



Making life better for children, parents  
and communities by bringing together:

- ▶ early education
- ▶ childcare
- ▶ health and family support

**SHEFFIELD DISTRICT**

**SURE START SOUTHEY / SHIRECLIFFE**

**ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT**

**2004**

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# **SURE START SOUTHEY / SHIRECLIFFE**

## **SUMMARY OF LOCAL EVALUATION WORK**

### **SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION**

Sure Start Southey / Shirecliffe is a wave 6 Sure Start programme and was approved in July 2003. This report provides a short summary of the evaluation activity that has taken place within Sure Start Southey / Shirecliffe during 2004.

The report will provide a description of local evaluation activities undertaken, summary of outcomes indicated by these evaluation activities and an indication of future steps the programme will take in the light of evaluation.

#### **1.1 Background**

There are currently 1049 children aged 0-4 living within the Sure Start Southey / Shirecliffe programme boundaries. The programme provides a network of high quality, co-ordinated services to meet the identified and expressed needs of the families and children in the area. This is achieved through partnership working with local parents, community, voluntary and statutory services and the Sure Start team. The programme is building on a well established system of collaborative working in the area aimed at enhancing the environment and empowering local people.

The core Sure Start services are delivered by 4 teams each of which is led by a qualified professional leading a diverse team of multi-skilled workers and volunteers. The teams are:

- The Parent Involvement / Community Development Team
- The Health and Outreach Team
- The Family Support Team
- The Early Years and Childcare Team

The service teams are supported by the Finance and Monitoring Team and the Administration Team.

## **SECTION 2 - DESCRIPTION OF EVALUATION ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY THE PROGRAMME**

There are four main types of evaluation undertaken by the programme:

1. Commissioned evaluation projects
2. User satisfaction survey undertaken by community consultations
3. Evaluation activity undertaken by the team themselves
4. Monitoring and data evaluation activity

### **2.1 Combined Evaluation undertaken by School of Education at the University of Sheffield - March 2003 – July 2004**

In March 2003 six Sheffield Sure Start programmes jointly commissioned Dr Michele Moore and Dr Karen Dunn to undertake their evaluations through the School of Education at the University of Sheffield. The evaluation of Sure Start Southey / Shirecliffe was thus set alongside evaluations of five other Sheffield Sure Start programmes to bring added value to the process of individual programme evaluation by maximizing scope for mainstreaming good practice.

The aims of the evaluation were to assist in planning further development of services and provide independent and objective feedback from the full range of stakeholders. Sure Start Southey / Shirecliffe was not approved until July 2003 therefore at the time of the commission was committing itself to evaluation from the very commencement of the programme. This was seen as helpful in assisting planning and development. The evaluators have pointed out that the fact that Sure Start Southey / Shirecliffe was willing to enter in to this process of open evaluation alongside other programmes, reflects the commitment to transparency that Sure Start Southey / Shirecliffe brings to working partnerships based in the community.

The major benefit of a combined evaluation was seen to be the opportunity to identify the key components needed by all relevant stakeholders on the journey towards reconfigured children's services.

This evaluation was designed to be **process** orientated, designed to improve understanding and practice by building on the knowledge and experience of participants. The evaluation drew together work undertaken by Sure Start Southey / Shirecliffe in order to provide a perspective on the challenges ahead.

### **2.2 User Satisfaction Survey undertaken by Community Consultations**

Sure Start Local Programmes (SSLPs) are expected to have an impact on the community as a whole as well as at individual level<sup>1</sup>. In order to demonstrate this impact each SSLP is required to undertake a local survey with residents who live within the area

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<sup>1</sup> *Towards Understanding Sure Start Local Programmes* June 2004

and have children aged 0 -4 years. The surveys should be completed within 3 months of the approval – the baseline survey and again at the end of year 3.

Community Consultations (South Yorkshire) were commissioned to undertake the baseline survey on behalf of Sure Start Southey / Shirecliffe. A questionnaire based survey was chosen as the preferred methodology as they have number of advantages for this type of study. Firstly they enable the collection of a variety of data covering a number of points and secondly a questionnaire can address all the issues quickly compared to more in depth methods such as interviews or focus groups.

The questionnaire was designed in consultation with the Programme Manager based on guidance from the National Evaluation of Sure Start (NESS). Respondents were asked questions about 10 different service areas:

1. Local play areas
2. Local Toddler Groups
3. Local Play groups
4. Health Visitors
5. Doctors
6. Dentists
7. Local Library
8. Information and Advice Service
9. Local Transport
10. Overall services

Respondents were asked to rate these services in categories ranging from ‘*Very satisfied*’ to ‘*Very dissatisfied*’ with an optional ‘*Do not use*’ category. To help clarify individual answers respondents were asked to explain their answers.

The final part of the survey was concerned with childcare and asked a number of questions to determine if further childcare provision is needed in the area.

