

Rotherham District Sure Start Maltby

Annual Evaluation Report 2003 – 4 (Year 3)

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Strategic Dimension

The first evaluation report depicted a programme in its early operational stages and therefore described a Board that was just coming together, with all the concomitant issues surrounding the development of the strategic arm of the programme. The focus of the strategic aspect of the current evaluation is to identify progress made against the position that was identified in 2002/03, particularly in relation to a number of key themes that were identified by Board members themselves in the last evaluation period. Very generally though, the general feeling among Board members was neatly captured by one member who stated:

I think the Maltby Sure Start Board has come a long way since its original establishment, and continues to develop meeting by meeting. In particular, I feel the personal commitment of its members has been vital, both workers and unpaid members.

(Board member – Statutory sector)

Composition of the Board

Longitudinal assessment of Board structure

The evaluation report of 2002/03 identified that the broad mix of representatives on the Sure Start Maltby Board was a strength of the programme, but this was countered to some extent by a lack of clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities of members.

Members of the Board were therefore asked to assess the Board, specifically in relation to whether or not they felt there had been any change since the previous evaluation period in relation to issues such as the composition of members and whether or not members were clear about their roles and responsibilities.

Analysis was conducted using a scale approach where respondents were asked to mark along a scale where they thought the programme stood on the issue compared to its position last year (therefore had the situation Deteriorated, stayed the Same, or Improved). Attendees at the Board were divided into four groups and each group gave their own assessment, each of which are represented on the scale. The assessment of the Board members is therefore set out at Scale 1.

Scale 1: Assessment of structure of Board since previous evaluation period

Deteriorated a lot	Deteriorated a little	The same	Improved a little	Improved a lot
		X		X (x3)

The results indicate that there is consensus among Board members that the structure of the Board has improved in the last year compared to its configuration during the previous evaluation cycle.

In evidencing this perceived improvement, Board members cited a number of factors which are detailed below:

Structural changes

Key amongst the structural changes identified was the fact that the Terms of Reference for the Board had been agreed ensuring that the Board has a solid underpinning to its work.

Board members welcomed improved clarity regarding their roles and responsibilities.

Procedural changes

Board members felt that the minutes distributed are *more understandable* and therefore of more use to them.

Members noted that attendance is consistent which has helped planning and decision making.

Members indicated that the reports to the Board were useful and were informative.

Changes in composition

Board members pointed out that there is a good mixture of people from agencies. While the Vice Chair has resigned it was noted that there remain

three parents on the Board while three more have expressed an interest in getting involved, hopefully by the autumn.

Improved attendance by parents was felt to have been an important achievement which has in turn positively impacted upon the Board as a whole although one member felt that scope existed for including more parents on the Board.

The Buddy system that has been adopted was welcomed as a new innovation and was felt to represent a positive development.

Personal development

A factor that should not be overlooked, and which was cited by Board members themselves, is the development of the Board members, and the fact that they have grown into their roles and that they have collectively grown as a Board. As one member stated simply, members are “*Growing in confidence*”.

A factor that was identified as being important in bringing the Board together was the Team Building Day which a number of members cited as helping the Board come together.

Observations and recommendations

1. The information set out above indicates very clearly that the Board has progressed considerably since the last evaluation period. The composition of the Board (in terms of agencies, organisations and sectors represented) continues to be good, but the real development made has been in terms of clarifying the roles of members and putting in the structural supports needed to help the Board function effectively. Thus, while good interpersonal relationships continue to exist between Board members, these have been supplemented with formal elements that combine to ensure effective working by the Board as a whole.
2. It is of some concern to note that, after the positive support received from the previous accountable body (Social Services), this role is now to switch to the Local Education Authority meaning meaning more change for the programme. The development of effective working

relationships with the new accountable body will be vital in ensuring that the good work of the programme can be sustained over the lifespan of the programme, and therefore the Board should look at this as a key objective over the next year.

The operational effectiveness of the Board

Members of the Management Board were asked to assess the value of their contributions to the proceedings of the Board. The results are presented are Table 1 below

Table 1: Assessment of contribution to the Board

How valuable is your contribution to the Board	Responses (actual no.)
Always valuable	2
Generally very valuable	5
Sometimes valuable	1
Not that valuable	1

When citing the reasons why they felt that they were able to make a positive contribution, members of the Board cited both professional skills which they brought to the Board as well as personal factors:

Professional skills

- *I believe that my experience, knowledge and skill in policy and procedures is helpful .Moreover my awareness of child protection issues has been valuable.*
- *Although some operational discussions are outside my area of knowledge and experience I feel my knowledge of Sure Start Children's Health allow me to make a useful contribution.*

Personal skills

- *My life experiences are an asset.*

While the majority of respondents felt that they were able to make a positive contribution to the running of the Board, one respondent felt that

their lack of experience within the area hampered their ability to contribute stating:

- *Because I am not from a council background and don't understand all the terms of the scale of the programme I find it hard to contribute.*

Some members explicitly noted attendance at meetings as being key to their ability to contribute whilst others conversely felt that their inability to attend regularly undermined their ability to contribute:

- *I am a regular attendee which is vital for consistency and conformity.*
- *Not always able to attend meetings as a full time Professional in teaching. Much of Sure Start work is applicable to Pre School rather than mainstream work.*

In addition to their own skills, members also referenced the support the Board is given by the programme, observing that:

- *The programme Manager provides regular reports to the board and identified issues as well as successes. She often has proposals and options for the Board to consider.*
- *Board Meetings adequately prepared for. Info sent out. Information always readily available. People know what they are doing.*

Board members were asked to indicate what factors/assistance could be provided in order to maximise their contribution to the Board. The results are presented at Table 2.

Table 2: Factors that would improve effectiveness of contribution of Board members

Factors	Responses (actual no.)
Training with Board members about roles, responsibilities etc.	8
Having a manual that sets out our roles and responsibilities	7
Team building with Board members	4
Having induction processes for Board members	3
Having more parents involved	3
Less meetings	1
More information about what is going on before we have meetings	1
If everyone was given at least one opportunity to speak at meetings	1
More time at meetings	0

The most commonly cited factor that Board members identified that would help improve effectiveness was *Training with Board members about roles, responsibilities*, closely followed by *Having a manual that sets out our roles and responsibilities*.

Whilst some Board members indicated that parental participation could be improved (see below at Table 3), only 3 members cited this as a means by which to improve the effectiveness of the Board.

In addition to the factors rated above, one Board member indicated that they would appreciate:

- *Support from my own organisation and mechanisms for linking back into decision-making forums.*

Parental involvement

Members of the Board were somewhat split regarding the level and degree of parental participation on the Board with as many indicating that parental involvement was *Very Good* to *Excellent* as those who said it was *OK* or *Needs a lot of improvement*. The results are set out at Table 3.

Table 3: Assessment of parental involvement

Parental involvement	Responses (actual no.)
Excellent	1
Very Good	3
OK	3
Needs a lot of improvement	1

Some Board members who expressed some degree of concern regarding parental involvement felt that the issue was a lack of parental engagement at the Board level:

- *Could do with more parental involvement especially at Board level.*
- *Sure Start Maltby has had continuous involvement from parents. This is not to say the programme would not benefit from more parents having more influence.*

Other Board members also recognised this factor but were also mindful of difficulties that had been experienced in recruiting parents to the Board, stating:

- *One parent, but it has been difficult to get other parents on the Board.*
- *I feel it is extremely hard for parents to be committed to something like Sure Start.*

One member felt that parents were not involved in decision-making, stating:

- *They are not at the centre of the programme – decisions are just made.*

Crucially, Board members indicated that, whilst parental involvement is not necessarily optimal, they as a Board are aware of this issue and are seeking to improve on the current situation:

- *The programme is aware of this area and work is going on.*

Observations and recommendations

3. Sure Start Maltby is to be congratulated for the level of parental involvement at the strategic level with the roles of both Chair and Vice-Chair currently held by parents. The programme has also managed to retain parents on the Board. This represents a considerable improvement on the situation as identified in the previous evaluation report.

Longitudinal assessment of parental involvement

The centrality of parental involvement on the Sure Start Maltby Partnership Board was identified as a priority by Board members in the evaluation report for 2002/03. As such Board members were asked to assess whether there had been any changes in parental involvement since the previous evaluation, and whether any changes that had occurred had been positive or negative. The assessment of Board members is presented at Scale 2 below. As can be seen, only three of the groups gave a rating in relation to this issue.

Scale 2: Assessment of parental involvement since previous evaluation

Deteriorated a lot	Deteriorated a little	The same	Improved a little	Improved a lot
			X	X (2)

There was a clear consensus amongst Board members that parental involvement in the programme (both in the design and delivery of services) had improved over the last year.

In explaining the rating that they gave, Board members felt that more parents were attending Sure Start groups and were becoming actively involved rather than solely as passive recipients of Sure Start services, as one member noted:

- *Parents are willing to come and give us their views.*

Board members singled out several groups and activities for particular attention where parents were playing a strong role:

- Parent's Voice
- Dad's Group
- Volunteer programme
- Partnership Board
- Sub-Committees of Partnership Board

One member felt that the improvement had been relatively recent noting that involvement has “*Blossomed over the last 4 months*”.

Board's view about the operational effectiveness of the programme

In addition to critiquing their own effectiveness, members of the Board were asked to assess the effectiveness of the programme as a whole. Board members were asked to give an overall assessment of how well they thought the programme was performing in relation to their expectations. The results are given at Table 4.

Table 4: Assessment of the operational effectiveness of the programme

How well have your expectations of Sure Start Maltby been met	Responses (actual no.)
Exceeded expectations	0
Met expectations	8
In some ways met expectations	1
Did not meet expectations	0

The Board members indicated a clear consensus in their evaluation of Sure Start Maltby with all members bar one indicating that the programme had *Met expectations*. None of the Board members interviewed stated that the programme *Did not meet expectations*.

Board members noted a number of reasons why their expectations had been met:

- *I had confidence from early on that Maltby SS would achieve a good deal, as it had widespread public support from the start. It has succeeded in most of the areas that were planned.*

Members noted that they had anticipated that the programme would need time to settle down, especially given the transition to a new programme manager that occurred during the last evaluation period. Members however felt that the programme had subsequently picked up the degree of momentum that is necessary for it to successfully deliver services to the community:

- *It is anticipated that new Sure Starts need time to settle down. Providers have to adapt to new ways of working and communicating in different ways. Now settled and working well.*
- *A big task community project with little initial enthusiasm, but once it was established with professionals, it is now steadily picking up pace to achieve its objectives.*

Effectiveness of mainstream provision over Sure Start model

Board members were also asked to indicate whether or not there were aspects of mainstream service provision which they felt were superior to the Sure Start model or areas where Sure Start has proven to not work as effectively as mainstream provision.

One member felt that the Sure Start model inherently ran the risk of ghettoising itself in that it “*Can be isolated from mainstream activity if not given a high enough profile*”.

Another Board member felt that the age cut off point built into Sure Start service delivery could leave families in need of assistance isolated after the withdrawal of services even though “*families may yet be dependent on this assistance*”.

One Board member felt that a problem existed with the model, not in the Sure Start area itself, but in the effect that the creation of a Sure Start can have on the surrounding area and its services, noting:

- *Draws staff from non Sure Start areas to where resources are available and case loads more manageable. This creates major*

problems providing services to parents and young children in non Sure Start areas creates inequality in a town that is generally deprived throughout.

Areas for improvement

Members of the Sure Start Maltby Partnership Board were asked to identify areas for improvement within the programme. Their responses are set out at Table 5.

Table 5: Areas for improvement within Sure Start Maltby

Areas for improvement	Responses (actual no.)
Engage with more parents	2
Greater awareness of Sure Start	1
Links with schools	1
Better inter-relationships between staff	1
Establishment of new premises	1
Clear boundaries of referrals to Social Services	1
De-stigmatise Sure Start	1
Ensuring long term survival of services	1

The results at Table 5 are interesting inasmuch as that they give no clear consensus as to areas that need improvement with only one factor cited by more than one respondent.

