

APPENDIX 3

PHASE 2 SURE START CHILDREN'S CENTRES

DRAFT GENERIC DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

Background

Brent is one of the most culturally diverse areas in the country and one of only two boroughs where black and minority ethnic groups are in the majority. The borough is also home to many refugees, asylum seekers and economic migrants. Generally the population is increasing and new housing in regeneration areas will bring more children. Nearly 15% of our population lives in one of the most disadvantaged wards in the country and over a third of our children live in low income households in receipt of council tax benefit. It is clear that Brent has important challenges to address in delivering the best outcomes for our youngest children and their families.

Sure Start Children's Centres are one of the key delivery mechanisms to achieve the Government's Every Child Matters programme. The aim is to improve outcomes for all children and in particular to close the gap between outcomes for the most disadvantaged children and others. Services will be brought together at a neighbourhood level supporting parents/carers, both in their parenting and their aspirations towards employment.

Sure Start Children's Centres will help Brent meet the five Every Child Matters outcomes for children; being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic wellbeing. The services offered in our Children's Centres will contribute to addressing all six Strategic Priorities identified in the Children and Young People's Plan. Children's Centres are strongly linked to Extended Services in schools which join up a range of services and activities for primary and secondary aged children and their families.

5 Children's Centres were developed in Brent in Phase 1 (2004-2006). Some of which have gained national recognition for their quality of architecture and service provision. It is a standard Brent is keen to uphold. In Phase 2 (2006-2008) the DfES has encouraged the development of Centres from existing provision and the capital allocation reflects that commitment.

Children's Centres in Phase 2 will ensure that all children and families living in the 30% most disadvantaged areas will have access to Children's Centre services. 7 centres must be developed by the end of March 2008.

Aims of the Capital Programme

The aim of this capital programme is to provide facilities for outreach work, co-located health and training services, sessional childcare and office accommodation.

The completed centres should be warm and uplifting environments for children, parents, staff and others. They should also be safe, efficient, flexible and represent good value for money over the lifetime of the building.

The majority of the 7 phase 2 centres will be developed from existing provision, however our aspirations for the building should remain. Our buildings should be secure and should be seen to be secure without looking unwelcoming. Parents do not expect to be able to gain free access to a building but should not feel as though it is very difficult to enter. Where physically possible, centres should be light and airy, with glazing and views to an attractive outside area.

Who will use the centres?

Users of the centres will be:

- Parents/carers/grandparents
- Children aged 0-5 years old (and 5+ years old on occasion)
- Centre Head and Manager
- Health visitors
- Childminders and other childcare professionals
- Social workers
- Community development workers
- Job Centre Plus advisors
- Visiting professionals from other statutory and non-statutory agencies and voluntary/community groups
- Administrative support staff

What activities will take place?

The types of activities that will take place in the centres include but are not exclusive to:

- Adult training including training on ICT
- Meetings for adults (sometimes with children) and professional teams (5-10 people)
- Activity groups for adults and children for example drop in sessions, baby clinic and family learning (10-15 adults)
- Childminder meetings and drop in sessions (10 childminders and up to 30 children)
- Job Centre Plus advice sessions for groups and individuals
- Drop-in surgeries with different agencies and voluntary groups e.g. Citizens Advice Bureaux
- Individual sessions with professionals and parents/children
- Sessional childcare for 0-5 year olds (15 children plus 4 staff)
- Staff activities including administration and desk based work by visiting professionals for which files will require secure/confidential storage.

These activities would ensure that the core offer is met.

What type/size of spaces are required for those activities/numbers of people?

The following spaces are the minimum required for the activities detailed above:

- Meeting/training room including ICT facilities suitable for 15 adults (plus trainer) to sit alternatively in boardroom/theatre/classroom style and for up to 10 people to sit around a table for a meeting - 16m²
- 2 Consultation rooms suitable for 3 adults and 3 children to meet informally around a coffee table - 2x 6m²
- Flexible room suitable to provide sessional childcare for 15 children (could also be used for drop-in sessions) - 35m²
- Centre manager office (1) - 4m²
- Office for permanent staff (2), hot desks (2/3) and secure filing - 14m²
- Staff room - 10m²
- Reception (1) - 2m²
- Waiting area with information boards - 6m²
- Snack kitchen - 3m²
- Adult WCs - 4m²
- Child-sized WCs (2) - 6m²
- Baby changing unit - 3m²
- Storage - 3m²

Total internal area (including circulation and services) of 135m²

Externally the following spaces are required:

- Covered buggy and bike storage - 4m²
- Disabled car parking (1)
- Staff car parking (2) - desirable
- CCTV
- External play area with outside tap - 135m²

How can spaces be linked?

- Reception and waiting area should be closely linked ideally with line of sight to main entrance, entrance to children's areas and external storage area for buggies and bikes.
- Visitors should not have to pass rooms to get to reception area
- Meeting/training room could be adjacent to childcare room with flexibility to create even bigger room
- Parents training or in a meeting need to be able to concentrate away from their children in crèche
- Childcare room should have access to external play area
- Consultation rooms should be directly accessible off a corridor
- Kitchen and toilets should be close or accessible off childcare room
- Meeting/training room ideally would have direct access to tea and coffee making facilities

How long will the spaces be in use for?

The centre will be used to provide the full core offer of Children's Centre services for at least 10 hours a day, 5 days a week for 48 weeks of the year. Ideally, services will extend beyond this minimum to offer more evening and weekend activities.

A sample phase 1 centre runs 16 group sessions offering Children's Centre services a week. Typically each session lasts 2 hours. It is anticipated that a large group space (training /meeting room) will be required morning and afternoon 5 days a week. Individual/small group activities will also take place in consultation rooms but this usage is not likely to be as great.

Evidence from a phase 1 centre shows that sessional childcare is needed in order for parents to attend training/advice sessions/meetings. Approximately 10 group sessions a week require childcare support; the remainder are adult and child activities.

How will spaces be equipped?

- Meeting/training room – fold away tables and chairs, overhead project and screen, ICT facilities and desks to suit
- Flexible room suitable to provide sessional childcare – children's toys, furniture and equipment, fold away tables and chairs for adult use
- 2 Consultation rooms – low coffee table and comfortable seating
- Centre manager office (1) – desk, chair, computer, storage,
- Office for permanent staff (2), hot desks (2/3) and secure filing - desk, chair, computer, storage, photocopier
- Staff room – comfortable seating
- Reception (1) – open counter, computer, desk, chair
- Waiting area with information boards – seating, notice boards
- Snack kitchen – sink, kettle, microwave, fridge/freezer
- Adult WCs
- Child-sized WCs (2)
- Baby changing unit – fold down unit
- Storage