

Section 1 Introduction to the evaluation

1.1 Background to the evaluation

Sure Start Little Ilford is part of a national policy initiative to tackle social exclusion and poverty in the long term. Funded by the Treasury, Sure Start programmes were developed to ensure that families of children under 4 living in disadvantaged communities have access to support and services that would in the short term improve their health, well being, development and pre-school education and in the longer term improve their life chances.

Sure Start Little Ilford was approved in July 2001 and was awarded initially a Public Service Agreement (PSA) to provide services until March 2005. In April 2003, following an open tender process, Sure Start Little Ilford commissioned Partners in Evaluation to conduct an external evaluation of its second year of operation to cover the period between September 2002 and August 2003.

Partners in Evaluation is a specialist evaluation agency based in Waterloo, southeast London, with a national reputation. Its multi-ethnic staff have a track record of conducting high quality external evaluations, training and developmental consultancy.

1.2 Aims of the evaluation

The overall aim of the evaluation is to evaluate the effectiveness of Sure Start Little Ilford in developing relevant and accessible services that are delivering on its key aims as stated in its current PSA.

The specific aims of the evaluation are to:

- assess the extent to which Sure Start Little Ilford is delivering on its targets
- assess partnership and cross-agency working to determine the extent that Sure Start Little Ilford activities are linked with other children's services
- assess the extent to which Sure Start Little Ilford is following the Sure Start principles of parental involvement and accessibility to all families (including cultural sensitivity and appropriateness).

1.3 Methodology

- 1.3.1 The evaluation commenced in April 2003 and data collection was completed between May and August 2003. Data were collected from more than 300 people, including 284 local parents with children under 4, 11 staff, 6 partnership board members and 2 representatives from other local partner agencies.
- 1.3.2 Seven parents were recruited and trained to be parent evaluators. Initially six parents participated in a two-day training session which aimed to build the team, develop questions for an interview survey, develop listening skills, and increase their confidence to be able to approach and interview other parents. An additional parent, who could not attend the training, was given one-to-one coaching to enable her to participate as a parent evaluator. Few of the parents knew each other prior to the training and were from different ethnic groups (1 white British, 1 Black African, 2 Black Caribbean, and 3 Asian). The parents were offered £75 in gift vouchers to participate in the training and interview up to 30 other parents in face-to-face interviews.

Participation in the training was successful in raising confidence levels and in developing friendship networks.

The parent evaluators interviewed a total of 257 other parents during the months of July and August 2003, using an interview schedule which they were fully involved in developing (shown in Appendix 1). The interviews were conducted during a series of six data collection events, where the parent evaluators went out as a group to a specific location under the supervision of a member of the evaluation team. Data collection events were held in within walking distance of Manor Park Library (where Sure Start Little Ilford has its main office), in busy streets and in places where parents would be likely to congregate or pass through. The interviews began by asking people if they were parents or carers of children under 4 living within a specified area that was shown to them on a laminated map. This ensured that all those interviewed lived within the Sure Start Little Ilford area.

The surveys were then entered onto a computerised statistical database (SPSS version 10) for analysis.

The findings of the parent survey are shown in Section 4 of this report. They were also presented at the September 2003 Sure Start Little Ilford Annual General Meeting, which was attended by more than 30 people, including the parent evaluators, who were presented with their certificates of participation and job references following the presentation.

- 1.3.3 A further six individual in-depth interviews were planned with parents to be conducted by the evaluation team in order to develop a series of

case studies. The interview schedule is shown at Appendix 2. The case studies are also shown in Section 4 of this report.

- 1.3.4 Focus groups were conducted with two groups of parents. One group of sixteen parents attended the regular parents' forum, some of whom were involved to some degree in formal parental involvement at Sure Start Little Ilford. The other group of ten parents was interviewed at the Albanian women's support group. The topic guide is shown at Appendix 3. The findings from these group interviews are shown in Section 4.
- 1.3.5 Three focus groups and two individual interviews were conducted with programme staff, partnership board members, partners and staff from other partner agencies. These included the Sure Start partnership group (6 participants), Sure Start staff (8), and programme partners (2). The topic guide for the partnership group is shown at Appendix 4. The findings from these are shown in Section 3 of the report.
- 1.3.6 A small group interview was conducted with the three members of the senior management team.
- 1.3.7 Appendix 5 lists the professional staff that participated in focus groups and interviews.
- 1.3.8 Performance data supplied by Sure Start Little Ilford, including monitoring returns to the Sure Start Unit, were also examined.
- 1.3.9 A great deal of quantitative and qualitative data were collected. The data were analysed along the following thematic lines:
 - programme history
 - programme management and partnership working
 - parent and community participation
 - ladders and barriers to programme implementation
 - attainment of targets.

Section 2 About Sure Start Little Ilford

2.1 About the Sure Start Little Ilford area

Sure Start Little Ilford is located in east London in the London Borough of Newham, covering much of Little Ilford ward. Appendix 6 shows the boundaries of the Sure Start area. Little Ilford ward ranks 29th most deprived ward in London.

The Sure Start area is densely populated with an estimated population of 11,000, including 730 families and an estimated 1090 children under four years old. In 1999, there were 249 live births.

The population of the area is very ethnically diverse, with approximately two-thirds of the population coming from black and other minority ethnic backgrounds. Bangladeshis are the largest ethnic group (13 percent), followed by Indian (12 percent), Black African (12 percent), Black British/Black Caribbean (10 percent), and Pakistani (7 percent). Approximately 40 percent of the minority ethnic population do not have English as their first language.

Refugees and asylum seekers form a significant minority group in the area. Many of these are housed in temporary accommodation, often sub standard houses and flats; they are relatively transitory.

Little Ilford ward ranks 46th in the London housing deprivation index. The housing stock in Little Ilford is mainly old terraced houses and modern council blocks. In 1991, five percent did not have exclusive use of a bathroom or an indoor toilet, and a quarter did not have central heating.

Unemployment is higher than average, with approximately ten percent unemployment; one in four of these is classed as long-term unemployed. There are high numbers of single parents.

The area suffers from poor transport links, with approximately 15 to 20 minutes to the nearest tube station and to the shopping centre at Ilford. Although there are many buses, road congestion is bad and levels of pollution are high.

2.2 Findings from the 2000 needs assessment

A needs assessment survey commissioned by the London Borough of Newham in 2000, prior to the development of the programme, found that:

- 14 percent were not currently using any services for young children

- one-quarter had never sought the advice of a health visitor
- only two percent had attended classes for new parents

2.3 The aims of Sure Start Little Ilford

Sure Start Little Ilford works towards achieving the four specific aims of the National Sure Start. These are:

- improving social and emotional development
- improving health
- improving the ability to learn
- strengthening families and communities.

Under each of these headings, Sure Start Little Ilford has national and local targets to achieve. These are listed in Section 6 of this report.

2.4 The development of Sure Start Little Ilford

Sure Start Little Ilford was the second Sure Start to be developed in the London Borough of Newham. As such, there was some experience within the borough from the previous developments and from start-ups of other Sure Starts.

Sure Start Little Ilford was given the approval to commence in July 2001 and operations began in September 2001. Things got off to a slow start, due to recruitment difficulties in Newham. A manager was appointed, but little progress was made in the first few months and this was not a good start for Sure Start Little Ilford:

The original manager wasn't around. We had a name but could never get hold of her. She sort of just disappeared... is that a polite way of putting it? We had the funding but nothing was happening. There were no health staff at all. But now it has improved and you can see things happening.
Partnership Board member

The process of development increased when the current Programme Co-ordinator was appointed in February 2002. This appointment was crucial, and the Programme Co-ordinator has been instrumental in turning things round and regaining the goodwill that had developed during the development of the corporate plan.

Her experience made all the difference. She got in there to sort out the ruffled feathers. She has a mature, confident approach. She is a clear communicator and helps different stakeholders to focus on their interdependency.
Partnership Board member

Sure Start Little Ilford offices are based in Manor Park Library. Services are based on six sites:

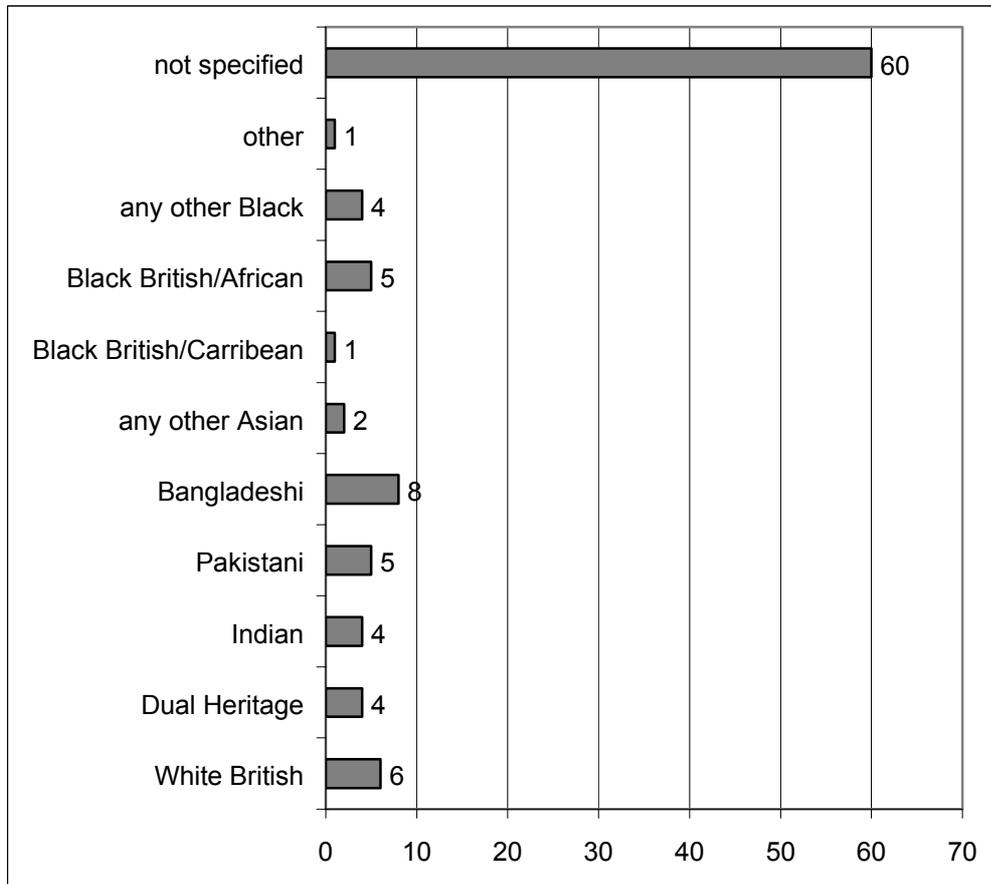
People don't want to go more than 800 yards from their front door. They won't do the 10 minute walk from the Jack Cornwall Estate to the Library. So we've tried to include every part of the area and it works well.
Senior manager

An important feature of Sure Start Little Ilford is the fact that the two core health visitors are based within the Sure Start team. Other support staff are helping the health visitors to increase contact time with parents.

By July 2003, approximately half of the families with children under four were registered. Over 500 calendars detailing Sure Start Little Ilford's activities are sent out every month.

The collection of ethnicity data at Sure Start Little Ilford (as shown in Figure 2.1) to date makes it difficult to compare the ethnicity of service users against the local population profile, due to the high numbers of records where the ethnicity data are not specified. However, it is clear that people from a wide ethnic spectrum make use of the services.

Figure 2.1: ethnicity breakdown of children registered with Sure Start Little Ilford by July 2003



Sure Start Little Ilford has developed a strategy to engage so-called 'hard to reach' groups. This has been quite successful, as many of the local population may be considered to be hard to reach.

The development of language-specific groups, which in turn have led to the development of new formal community groups, has been particularly successful. These include the Asian Women's group, a Romany group (*Roma*), and an Albanian Women's group (*Shpresa*).

But more work needs to be done, especially with the predominantly Muslim Bangladeshi community. Cultural norms may mean that married women cannot access services without the support or presence of their husbands.

With such a high proportion of families living in the area using a mother tongue other than English, language is an issue at Sure Start Little Ilford. Literature is provided in some of the more popular mother tongues:

But with more than 25 different languages to cater for, we tend to signpost people to the Language Shop in Newham. Senior manager

Parental involvement is strong and is embedded into the programme, with 18 to 20 parents regularly attending the fortnightly Parents' Forum. Parents are supported by a Parent Involvement Worker to take turns to chair the meetings. This Forum feeds directly into the Partnership Board and seven parents sit on it.

2.5 Case study of the development of a new community group

Bringing hope to Albanian women – Shpresa

Shpresa is the Albanian word for hope and also the name of a new community group that has been developed with support from Sure Start Little Ilford as part of its hard to reach strategy.

The group developed from an idea that a local Albanian community activist had been trying to get off the ground. A core community of about 30 Albanian families now live in Little Ilford. They were disadvantaged by a lack of English that isolated them from the mainstream community, a lack of ability to find out what services were available locally (especially English classes), a history of trauma that led to leaving their homeland to seek asylum, the loss of the traditional Albanian male role of provider for the family, and the depression and domestic strife that the combined effect of these factors had on their lives.

The activist came into contact with Sure Start Little Ilford during an event to mark Refugee Week. *“We exchanged details. This was followed by three meetings with the Sure Start Development Worker to work out how we could help each other. We applied to Sure Start and were successful in getting £5K to run a support group with a crèche.”*

Since then things have gone from strength to strength. The support group soon expanded to English classes with a crèche, a strengthening families course (that aimed to reduce the gaps between UK and Albanian cultures, such as the unacceptability of smacking children in the UK) and film-making classes. *“This has become a real focus for the community.”*

“Before Sure Start, no-one offered us any help. Sure Start understands the needs of the community. They understand that we have different needs. This is a change process... it takes time.”