In relation to engaging with more parents, the Board members noted:

- *To engage more parents into the project also new parents not just the same parents who attend all the groups as sometimes we overload the parents who already attend the project.*
- *Need to be more creative in recruiting parents to be involved in the programme.*

Benefits of Sure Start

Board members were invited to indicate what they thought were the key benefits of the Sure Start Maltby partnership to parents and very young children.

The responses given largely broke down into two distinct themes:

A. Improvements to service design and delivery

One of the key benefits identified by Board members in relation to service design and delivery was the wider range of services being offered through Sure Start:

- *More flexible delivery of services - responsive to local need.*
- *Families have better range of services available to them from a multi disciplinary team.*
- *To identify gaps in local services for parents.*

Whilst other members noted the scope for joint working that underlines the entire concept of Sure Start:

- *Promotes joined up working which improves services and communications for parents and young children.*

Some Board members indicated specific services which they felt Sure Start had made an impact around:

- *Improvement of Professional Services e.g. access to Health Visitor, Speech Therapist.*
- *Ante Natal Support.*

Other benefits identified were:

- *A focal point of information services and provider of opportunities for all within Maltby.*
- *It offers an opportunity for child protection concerns to be identified early and hopefully cycles of parenting styles to be broken.*
- *Provides the capacity and pump priming to tackle inequalities and make a difference.*
- *More well trained staff giving support across a range of issues.*
- *The needs of children are at the centre and services are better integrated e.g. childcare and family support plus opportunities to get involved.*

B. Improvements for parents and their young children

When citing benefits relating to parents and their children, Board members emphasised the empowering nature of Sure Start, observing that it allows parents to have a say in service provision in the locality and involves them in service delivery.

- *Empowers parents to have a voice in the community.*
- *To support and empower local parents to enable them to develop their own skills, self esteem and motivation.*
- *Involvement and participation.*

Board members also felt that Sure Start had played a role in relation to tackling isolation in the area among parents:

- *It offers opportunities for parents to form links in the community and reduce isolation.*
- *Access to friendship.*

Other benefits identified were:

- *To enable parents /carers to offer their children a more rich and fulfilled lifestyle.*
- *It offers opportunities for support to parents and children who may be in need of assistance.*

Observations and recommendations

4. It is interesting that, a greater number of citations were given that related to service provision and procedural matters than those which related to quality of life and impact on the lives of parents (11 citations versus 7 for improvements for parents/children). This may indicate the seniority of the Board members who may tend to perceive Sure Start more in terms of the alignment of services and the scope it allows for re-structuring services. This interpretation is emphasised by the fact that issues relating to lives of parents were cited by a parent representative, a Family Support Worker and a representative from Early Years and Childcare services.

Effectiveness of programme management

In addition to exploring their strategic role and their view of the programme as a whole, Board members were asked to rate the day to day management of the programme. Their assessment is presented at Table 6.

Table 6: Assessment of effectiveness of management of programme

How well the programme is managed on a day to day level	Responses (actual no.)
Excellent	3
Very Good	4
OK	2
Needs a lot of improvement	0

The result at Table 6 represents a clear endorsement of the management of the programme by the Programme Manager with a clear majority of respondents indicating that the day to day management is Very Good to Excellent.

In noting the strengths of the Programme Manager, Board members noted:

- *The programme is managed extremely well, with financial arrangements, policies, staff issues and planning all well organised. The programmes successful initiative demonstrate the backing of a well managed scheme.*

Board members recognised that Sure Start Maltby has evolved over time and that management has had to reflect this:

- *Initially I had concerns about the management of Sure Start. A new Programme Manager was introduced at a time when a team building exercise was undertaken Sure Start is now going from strength to strength tribute to the new Programme Manager.*

As one Board member noted:

- *We are still learning as we continue to go forward.*

One member felt that operational staff were not always given the level of support they sought noting:

- *Because as the team the support we are offered is very limited so ultimately we make a lot of decisions our self. The programme does run ok and has moved on since the new manager came into post but issues still need to be addressed related to everyday decisions and practices are not being addressed fully.*

Observations and recommendations

5. It is clearly apparent from the views collected that the appointment of the Programme Manager has been crucial in ensuring the success of the programme as a whole. The evidence would tend to suggest that since the arrival of the Programme Manager, the programme has had a clearer strategic vision, acts with more purpose and that there is generally more activity.

The Board's ability to work strategically

A key aspect of a Sure Start partnerships Board's ability to work strategically is its ability to plan ahead towards the end of the life-span of the programme when services will have to be mainstreamed as central funding is gradually reduced.

Board members were asked to rate a number of factors relating to the mainstreaming of services and to assess where the programme stands in relation to these factors. The results are given at Table 7.

Mainstreaming practices

Table 7: Assessment of mainstreaming

Mainstreaming practice	Responses (actual no.)
We are sure that mainstream organisations and local parents know who we are	7
We have all of the key decision makers from mainstream agencies involved at Board level	4
We undertake rigorous evaluation of our projects/services to prove that we are successful	4
We have a very good sense of what else is going on at a strategic level	4
We are too early in the development of our Sure Start programme to consider such things	0

The results at Table 7 indicate that the Board feels that awareness of Sure Start in the Maltby area is high among both mainstream providers and the public thereby preparing the way for the programme to eventually hand over the running of services to both other agencies and the community itself.

The results at Table 7 do however tend to indicate that, whilst awareness is good, the Board is not quite as confident that other fundamental prerequisites for successful mainstreaming are in place. Thus 4 Board members felt that "*We have a very good sense of what else is going on at a strategic level*" whilst 4 again noted that "*We have all of the key decision makers from mainstream agencies involved at Board level*".

Crucially, none of the respondents felt that the programme was too early in its life-span to begin thinking about the issue of mainstreaming.

One Board member felt that mainstreaming of Sure Start services was inherently difficult if not altogether flawed due to the nature of the funding regime Sure Start receives:

- *The main threat to the Sure Start model is its reliance on external funding therefore the fear that some of its services can never be sustainable or replicable when external funding ceases or doesn't exist. It may have encouraged the development of expensive services which could then need to be withdrawn leading to disappointment and setting a bad precedent.*

Longitudinal assessment of mainstreaming

A key factor identified by Board members in the previous evaluation report was that of the mainstreaming of services. Once again, Board members were invited to assess the extent to which progress had been made in this area since the last evaluation period, with the results set out at Scale 3. Again, only three groups scored this theme.

Scale 3: Assessment of mainstreaming since previous evaluation period

Deteriorated a lot	Deteriorated a little	The same	Improved a little	Improved a lot
			X	X (x2)

While the results indicate some progress has been made in relation to mainstreaming, some Board members felt that the degree of progress had been relatively limited.

Those who felt progress was limited indicated that this was because mainstreaming is “*Just starting to take-off*”.

Those who felt the situation had improved identified a number of factors.

- Parent and toddler group has a constitution thereby making it independent and therefore eligible for external funding.
- The development of good partnership with Tot-Spot.
- The attendance by the Programme Manager at Network Group.

Mainstreaming and the Sure Start Maltby capital project

In broader discussions about mainstreaming, a number of Board members felt that the ultimate success in mainstreaming is dependent on the development of the capital project.

Board members of this opinion felt that the premises will act as a focal point for activities and thus will become a centre of community activities. Some members therefore felt that mainstreaming would have to wait until services could be run from this centre.

Observations and recommendations

6. While Board members indicate that they feel that they are aware of what is happening with regard to the wider strategic agenda across Rotherham, it is not clear the extent to which Sure Start Maltby is represented at this wider strategic level, in particular at key joint planning and specialist planning mechanisms. As such, the recommendation from the evaluation report of 2002/03 stand with regard to the fact that Sure Start Maltby should seek to obtain representation in other planning fora in the area.

This recommendation should however be seen in the context that efforts are being made, most notably in the work of the three Rotherham programme managers (Maltby, Rawmarsh and Rotherham Central) to act in unison in order to have greater impact and say at the strategic level.

7. It is highly commendable that Sure Start Maltby is already moving ahead with plans for mainstreaming services with services such as the support group for parents of children who need additional care already having achieved a semi-autonomous status and engaging in its own fund-raising. The programme should now look at looking at mainstreaming its key services (such as Speech and Language). The programme should also consider using its funding to develop innovative pilot schemes that should be moved over to mainstream provision as soon as viable such as is done at Sure Start Ashford. As such, the programme could consider seeing its role as a seedbed for new ways of working.

Development of the capital project

The capital project component of the Sure Start Maltby programme was identified as an important issue in the evaluation report of 2002/03.

Board members felt that the capital project had presented a problem to the programme since the outset, that whilst the programme had always intended to have its own building, the location of this has proved to be an ongoing problem.

Board members identified problems in obtaining the land to build on, with alternative options mooted such as renting shop-front premises on the high

street (a plan which did not come to fruition as the lease of the proposed site was obtained by a private vendor).

Board members proved to be optimistic and were driven by the sense that the successful completion of Sure Start premises would mean things would improve 100% as one member said. Some Board members felt that the development of the capital project was increasingly imminent.

Partnership Board members were asked to assess the progress of the capital project. Their assessment is given at Scale 4.

Scale 4: Assessment of development of the capital project since

Deteriorated a lot	Deteriorated a little	The same	Improved a little	Improved a lot
		X	X	X

Opinion was split somewhat with regard to movement on the capital project.

Of the members that felt the situation was static from last year, one noted “*nothing major has changed except for the development of the drawn up plans*” whilst another felt that there had been no apparent movement on this issue since October 2003.

Of those who felt that progress had been made, a number of positive factors were cited:

- *The land has been agreed*
- *Planning permission has been received*
- *Plans drafted with final plan soon to be submitted to architect*
- *Capital strategy sub-group established*
- *There has been successful consultation on the plans for the building*

While planning permission has been applied for and not yet granted, the Board clearly felt optimistic about progress and sensed that completion is just a matter of time. Thus the Board member who gave the most positive endorsement felt that the capital development is “*almost finalised – therefore it is a reality*”.

Observations and recommendations

8. The programme is to be congratulated in having neared the stage of commencement on the capital build project. Members of the Board are clearly of the opinion that the new Sure Start premises will represent a leaping off point for providing more services for local parents and their very young children whilst also acting as a focal point for the community. As such, the Board should make the completion of the capital project an absolute priority for the rest of the financial year.

Future priorities of Sure Start Maltby

Board members were invited to list the future priorities for the programme over the short term (next financial year) and the medium/longer term (3 years).

Short term goals (next financial year)

Review services

- *Programme should establish which services are working and which are not*

Publicity

- *Need to continually inform the community about the things that are happening – in particular outings and events*

Capital project

- *Need to get building up and running*
- *Members felt that the programme will be unable to move on until the building is completed and this therefore becomes a key priority*

Relationship with Education

- *With the transition to a new accountable body, members were keen to establish a relationship with this agency*

3 year goals

More parental involvement

- *Encourage parents to have greater role in running services*

- *Training parents to provide services*
- *Encouraging feedback regarding service quality*

Service for vulnerable parents

- *Programme should look at establishing self-help groups for vulnerable parents*

Services for young parents

- *Programme should look at establishing groups specifically catering for younger parents*

Counselling services

- *Board members felt that there was a gap in relation to counselling services especially in relation to substance misuse*
- *It was felt that substance abusers in the area often fall back into old patterns of behaviour and thus resume their substance abuse – Board members felt that Sure Start was ideally placed to help substance abusers over the longer term*

Become a centre of excellence

- *It was felt that Sure Start had the capacity to eventually become a local centre of excellence for other areas to emulate*

Mainstreaming services

- *Sure Start should look at which services it wishes to continue and which services it should wind up*

Operational Dimension

During the period covered by the first evaluation report, Sure Start Maltby was still somewhat in its infancy having established itself and its services in the period 2001/2002. The operational analysis of Sure Start Maltby therefore seeks to look at the progress that the programme has made since the period of the first evaluation report, to identify whether the programme has settled down and is successfully providing services to parents in the area and whether particular issues identified in the previous evaluation report have been addressed.

In order to make the data between the two surveys as comparable as possible this section of the report is divided into the same thematic areas as the evaluation report for 2002/2003.

The provision of a seamless service

Referrals

Waiting times for referrals

In the evaluation report for 2002/03, service providers noted that a key programme strength was the speed of the referral process. Given that the referral process was identified as a key strength of Sure Start Maltby, the current evaluation sought to ascertain whether this was still the case.

