



**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL'S
LOCAL COMMITTEE IN
EPSOM & EWELL**

**CHILDREN'S CENTRES IN
EPSOM & EWELL**

15 MAY 2007

KEY ISSUE:

The Government has given local authorities the strategic responsibility for delivery of children's centres.

SUMMARY:

This report outlines progress towards delivery of children's centres in targeted areas within Epsom and Ewell, incorporating an outline of the range of services to be included in the children's centre offer for children under 5.

1 INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

- 1.1 “Children’s Centres in Surrey are where services work together in partnership with children, families and communities to make a difference to all.”

Developing 77 Children’s Centres across Surrey by 2010 will help to make this vision a reality.

- 1.2 A multi professional strategy group was set up to inform and influence the strategic direction, between 2005 and 2008, on the development of Children’s Centres across Surrey. Its aim is to work effectively with key partners and organisations to ensure that Centres developed in Surrey meet the needs of all children, families and communities, taking into account the five broad target outcomes for all children and young people set out in the Children Act 2004:

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a positive contribution
- Economic well being

A particular aim is to increase the life chances of Surrey children who are disadvantaged by their social, economic, geographical and family circumstances through providing enriched early intervention.

- 1.3 The agencies represented are:
 SCC Early Years and Childcare, County Co-ordinator for Portage, Educational Psychologist, Adult & Community Learning, Capital Strategy Manager, Schools Leadership Service, Jobcentre Plus Childcare Partnership Manager, 4S Consultant for Extended Learning, 4S Primary Consultant, Chief Executive of Connexions Surrey, Manager of Children’s Community Services, Surrey PCT representatives.

2 ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

- 2.1 The target for Surrey is to have fifty Children’s Centres designated by Sure Start by 31st March 2008. This will be achieved in two phases: in Phase 1 up to four centres will be designated, and in Phase 2 a total of 46 centres. Within Phase Two there will be differentiation in the levels of services:
- 10 Full Core Offer
 - 36 Graduated Offer

NW Surrey	SW Surrey	NE Surrey	SE Surrey
1 full core	3 full core	5 full core	1 full core
12 graduated	9 graduated	6 graduated	9 graduated
13 total	12 total	11 total	10 total

- 2.2 The Children's Centre Core Offer comprises:
- Integrated early years provision
 - Integrated education and childcare for a minimum of 48 weeks per year, 10 hours per day, 5 days per week.
 - Childminder's Network
 - Family support, parenting education and parental outreach
 - Child and family health services
 - Parental involvement
 - Education, training and employment services including links with Job Centre Plus
 - Access to wider services
- 2.3 Under the Children's Centre graduated offer, the integrated early years provision offer will depend on the level of need and the ability of existing good quality provision to meet those needs. The Centres will provide information on childcare choices for parents including childminding, and link to other local early years provision including pre-schools and full day care nurseries. They will open at times to meet local need.
- 2.4 Under the minimum level of service, seven Centres will have a role in the co-ordination of integrated services provided through outreach, as part of the local authority framework for children's services. The minimum level of service to be provided will be as follows:
- Information on childcare and early years provision
 - Information and support to access wider services
 - Information and advice to parents
 - Support to childminders
 - Drop in sessions or early years provision
 - Links to Job Centre Plus and health services
- 2.5 Areas 1 – 10, including Phase 1 centres will receive the full core offer. In Areas 11 – 77 there will be a graduated approach, from close to the full core offer with a reduction in levels of service down to the minimum level of service.
- Children's Centre services must reflect level of need in the area but should not duplicate existing provision or provide unnecessary levels of service.

- 2.6 Who decides on the level of service? In the 30% most disadvantaged areas of the county the Sure Start Unit requires that a full range of integrated services should be provided. In other areas, the local authority decides on the basis of mapping of local need, existing services and consultation with the local community. In Surrey, this has been decided based on: the proportion of families with children under five in the local population living in income deprived households, the proportion of families with children under five in the local population with significant special needs, and the extent to which existing childcare providers meet parents' needs, as well as the prior existence of accessible services in the local area to meet the support needs of families with children under five.

3. CHILDREN'S CENTRES IN THE BOROUGH OF EPSOM AND EWELL

3.1 Area 1 Ewell Court and Ruxley

Full Core Offer. Potentially Riverview Cof E School

Services delivered from this site have yet to be finalised. Early Years and Childcare are investigating the need for new childcare places in light of the childcare sufficiency target.

Next Steps

Currently reviewing plans to bring new build within budget.

Area 7 Ewell

Full Core Offer. Potentially site identified at Hollymoor Lane

Services delivered from this site have yet to be finalised. Early Years are investigating the need for new childcare places and potential childcare providers who might be interested in offering Integrated Care and education and the management of the Children's Centre from this site. The Borough Council, working with Rosebery Housing Association, is progressing the development of the site to include the Children's Centre.

Next Steps

Identify provider to offer childcare and manage services. Building contract to be tendered

Area 37 Epsom

Graduated Model. Currently identifying site

Next Steps

Potential sites considered Epsom Hospital, St Martins Infant and Junior School, continuing to identify suitable site to offer graduated model.

4. CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 Borough meetings were held in 2005, to inform all Early Years settings and schools on the mapping of children's centre areas. This included details of how to express an interest in being involved. Once the settings and schools had expressed their interest they were asked to complete a business plan.
- 4.2 All children's centres in Surrey were then invited to attend an area networking event. This event for the North East was held at The Ebbisham Centre in autumn 2006, and all potential partners were invited. Individual consultation will be carried out in the children's centre area with the support of the partners.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The development of children's centres will be of particular benefit to lone parents in need of support, childcare and skills development to enable them to get back into work. The majority of lone parents are women.

Report by: Karen Edwards, North East Area Manager, SCC Early Years

LEAD/CONTACT OFFICER: Karen Edwards
TELEPHONE NUMBER: 01372 833 890
BACKGROUND PAPERS: NONE