Shpresa is in the process of becoming a formalised organisation, again with advice and help from Sure Start Little Ilford. *“We need to keep the boundaries. We help them to achieve their targets and they give us financial help and advice.”*

2.6 Sure Start Little Ilford’s services in place by July 2003

Sure Start Little Ilford offers a variety of services for both parents and their children. Ideas for services are generated from staff and parents, but must be discussed at the Parents’ Forum before they can be considered for development.

There is little correlation between what people say they want and what they will attend.

Senior manager

As such, new services are continually developing, some of which are sustained to become part of the core service. By July 2002 a wide range of services were available including:

- home visiting service (health visitors and other support staff)
- Albanian women’s support group
- Albanian women’s film making
- Asian women’s support group
- arts and crafts
- baby massage
- breast feeding group
- childminders’ support group
- computer classes
- crèche

- day trips
- dietician's drop-in
- English classes
- first aid
- *Fresh Start* newsletter
- health and beauty
- kids and carers
- parent and child play (MPL)
- parenting courses
- Parents' Forum
- post-natal depression support
- strengthening families
- Sure Starters (special needs)
- teddy bears picnic (healthy eating)
- weanies (healthy eating)

The idea is to provide a wide range of services and activities that will engage those parents who might not usually become engaged in a more clinical service. Once they are engaged, further opportunities develop to get parents and children involved in yet more activities that they would almost certainly not otherwise have considered.

Many of the services are oversubscribed, with long waiting lists for some services. This is a source of frustration for many of the staff.

Some of the waiting lists are six pages long. We need to increase the services to cover more people. Staff member

2.7 Key findings and recommendations

After a difficult and slow start, Sure Start Little Ilford is now developing a wide range of services for families with children under 4. The Co-ordinator has worked *effectively* and *maturely* to build relationships and trust.

An important feature of Sure Start Little Ilford is the fact that the two core health visitors are based within the Sure Start team. Other support staff are helping the health visitors to increase contact time with parents.

By July 2003, approximately half of the families with children under four were registered. Over 500 calendars detailing Sure Start Little Ilford's activities are sent out every month.

However, there are long waiting lists for some services.

The collection of ethnicity data at Sure Start Little Ilford to date makes it difficult to compare the ethnicity of service users against the local

population profile due to the high numbers of records where the ethnicity data are not specified. However, it is clear that people from a wide ethnic spectrum make use of the services.

Sure Start Little Ilford has been quite successful in engaging parts of the local population considered to be 'hard to reach'. But more work needs to be done, especially with the predominantly Muslim Bangladeshi community.

Sure Start Little Ilford has also developed groups that support people in their own language.

Parental involvement is strong and is embedded into the programme.

Three recommendations are offered:

Recommendation 1 Collection of ethnicity data

Sure Start Little Ilford needs to improve its recording of ethnicity data (and reduce the percentage of records where ethnicity is not specified).

Recommendation 2 Increasing capacity to meet unmet need

Sure Start Little Ilford needs to review its capacity and the unmet need with its partners to find creative ways of finding extra resources (through grant and charitable trust funding).

Recommendation 3 Reaching 'hard to reach' communities

Sure Start Little Ilford needs to continue to develop its approaches to working with 'hard to reach' communities. The Bangladeshi community, which is the largest minority ethnic group in the area, needs to be targeted more effectively. This may be achieved through outreach religious leaders and faith communities.

Section 3 Partnership working

3.1 Introduction

Data for this section have been drawn from focus group interviews with Sure Start staff and with staff and managers from other local partner organisations. It must be acknowledged that effective partnership working requires much effort in building and sustaining relationships, cutting across different organisations' agendas and priorities. As such, it can be quite difficult to achieve. The findings presented in this section will show that Sure Start Little Ilford has been moderately successful in developing good partnership working.

This section also presents some of the barriers to effective implementation as well as the factors that have facilitated effective joint working.

3.2 Progress at the strategic level

Part of what has facilitated the development of effective partnership working is the presence of other Sure Starts in Newham. As such, the combined voice of Sure Starts in Newham means that no one programme is battling to change things against unresponsive partners.

There were tensions initially because Sure Start had a very shaky start. I think this caused tension but things have changed.

Partnership Board member

Two factors have meant that there is excellent co-operation between local health services and Sure Start Little Ilford: having the Director responsible for partnerships and service integration at Newham Primary Care Trust (PCT) as Chair of Sure Start Little Ilford's Partnership Board, and having Health Visitors as part of the core team.

The PCT sees Sure Start as an opportunity... it's an integral part of our development.

PCT Director

Although it is too early to assess the impact of Sure Start Little Ilford on reshaping health services for families with children under 4, perinatal maternal mental health screening is being mainstreamed across Newham as a result of the focus that the Sure Starts have had on identifying postnatal depression and then addressing it through support.

Partnership work with Social Services has been more difficult because Newham Social Services has been under 'special measures'. Other local authority departments, such as education, have also been slow to respond. But there is *commitment* from all sides and there are now

named representatives with whom relationships are beginning to develop.

3.3 The importance of relationships

Developing good relationships is key to successful partnership working. The lack of availability of the initial manager did not serve to foster good working relationships, trust and goodwill. The current Programme Manager was credited by many stakeholders as building effective working relationships.

She has worked skilfully, with political acumen. She genuinely understands other people's agendas and tries to work towards the meeting of shared objectives, so it's not like she's single-minded about achieving Sure Start's objectives without regard for what other people need to achieve.

Partnership Board member

Building strong relationships within the Partnership Board has also been a critical factor in enabling its members to contribute effectively.

Perhaps we need to get to know people properly. I know the people who went on the minibus trip to look at the capital fund proposals better than the others. The people that came with us on the minibus, I know them better... and it's more comfortable to work with them.

Partnership Board member

3.4 Partnership meetings

The Partnership Board meets quarterly to discuss the operational details of the development and implementation of Sure Start Little Ilford. Generally feedback about the meetings was that the meetings are full, well-attended, and well-chaired.

Some members of the board expressed a view that sometimes the meetings were very large, and it was difficult to have a voice.

Currently, two working groups report to the Partnership group: the Community Café group and the Capital Fund group.

Representation on the Board by parents is strong with five to six parent representatives. This is supported by the fortnightly Parents' Forum, which is a sub-group of the Board. Decisions made at the Parents Forum are ratified by the Board.

There were mixed views about the adequacy of the formal reports and supporting paperwork for the Partnership Board. Some members reported that the papers are *informative*, while others reported that there was a lack of formal reporting. This discrepancy is likely to be related to the individual board members experience in formal

committees. For more experienced board members, this presented a barrier to more effective working.

3.5 Relationships with local GP surgeries

Although no GPs were formally interviewed as part of the evaluation, a member of the evaluation team visited twelve local GP surgeries. Information about Sure Start Little Ilford was displayed in only one of the twelve surgeries. In three of the surgeries, the researcher asked the Practice Nurse for information about Sure Start Little Ilford and all of them replied that they knew nothing about it (including a surgery within a few minutes' walk of Manor Park library). The three receptionists that were also asked if they had any information about where Sure Start Little Ilford is located were unable to provide any information. Given that GPs are often the first port of call when a child is ill, this represents a missed opportunity. Sure Start Little Ilford might need to think about more formal ways of increasing the engagement of other staff that work in general practice.

3.6 Key findings and recommendations

The critical mass of having eight Sure Starts located within Newham facilitates Sure Start Little Ilford's progress at the strategic level.

Partnership working is generally good due to the strong relationships and trust that have been built. There is much to be celebrated.

There are strong links with health and the links with local authority departments are developing steadily.

However, relationships between Sure Start Little Ilford and local GPs are very weak.

One recommendation is offered.

Recommendation 4 Engagement with GPs

Sure Start Little Ilford should build closer working links with GPs and surgery staff.

Section 4 Has Sure Start Little Ilford improved the lives of parents and their children under 4?

4.1 Introduction

The evidence for this section is drawn from the 257 parents interviewed through the parents' survey, six individual interviews and two focus group interviews. This section begins with the findings of the survey, moves on to a summary of trends and issues raised during the focus groups and interviews, and then presents a series of five case studies to illustrate in more detail how Sure Start Little Ilford has impacted on people's lives.

4.2 Findings from the survey

4.2.1 *The sample*

The parent evaluators interviewed a total of 257 local people. Of these, 96 percent were parents of children under 4, 2 percent were carers, and 2 percent were guardians.

More women than men were interviewed (92 percent women; 8 percent men). Figures 4.1 and 4.2 show the total number of children in the family and the number of children under four in each family. Almost 40 percent of parents interviewed had just one child, 33 percent had two children, while 16 percent had three children. Of these, 81 percent had one child under 4, and 18 percent had two children under 4.

Figure 4.1: total number of children in the family

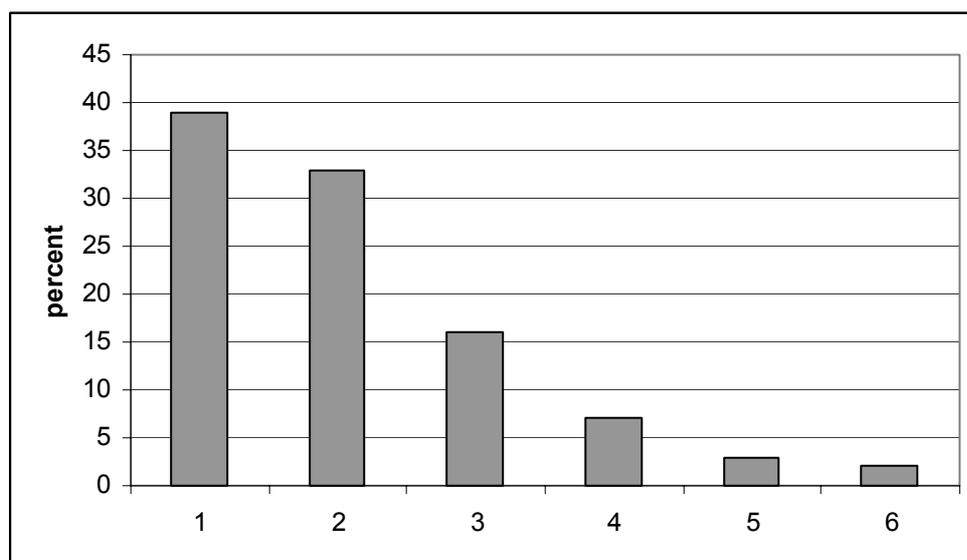


Figure 4.2: number of children under 4 in the family

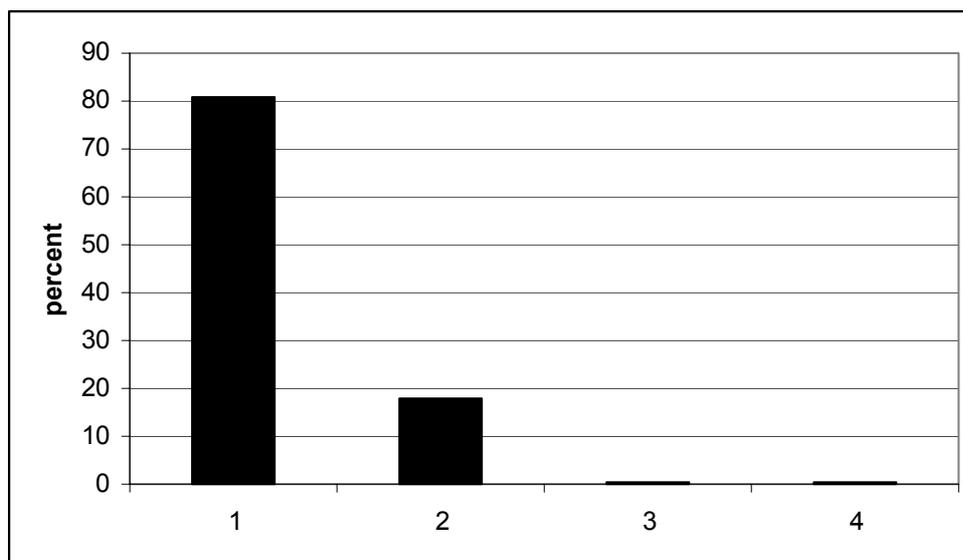


Figure 4.3 shows the marital status of the sample. Just over two-thirds of the sample were married (70 percent), while 13 percent were lone parents and 11 percent were not married but were living with a partner.

Figure 4.3: marital status of the sample

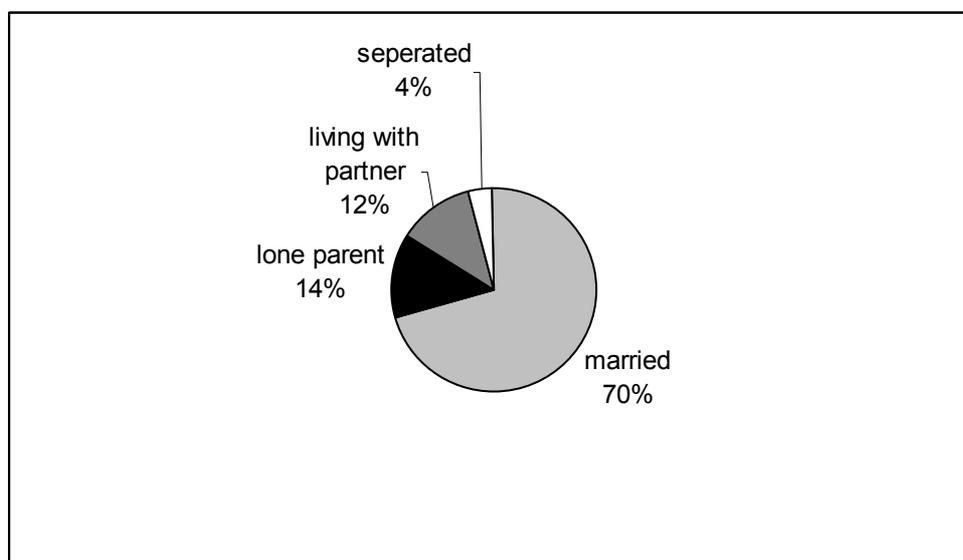


Figure 4.4 shows the employment status of the sample. Over four-fifths were full-time parents or carers (82 percent), while eleven percent were in part-time employment and 7 percent in full-time employment. Employed people are likely to be under-represented in the sample as most of the interviewing was conducted during weekdays so that the parent evaluators could make use of Sure Start's crèche while they interviewed.