Service providers were asked to indicate what normal waiting times were before clients are able to use their service. The results for those providers to whom referrals were applicable were:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| • Up to 24 hours | 2 citations |
| • Up to 1 week | 2 citations |
| • Less than a month | 1 citation |
| • Prioritise as necessary | 1 citation |

The results suggest that referrals to Sure Start Maltby services are extremely rapid with the data indicating that the majority of clients are able to see the service they have been referred on to in a week or less, a

considerable improvement from the results that would be expected for mainstream services.

Service providers were asked to indicate whether there had been any change in the waiting times for referrals since the last evaluation period. The same scale approach was used as for the Board with providers divided into four groups. The results are presented at Scale 5 below. One group of providers did not rate this theme.

Scale 5: Assessment of waiting times for referrals since previous evaluation period

Deteriorated a lot	Deteriorated a little	The same	Improved a little	Improved a lot
		X (x2)	X	

Service providers tended to indicate that waiting times for referrals were as they were in the last evaluation. Service providers emphasised that this was a positive endorsement since they felt that it would be difficult to improve on current performance. As one provider noted:

- *Same i.e. has always been good – very low waiting times already, much quicker time than in mainstream services.*

And as another observed:

- *Same as we feel that all our referrals are dealt with quickly because we have always had a quick response to referral.*

Another provider noted that it would be difficult to have achieved an improvement given that:

- *All contacts are made within 24 – 48n hours of referrals. Contact by phone or a visit some within the same day.*

Those providers who felt that waiting times for referrals had improved indicated that this was because:

- *We don't have anyone complaining so must be happy.*

One provider did note that the programme better clarified needs of clients in advance through visits by Family Workers which they felt made things

clearer and avoided unnecessary referrals being made or ones which duplicated service provision.

Observations and recommendations

9. Sure Start Maltby is to be strongly commended for the waiting times that exist for its services. It has managed to maintain the excellent levels as identified in the evaluation report for 2002/03 and evidently provides services that are considerably quicker to access than mainstream provision. In future attempts to mainstream services Sure Start should use the speed of referrals and short waiting times as a key component in “selling” its practices to mainstream agencies.

Appropriateness of referrals

Whilst speed of referrals are an essential strength of the Sure Start model, by-passing the extended waiting periods often found in mainstream provision, it remains vital that those referrals made are appropriate. As such service providers were asked to indicate how appropriate they thought referrals made were. Their assessment is given at Table 8.

Table 8: Appropriateness of referrals received

Appropriateness of referrals	Responses (actual no.)
Never	0
Sometimes	0
Mostly	1
Always	4

The results at Table 8 clearly indicate that where referrals are made, providers feel that they are appropriate with the majority of respondents indicating that they are *Always* appropriate.

Co-ordinated service provision

Service providers were asked to assess how the co-ordination of services had moved on since the previous evaluation period. The assessment is given at Scale 6.

Scale 6: Assessment of co-ordination of service provision since previous evaluation

Deteriorated a lot	Deteriorated a little	The same	Improved a little	Improved a lot
X		X	X (x2)	

Providers noted that co-working varied dependent on who was being worked with, with the level of commitment varying between the various providers. Thus:

- *Co-ordinated services with some providers is excellent but with others it can take time.*

Some providers indicated that co-ordination was generally good among those providers based from the offices at Blyth Road.

Providers felt that mainstream providers faced difficulties in balancing the competing requirements placed upon their time. Thus it was felt that they were continuously having to balance their mainstream obligations with their wish to be engaged with Sure Start. Ultimately though, as one provider noted:

- *Mainstream work overrides their input into Sure Start service provision.*

Providers felt that one way in which problems with co-ordination manifested itself was in the duplication of service provision with some duplication existing between those services that are based within the Sure Start offices and those based elsewhere.

A further issue that was identified related to lack of clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities of staff. Where staff were seen as having an obvious and discrete role (such as speech and language or physiotherapy) it was felt that co-ordination was a relatively straightforward process since

there is an obvious point of contact. Where roles are somewhat more ambiguous, then problems seem to arise.

Where providers indicated a deterioration in the co-ordination of service provision they pointed to the fact that this element of the programme is reliant on goodwill and informal relationships and lacks formal mechanisms. As such, providers indicated that they sometimes found it hard to forward plan group work and activities since could not be sure of the commitment of other staff over the longer term. Providers were able to cite examples where staff had withdrawn their support for a scheme shortly before the start date leading to complications among the staff running it.

Observations and recommendations

10. The evidence suggests that there is some scope for improving the degree of co-ordination in service provision and that, currently, levels of co-ordination vary between service providers. The current system of co-ordinating action seems to rely heavily on interpersonal relationships and informal agreements. The programme should therefore examine more formal mechanisms for co-ordinating the work of the various service providers. Options available include making planning arrangements a standing item at all team meetings and developing a shared calendar/diary to avoid date clashes.
11. Some barriers to better co-ordination of services exist through lack of clarity regarding the roles of staff and service providers. Communication of the scope and responsibilities of all staff members and service providers should go a considerable way to clarifying the remit of all staff and thereby ensuring that the correct staff are contacted when trying to co-ordinate service delivery.

Information sharing

In the evaluation report of 2002/2003, information sharing was described as being fundamental to the operational success of Sure Start, particularly where it pertains to referrals. Service providers were asked to assess information sharing since the last evaluation period. The assessment given is presented at Scale 7 below.

Scale 7: Assessment of information sharing since previous evaluation period

Deteriorated a lot	Deteriorated a little	The same	Improved a little	Improved a lot
			X (x2)	X

Service providers clearly indicated that information sharing has improved within Sure Start Maltby and its service providers.

Providers cited a number of reasons for the improvement in information sharing:

- *Better awareness of one another's roles*
- *Better information about groups run by Sure Start*
- *Monthly newsletter with information regarding all groups and activities*
- *Regular providers meetings*
- *Regular feedback from Board*
- *Distribution of information by Parent Link Workers*

While providers generally pointed to a number of improvements made, they raised a few points that they felt the programme should be mindful of in order to ensure the continued success of information. These points are therefore included inasmuch as they present possible future threats to the programme:

- The information flow from providers to programme management tends to be better than the flow of information from management back out to providers.
- Providers do not always pass on information to designated staff.
- Not entirely clear that providers are looking at the information being distributed which has been evidenced in some bad planning.

Working in the Sure Start Way

Organisational fit

Providers were asked in the questionnaire to indicate the extent to which the priorities of their organisation aligned with those of Sure Start Maltby. The results are set out at Table 9.

Table 9: Extent of match between provider organisation's priorities and Sure Start Maltby

Organisational match	Responses (actual no.)
Good match	4
OK match	6
Poor match	0

As evidenced at Table 9, all providers felt that there was an *OK* to *Good* match between their priorities and that of Sure Start Maltby.

Providers were asked whether the degree of organisational synergy they identified was due to Sure Start or whether it was influenced by other organisations/agendas. The assessment of providers is given at Table 10.

Table 10: Party responsible for degree of organisational match

Responsible for organisational match	Responses (actual no.)
Definitely Sure Start	4
Partly Sure Start	1
Other agendas	5

The results indicated a somewhat mixed picture with as many respondents identifying the influence of Sure Start (whether it be *Definitely* or *Partly*) as those identifying *Other agendas* as being responsible for the degree of organisational fit.

Assessment of programme

Given the range of professions and experience among service providers, service providers were asked to indicate the extent to which the programme had met their expectations to date. The results are set out at Table 11.

Table 11: Extent to which Sure Start had met expectations of service providers

Extent to which Sure Start has met expectations	Responses (actual no.)
Exceeded my expectations	0
Met my expectations	9
Has not met my expectations	1

The results emphatically demonstrate that the programme is performing well with all respondents bar one indicating that the programme has *Met my expectations*.

In identifying why their expectations had been met, providers indicated that the level of resources available families was crucial (cited by 4 respondents). Another crucial factor proved to be the speed of referrals made with 4 providers citing this as evidence for their assessment.

Other factors cited were:

- *Because I do have more time to give to families the service that they want.*
- *Gives me more time to spend with clients on one to one basis.*
- *I've appreciated the team approach and ability to try new initiatives.*

Impact on work satisfaction

An additional factor that should be addressed in evaluating Sure Start Maltby is the extent to which it has not only provided better services to parents and their young children in its catchment area, but also the extent to which it has improved job satisfaction among both its own staff and the staff of those services it commissions. Given that services were effectively still embedding themselves during the period of the first evaluation report (2002/2003) it was not appropriate to test staff for job satisfaction as this would have been an assessment during a period of intense transition. Now that staff have settled in they were asked to indicate how much Sure Start

Maltby had changed their satisfaction with work. Their responses are detailed at Table 12.

Table 12: Assessment of affect on satisfaction with work

Affect of Sure Start on satisfaction with work	Responses (actual no.)
Changed a lot for the worse	0
Changed a little for the worse	5
No change	1
Changed a little for the better	1
Changed a lot for the better	3

The results given at Table 12 are somewhat ambivalent with 4 respondents indicating that their job satisfaction has *Changed a little for the better* or *a lot for the better* whilst 5 indicate that it has *Changed a little for the worse*.

The explanation for the results given at Table 12 lie in the comments provided by respondents. The comments made are given below and are divided into those which indicate deterioration in job satisfaction and those which indicate an improvement.

Improvement

The key factor identified in improving job satisfaction was the ability to offer services of more quality that allowed them to spend more time with clients:

- *Because I am able to offer quality time.*
- *Chance to offer a really good service to families.*
- *I feel I can give more time to clients that require it.*
- *Because I am supporting families that need extra help – which is initially is a long job but is very satisfying when you see these families filling their fullest potential.*
- *Chance to offer a really good service to families.*

Staff also appreciated the ability to work in a more flexible and innovative manner:

- *More flexible working practice work as a multi-agency team.*
- *Chance to try new initiatives – variety.*

Two providers felt that the improvement in the resources they could access made their jobs more satisfying, whilst one provider simply noted Sure Start is a:

- *More fun atmosphere than mainstream.*

Deterioration

Of those who felt that their job satisfaction had *Changed a little for the worse*, all mentioned communication as well exemplified in the following quotes:

- *Communication issues have caused concern and tension*
- *Communication still a major problem.*
- *Communication by all parties has not always been successful.*

Related to the issue of communication, some staff indicated that they were not clear about roles and responsibilities, something which evidently caused them some degree of frustration.

Professional development of staff

In addition to job satisfaction, Sure Start programmes should also ensure the continued professional development of its staff. Professional development ensures that staff are able to provide the best possible quality of service to clients and keep abreast of developments in their field.

Staff were therefore asked what impact Sure Start had had on their personal development and what this impact had been. Of 10 respondents to the service providers questionnaire, exactly half felt that they had been able to develop while working for Sure Start whilst the remaining half indicated that they had not developed or that development had been limited.

The result correlate almost exactly with the proportion of service providers who felt that their job satisfaction had improved under Sure Start and those who felt that it had declined. In fact, all those respondents who indicated that their job satisfaction had *Changed a little for the worse* indicated having no or very little personal development, whereas those whose satisfaction had improved *a little* or *a lot* had all benefited from professional development.

Those who had developed gave details of their professional development:

- *Allowed me to develop new skills and knowledge. Understanding by working with other providers that I have been able to apply to my working practice.*
- *It has enabled me to professionally develop within my specialised area.*
- *Further experience and training.*
- *Different ways of working - more multi-disciplinary team working.*
- *I feel I have a much more rounded and holistic picture and can thus help families more.*

Observations and recommendations

12. The professional development of staff at Sure Start Maltby would appear to be uneven with some providers indicating that they find the Sure Start environment conducive to their development whilst other (particularly more specialised) staff do not all feel that they have continued to develop.

Given the very clear knock-on effect that professional development (or lack of) is having on work satisfaction then this issue must be dealt with with some urgency. Now that the programme has settled down, it would appear to be increasingly apparent that job satisfaction will be an important component in retaining staff.

