware of toddler groups in their immediate area, and occasionally in other areas.

7.1 Findings of focus group

- Parents confirmed that there is very little in the area for parents and young children. There is the library, which has limited opening hours, making taking children difficult. However, the Rhyme, Rattle and Roll sessions were considered good by those who had been. Parents also mentioned a playgroup at Kirkby Woodhouse school on Thursday mornings, and baby swimming lessons at Annesley Woodhouse school, although they reported that places for swimming are limited.

"I feel as though there is nothing in Annesley to do. I'm lucky because I've got a car so I can put the kids in the car and take them to Rufford or go and meet friends, but not everybody has a car"

"I've been living locally for about two years and I've never found anything to take the kids to"

"It is all more suitable times for grandparents to go. My little girl loves going to the library but it is not open at suitable times"

- Because of the lack of local services, it is easy for parents to become isolated, particularly if they do not have other children in school. The community is tight-knit and difficult for incomers to break into.

"The one [Children's Centre] at Newstead, I think it saved my sanity going there. I don't come from Annesley and my friend's kids had grown up and they had gone back to work so I felt as though I'd got nobody to talk to"

"If my kids wasn't at school, I'd have no friends at all and I'm not a loner. It would be nice to go out and be able to meet people."

“It is a very tight-knit community and if you haven’t grown up from being a kiddie in the community [it is hard to break in]”

- Whilst there are activities outside the area, in Kirkby and Sutton for example, parents without a car found it very difficult to access them and get back in time to pick up older children from nursery or school. Even with a car, there were often waiting lists for popular activities such as gymnastics.

“I have got to go to Kirkby or to Sutton for my kids to have a lesson”

- Older children were generally not felt to be welcome at activities for younger siblings. This made it particularly difficult for parents with an older child who was only at nursery for half a day to take their younger child to activities.

“I’ve found that a lot of things I can’t take [him] to. [She] is off nursery in the mornings but I can’t go to a lot of things because you can’t take your older one with you.”

- Those with children at the two schools were very positive about their standards and about their supportiveness of families. Before and after school clubs are available, although mostly limited to children of full time school age.

“My daughter has just moved up to comp and she had an absolutely wonderful time there”

- Parents felt that there was a problem with older children hanging around, feeling that perhaps they did not have enough to do, although they were aware that there was Brownies and Scouts, and one was aware of the youth club at the Acacia Community Centre. The presence of older children on the play equipment was an issue, and parents felt this was partly because the siting of the play equipment so close to the basketball court at the Acacia Community Centre encouraged this.
- Parents raised concerns about accessing health services in suitable facilities. They were particularly unhappy with having to walk up a steep flight of stairs to access their Midwife at one local GP surgery, and the lack of safety they perceived for toddlers, reporting that they were unhappy with the safety of the stairgate at the top. They would be happier accessing the Midwife at Acacia Community Centre.

“Up at the doctors [on Forest Road], the Midwife who does the antenatal is up a great massive flight of stairs, so probably like the one in Newstead if they could have the Midwife here [Acacia Community Centre], and it could be like a mother and toddler group, that would be really nice.”

- Likewise with the Health Visitor, they expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of a private room for one baby clinic, which takes place in the waiting room. They felt it was unsatisfactory to have to undress their babies in front of other

patients. Once again they suggested the Acacia Community Centre as a potentially more suitable venue for such clinics.

“You are in a little waiting room where you have to undress your kids for the health clinic. There is no separate room.”

“You could do that kind of stuff in the community centre”

- Parents would like to see the Acacia Community Centre adapted to make it a suitable venue for local activities. They all felt that it is sufficiently central to be suitable, but that it was currently unwelcoming. They were not aware that plans were in place to do this, subject to funding.

“I think at first this building needs to be altered. You need lighting, just the layout – it is just a horrible building to come to. It has got no windows in it.”

- They suggested a small fenced outdoor area, which could be used for outdoor play during toddler groups and crèches.
- A central source of information would be welcomed by parents, who liked the sound of the service offered by the Children’s Information Service and would like this to be more widely publicised. They would also like a central notice board or similar.
- Because of the lack of local services, parents offered fairly limited suggestions on what they would like to see: toddler groups, gym or dance classes for little ones and better access to health professionals outside of the GP surgery, perhaps in a drop-in situation or alongside a toddler group.

“Just one building with some activities for kids”

8 Key messages for the future

- The interviews with parents, the focus groups and input from the partners show a high level of agreement about the needs of parents and young children in Annesley Woodhouse for the future.

These include:

- Parent and baby groups and parent and toddler groups provided locally
 - Improved access to outdoor play, both free play in parks and organised outdoor activities
 - Activities for older children
 - Better access to up-to-date information about services and activities across the area
 - Local, affordable childcare
 - Raised awareness of existing services across the area
 - Better access to health services, particularly to Health Visitors and Midwives in venues outside of GP surgeries
 - Adult education classes with crèche
 - The co-ordination of service providers and improved partnership working to deliver services.
- While the consultation necessarily had its limitations, due to lack of time and resource, the results are still felt to be representative of the community; it was always seen as a first conversation to provide a basis with which to build the future Children's Centre services in Annesley Woodhouse.
 - There is the need to assure parents and partners that the Children's Centre services will be and that the involvement of all parties is crucial in its success, as well as allowing parents to take ownership of the Children's Centre, to be jointly engaged with professionals in the provision of services for them and their families.
 - This consultation and the planned feedback session on 4th December are the starting points from which services for children under 5 and their families will develop. There is every reason to think from responses that parents will become involved, so that the Children's Centre becomes their service, rather than something delivered to them.

9 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Parents' Questionnaire

Appendix 2 – Showcards

Appendix 3 – Questionnaire for Service Providers / Partners

Appendix 4 – Discussion Guide for Sure Start Children's Centres Focus Groups

Appendix 5 – 'Other' Responses from Parents' Questionnaire

Appendix 6 – Responses from Partners and Service Providers

Appendix 7 – Mapping exercise: Current Services in Annesley Woodhouse from parents and partners