Figure 4.4: employment status

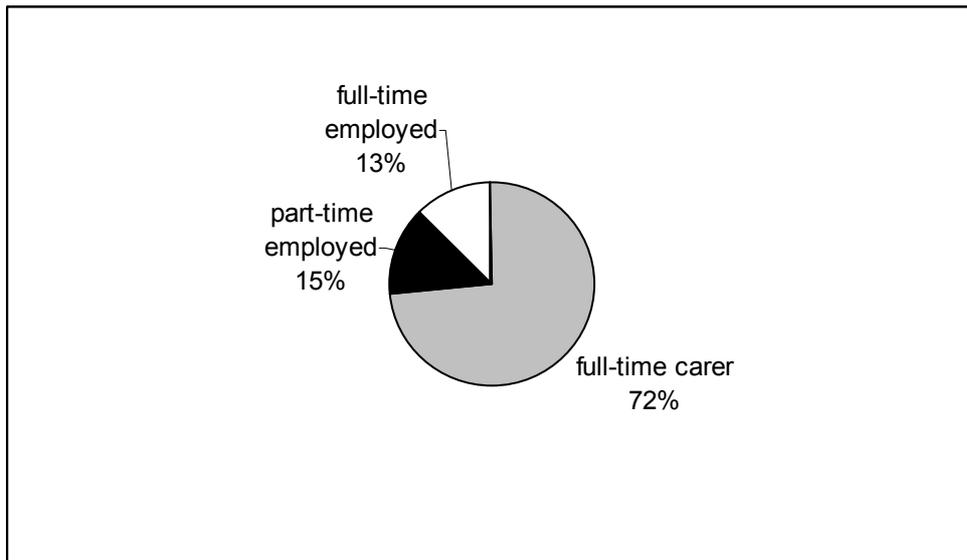
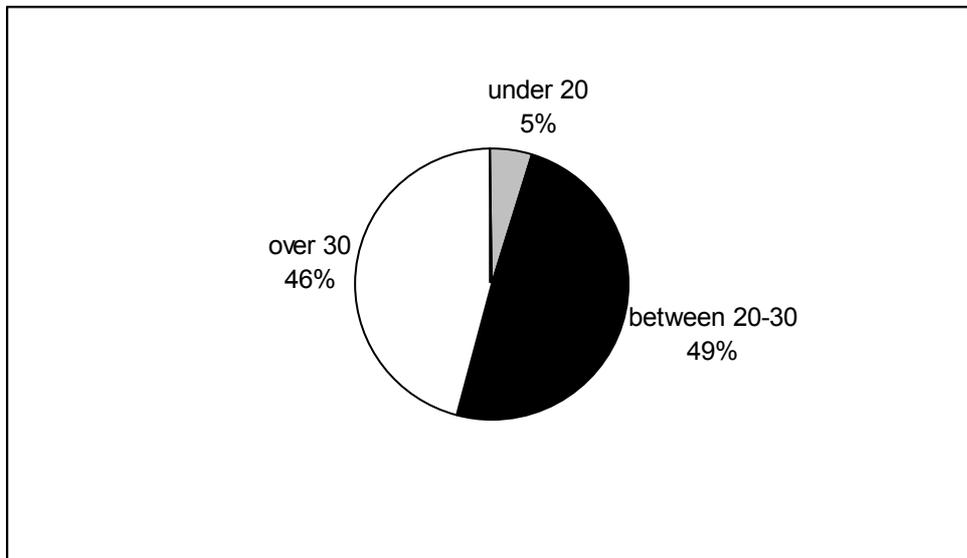


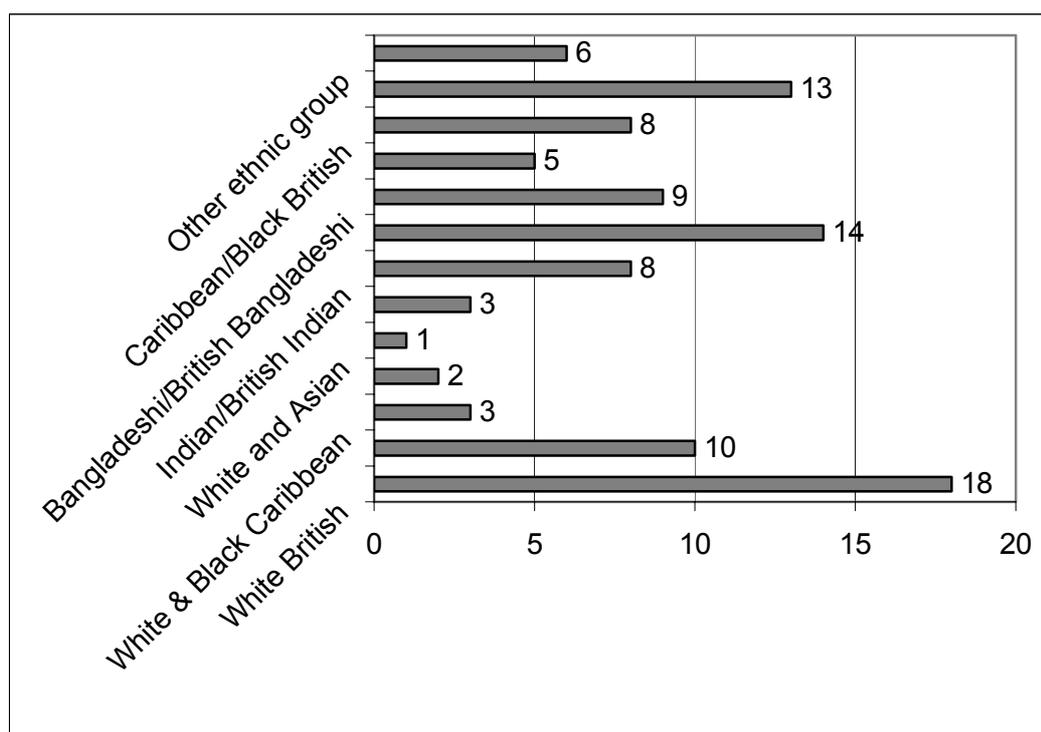
Figure 4.5 shows the age range of the sample. Almost half of the parents were over 30 (46 percent), while only 5 percent were under 20. While the high numbers of parents over 30 was corroborated as being representative of the area by those present at the initial presentation of the survey findings, it is likely that younger parents are under-represented in the sample as they were more likely to be unwilling to be interviewed.

Figure 4.5: age distribution of parents interviewed



The sample captured a wide range of ethnic groups (as would be expected in a multi-ethnic area). The largest ethnic group in the survey were white British (18 percent), followed by Pakistanis (14 percent) and Black African/Black African British at 13 percent. Figure 4.6 shows the distribution of the ethnicity of the sample.

Figure 4.6: The distribution of the ethnicity of the sample



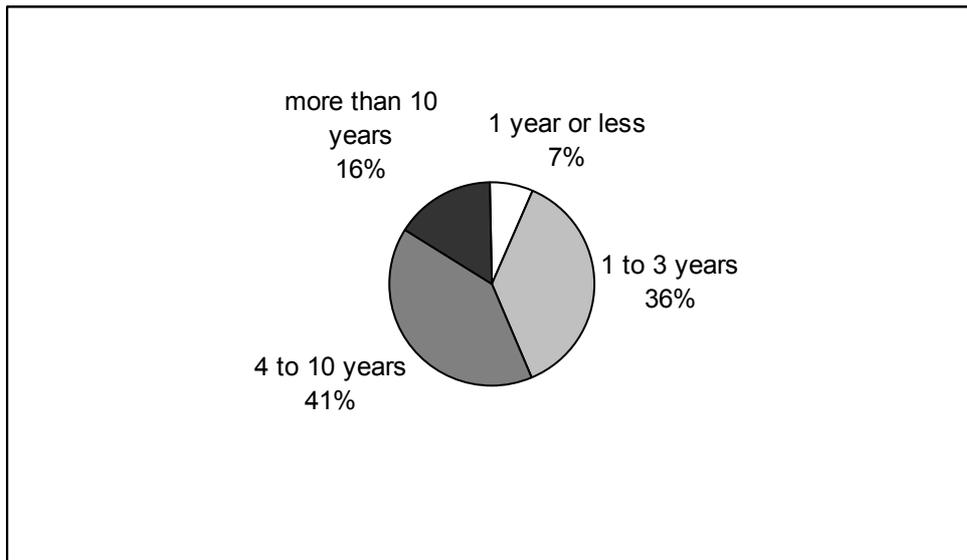
Bangladeshis are considerably under-represented in this sample and Indians are very slightly under-represented in the survey as compared to ethnicity data from local nursery and primary schools in 1999/2000. White British, White other and Caribbean/Black British are over-represented.

No significant differences were found between the ethnic groups on key variables such as support, satisfaction and service use. Language spoken was a more important factor determining service use.

Just 40 percent of the sample spoke English as their first language at home. Urdu is the next most frequently spoken language at home by 9 percent, followed by Bengali 8 percent, and Hindi 6 percent. There are 29 different languages as the main languages spoken at home.

Finally, Figure 4.7 shows the length of residence in the area. A third (34 percent) have lived in the area for between four and ten years, while just over a third (36 percent) have lived in the area for between 1 and 3 years. Eight percent have lived in the area for just one year, while 16 percent have lived in the area for more than 10 years.

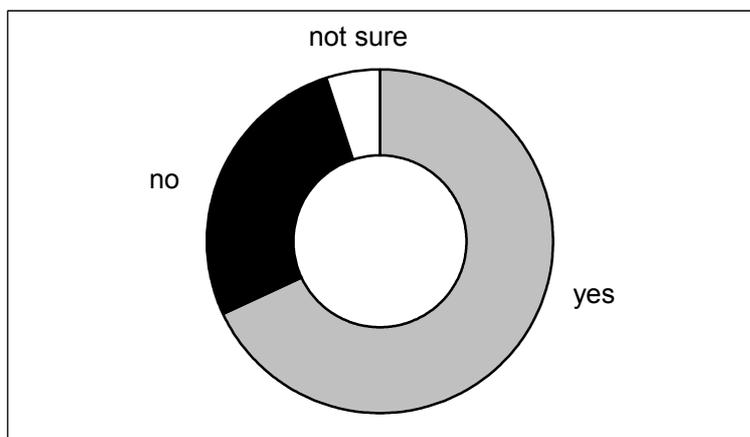
Figure 4.7: length of residence in the area



4.2.2 Knowledge about Sure Start Little Ilford

Figure 4.8 shows that two thirds (68 percent) of those interviewed had heard of Sure Start Little Ilford, while a just over a quarter had not heard of it (27 percent) and 5 percent were not sure.

Figure 4.8: Have you heard about Sure Start Little Ilford?

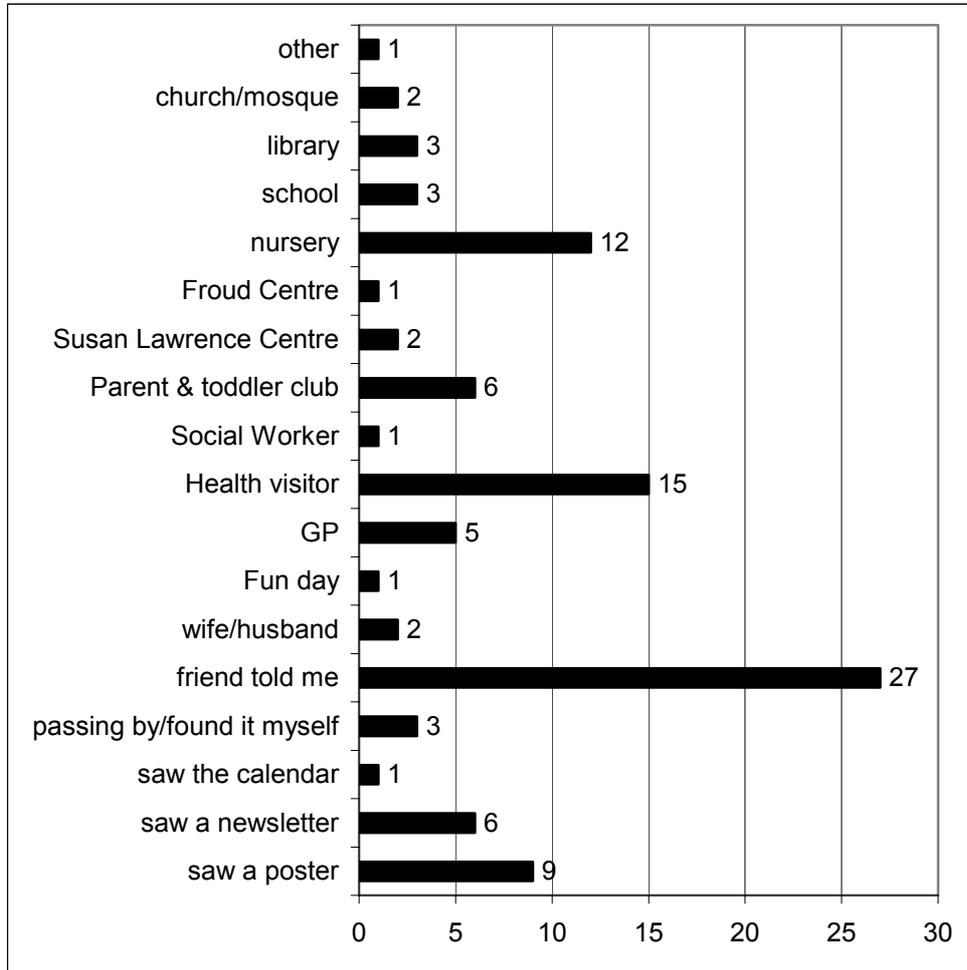


Of the 32 percent who did not know about Sure Start Little Ilford or were not sure, just under a third of these used services provided by Sure Start Little Ilford without being aware of Sure Start Little Ilford.