The need for staff development is lent further importance given the fact that the Sure Start model is a time limited one, meaning that all staff will ultimately have to seek employment with mainstream providers and other agencies and organisation. Staff who feel that their skills are adrift of those that are required in the rest of the sector will be increasingly tempted to move on to ensure that they remain employable. Sure Start Maltby should therefore explore a number of options:

- Annual appraisals for all staff. In their appraisals staff should be encouraged to set their own goals and targets over the next year whilst also setting out their expectations of what the programme should be offering them in terms of their development.
- Staff based around a specialism should be afforded opportunities to seek professional development through their

- parent organisation or professional body and be allowed opportunities to meet with other practitioners in their field.
- Sure Start Maltby should explore the possibility of joint professional development opportunities with the other Rotherham programmes (namely Rawmarsh and Rotherham Central).

Making an impact

As per the previous evaluation report, service providers were asked to assess the extent to which they felt that Sure Start Maltby is making a positive impact on the development, health and well being of both parents and their very young children within the programme catchment area.

Impact of Sure Start services

Children

Providers were asked to evaluate a series of factors relating to child/baby health and well being. Their assessment is set out at Table 13.

Table 13: Impact on child health and well being

Impact on baby/child development	Much better (>5%)	Little better (<5%)	About the same	Lower	Don't have a view
Baby development	4	5	1	0	0
Child development	4	5	0	0	0
Child accident prevention	1	3	5	0	0
Child speech and language	9	0	0	0	0
Meeting needs of children with special needs	7	2	0	0	0
Children's teeth	0	4	3	0	2
Child socialisation skills/behaviour	6	3	0	0	0

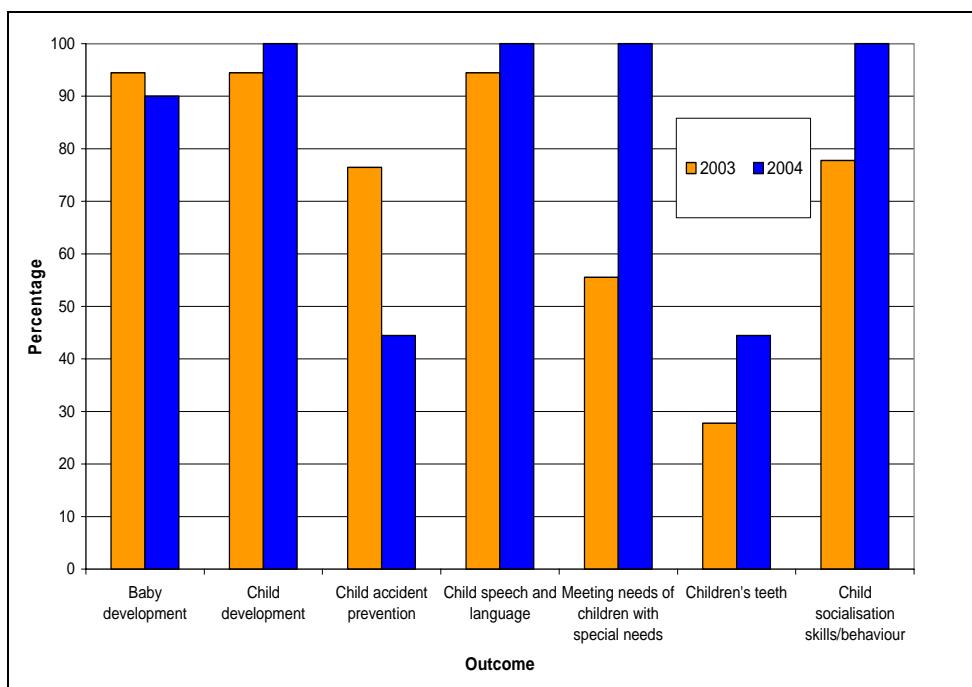
The results at Table 13 indicate a very positive appraisal of the impact that Sure Start Maltby is having on very young children in the area with particularly impressive assessments given in relation to *Child speech and language*, *Meeting needs of children with special needs* and *Child socialisation skills/behaviour* which the majority of respondents felt were *Much Better* than pre-Sure Start provision.

The results from the current evaluation were then set against those from the evaluation of 2002/2003 to assess the longitudinal impact of Sure Start and

whether providers continue to feel that Sure Start Maltby provides a service superior to that of mainstream provision.

The scores for both evaluations were converted into percentage format in order to allow direct comparison with the figures for those stating *Little better* to *Much better* added together. The results set out at Chart 1.

Chart 1: Impact on child health and well being by year of evaluation



The data at Chart 1 demonstrates that in relation to all outcomes bar two (*Baby development* and *Child accident prevention*) the results for Sure Start have improved between the two evaluation periods. Marked improvements were observed in relation to *Meeting needs of children with special needs*, *Children's teeth* and *Child socialisation skills/behaviour*.

While the results initially give some cause for concern regarding *Child accident prevention*, reference to Table 13 indicates that the majority of providers indicated that service provision is *About the same* therefore the decline is not as precipitous as Chart 1 tends to indicate.

Parents

Providers were also invited to assess the impact that Sure Start Maltby had had on the health and well being of parents in the area with the results set out at Table 14.

Table 14: Impact on parent health and well being

Impact on parent development	Much better (>5%)	Little better (<5%)	About the same	Lower	Don't have a view
Better relationship with child	1	8	0	0	0
More self-confidence	5	5	0	0	0
Increased breastfeeding	2	1	2	0	5
Reduced post-natal depression	2	1	2	0	5
Parenting skills	1	7	2	0	0
Reduction in smoking	2	1	0	1	6
Mothers smoke less during pregnancy	2	1	0	0	6
Attending appointments	0	3	5	0	2
Lower drug/alcohol misuse	0	2	6	0	2
Accessing more services	4	4	1	0	1
Taking up training	4	5	0	0	0
Taking up benefits	2	2	1	0	5

Whilst not as pronounced as the results regarding the impact made on babies and children (see Table 13) the results are nonetheless a positive endorsement of the programme with the majority of respondents indicating an improvement (*Little better to Much better*) in relation to *Better relationship with child, More self-confidence, Parenting skills, Accessing more services* and *Taking up benefits*.

Qualifying the results at Table 14 is the fact that in relation to a number of outcomes, providers indicated that they *Don't have a view*.

As with the results for outcomes for very young children, the data was set against that obtained for the evaluation in 2002/2003. Again, the results compare the proportion of respondents stating that outcomes are a Little better to Much better. The information is set out at Chart 2.

Chart 2: Impact on parent health and well being by year of evaluation

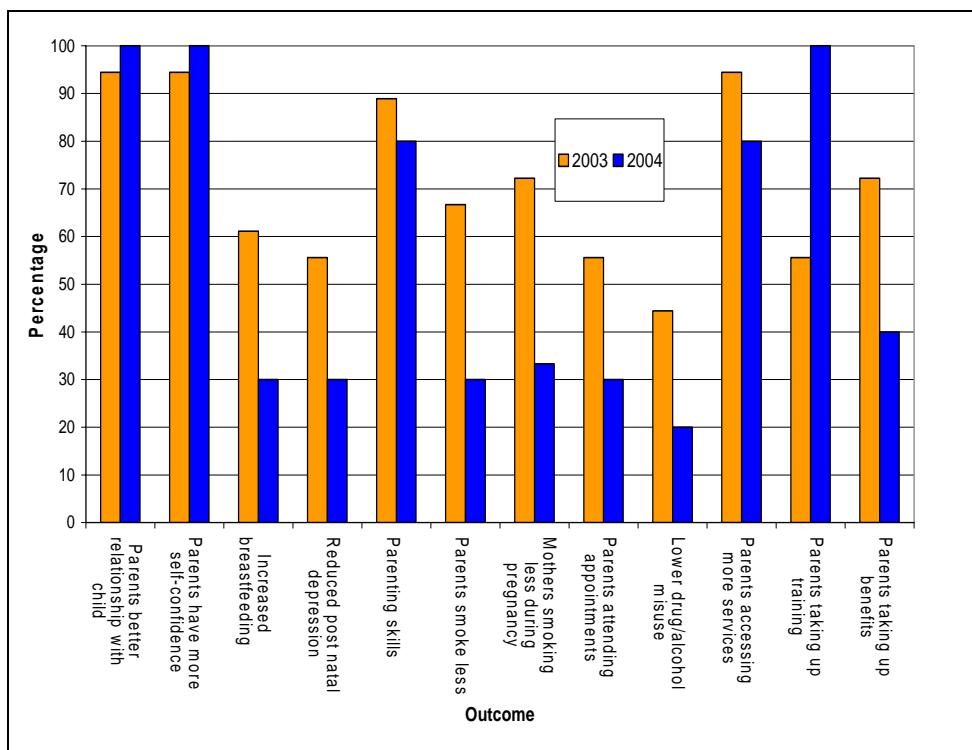


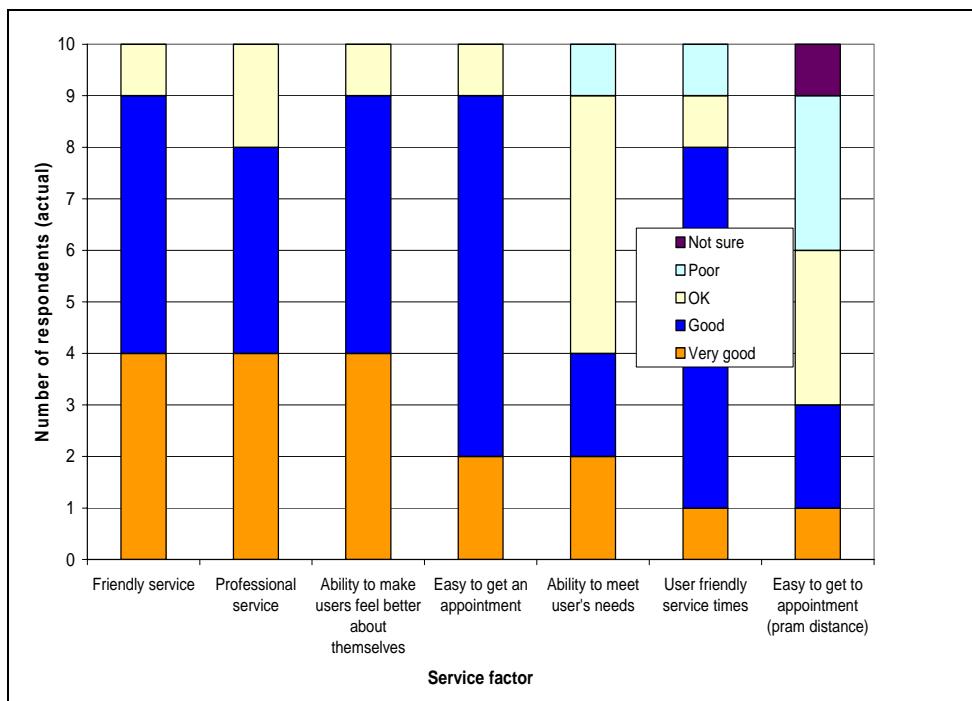
Chart 2 shows a mixed picture with improvements evidenced in relation to *Parents having a better relationship with their child*, *Parents have more self-confidence* and *Parents taking up training* (which saw a considerable improvement).

Again a caveat must be introduced in relation to the results at Chart 2 since study of Table 14 demonstrates that in most cases providers simply *Don't have a view* about the quality of services in terms of their impact. The issue may therefore be one of communication between programme and providers rather than one of changes in the quality of services provided.

Quality of Sure Start services

Service providers were asked to assess the quality of Sure Start services in relation to a number of key factors, with the results set out at Chart 3.

Chart 3: Assessment of quality of Sure Start services



The results at Chart 3 indicate a very positive assessment of Sure Start services in relation to key criteria. Thus, the majority of respondents felt that services were *Good* to *Very Good* in relation to all factors bar two (*Ability to meet user's needs* and *Easy to get to appointment*).

A key theme to emerge from the evaluation report of 2002/2003 was the general high quality of services provided by Sure Start Maltby. Providers were therefore asked to indicate whether or not this quality had been maintained, had improved or had deteriorated. The assessment of the providers is set out at Scale 8.

Scale 8: Assessment of quality of services since last evaluation period

Deteriorated a lot	Deteriorated a little	The same	Improved a little	Improved a lot
			X	X

The results are extremely positive for the programme with providers indicating that service quality has improved since the last evaluation period.