Figure 4.9 shows the distribution of the ways that people had heard about Sure Start Little Ilford. The most common route of hearing about Sure Start Little Ilford was from a friend (27 percent), while the second most common source of hearing about Sure Start was from their Health Visitor (15 percent), followed by a nursery (12 percent). Posters and

newsletters accounted for 15 percent of parents knowing about Sure Start. Five percent reported that their GP had told them about Sure Start.

Figure 4.9: How did you first get to know about Sure Start Little Ilford?



4.2.3 Use of Sure Start Little Ilford's services in general

Just under two-thirds (60 percent) of those that knew about Sure Start Little Ilford use one or more services. The reasons for not using Sure Start's services are complex. These include:

- 36% say that they do not have enough information
- 16% think that the services are not offered at times that are convenient for them
- 15% report that they are too busy (including those that work)
- 7% don't think that Sure Start Little Ilford offers anything that they need

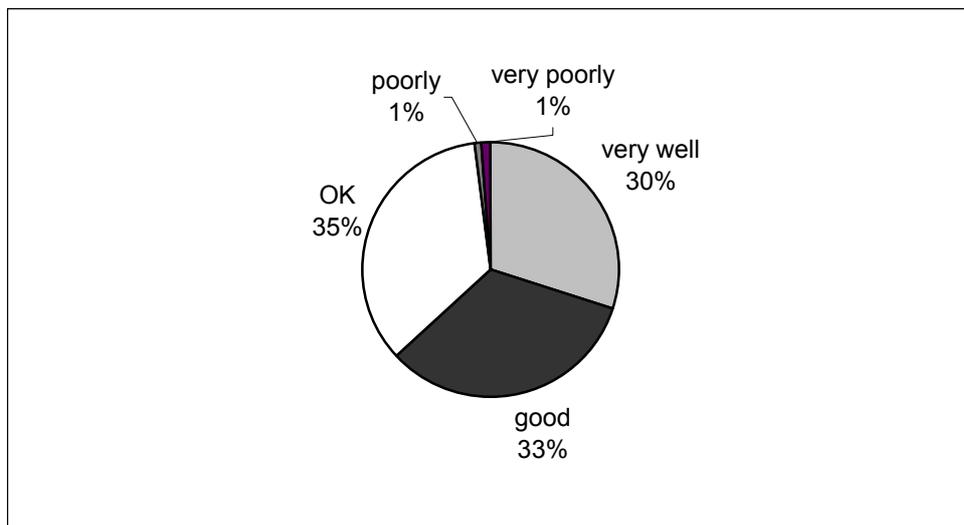
- 5% have had difficulty in settling their child in the crèche
- 5% are on a waiting list for Sure Start Little Ilford's services
- no parents reported that they couldn't afford it or that they had heard negative things about Sure Start Little Ilford.

The three main things that people not currently using services want are:

- more information
- services at the weekends
- services for children that are 4.

When asked how well the services meet their needs, responses were quite mixed as shown in Figure 4.10.

Figure 4.10: How well do the services meet your needs?



21% would like to make more use of Sure Start Little Ilford's services:

- 17 parents would like more activities in the afternoon
- 11 parents would like activities to be offered in the evening
- 24 parents would like activities open at weekends.

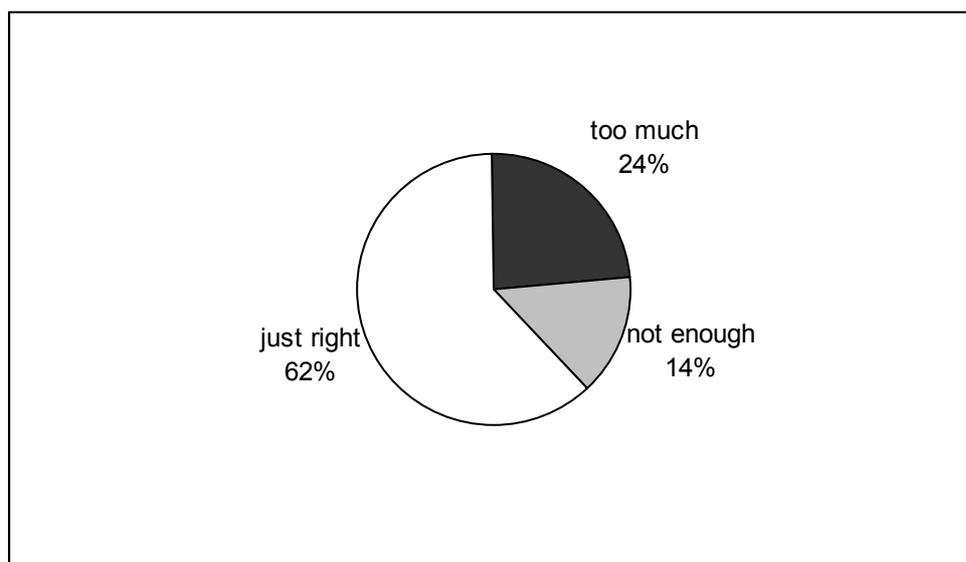
Parents would like:

- services for 4 year olds (so that they can join in with their siblings)
- more sporting/physical activities.

4.2.4 Information about Sure Start Little Ilford

Two-thirds (62 percent) of parents reported that they had just about the right amount of information about Sure Start Little Ilford, while 14 percent said that they did not have enough information, and 24 percent thought that they had too much. These frequencies are shown in Figure 4.11. Although monthly calendars are sent to all families that are registered, the information is dense and some people find it difficult to understand.

Figure 4.11: Do you feel that you have enough information about the services that are available?

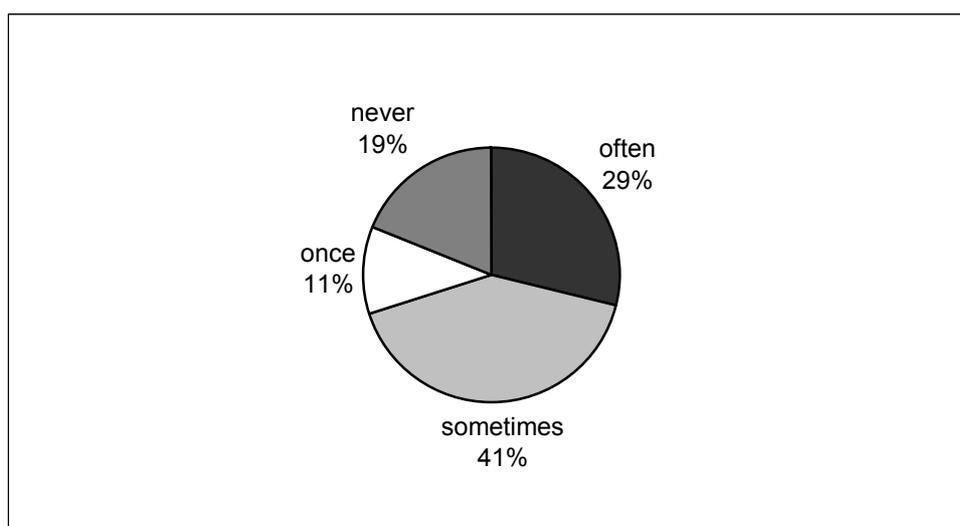


4.2.5 Crèche facilities

Just under one fifth (19 percent) of the sample had never made use of the crèche facilities provided by Sure Start Little Ilford, while just under a third (29 percent) reported that they used it often, and 41 percent said that they used it “sometimes.” Figure 4.12 shows the frequency of use of the crèche.

Of those that said that they never use the crèche, 80 percent stated that they have alternative care arrangements. Only 1 parent stated that she did not use the crèche because it was not culturally appropriate.

Figure 4.12: How often do you use crèche at Sure Start Little Ilford?



Of those that do use it:

- 65% rate it as a ★★★3 star service
- 30 % rate it as a ★★2 star service
- 5% rate it as a ★one star service.

When asked how the crèche could be improved, 28 percent stated that they were satisfied with the crèche as it is. The most frequently cited responses for suggested improvements were the need to do more activities with the children (55 percent), to offer better child care (11 percent), and to have more space (6 percent).

4.2.6 Satisfaction with other services

Table 4.1 shows the satisfaction levels for all services where seven or more users (number shown in brackets) reported that they used a particular service. There is a high level of satisfaction with Sure Start Little Ilford's individual services.

Table 4.1: Satisfaction levels of the most frequently reported services used

service	★★★	★★	★
Day trips (60)	83	17	
Kids & carers (37)	73	24	3
Parent & child play (24)	71	25	4
Parenting classes (16)	56	44	
Health & beauty (11)	64	27	9
Swimming (11)	60	30	10
Teddy Bear's picnic (9)	89	11	
English classes (9)	67	22	11
Arts & crafts (8)	50	50	
Baby massage (7)	86	14	

(N.B. These percentage figures should be treated with some caution as the sample size is too small to be stable for many services)

4.2.7 What difference has Sure Start Little Ilford made to parents' lives?

Seventy-three percent of parents interviewed that were using at least one Sure Start Little Ilford service reported that it had contributed to improving the quality of their lives. Figure 4.13 shows the responses by percent (note the numbers add up to more than 100 percent as parents were able to give more than one answer).

Figure 4.13: do you think that these services have made a difference to your life?



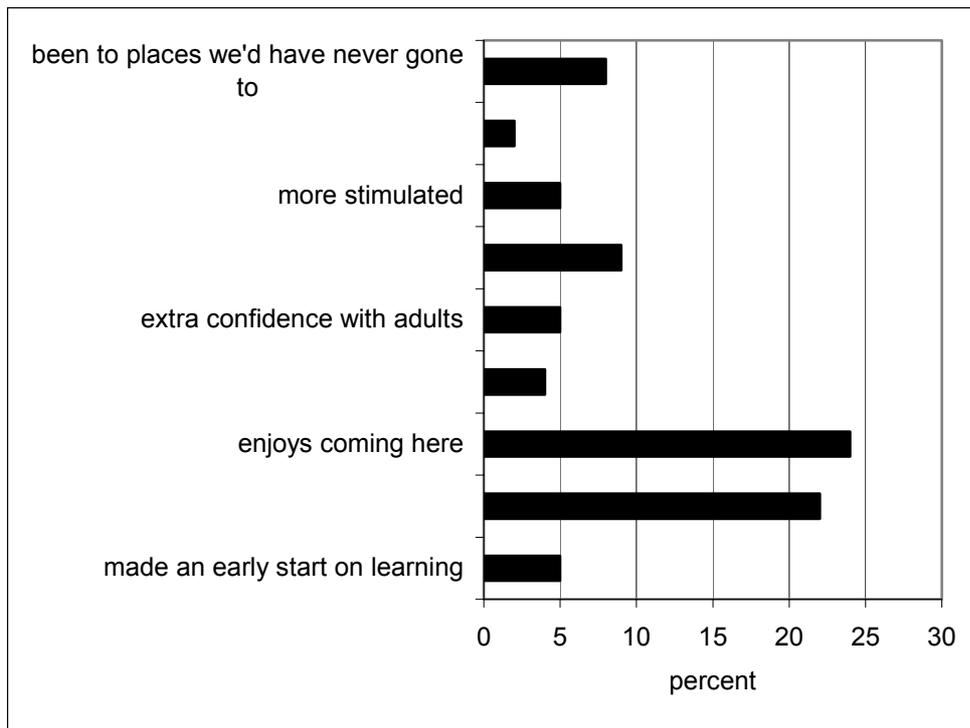
The case studies in section 4.4 help to illustrate the ways in which parents report an improvement in the quality of their lives.

Of those that reported that Sure Start Little Ilford had not made a difference to them, 3 people stated that they were “OK” before they came, 2 stated that they had “nothing in common” with anyone else, and 3 people reported that the staff were unfriendly, intimidating or unprofessional.

4.2.7 What difference has Sure Start Little Ilford made to children's lives?

Eighty-one percent of parents believed that Sure Start Little Ilford had improved their children's lives. Figure 4.14 shows the responses by percent (note the numbers add up to more than 100 percent as parents were able to give more than one answer).

Figure 4.14: do you think that these services have made a difference to your children's lives?

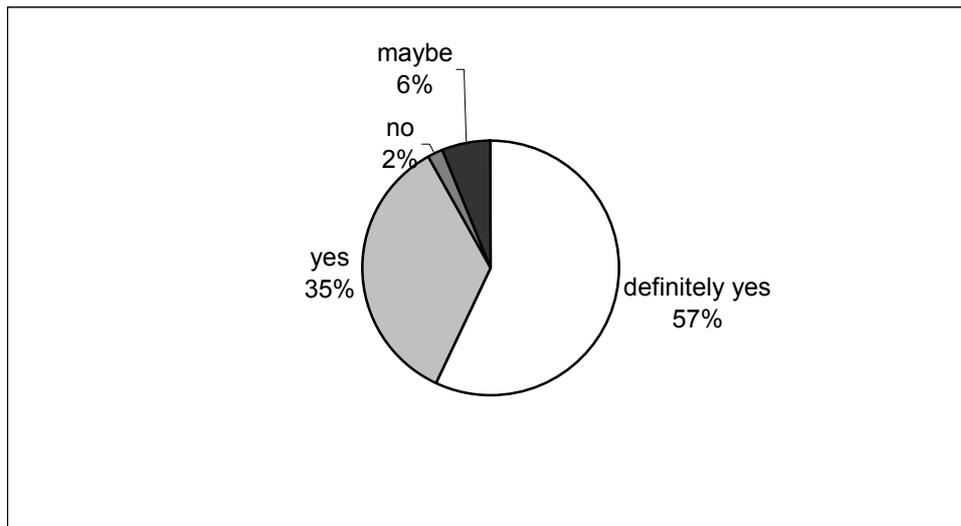


The case studies in Section 4.4 help to illustrate the ways in which parents report an improvement in the quality of their children's lives.

4.2.7 Satisfaction with Sure Start Little Ilford

In order to measure parents' overall satisfaction, we asked them if they would recommend Sure Start Little Ilford to their friends. Ninety-two percent said that they "definitely would" or that they "would" refer Sure Start to their friends. Figure 4.15 shows the distribution of answers. Only two percent said that they "probably would not".

Figure 4.15: Would you recommend Sure Start Little Ilford to your friends?



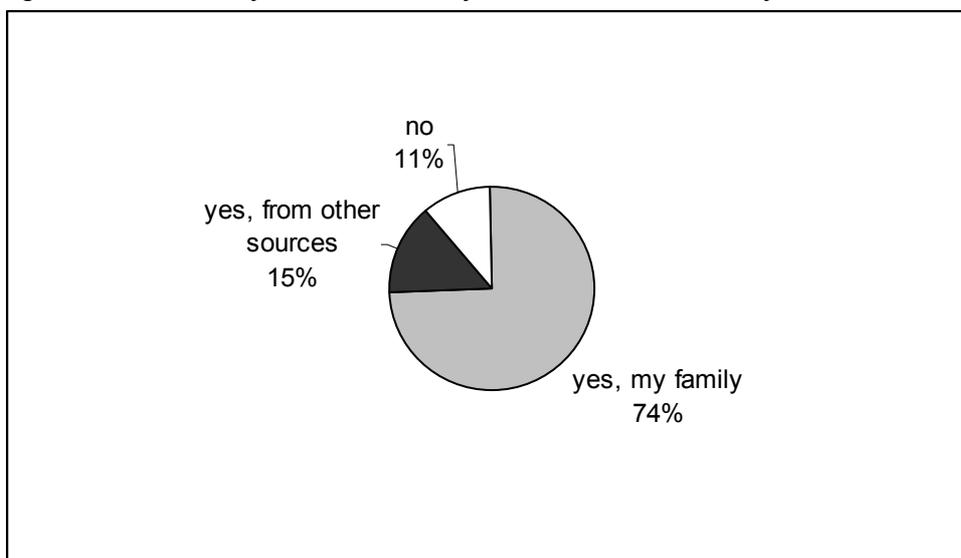
4.2.8 Knowledge about free services at Sure Start Little Ilford

Only two-thirds (65 percent) of the sample were aware that Sure Start Little Ilford's services are free.

4.2.9 Parent's perceptions of their support networks

Respondents were asked "Do you feel that you have someone you can talk to" as a proxy measure to assess if they have enough personal and social support. Three-quarters reported they could speak to their families, as shown in Figure 4.16. Fifteen reported that there were sources outside their families where they could talk to someone, while 11 percent reported that they had no one that they could talk to.

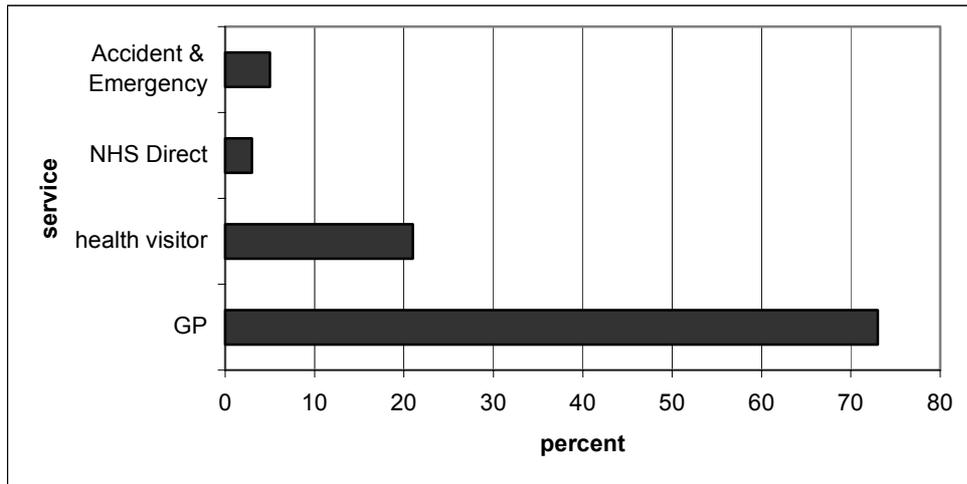
Figure 4.16: Do you feel that you have someone you can talk to?



4.2.10 Parents' feelings about services in general in the area

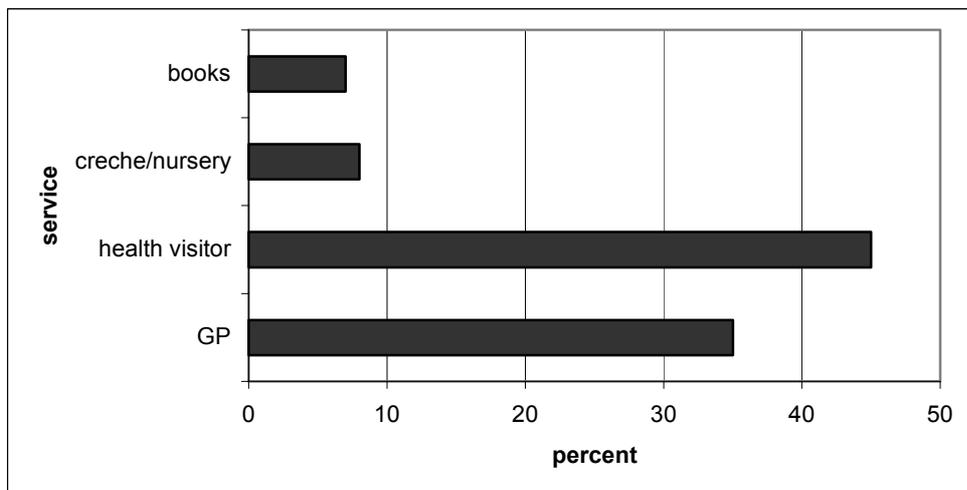
When asked "where do you go when you have a concern for your child's health?" 73 percent reported that they would go to their GP, followed by 21 percent going to their Health Visitor. Figure 4.17 shows parent's responses to this question (note that percentages add up to more than 100 as parents could give multiple answers).

Figure 4.17: Where would you go if you had a concern about your child's general health?



Similarly, parents were asked where they would go if they had a concern for their child's learning and development. Health Visitors were the most frequently (45 percent) mentioned service followed by GP (35 percent). Figure 4.18 above shows parents' responses to this question (note that percentages add up to more than 100 as parents could give multiple answers).

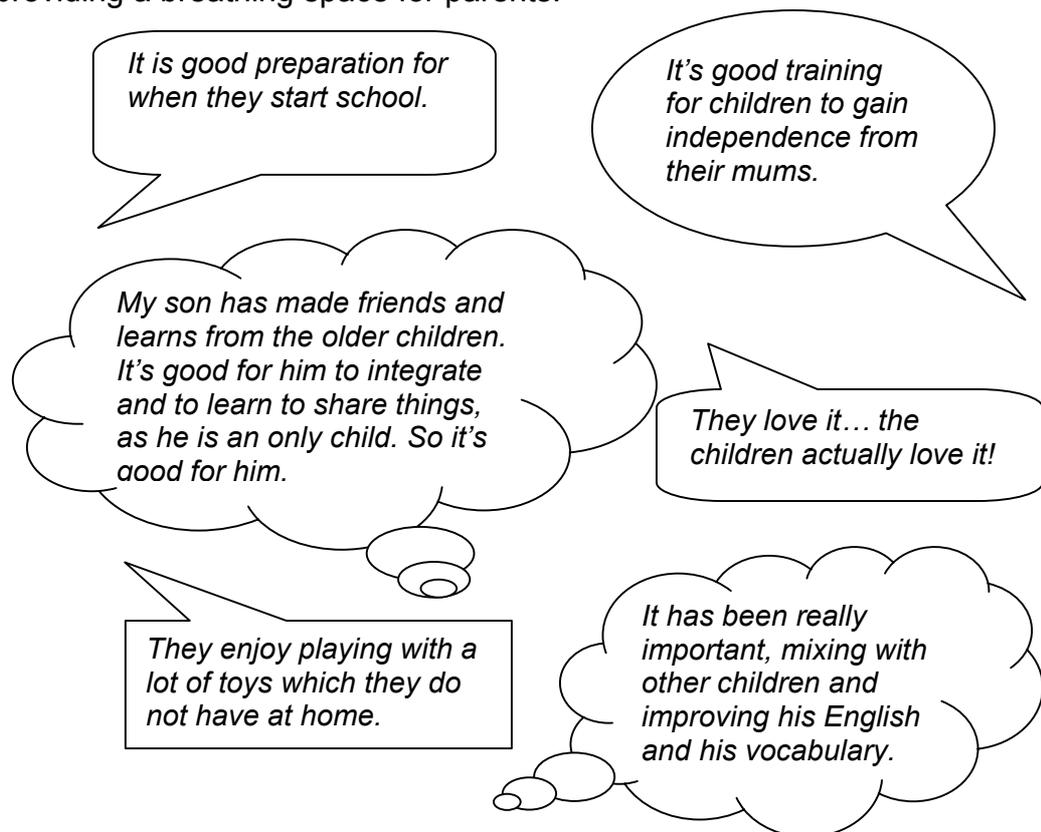
Figure 4.18: Where would you go if you had a concern about your child's learning and development?



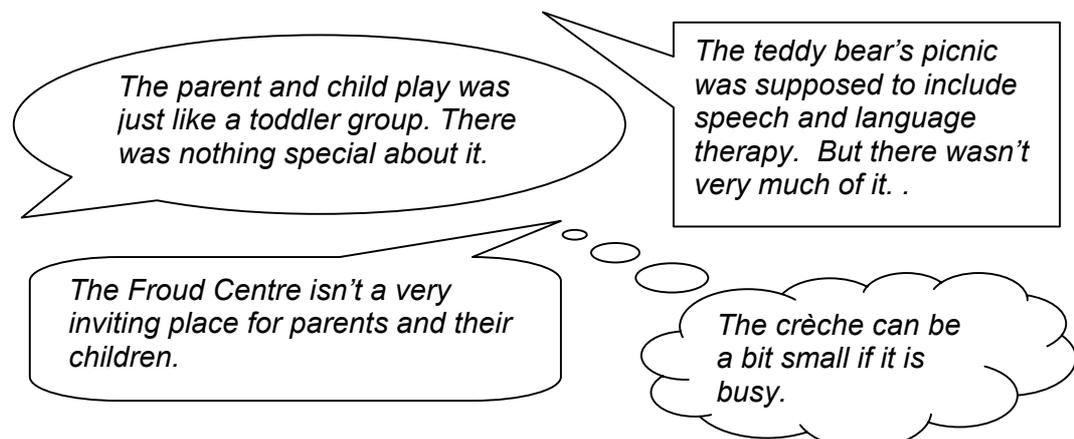
4.3 Trends and issues from the in-depth interviews and focus groups

The average number of Sure Start services used by the parents that participated in the in-depth interviews and focus groups was five. High levels of satisfaction were expressed in general (as in the large scale survey) but there were some specific concerns. It is worth stating that these parents are probably not representative of all parents using Sure Start, but that they represent the views of parents who are quite involved and use Sure Start at a deeper level.

The importance of the crèche was underlined, especially the notion of providing a breathing space for parents.



But there were feelings that not all the services worked so well and could be improved.



They were asking people if they wanted to volunteer. I put my name down to work with the domestic violence project. And then silence. When people come forward to offer their help, they need to respond more quickly, or else we lose interest and think that they don't want our help.

The trips and outings were very important as it allowed parents and children to go to places that they might not have been able to afford, or have the confidence to get to.

The trip to the seaside was a real treat. I couldn't have gone there by myself. I wouldn't have had the confidence to go on the train... let alone the cost. And apart from having a good time on the day, it helped me to get to know other people a bit more.

The range of activities was highly valued and praised by the parents. Sure Start was viewed as responding well to parents' requests.

We get to try lots of new things, that maybe we would have seen as too risky to spend money on just in case we didn't like it and waste the money.

The services help us to socialise and keep mentally alert.