When asked to evidence the assessment that they gave, some providers indicated that improvements in joint working had led to advances in service quality, as one provider noted there is “*More of a holistic approach*” adopted now. As another observed:

- *Through working together we are able to offer a better service because we feel we have expanded on our own skills.*

One provider, although agreeing that service quality had improved, felt that joint working did still have some way to go however and noted that co-working “*Can still be disjointed*”.

Other providers felt that the improvements were a result of service providers bedding down:

- *Providers more confident in their roles therefore able to offer more.*
- *Service providers are now more comfortable in their roles and with each other.*

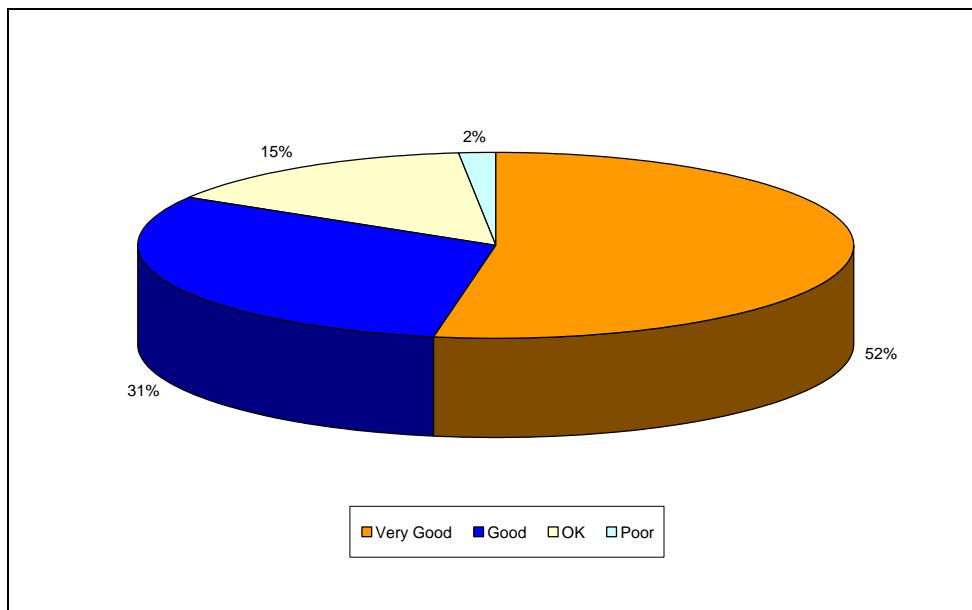
The volume of service provision was felt to represent an improvement in quality with providers noting that they are “*Offering lots more services now*”.

Client Dimension – Outcomes for local parents and very young children

Overall assessment of Sure Start Maltby

When asked to rate Sure Start Maltby overall, the majority of respondents (53%) indicated that it was *Very Good*. The results are presented in full at Chart 4.

Chart 4: Overall assessment of Sure Start Maltby



The results were looked at in relation to key demographic to ascertain whether there were any differences in perception among respondents:

- Satisfaction rates varied considerably by gender with a lower proportion of male respondents indicating that Sure Start is *Good* or *Very Good*. See Table 15.

Table 15: Overall assessment of Sure Start by gender

Assessment	Male	Female
Very good	36.4	56.4
Good	27.3	31.7
OK	31.8	10.9
Poor	4.5	1.0

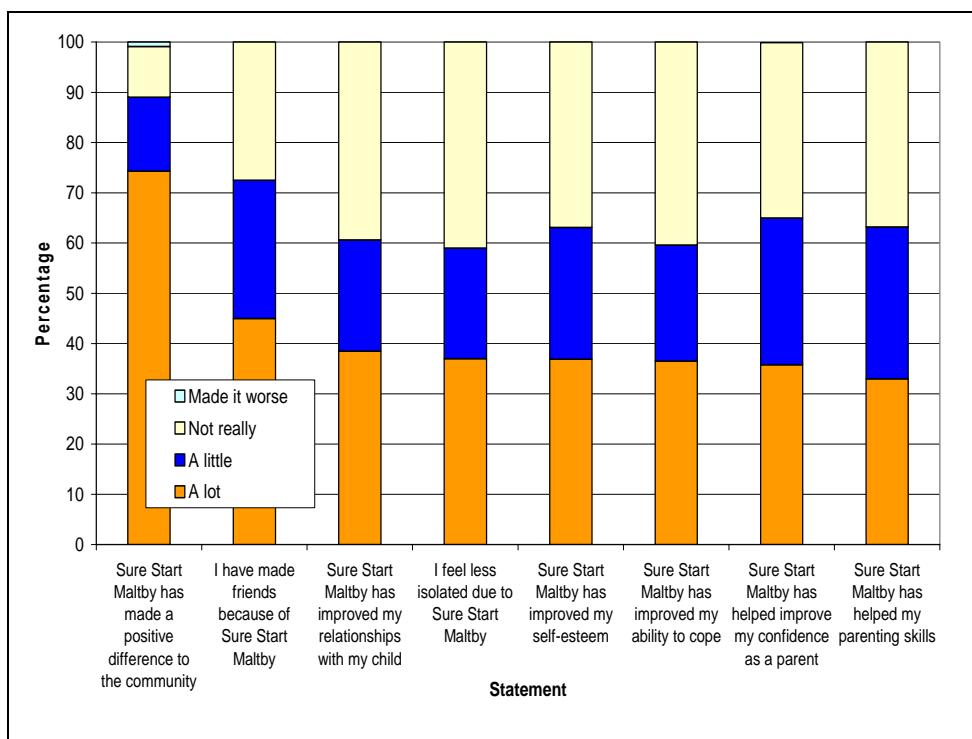
- Parenting status played no part in informing respondents assessment of Sure Start Maltby with 83% of lone parents and 84% of respondents from dual parenting households indicating that they thought the programme was *Good* to *Very Good*.

Sure Start's impact on parents and children in the area

Parents

In order to assess the extent to which Sure Start had impacted upon the lives of parents in the area, respondents were presented with a series of statements relating to their quality of life which they were asked to rate using an attitudinal scale encompassing the points *A lot*, *A little*, *Not really*, *Made it worse*. The results are given at Chart 5.

Chart 5: Parent's assessment of impact of Sure Start on their lives



The results at Chart 5 represents an endorsement of the success of the programme in helping local parents with the majority of respondents indicating that the programme had made *A little* or *A lot* of a difference to their lives in relation to all of the statements given.

The results are particularly positive in relation to the impact that the programme has had on the community with 89% of parents agreeing *A little* or *A lot* with the statement, *Sure Start Maltby has made a positive difference to the community*.

Comments in the community emphasised the supportive nature of the programme and the extent to which parents appreciated this support:

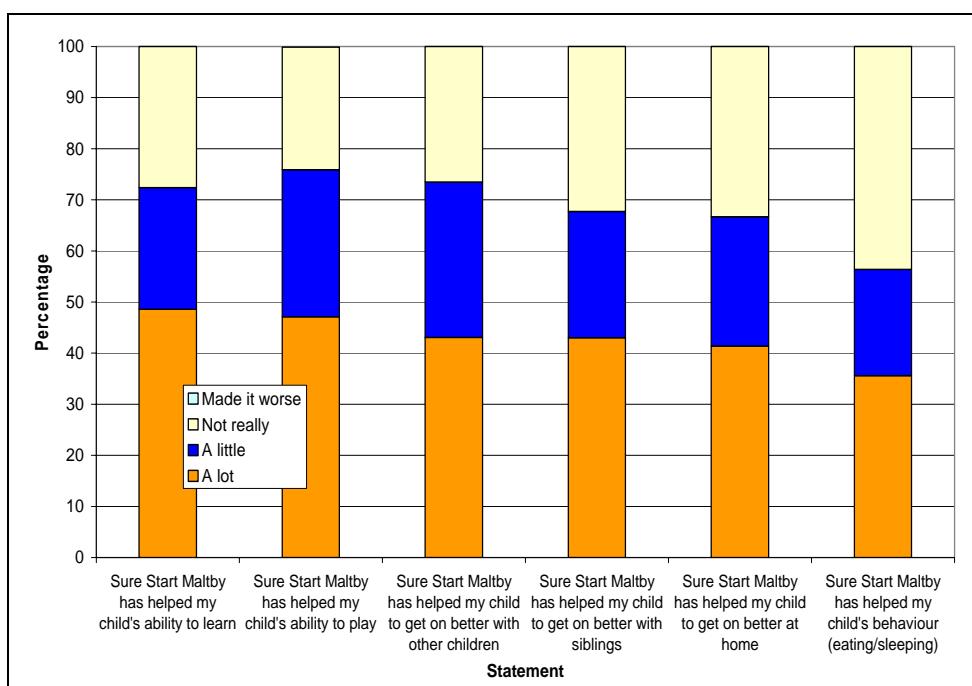
- *If I need help, I just phone up and speak to people who will listen to my problems and help if they can*
- *I love Sure Start – they are always there for you when you need them.*
- *I got a lot of help to talk to people, I used to be very shy.*
- *I feel like they have helped me more and I really feel welcome when I go.*

- *I have only been to Sure Start eight times and I like going because they make me feel welcome.*
- *If I need them, I just phone and they are always there.*
- *They are always there to listen if you need to talk to them.*
- *They are always there for you.*

Children

Parents were also invited to rate a series of statements relating to their children using the same attitudinal scale used at Chart 6.

Chart 6: Parent's assessment of impact of Sure Start on their children



Again, the results at Chart 6 represent a positive endorsement of the work of Sure Start Maltby with the majority of parents indicating that the programme had made *A little* or *A lot* of a difference in relation to each of the statements given.

Awareness

When respondents to the community survey were asked whether they had heard of Sure Start Maltby 97% indicated that they had. Whilst the result represents an excellent level of awareness in itself it also represents an improvement on the level of awareness as identified in the community survey for 2003/03. The results for 2002/03 compared to the current survey are given at Table 16.

Table 16: Level of awareness of Sure Start Maltby by year of survey

Heard of Sure Start	2002/03	2003/04
Yes	92.4	96.9
No	7.6	3.1

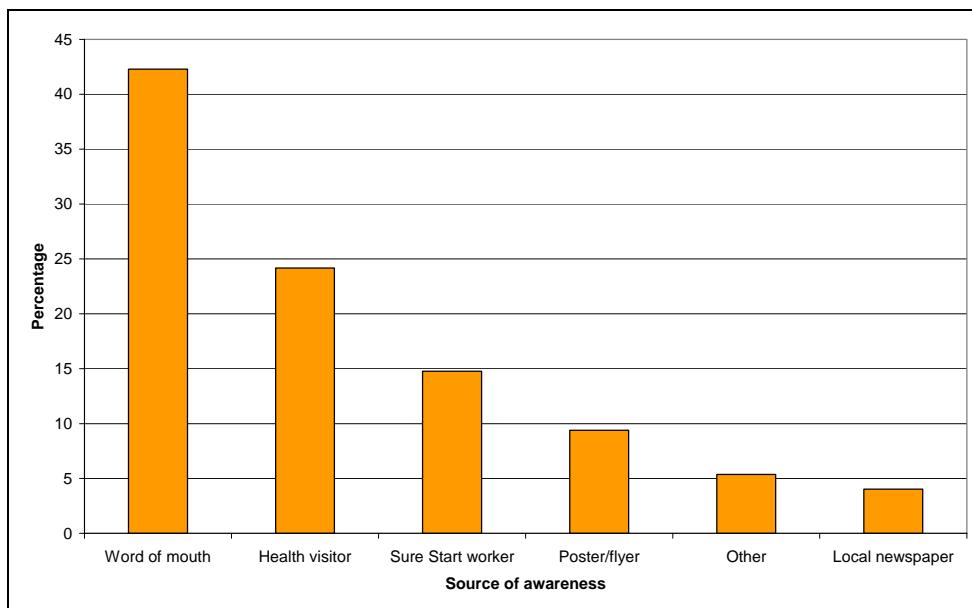
As Table 16 demonstrates, the programme has been able to improve on the very high levels of awareness that existed in 2002/03, a result that testifies to the continued success of the promotional work undertaken by the programme.