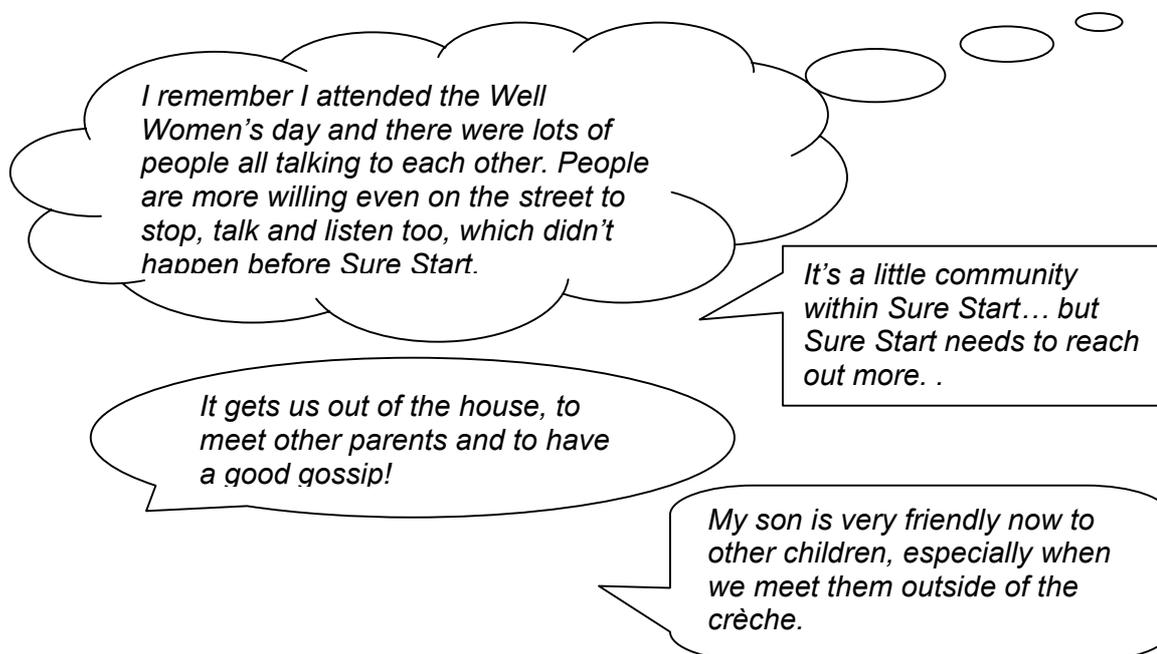
Many parents spoke about how the services had boosted their confidence.

Before, I didn't know many people locally. I had no-one to talk to about being a parent. I was frightened that I wasn't a good mother. But meeting other parents has given me the confidence that I am a good mother.

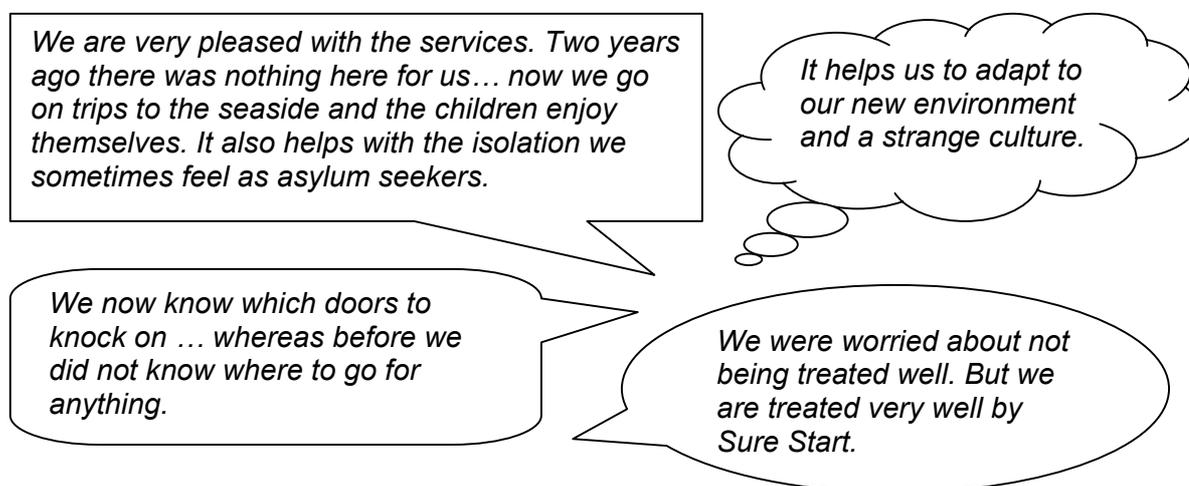
I've tried things that I would never normally do. That's boosted my confidence.

It has kept me sane! It is very difficult if you don't have family or friends nearby. Meeting other parents, sharing experiences and tips, getting advice... it has all helped me to get more out of life.

One of the most important aspects that parents reported was that they now knew more people locally. This helped in all sorts of ways and is an indicator that Sure Start has strengthened the neighbourhood. But there were also comments that lots of people still did not know about Sure Start.



Finally, Sure Start Little Ilford has made a big difference to some of the refugees and asylum seekers that use the services.



But there are some concerns that Sure Start Little Ilford's adherence to 'the rules' means that siblings over 4 cannot join in some of the family activities (like trips), and that people aren't happy when their friends who live across the street, outside of the Sure Start area, cannot access services.

4.4 Case studies

Five case studies were developed from the in-depth interviews to illustrate more holistically how parents that use a variety of Sure Start Little Ilford's services, use a range of services to improve the quality of their lives and the lives of their children. All names and identifying features have been changed in order to preserve anonymity.

Case Study 1 Laurie's story

"Sharing socialising with other parents on trips and other activities is confidence building."

Laurie has two children, Clem, who is three years old and Ruth, who is three months old. She works outside her home two days a week and works at home for another two days a week. Laurie is familiar with most of the services that Sure Start offers and tries to access as many as her time allows. *"I was really keen to attend the Kids and Carers class but I found the times very difficult - In the end I really didn't get much out of it because I didn't attend the class sometimes."*

She uses the crèche at the Susan Lawrence centre for the children and has also been on a number of trips sponsored by Sure Start. Laurie says that as a working mum, who also works at home some days, Sure Start has *"taken a lot of pressure from me by taking the children and helping to develop them."* While the children are at the crèche, she is able to concentrate on her work because she has no distractions and knows her children are in safe hands. She can accomplish a lot and is therefore ready to give her full attention to the children when they come home. She is also grateful for the feedback reports she gets from Sure Start about Clem's development.

Clem is very happy, sociable and interested in listening to other languages. She says that constantly interacting with other children has taught him how to behave by watching other children. Laurie confesses that she is sometimes not happy with her son's *"short attention span."* She has been able to get the support to reassure her and the skills to help her with her son's concentration from Sure Start.

Laurie feels that Sure Start has enhanced the sense of community in the area. *"There was a Christmas party for all groups last year. I think the party helped to break down barriers."* Laurie was also asked if she would like to get more involved with Sure Start, *"Yes, I would like to - but the times (when Sure Start is open) are not good for me - like when the Parents Forum takes place."*

Case Study 2 Sam's story

"It's been a blessing - it is almost like a second home to me."

Sam is a single parent who had her first child about 2 years ago. She lives right next door to Manor Park Library, which houses Sure Start Little Ilford. Until two and a half years ago, before Sam had her son, she had been in full time employment for almost 20 years. She was also then living with her husband and had a network of work colleagues she socialised with. Due to a difficult pregnancy, she was forced to stop working and has not gone back to work since having her baby. She is also now separated from her husband and lives on her own with her son Barnaby who is 18 months.

Sam is well aware of what Sure Start offers and is using a number of services both for herself and for Barnaby. *"Sure Start has been my social outlet. I stopped working a couple of years ago and the adjustment from socialising with work colleagues to staying in the house has been difficult."* Sam has made friends with other parents who use services at Sure Start and taken advantage of some of the training courses offered. *"I remember when the arts and crafts classes had not been utilised well and were about to be cancelled. I mobilised other parents and so the courses went ahead."* Sam credits Sure Start for *"keeping her sane"* because it has enabled her to continue to *"have a good full life."*

Barnaby enjoys going to the crèche and interacting with other children. Sam indicates that as an only child, this is one of a few times when he gets a chance to play with other children. *"My son has made friends and through observing learns from older children. It is good for him to integrate and to learn to share, for instance his toys. He is an only child and learning to be with others and sharing is good for him."* Barnaby is still very young and his development can only be helped with as much contact as possible with other children until he starts nursery. He is very lively, healthy and loves discovering new things. *"As soon as we come through the doors of the crèche, he is off and running before I get his coat off. He is always on the go and curious about everything,"* says Sam.

Sam has been able to access various services although what appeals to her most are those activities that involve both parent and child. Some of the activities she has been involved in are the day trips, swimming (Aqua Babies), Teddy Bears' picnics and the Health and Beauty course. *"Stopping work a few years ago to have my baby isolated me. Coming to Sure Start has made me regain my confidence and get rid of the isolation."*

Sam strongly believes she has benefited from accessing Sure Start. She feels lucky to be living so close so she doesn't have to travel a long distance to enjoy the services. She suggests that *"it would be good for parents and their children if music and story-telling were introduced."*

Case Study 3 Shaneez's story

"Grateful for the help for a child with special needs."

Shaneez moved to London from Pakistan about three years ago. When she first arrived in the UK, she lived with relatives until she could afford to live on her own. She has lived in Manor Park for a little over two years with her two children. Her husband lives in Pakistan. Among Shaneez's children, only Zeenab who is three and a half years old is of Sure Start age. Shaneez says that bringing up two children on your own is *"not easy, especially two very energetic and active boys."* Through Sure Start, Shaneez has been able to use services to help her adjust to her relatively new environment and to cope with bringing up two children alone.

For Zeenab, Shaneez uses the crèche at Manor Park and takes parenting courses. She has also received support from Sure Starters for Zeenab's behaviour. Zeenab has been displaying signs of disruptive behaviour. *"My child has a few problems. Through a support worker and the Sure Starters (special needs service), I have got the help that I need."* Zeenab gets very anxious and has problems communicating. When Shaneez first brought him to the crèche, he would constantly cry and sometimes she would have to take him back home. An outreach worker from Sure Starters has been visiting her once a week to help out with Zeenab. *"I apply the skills the outreach worker teaches me and the advice she gives."* Shaneez says, *"Zeenab is very friendly now to other children especially when we meet them outside the crèche."*

Shaneez uses a number of services for herself, including Health and Beauty, English classes and the Teddy Bears' Picnics. She is very aware of the services on offer at Sure Start and even does some volunteer work. *"I am happy with the services I receive. All the activities have contributed a little to my own confidence and skills – especially improving my English, as it is not my first language."* Shaneez has also made friends and keeps busy with activities and classes, which helps her not to worry too much about her children. *"I socialise more, I practise and apply what I learn which helps me to be less stressed, especially with a child with behavioural problems."*

When asked how best Sure Start can encourage more parents like her to get involved, Shaneez replies, *"I think by trying to advertise more and then maybe they can reach more parents. But it also depends on how busy parents are with their lives to be able to be involved with Sure Start."*

Shaneez says: *"I am happy with the opportunities Sure Start has given me and I want to do some voluntary work, which I'd be happy to continue even after my son reaches four."*

Case Study 4 Anna's story

“Sure Start helps me break the monotony of being a full time mother”

Anna is originally from Colombia. She lives with her husband and their 20-month-old son Antonio. She found out about Sure Start through a friend over a year ago and has been using the services regularly since then. Anna is a first time mother and expressed her joy in being able to socialise and learn from more experienced mothers by going to Sure Start. *“Sharing with other parents has helped. My son is the only one I have. Being a parent for the first time was not easy. Coming to Sure Start and socialising with other parents helped boost my confidence as a mother.”*

Antonio is still very young, and for Anna parenting courses have been very useful. She wishes the courses were *“just a bit longer and deeper in substance”*. Anna has also been able to participate in swimming classes, parents and child play and uses the crèche facilities at the Susan Lawrence Centre (SLC). *“I take Antonio to the Susan Lawrence Centre because I feel there is more space than at Manor Park Library.”* Anna feels Antonio enjoys playing with other children and has adapted quite well to staying in the crèche. Anna insists it is too early to worry about her son's communication skills. She is aware that Antonio does not talk very much but at least he understands when he is spoken to. *“Antonio understands when I tell him something in Spanish or English.”* Anna says that his son enjoys being read to and sometimes picks up a book on his own & brings it to her. *“I do read to my child quite a lot and he likes being read to. English is not my first language so I do read to him in Spanish.”*

Anna enjoys most of the activities that involve her interacting with Antonio, including trips away, which are sponsored by Sure Start.

For herself, Anna says that Sure Start has helped her reduce the isolation of being on her own all day with a baby and no adult interaction. *“I have met friends. It is good to share experiences with other parents – Sure Start helps me break the monotony of being a full time mother.”* Having the opportunity to interact with other parents has been very valuable for her. She has learnt many things she would not have otherwise known if she had not gone to Sure Start. *“Getting out of the house helps a lot and you learn without realizing it. Being a full time mother is not easy.”*

In response to the question whether Sure Start has created a stronger sense of community since it came to the area, Anna responded, *“If you are lucky and involved in Sure Start, then you feel useful and a sense of belonging to the community.”*

Case Study 5 Karen's story

"If Sure Start was not around my child would have no interaction with other children."

Karen has been living in East London for the last ten years. Since separating from her husband a couple of years ago, she now lives in temporary accommodation in Manor Park with her two sons. One of Karen's sons, Elias, who is about three and a half years of age and uses Sure Start, also has special needs.