The data regarding awareness was looked at in relation to a number of key demographic variables which demonstrated:

- Awareness proved to be higher amongst female than male respondents with 99% of mothers indicating that they had heard of Sure Start Maltby compared to 88% of fathers.
- Awareness was not related to parenting status with 96% of lone parents and 97% of their dual parent peers indicating that they had heard of Sure Start.

As with the community survey for 2002/03, respondents were asked where they had heard of Sure Start Maltby. The results are set out at Chart 7.

Chart 7: Source of awareness among respondents



The most commonly cited source of awareness of the programme was via *Word of mouth* as cited by 42% of parents. The next most commonly cited source of awareness was via *Health Visitors*, as cited by 24% of respondents.

Of those who indicated an *Other* source, 4 cited their partner, 3 cited a school and 2 cited their midwife.

When source of awareness was looked at in relation to demographic variables some differences between respondents became apparent:

- While *Word of mouth* was the predominant means of hearing about the programme among both men and women, a greater proportion of male respondents identified this factor than their female peers. See Table 17.

Table 17: Source of awareness by gender

Source of awareness	Male	Female
Word of mouth	45.8	41.6
Local newspaper	4.2	4.0
Poster/flyer	4.2	10.4
Health visitor	25.0	24.0
Sure Start worker	8.3	16.0
Other	12.5	4.0

- Those aged 25 to 44 were more likely than their peers aged 20 to 24 to have heard of Sure Start through their *Health visitor* at 32% and 21% respectively. Conversely, those aged 20 to 24 were three more times more likely to have heard of Sure Start through *Poster/flyers* than their peers 25 to 44 (at 15% and 5% respectively).
- The data indicated a considerable difference between lone parents and their dual parenting peers with 68% of lone parents hearing about Sure Start via *Word of mouth* compared to 38% of respondents from dual parent households. The results are given in full at Table 18.

Table 18: Source of awareness by parenting status

Source of awareness	Lone parents	Dual parents
Word of mouth	68.0	37.5
Local newspaper	0.0	4.2
Poster/flyer	4.0	10.8
Health visitor	20.0	25.0
Sure Start worker	4.0	17.5
Other	4.0	5.0

- As may have been anticipated, those living in the area for More than 10 years were the most likely to have heard of Sure Start via *Word of mouth*, whilst those who had lived in the area 0 – 1 year were least likely to have heard via this source (at 53% and 22% respectively).

The results were set aside those from the survey of 2002-03 in order to determine whether there had been any changes regarding where people were hearing about the programme.

Table 19: Source of awareness of Sure Start Maltby by year of survey

Source of awareness	2002/03	2003/04
Word of mouth	40.7	42.3
Health Visitor	28.7	24.2
Sure Start worker	12.0	14.8
Poster/flyer	4.6	9.4
Other	9.3	5.4
Local newspaper	4.6	4.0

As Table 19 demonstrates, the results are remarkably consistent with *Word of mouth* cited as the most common means of finding out about the programme followed by *Health Visitors* and *Sure Start worker* in both years.

Sure Start Maltby and services for fathers

In general, male involvement in Sure Start services is lower than among mothers. Whilst this is to be expected to some extent given the preponderance of women as primary care givers to very young children, this is not to say that male involvement should not be encouraged as far as possible.

Research has shown a crucial impediment to the involvement of fathers in Sure Start is the extent to which they feel that they are welcome and that they feel the environment is conducive to their participation. Conclusions drawn from a large number of programmes (128) have shown that when fathers participate in services their preference is for fun or active sessions over discussion based ones.

The Sure Start Maltby community survey therefore sought to examine the extent to which barriers to involvement exist among fathers, and what the perceptions of male participation were among mothers in the Sure Start area.

Male respondents were asked whether they thought Sure Start was father/male friendly. 70% thought it was friendly whilst the remainder thought not.

When female respondents to the community survey were asked whether or not they thought that Sure Start is father/male friendly 88% thought that it was indicating that mothers have a slightly more positive perception of the male friendliness of Sure Start services than fathers themselves.

Fathers were asked why they thought Sure Start was (or was not) male friendly.

Positive

A number of fathers welcomed the fact that other fathers used Sure Start services:

- *I see dads at playgroups.*

Other fathers felt that Sure Start services had a welcoming environment which encouraged their participation:

- *I was made to feel welcome when I go to playgroups.*
- *I've always been made to feel welcome.*
- *I thought I would be the only dad going to playgroups, but there were a few there.*

Whilst one father felt that Sure Start welcomed everyone regardless of gender:

- *I think Sure Start is friendly for all.*

Of some interest, only one father noted that he had used a service specifically aimed at fathers:

- *I went on a father and son trip – extremely friendly.*

Negative

Some fathers felt that Sure Start was not doing enough to encourage participation amongst fathers noting:

- *Not enough is said or done to encourage fathers.*
- *They don't do anything for dads and children.*
- *They don't do enough for dads and not enough encouragement.*
- *They don't encourage fathers to participate.*

One father felt that the main thrust of services was for mothers noting:

- *Parent and toddler groups are more for mums.*

Mothers were also asked to indicate why they thought Sure Start was (or was not) male friendly. Given the high majority of mothers who felt that Sure Start was male friendly, the comments given were overwhelmingly positive.

The comments of mothers broadly broke down into three categories – fathers are welcome since mothers have seen them participating in activities and groups, that Sure Start is welcoming to everyone, and that there are services specifically for fathers.

Comments relating to each of these areas are given below:

Participation

- *I see dads at playgroups, they like being there.*
- *I see dads at the playgroups.*
- *There are plenty of activities for fathers.*
- *You see a few dads at playgroup.*
- *I take my husband to the playgroup when he is not working.*
- *Dads are there at playgroups.*
- *I see dads at playgroups – they are always welcome.*

Welcoming atmosphere

- *Everyone is always welcome.*
- *I would always welcome fathers in the group.*
- *They try to get everyone to join in.*
- *Fathers are always welcome.*
- *Dads are as welcome as mums.*

Services for fathers

- *They have a dad's only group.*
- *There are groups just for dads.*

Whilst only few negative comments were made, they are nonetheless informative and have therefore been detailed below:

Negative

- *I never hear about fathers.*
- *I didn't know there was anything for dads.*
- *I would like to more dads using the service.*
- *Not enough leaflets and posters to inform fathers.*
- *I didn't know about fathers joining in.*

One father felt the lack of knowledge about Sure Start was widespread, noting

- *I went on a father and son trip, my wife helps out at Sure Start a lot and asked if I would like to go. I work with 180 men in Maltby and none knew of the trip.*

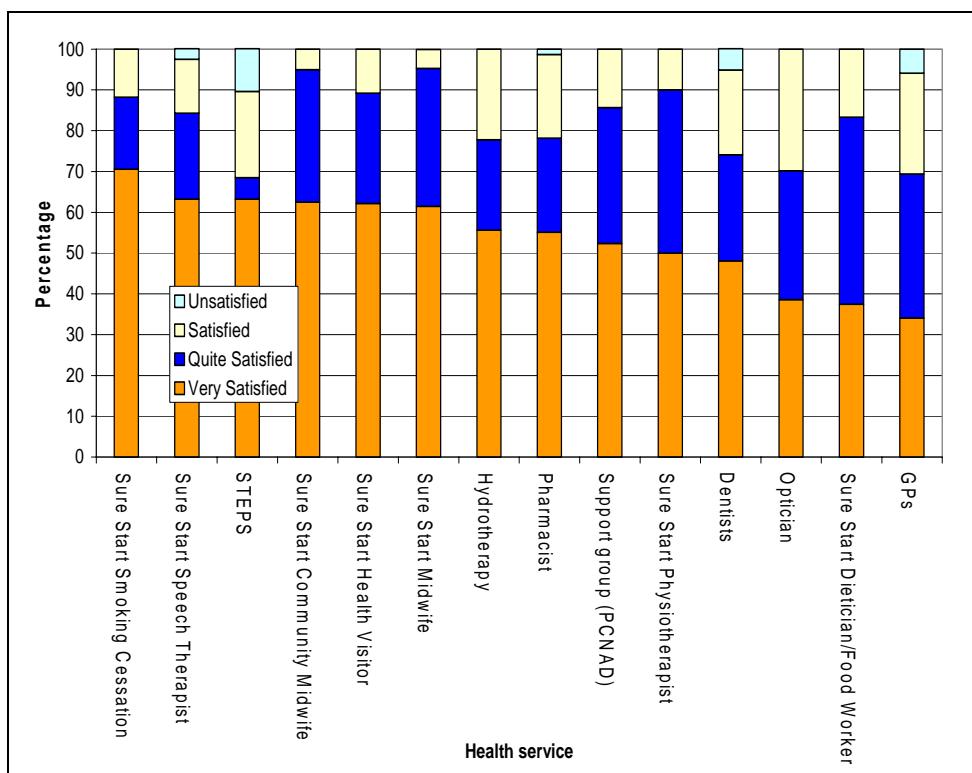
Health

Parents were asked to evaluate a range of health services using an attitudinal scale incorporating the points *Very satisfied*, *Quite satisfied*, *Satisfied* and *Unsatisfied*. Respondents were asked to evaluate the following services:

- Sure Start Midwife
- Sure Start Health Visitor
- GPs
- Sure Start Speech and Language Therapist
- Sure Start Dietician/Food Worker
- Sure Start Physiotherapist
- Sure Start Community Midwife
- STEPS (mental health service)
- Dentists
- Pharmacists
- Opticians
- Sure Start Smoking Cessation
- Hydrotherapy
- Support group for parents of children who need additional care (PCNAD)

The results are given at Chart 8.

Chart 8: Evaluation of health services



The results indicate that health services in the Maltby area are well thought of with the majority of parents indicating that they were *Very Satisfied* to *Quite Satisfied*. The results are particularly positive for the programme with satisfaction rates for Sure Start services and those it commissions consistently higher than for mainstream services.

Overall results show the services STEPS, opticians, dentists and GP's scored the lowest levels of satisfaction in comparison to other services. In contrast the highest levels of overall satisfaction are within the Sure Start Midwife, the Sure Start Community Midwife and the Smoking Cessation service. Detailed analysis of overall satisfaction levels are given below.

- The highest service satisfaction for both genders was with the Sure Start Midwife. 97% of female respondents were *very satisfied* and *quite satisfied*. 88% of male respondents were either *satisfied* or *very satisfied*.
- In comparison to the results from the Sure Start Midwife, the satisfaction levels for the *community midwife* are almost exactly the

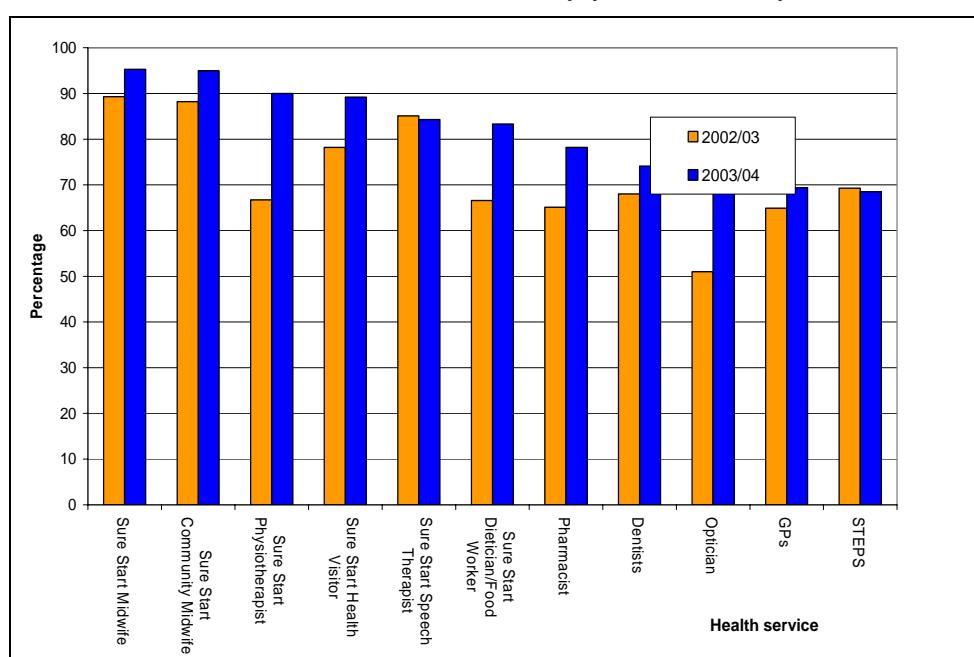
same for females as for male respondents (around 80% of both *quite* or *very satisfied* with the community midwife).

- 92% of women were *quite satisfied* or *very satisfied* with the health visitors, in contrast to 75% of males.
- 70% of women were *very satisfied* or *satisfied* with GPs in contrast to 67% of males.

The majority of dual and lone parents were quite satisfied or very satisfied with all health services. Dual or lone parents in the majority were more satisfied with Sure Start services than mainstream services. Other key findings from the analysis are given below.

The satisfaction ratings from the 2003/04 survey were compared against those of the 2002/03 survey (for those services that featured in both surveys) to see whether clients attitudes towards health services had changed over time (expressed as the percentage of parents *Very Satisfied* to *Quite Satisfied*). The longitudinal results are set out at Chart 9.

Chart 9: Evaluation of health services by year of survey



The results at Chart 9 demonstrate that satisfaction ratings have improved for all the health services listed bar the *Sure Start Speech Therapist* and *STEPS* (both of which saw a decline of only 1 percentage point).

In relation to Sure Start services, notable improvements were witnessed in relation to the *Sure Start Physiotherapist* (an improvement of 23%) and the *Sure Start Dietician* (an improvement of 17%).

Coverage of health services

In order to ascertain whether or not the full spectrum of health needs of parents and their children had been met, respondents were asked whether or not they felt that there are enough health services in the area.

Indicating that most health needs are currently being met, 81% of parents felt that there were enough health services locally while 19% thought not.

- The results were looked at in relation to key demographic variables and indicated that:
- A slightly higher percentage of fathers thought that there were enough health services for parents and their young children in the area (84% of male respondents compared to 80% of female respondents).
- Those aged 25 – 44 were more likely to think that there were enough health services than their peers aged 20 – 24 (at 84% to 79%).

While coverage of health services was felt to be good, one respondent felt this to be conditional on knowledge of the locality:

- *There are enough health services as long as you actually know about them.*

Table 20: Assessment of coverage of health services by parenting status

	Lone parents	Dual parents
Enough services	76.0	83.3
Not enough services	24.0	16.7

- Those who had lived in the area *More than 10* years were the least likely to think that there were enough health services at 73% compared to an average of 94% amongst those who had lived in the area for up to 10 years.

Play and learning services

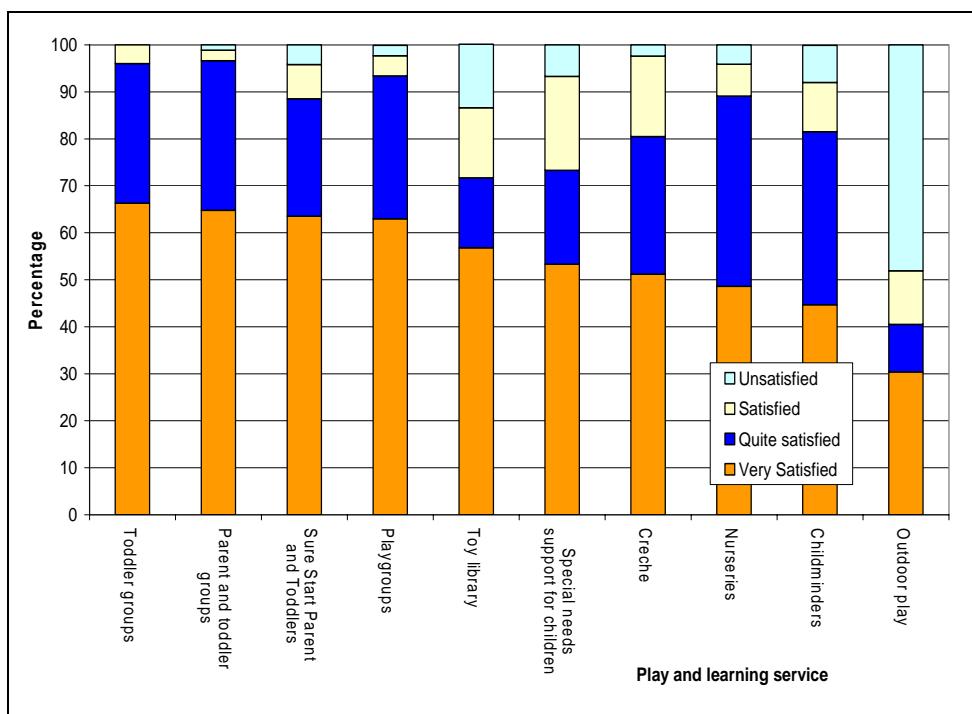
Respondents to the community survey were asked to evaluate play and learning services using the attitudinal scale described above at *Health*.

The services evaluated were:

- Toddler groups
- Sure Start Parent and Toddlers
- Nurseries
- Playgroups
- Childminders
- Parent and toddler groups
- Crèche
- Outdoor play
- Special needs support for children
- Toy library

The results are set out at Chart 10.

Chart 10: Evaluation of play and learning services



The results at Chart 10 indicate a positive assessment of play and learning services with the majority of parents indicating that they are *Quite Satisfied* to *Very Satisfied* with each of the services listed (bar *Outdoor play*).

Of note are the results for *Toddler groups*, *Parent and toddler groups* and *Playgroups* which saw approval ratings of over 90% in each case.

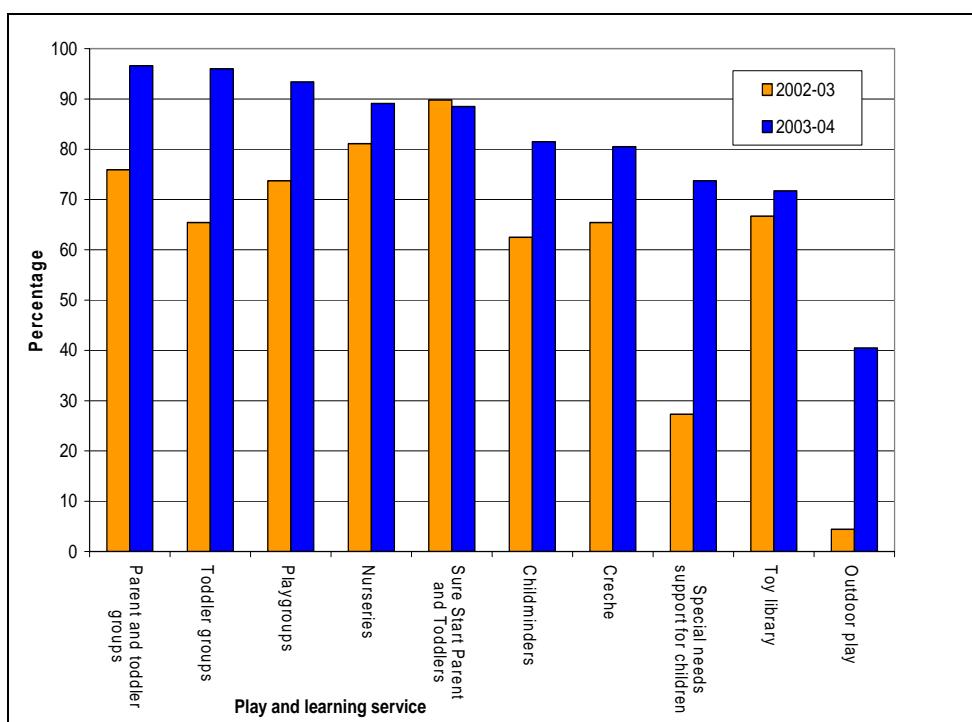
Results were analysed by key demographic variables and given below.

- Both males and females were most satisfied by the toddler groups (100% males and 95% females) and parent and toddler groups (100% males and 96% females).
- Both males and females were most frequently unsatisfied with outdoor play (43% and 49% *unsatisfied* respectively).
- Lone parents were more unsatisfied with outdoor play (78% *unsatisfied*) than dual parents (43% *unsatisfied*). Dual parents were *very to quite satisfied* with toddler groups and parent and toddler groups at 97% and 98% (respectively) in comparison to lone parents who were 85% and 88% *quite satisfied* or *very satisfied*.

- 100% of respondents aged up to 19 were *unsatisfied* with outdoor play. This compares with 42% *unsatisfied* from 20 to 24 years olds and 48% *unsatisfied* from 25 to 44 year olds.

As with the results for health, the data was compared against the data for 2002/03 (where results were compared as percentages of respondents stating they were *Very satisfied* to *Quite satisfied*). The results are given at Chart 11.

Chart 11: Evaluation of play and learning services by year of survey



As evidenced at Chart 11, the results for 2003/04 represent a considerable improvement for all services listed bar Sure Start Parent and Toddlers (with a decline of a single percentage point).

Considerable improvements were made in relation to:

- Special needs support for children +46%
- Outdoor play +36%

- Toddler groups +31%
- Parent and toddler groups +21%
- Playgroups + 20%
- Childminders +20%

Coverage of play and learning services

When asked whether or not they thought that there were enough play and learning services in the area, two thirds (66%) of respondents thought that there were while the remainder thought not.

- Female respondents were more likely than their male peers to indicate that there were enough play and learning services in the area at 69% compared to 60%.
- There was a considerable difference in attitudes between lone parents and their dual parenting peers. The results are given at Table 23.

Table 21: Assessment of coverage of play and learning services by parenting status

	Lone parents	Dual parents
Enough services	47.8	72.0
Not enough services	52.2	28.0

- As with the results for coverage of health services, those who had lived in the area for more than 10 years were less likely to indicate that there were enough play and learning services than those who had lived in the area for up to 10 years (57% of those who had lived in the area for more than 10 years against an average of 81% for those in the other cohorts).

Training and education facilities

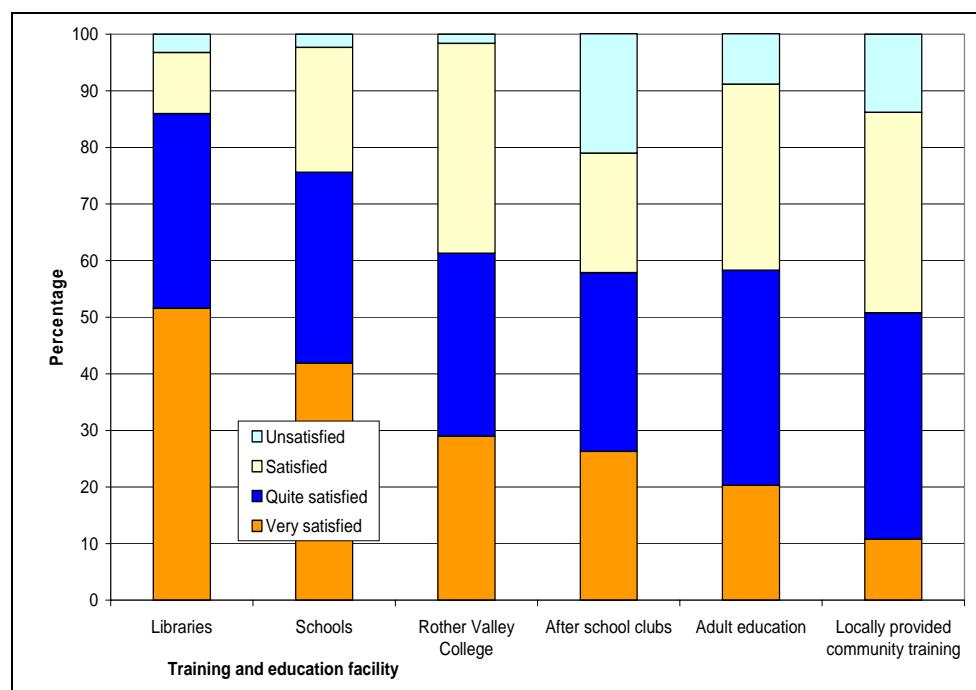
Training and education facilities were evaluated using the attitudinal scale adopted elsewhere in the survey (see *Health*).