Karen uses a number of services that Sure Start offers but mainly for her son, Elias. She says that being able to take her son to the playgroup at the Susan Lawrence centre benefits both her and Elias. *"At this playgroup at least he is treated normally - in other play groups he would be judged for his disability."*

Karen is happy to spend some time away from her son. She says she is not sure what would have happened to her if she did not have the support from Sure Start. *"I need some time away from my son. Space in the playgroup at Susan Lawrence centre was provided as respite for me."* Karen says that she spends much of the time on her own catching up on sleep. *"When my son comes home I am less stressed and better able to deal with him in a calm manner. When he goes to the play group, I get peace and quiet. I can catch up on my sleep. My son never sleeps. Having the time to myself to do anything I want feels like I have a bit of my life back and I can finally see the light at the end of the tunnel."*

Apart from the playgroup, Sure Start offers other support to Karen and her son. She sees a dietician for advice on her son's eating habits and his general well being. *"Diet is a big problem - that is why we see the dietician. My son does not eat solid food and drinks excessively in the night and during the day. He has to drink through a bottle and his teeth have become very weak."*

Karen is also able to use Sure Starters, a service offered to those with children who have special needs. She says, *"Elias speaks just a bit more clearly now with all the support we get including Sure Starters. His language has also improved because of mixing with other children."*

Karen now says, *"I would not know where to look for anything. Whenever I need help Sure Start comes up with solutions."* Karen is well aware that her child will never totally recover from his disability. She says that it is also *"difficult to know what is going to happen from one day to the next. One day he (my son) is fairly okay, then the next he is very anxious and disruptive."* Karen says she is grateful for Sure Start's support, which enables her to better cope with her child. On the other hand she also feels *"anxious to think what will happen when Elias turns four" – and they are "unable to access some of the services. There are so many people involved in our lives, where will we go once he's four?"* Karen is very concerned about this.

4.5 Key findings and recommendations

Sure Start Little Ilford is working effectively to make a difference to those families that access the service. Some of the key findings from this section are highlighted below:

- two thirds (68 percent) of those interviewed had heard of Sure Start Little Ilford.
- word of mouth from friends is the most likely way that parents hear about Sure Start Little Ilford (27 percent), while the second most common source of parents hearing about Sure Start was from their Health Visitor (15 percent). Only 5 percent of parents reported that they had been told about Sure Start Little Ilford by their GP. (This is an important finding as 73 percent of parents report that they would turn to their GP for if they had a concern about their child's health, and 35 percent would go to their GP if they had a concern for their child's development.)
- just under two-thirds (60 percent) of those that knew about Sure Start Little Ilford use one or more services. The reasons for not using Sure Start's services are complex. These include not enough information (36 percent); services are not offered at times that are convenient (16 percent); being too busy, including work (15 percent); and 7 percent report that Sure Start does not offer anything that they need.
- no parents reported that they couldn't afford it or that they had heard negative things about Sure Start Little Ilford.
- the three main things that people not currently using services want are more information, services at the weekends, services for children that are 4.
- of those that reported using Sure Start Little Ilford's services, 63 percent reported that the services met their needs 'well' or 'very well', while 35 percent reported that the services met their needs 'OK'.
- two-thirds (62 percent) of parents reported that they had just about the right amount of information about Sure Start Little Ilford, while 14 percent said that they did not have enough information, and 24 percent thought that they had too much. Although monthly calendars are sent to all families that are registered, the information is dense and some people find it difficult to understand.
- 65 percent of parents that use the crèche rated it a 3 star service, while 30 percent rated it as a two star service. Parents wanted more activities with the children (55 percent), to offer

better child care (11 percent), and to have more space (6 percent).

- there is a high level of satisfaction with Sure Start Little Ilford's individual services
- 73 percent of those that use the services report that they have improved their quality of life as a parent.
- 81 percent of those that use the service report that the services have made an improvement in their child's life.
- 92 percent '*definitely would*' or '*would*' refer Sure Start to their friends.
- Sure Start Little Ilford has been successful in helping parents to make new friends, increase their confidence, reduce their stress and to improve parent child relationships. It has also helped parents to learn new skills and to discover new interests.
- Sure Start Little Ilford has been successful in improving children's lives, including helping children to socialise (learning how to share, making new friends, increasing their confidence and independence) and accelerating their learning. It has also created new opportunities to do things that they wouldn't ordinarily have had access to (trips, toys).

However:

- only two-thirds (65 percent) of the sample were aware that Sure Start Little Ilford's Services are free.
- there are some concerns that Sure Start Little Ilford's adherence to 'the rules' means that siblings over 4 cannot join in some of the family activities (like trips), and that people aren't happy when their friends who live across the street, outside of the Sure Start area, cannot access services.

Two recommendations are offered:

Recommendation 5: publicity and information

Sure Start Little Ilford needs to review the way it publicises itself and its services. More outreach needs to be done through leaders of faith communities, information and posters in GPs' surgeries.

The calendar format needs to be redesigned to make it easier to read and more accessible.

Recommendation 6: service development

Sure Start Little Ilford needs to develop more services that:

- create greater opportunities for physical exercise
- involve parents and children together

It should also consider how it may expand access to those that cannot attend during the week, through some weekend activities.

Section 5: Drawing it all together: key findings, conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This section of the report draws together some of the most important key findings from the preceding sections while addressing the three core questions that were the stated aims of the evaluation:

- assess the extent to which Sure Start Little Ilford is delivering on its targets
- assess partnership and cross-agency working to determine the extent that Sure Start Little Ilford's activities are linked with other children's services
- assess the extent to which Sure Start Little Ilford is following the Sure Start principles of parental involvement and accessibility to all families (including cultural sensitivity and appropriateness).

Finally, six recommendations are offered.

5.2 Is Sure Start Little Ilford delivering on its targets?

Sure Start Ilford has made good progress towards achieving its targets.

5.3 Is there effective cross-agency working linking Sure Start Little Ilford's work with other children's services?

There is evidence of effective cross-agency working within some aspects of the health service, although this is not extended to working well with GPs. The presence of Health Visitors in the core Sure Start team has facilitated this, as has having a Director from the PCT as the Chair of the Partnership Board.

Work with the local authority (Social Services and Education) has been less well developed, due to problems internal to the local authority. Relationships have now been built and the situation is improving.

Partnership working is improving as relationships are built and partners get to become familiar with each other's ways of working. There is much to be celebrated.

The critical mass of eight Sure Starts in Newham means that Sure Start is well located within the local strategic development.

5.4 How effective is Sure Start Little Ilford in involving parents and delivering appropriate services to families with children under 4?

Sure Start Little Ilford is working effectively to make a difference to those families that access the service.

- two thirds (68 percent) of those interviewed had heard of Sure Start Little Ilford.
- just under two-thirds (60 percent) of those that knew about Sure Start Little Ilford use one or more services. The reasons for not using Sure Start's services are complex. These include not enough information (36 percent); services are not offered at times that are convenient (16 percent); being too busy, including work (15 percent); and 7 percent report that Sure Start does not offer anything that they need.
- of those that reported using Sure Start Little Ilford's services, 63 percent reported that the services met their needs 'well' or 'very well', while 35 percent reported that the services met their needs 'OK'.
- two-thirds (62 percent) of parents reported that they had just about the right amount of information about Sure Start Little Ilford, while 14 percent said that they did not have enough information, and 24 percent thought that they had too much. Although monthly calendars are sent to all families that are registered, the information is dense and some people find it difficult to understand.
- 65 percent of parents that use the crèche rated it a 3 star service, while 30 percent rated it as a two star service. Parents wanted more activities with the children (55 percent), to offer better child care (11 percent), and to have more space (6 percent).
- 73 percent of those that use the services report that they have improved their quality of life as a parent
- 81 percent of those that use the service report that the services have made an improvement in their child's life
- 92 percent 'definitely would' or 'would' refer Sure Start to their friends

Parents reported that they highly valued and praised the programme of activities.

However:

- only two-thirds (65 percent) of the sample were aware that Sure Start Little Ilford's Services are free.
- there are some concerns that Sure Start Little Ilford's adherence to 'the rules' means that siblings over 4 cannot join in some of the family activities (like trips), and that people aren't happy when their friends who live across the street, outside of the Sure Start area cannot access services.

There is evidence that Sure Start Little Ilford is strengthening the neighbourhood as parents' social networks expand from their contact with other programme users. Parents reported that they knew more people locally.

It is also evident that people from a wide ethnic spectrum make use of the services provided by Sure Start Little Ilford. There is a generally high level of satisfaction with individual services and support across all the different groups of people.

Sure Start Little Ilford has also helped parents learn new skills and discover new interests. Parents have received training and support to participate in key decision-making such as developing new ideas for activities. This has helped parents to increase their confidence.

The combination of the support the parents receive and the activities they are involved in, have helped reduce their stress and to improve parent and child relationships.

Parental involvement has been significant and Sure Start Little Ilford has much to be proud of.

5.5 Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Collection of ethnicity data

Sure Start Little Ilford needs to improve its recording of ethnicity data (and reduce the percentage of records for which ethnicity is not specified).

Recommendation 2: Increasing capacity to meet unmet need

Sure Start Little Ilford needs to review its capacity and the unmet need with its partners to find creative ways of finding extra resources (through grant and charitable trust funding).

Recommendation 3: Reaching 'hard to reach' communities

Sure Start Little Ilford needs to continue to develop its approaches to working with 'hard to reach' communities. The Bangladeshi community, which is the largest minority ethnic group in the area, needs to be targeted more effectively. This may be achieved through outreach religious leaders and faith communities.

Recommendation 4: Engagement with GPs

Sure Start Little Ilford should build closer working links with GPs and surgery staff.

Recommendation 5: publicity and information

Sure Start Little Ilford needs to review the way it publicises itself and its services. More outreach needs to be done through leaders of faith communities, information and posters in GPs surgeries.

The calendar format needs to be redesigned to make it easier to read and more accessible.

Recommendation 6: service development

Sure Start Little Ilford needs to develop more services that:

- create greater opportunities for physical exercise
- involve parents and children together

It should also consider how it may expand access to those that cannot attend during the week, through some weekend activities.

Appendix 1 Parent evaluator interview schedule

Interviewer initials:	Date:	Location:
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Hello... My name is _____ and I am one of a group of local parents who are trying to find out what other parents and carers think of locally available services for parents and their children.

We are trying to find out what people think of the local services and how they could be better. I am not trying to sell you anything, nor am I looking for any donations to charity. Can you spare between 5 and 10 minutes to answer some questions? Your answers will be confidential. Your name will not be written on this sheet. Your views will help to improve local services.

Do you live in this area? (show map)

If the answer is YES, continue. If NO, thank them for their time and explain that you are looking to speak to people that live in the area.

Are you a parent, carer or guardian of a child under 4 years old?

<input type="checkbox"/> yes, a parent <input type="checkbox"/> yes, a carer <input type="checkbox"/> yes, a guardian	↓	<input type="checkbox"/> no →	Are you currently expecting to become a parent in the next six months? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
		<i>Thank them for their time and explain that you are looking to speak to parents of children under 4 and parents to be</i>	

F	M
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Q1 How many children do you have? How many of these are under 4?

Q2 Have you heard of Sure Start Little Ilford?

<input type="checkbox"/> yes ↓	<input type="checkbox"/> not sure <input type="checkbox"/> no →	If NO, go to Q15 (also offer to register them with Sure Start)
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Q3 How did you hear or come to know about Sure Start Little Ilford?

saw a poster	1 O'Clock Club/parent & toddler group
saw a newsletter	from nursery/crèche
saw the calendar	from school
friend told me	from church/mosque
GP told me	other:
health visitor told me	
don't know	

Q4 Have you used any Sure Start services?

GO TO Q6 ← yes no not sure

Why is that? ←

<input type="checkbox"/>	don't want to get involved	<input type="checkbox"/>	don't have enough information
<input type="checkbox"/>	I don't need anything they offer	<input type="checkbox"/>	didn't think I could afford it
<input type="checkbox"/>	difficult to settle my child in crèche	<input type="checkbox"/>	needed someone to encourage me
<input type="checkbox"/>	it's just for women	<input type="checkbox"/>	I work full-time
<input type="checkbox"/>	inconvenient time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Negative impression/bad experience (please briefly explain)
<input type="checkbox"/>	other:		

Q5 What would you like to see Sure Start Little Ilford offer in order for you to use it?

<input type="checkbox"/>	nothing would make me use it (<i>please briefly explain</i>)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sports
<input type="checkbox"/>	art/craft	<input type="checkbox"/>	children's activities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other ↓		

NOW GO TO Q15

Q6 Do you use the crèche facilities at Manor Park Library or the Susan Lawrence Centre?

often sometimes once never

↓

Why is that?