The services evaluated were:

- Adult education
- Rother Valley College
- Schools
- After school clubs
- Libraries
- Locally provided community training

The results are set out at Chart 23.

Chart 12: Evaluation of training and education facility



As for the other thematic areas, the results were broadly positive with the majority of parents indicating that they were *Very satisfied* to *Quite satisfied* with facilities in the area.

The service satisfaction was compared with a number of key demographic variables, and the results are given below.

Male and female service satisfaction differed with regard to a number of services:

- Male and female satisfaction was lowest in regard to parks (48% and 45% *unsatisfied* respectively).
- 40% of fathers were *quite satisfied* or *very satisfied* with the DeVeloing Dads service. In contrast 63% of female respondents were *quite satisfied* to *very satisfied*.
- Only 38% of males were *quite satisfied* or *very satisfied* with the Sure Start Parent Link worker in contrast to 89% of females.
- 93% of females were *quite* or *very satisfied* with the Sure Start family worker in contrast to 75% of men

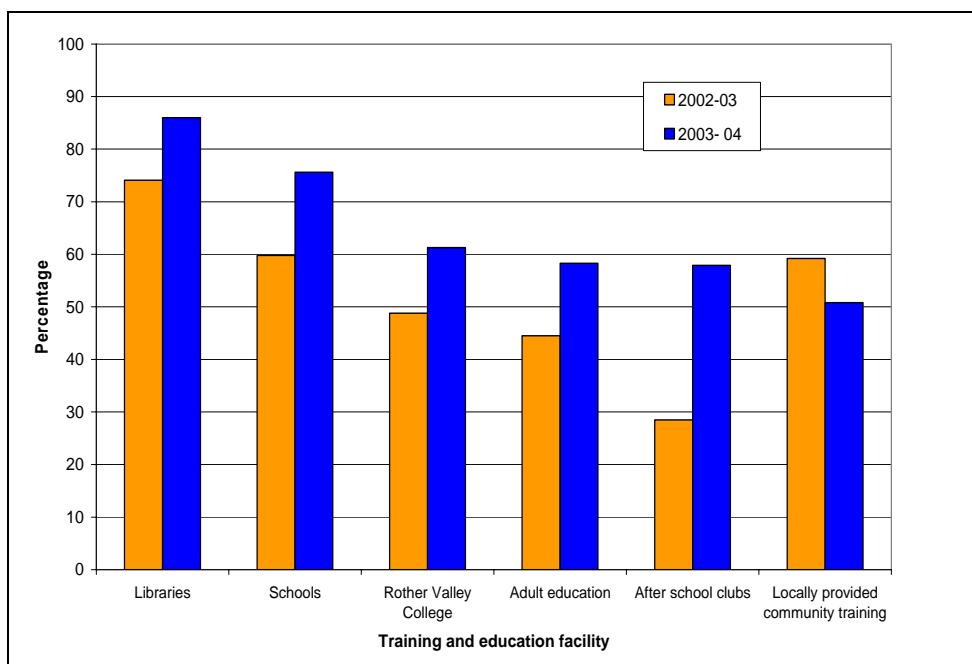
Both lone parent and dual parent satisfaction with training and education services was in general high however lone parents were more dissatisfied with public transport than dual parents (30% *unsatisfied* in comparison to 11% *unsatisfied*)

Respondents living in the area for 0 – 1 years were more satisfied with training and education services than any other resident cohort... Other notable results are given below.

- Respondents living in the Maltby area for 0 – 1 years were more satisfied with parks than those living in the area for longer, (89% *very* or *quite satisfied*). The longer respondents lived in the area, the lower the level of satisfaction. (48% *quite satisfied* and *very satisfied* when resident 2 – 5 years, 47% *among* resident 6 – 10 years, and 17% *among* resident of more than 10 years).
- Respondents living in the area for 0-1 years were most satisfied with public transport (100% *quite satisfied* and *very satisfied*). In contrast, those living in the area for 2 – 5 years were 59% *quite satisfied* or *very satisfied*, respondents resident 6 – 10 years were 69% *quite satisfied* or *very satisfied*, and respondents resident more than 10 years were 40% *quite satisfied* or *very satisfied*.

The results regarding training and education facilities were compared to those from the 2002-03 survey to identify and changes in attitude over time. The results are set out at Chart 13.

Chart 13: Evaluation of training and education facilities by year of survey



The results again indicated an improvement in most services apart for *Locally provided community training* which saw a decline of some 8 percentage points.

Coverage of training and education facilities

A slight majority (56%) of parents interviewed felt that there were enough training and education facilities in the area whilst the remainder thought not.

Analysis according to key demographic factors revealed that:

- 42% of male respondents thought that there were enough training and education facilities in the area compared to 59% of female respondents.

- 30% of lone parents thought that there were sufficient training and education facilities compared to 63% of their dual parenting peers.
- 49% of respondents who had lived in the area *More than 10 years* thought there were enough training facilities against an average of 71% among those who had lived in the area for up to 10 years.

Support services

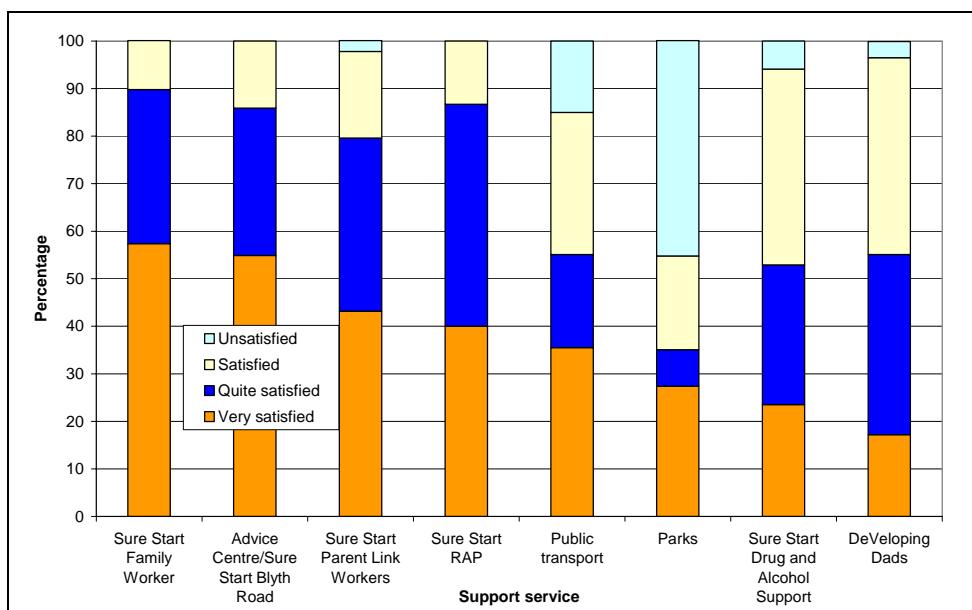
The last thematic area to be explored was that of support services for parents and their very young children. Support services were assessed using the attitudinal scale utilised in the other thematic areas (see *Health* above).

The services evaluated were:

- Sure Start Family Worker
- Sure Start RAP
- Sure Start Drug and Alcohol Support
- Sure Start Parent Link Workers
- DeDeveloping Dads
- Advice Centre/Sure Start Blyth Road
- Parks
- Public transport

The results are given at Chart 14

Chart 14: Evaluation of support services

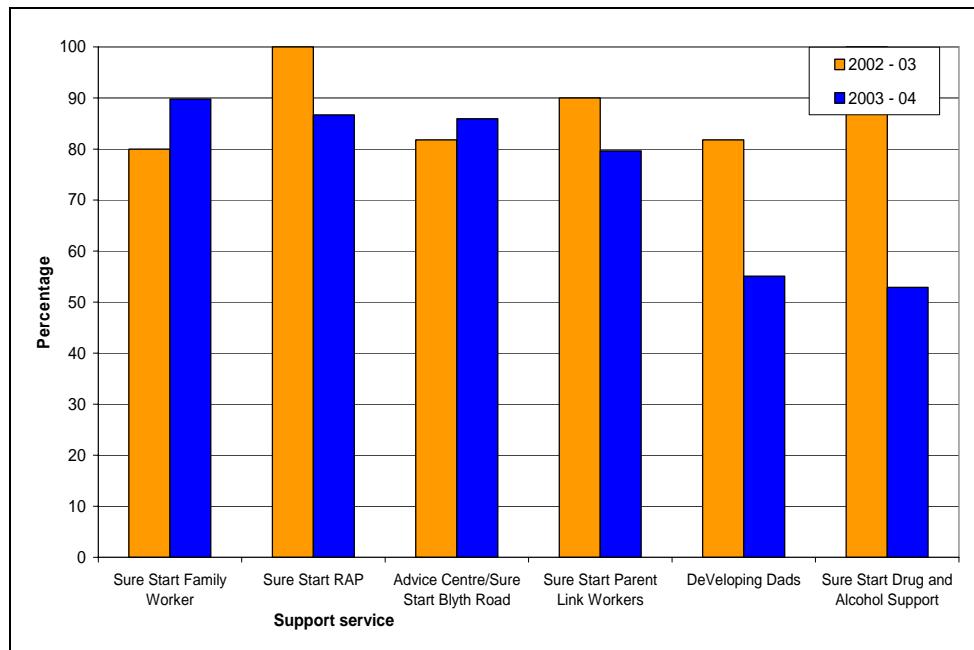


Approval ratings were again high with the majority of respondents indicating that they were *Very satisfied* to *Quite satisfied* with the services

listed bar *Parks* where nearly half of respondents (45%) of parents indicated that they were *Unsatisfied* with.

Again, the results from the 2003-04 survey were compared with historical data from the previous survey. See Chart 15.

Chart 15: Evaluation of support services by year of survey



The results for support services were more mixed than for the other thematic areas with parents reporting lower satisfaction rates for all services bar the *Sure Start Family Worker* and *Advice Centre*. The levels of decline for services were:

- Sure Start RAP -13%
- Sure Start Parent Link Workers -10%
- DeDeveloping Dads¹ -27%
- Sure Start Drug and Alcohol Support -47%

The significant shift in relation to the Drug and Alcohol Support service can be explained by the fact that only 10 respondents used this service,

¹ The results are compared to those for Dearne Valley Dads, the previous name for the service.

therefore a change in attitude by a very small number of service users can lead to apparently dramatic shifts in satisfaction ratings. Nonetheless, the change in opinion is still some matter of concern.

Coverage of support services

Over two thirds (69%) of parents thought that there were enough support services in the Maltby area whilst the remainder of parents thought not.

Looked at in relation to key demographic variables, the results indicated that:

- 52% of fathers thought that there were sufficient support services in the area compared to 74% of mothers.
- Again, clear differences were detected in the attitudes of lone parents versus their dual parenting peers.

Table 22: Assessment of coverage of support services by parenting status

	Lone parents	Dual parents
Enough services	58.3	74.0
Not enough services	41.7	26.0

Appendix – Demographic Profile of Community Survey Respondents

In total, 131 parents responded to the Sure Start Maltby community survey.

Gender

81% of respondents were female and 19% male giving a female to male ratio of 4:1.

Age of respondents

	Up to 19	20 - 24	25 - 44	45 – 54	55 - 64	65 plus
%	7.6	29.0	53.4	6.9	0.8	2.3
No.	10	38	70	9	1	3

Number of children

	None	1/ expectant	2	3	4	5 plus
%	0.0	30.8	31.5	20.0	13.1	4.6
No.	0	40	41	26	17	6

Age of children

	Under 1	1 – 2	2 – 3	3- 4	4 plus
%	12.8	11.8	22.2	16.2	37.0
No.	38	35	66	48	110

Ethnicity

	White British	Black	Asian	Other
%	100	0	0	0
No.	131	0	0	0

Parenting status

20% of respondents to the community survey indicated that they were a lone parent whilst the remainder of respondents indicated that they were in a dual parenting household.

Length of time lived in area

	0 – 1 year	2- 5 years	6 – 10 years	10 years plus
%	7.9	28.6	14.3	49.2
No.	10	36	18	62

Working status

	Working full time	Working part time	Full time parent	Un-employed	Other
Respondent (%)	11.5	13.1	4.6	65.4	5.4
Partner (%)	56.7	9.6	18.3	13.5	1.9