<input type="checkbox"/>	don't need it / have alternative care
<input type="checkbox"/>	don't like it
<input type="checkbox"/>	not the right time
<input type="checkbox"/>	not culturally appropriate
<input type="checkbox"/>	didn't know about it
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:

If you were to give a star rating to this service, would it get:

<input type="checkbox"/>	1 star	*
<input type="checkbox"/>	2 stars	**
<input type="checkbox"/>	3 stars	***

→ **How could it be improved?** ←

Q7 Which Sure Start Little Ilford services do you currently use or have you used in the past year? I have a list if you would like to see what services Sure Start offers if you'd like to see it?

service	Do you use this service now or did you used to use it before?		How often do/did you use this service?	If you were to give a star rating to this service, would it get: 1 star * 2 stars ** 3 stars ***
	now	before		
Albanian women's film making			<input type="radio"/> once only <input type="radio"/> a few times <input type="radio"/> once a week <input type="radio"/> more than once a week	
Arts and crafts			<input type="radio"/> once only <input type="radio"/> a few times <input type="radio"/> once a week <input type="radio"/> more than once a week	
Asian women's support group			<input type="radio"/> once only <input type="radio"/> a few times <input type="radio"/> once a week <input type="radio"/> more than once a week	
Baby massage			<input type="radio"/> once only <input type="radio"/> a few times <input type="radio"/> once a week <input type="radio"/> more than once a week	
Breast feeding group			<input type="radio"/> once only <input type="radio"/> a few times <input type="radio"/> once a week <input type="radio"/> more than once a week	

Q7 continued service	Do you use this service now or did you use it before?		How often do/did you use this service?	If you were to give a star rating to this service, would it get: 1 star * 2 stars ** 3 stars ***
	now	before		
Child minders support group			<input type="radio"/> once only <input type="radio"/> a few times <input type="radio"/> once a week <input type="radio"/> more than once a week	
Computer classes			<input type="radio"/> once only <input type="radio"/> a few times <input type="radio"/> once a week <input type="radio"/> more than once a week	
Day trips out			<input type="radio"/> once only <input type="radio"/> a few times <input type="radio"/> once a week <input type="radio"/> more than once a week	
Dieticians			<input type="radio"/> once only <input type="radio"/> a few times <input type="radio"/> once a week <input type="radio"/> more than once a week	
English classes			<input type="radio"/> once only <input type="radio"/> a few times <input type="radio"/> once a week <input type="radio"/> more than once a week	
First Aid			<input type="radio"/> once only <input type="radio"/> a few times <input type="radio"/> once a week <input type="radio"/> more than once a week	
Health and beauty			<input type="radio"/> once only <input type="radio"/> a few times <input type="radio"/> once a week <input type="radio"/> more than once a week	
Kids and carers			<input type="radio"/> once only <input type="radio"/> a few times <input type="radio"/> once a week <input type="radio"/> more than once a week	
Parent and child play (MPI)			<input type="radio"/> once only <input type="radio"/> a few times <input type="radio"/> once a week <input type="radio"/> more than once a week	
Parenting courses			<input type="radio"/> once only <input type="radio"/> a few times <input type="radio"/> once a week <input type="radio"/> more than once a week	
Shpresa Albanian Women's support group			<input type="radio"/> once only <input type="radio"/> a few times <input type="radio"/> once a week <input type="radio"/> more than once a week	
Strengthening families			<input type="radio"/> once only <input type="radio"/> a few times <input type="radio"/> once a week <input type="radio"/> more than once a week	
Sure Starters (special needs)			<input type="radio"/> once only <input type="radio"/> a few times <input type="radio"/> once a week <input type="radio"/> more than once a week	
Swimming			<input type="radio"/> once only <input type="radio"/> a few times <input type="radio"/> once a week <input type="radio"/> more than once a week	
Teddy Bears picnic (healthy eating)			<input type="radio"/> once only <input type="radio"/> a few times <input type="radio"/> once a week <input type="radio"/> more than once a week	
Weanies – healthy eating			<input type="radio"/> once only <input type="radio"/> a few times <input type="radio"/> once a week <input type="radio"/> more than once a week	

Q8 How well do the services currently offered meet your needs?

very well well OK poor very poor

Q9 Would you like to make more use of Sure Start activities or services?

yes, want to use it more no, just right **go to Q10**



What would enable you to use it more?

<input type="checkbox"/>	open in the afternoon	<input type="checkbox"/>	don't know
<input type="checkbox"/>	open in the evenings	<input type="checkbox"/>	more variety of activities
<input type="checkbox"/>	open at weekends	<input type="checkbox"/>	more activities for children
<input type="checkbox"/>	other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	more joint activities for parents & children

Q10 Do you feel you have enough information about services that are available?

too much not enough just right **go to Q11**



How could it be improved?

Q11 Do you think that these services have made a difference to your life?

yes <i>please briefly explain how:</i>	no <i>please briefly explain why not:</i>
made new friends	I was OK before
gained more confidence	I can afford to do my own thing
more time for me/breathing space	lack of professionalism
learned new skills	staff unfriendly
discovering new interests	I've nothing in common with others
opportunities for training	intimidating to come here
helped me think about my future	not a friendly place
gained parenting skills	other:
less stressed	
improved relationship with my child	
able to look after my child better	
more involved in the community	
other:	

Q12 Do you think that these services have made a difference to your child's life?

Go to Q14 if the parent is a pregnant woman

yes <i>please briefly explain how:</i>	no <i>please briefly explain why not:</i>
made new friends	scared to be left
enjoys coming here	traumatised
improved behaviour	not enough stimulation
extra confidence to relate to adults	was OK before
more confidence w/ other children	other:
more caring	
more stimulated	
better health	
early identification of a problem	
less stress	
made early start on learning	
been on trips to places we wouldn't have gone to	
other:	

Q13 Are there services or activities that you would like to see offered that are not currently available?

skills	sports
art/craft	children's activities
other	parent & child activities

Q14 Would you recommend Sure Start Little Ilford to your friends with children under 4?

yes, definitely
 yes
 maybe
 probably not
 definitely not

↓
Why is that?

Q15 Do you know that all Sure Start Ilford's services are free?

yes no not sure

Now I am going to ask you a few questions about living in the area.

Q16 How long have you lived in the area?

<input type="checkbox"/>	less than 1 year	<input type="checkbox"/>	4 to ten years
<input type="checkbox"/>	1 to 3 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	more than 10 years

Q17 Do you feel that you have someone you can talk to or turn to when you need help?

yes, my family no not sure
 yes, from other sources

Why is that?

Q18 Where would you go when you have a concern for your child's general health?

<input type="checkbox"/>	GP	<input type="checkbox"/>	don't know
<input type="checkbox"/>	health visitor	<input type="checkbox"/>	other:
<input type="checkbox"/>	NHS direct		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Accident & Emergency (hospital)		

Q19 Where would you go when you have a concern for your child's learning and development?

<input type="checkbox"/>	GP	<input type="checkbox"/>	don't know
<input type="checkbox"/>	health visitor	<input type="checkbox"/>	other:
<input type="checkbox"/>	crèche/nursery		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Books		

Q20 Do any of your children under 4 have any disabilities or special needs?

no yes → **What are their special needs?**

↓

	Are there appropriate services to meet their needs? yes no
--	---

Q21 Would you be interested in getting involved in joining the Parent's Forum or volunteering with Sure Start?

yes (make sure you get their name and number on a separate piece of paper)
 no

We are nearly at the end of the interview. Can I ask you 5 questions about yourself?

yes no, refused

Q22 Are you:

<input type="checkbox"/>	married
<input type="checkbox"/>	lone parent
<input type="checkbox"/>	living with your partner
<input type="checkbox"/>	separated/divorced/widowed

Q22 Are you:

<input type="checkbox"/>	A full-time mother/father/carer
<input type="checkbox"/>	employed, part-time
<input type="checkbox"/>	employed, full-time

Q23 Would you say that you are:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Under 20
<input type="checkbox"/>	between 20 and 30
<input type="checkbox"/>	over 30

Q24 What is the main language that you speak at home?

<input type="checkbox"/>	English	<input type="checkbox"/>	Russian
<input type="checkbox"/>	Somali	<input type="checkbox"/>	Albanian
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spanish	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hindi
<input type="checkbox"/>	French	<input type="checkbox"/>	Urdu
<input type="checkbox"/>	Turkish	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gujarati
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bengali	<input type="checkbox"/>	other

Q25 How would you describe your race and ethnicity?

<input type="checkbox"/>	White
<input type="checkbox"/>	British
<input type="checkbox"/>	Irish
<input type="checkbox"/>	any other background
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed race
<input type="checkbox"/>	White & Black Caribbean
<input type="checkbox"/>	White & Black African
<input type="checkbox"/>	White & Asian
<input type="checkbox"/>	any other mixed background
<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian or British Asian
<input type="checkbox"/>	Indian
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pakistani
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bangladeshi
<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other black Asian background
<input type="checkbox"/>	Black or Black British
<input type="checkbox"/>	Caribbean
<input type="checkbox"/>	African
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chinese or other ethnic group
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chinese
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other ethnic group:

Thank you for your time in helping us with our survey. Your views will be used to improve local services.

Would you like a copy of the latest **Fresh Start**, the Sure Start Little Ilford newsletter

Appendix 2 In-depth individual parent interview schedule

Sure Start Little Ilford - Interview schedule for parents

Parent:

Child/ren:

(Spend 10-15 minutes breaking the ice and familiarising yourself with their child/ren's name/s and details. Where possible use child/ren's name/s in the interview)

Introduction

- thank them for agreeing to take part
- focus of the evaluation is to understand if and how SSLI have made a difference to families with children under 4, and how services could be improved
- remind them about confidentiality (not named in the report etc)
- the interview is in two halves: first, questions about their child, then questions about themselves
- consent to record interview – but don't push if unhappy

About SSLI (Use sheet of activities if necessary)

- 1 Which services and activities are they aware of that are provided by or funded by SSLI?
- 2 Go through each service/activity that they have listed.
 - Which of these have they used?
 - What did they think about what they received?
 - In what way did their child benefit from receiving the service?
 - In what way did they benefit from receiving the service?
 - How could the service have been improved?

About their child

- 3a Are you happy with your child's communication skills (speaking, listening, understanding etc)?

- 3b Have SSLI services helped to develop these skills?
- 4a How does your child react around other children? Is s/he confident?
Does s/he join in with other children?
- 4b Have SSLI services helped to develop these skills?
- 5a Are you happy with your child's ability to concentrate?
- 5b Have SSLI services helped to develop these skills?
- 6a How anxious or settled is your child?
- 6b Have SSLI services helped to develop these skills?
- 7a Overall, how healthy is your child?
- 7b Have SSLI services helped to improve her/his health?

About the parent

- 8a How often do you play with your child?
- 8b Have SSLI services helped to develop these skills?
- 9a How often do you read to your child? Have you been offered you free books?
- 9b Have SSLI services helped you to read and use books with your child?
- 10a Have any of the activities or services offered by SSLI served to develop your own confidence or skills?
- 10b What difference has this made to you as a person? As a parent?
- 11 Would you say that there has been more community activity or a stronger sense of community since SSLI came to the area? Please explain.
- 12 Are you aware that parents can be involved? Are you involved, or if not, would you like to be?
- 13 How best could SSLI get more parents involved?

Thank them for their help.

Appendix 3 Topic guide for parent focus groups

Consent to record focus group

Explain aims of the evaluation: the overall aim is to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of Sure Start Little Ilford in delivering relevant and accessible services to you, the service users. The aim is to ensure that families of pre-school children have access to a range of support and services that will, in the short term, improve their health, well-being and early development and pre-school education, and, in the longer term, improve their life chances.

We are not asking about your personal lives – but we want to know if SSLI is making a difference to you and your under-4s, and we want to know your views on the services and support you access and whether these are enough for you and what you want.

Please remember: everyone has a right to his/her own views
what is discussed in the group should be treated as
confidential

- 1 How did you find out about Sure Start Little Ilford?
- 2 Which services do you use? (List round group)
- 3 What do you think of the services available for your children?
- 4 What benefits to your children have you perceived?
- 5 What do you think of the services offered for you, the parents?
- 6 What benefits to yourselves have you perceived?
- 7 How has it benefited you to meet other parents of under-4s?
- 8 Are the services available at the right times for you?
- 9 What do you think of the buildings themselves – their condition and maintenance?
- 10 Do you feel your ideas and opinions are represented at management level? Do any of you represent the parents on any boards or committees?
- 11 Is there anything else that we haven't discussed that SSLI can offer?
- 12 Is there anything else you would like to say?

Thank you for your time.

Appendix 4 Topic guide for partnership focus group

Introductions

- thank people for coming
- introduce ourselves and PiE
- explain/remind them of the focus of the group
- consent to record

Ask each person to state their name, the agency they work for, their job title and a brief description of how they came to be involved with Sure Start.

- 1 What is the role and remit of the partnership group?
- 2 How often does it meet, and how long do the meetings last for?
- 3 Are the meetings held in a manner that results in a productive use of the time?
- 4 How are decisions made in the group?
- 5 How do parents contribute to the decision making process?
- 6 Are there any tensions between parents and professionals within this process?
- 7 What added value does the partnership approach bring to Sure Start?
- 8 What added value does Sure Start bring to other local services?
- 9 Are there tensions between Sure Start and some mainstream agencies?
- 10 Has the partnership group developed a strategy for how Sure Start services will be mainstreamed?
- 11 Anything else anyone wants to add?

Thank you for your time.

Appendix 5 List of staff and other professionals who participated in interviews

Sure Start Little Ilford staff

Grace Agomoh, Health Visitor
Dee De Costa Veiga, HV Assistant
Jennifer Singh, Nursery Nurse
Nicky Rekhrao, Crèche worker
Karen Chalmers, Crèche worker
Lorraine Ellison, Parent Involvement Worker
Jill Ramoo, Temp accommodation worker
Maxine Kempster, Outreach Worker

Sure Start Little Ilford Senior Management

Janine Hunter, Programme Manager
Jackie Glasgow, Health Team Leader
Sunita Patel, Temp Community Dev. Officer

Sure Start Little Ilford Partnership Board

Val Graves (chair), Director of Community Health Services (partnerships and Integration), Newham Primary Care Trust
Maureen Haynes, Head teacher, Sherringham nursery school
Angela Rock, Volunteer, Dersingham Infants school
Gill Pady, Scheme Manager, Home Start
Theresa Cansdale, Child Care Services Development Officer, Culture and Community Dept
Glenda Popeau, Manager, ELBOW – East London Black Women's Organisation

Other agencies

Luli Nuzi, Shpresa

Appendix 6 Map of Sure Start Little Ilford area