To carry out the survey a team of researchers employed by Community Consultations were sent around the Sure Start Southey / Shirecliffe area. The post codes of the respondents were plotted on a map to identify the coverage of the area. 109 surveys were carried out which represented a 10% of the eligible families in the area. The questionnaire was administered via door knocking to make possible a relatively random method of sampling. Compared to the census statistics for the population of Southey and Shirecliffe as a whole the sample obtained was representative of the area.

### **2.3 Evaluation activity undertaken by the team themselves**

The challenge of embedding evaluation activity into the core business of Sure Start Southey / Shirecliffe (a new Wave 6 programme) has been aided by specific measures outlined below:

1. Each team is aware that it has specific Sure Start targets to work towards and a strategy for this is clearly identified within the team structure.
2. The objectives for each team are target led. This enables clarity of role and purpose.

3. An outcomes model of evaluation has been cascaded to the staff team (see Appendix 1)
4. Evaluation methodologies and 'user-friendly' proformas have been developed to aid staff in their evaluation tasks. The staff team are now using a variety of methods to capture outcomes and the following interventions have been evaluated:
  - **'Parents Together' meetings**
  - **Parent representation on the Partnership Board**
  - **Participatory Appraisal**
  - **'Parents and Parents To Be' group**
  - **'Teenage Mums Together' group**
  - **Men's Project Worker**
  - **Webster Stratton Parenting Programme**
  - **Young Families Advice Project**

## **2.4 Monitoring and Data Evaluation Activity**

Data is captured electronically by staff, using hand held devices, then transferred electronically to the central database. This removes any intervening paper system and should lead to robust data capture.

The two systems currently in use are:

- **eStart:** a database specifically designed for Sure Start programmes to capture and share child data. It is currently used by 175 programmes across the country.
- **eFect:** a system designed to enable effective cost evaluation for Sure Start programmes.

Staff training is supplied both by eStart and internally via the Information Officer.

## **SECTION 3 - SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES**

Bearing in mind the relative youth of the programme our evaluation data shows substantial progress has been made by the programme in delivering services and engaging local parents and other partners. Our evaluation data drawn together from the above-mentioned sources indicates key strengths and challenges which we use to determine future direction for the programme (- see final section of this report).

### **3.1 University of Sheffield Evaluation of Sure Start Southey / Shirecliffe**

Headline findings demonstrated the following:

- Local parents are involved in the Sure Start Southey / Shirecliffe programme at all levels
- There is evidence to demonstrate a good understanding throughout the programme of the key Sure Start targets

- Systems of evaluation and monitoring are developing well but are still relatively immature
- There is scope for improved communication between the programme and SLA providers, parents and external agencies
- The impact of lack of basic facilities and infra structure had a key bearing on the early work of the programme which has worked to provide high quality services in spite of these factors
- The programme has worked hard to overcome problematic issues of boundaries and borders and negotiated well its proximity to a trailblazer programme.
- Clarity is needed about the precise role and remit of the accountable body in order for best value for the programme to be derived from the relationship with it

Sure Start Southey / Shirecliffe, though a new programme, is seen as successful and is evolving well and has been experienced positively by a wide range of key stakeholders. The stakeholders who contributed to the evaluation unanimously agreed that the work of the programme is valued by the local community. External evaluators have suggested that aspects of Sure Start Southey / Shirecliffe service delivery, including imaginative services – particularly in respect of health targets - provide useful ‘best practice’ exemplars for other programmes to use.

### **3.2 User Satisfaction Survey**

A large number of topics were covered by the survey and are too numerous to feedback for the purpose of this report. However certain themes run through the report:

#### **Dissatisfaction**

Local parks and play areas were frequently criticised. Local transport also came in for heavy criticism particularly the taking off of the ‘pram accessible buses’. Whilst these services are not provided directly by Sure Start Southey / Shirecliffe they do have a large impact on the families in the area. The only dissatisfaction expressed about the Sure Start Southey / Shirecliffe programme specifically, is that there is not yet enough Sure Start provision. As the programme develops its services this situation will change for the better.

#### **Satisfaction**

Respondents were satisfied with many statutory services such as Doctors, Health Visitors and Dentists. Equally Sure Start services such as parent – toddler groups and play groups received a positive response.

#### **Services not being used**

By far the most prominent finding to emerge from the User Satisfaction Survey has been an indication of the high proportion of respondents who say they do not use local services; including services being provided by Sure Start Southey / Shirecliffe. This can perhaps be explained by the fact that this particular Sure Start programme is relatively

new and has not had time to establish its presence in the area. However, other non Sure Start services such as play areas, dentists and the local library met with a high percentage of respondents replying that they didn't use the service which indicates that there is further work to be done to secure participation of local people in services on offer.

### **Need for childcare**

Nearly all respondents said they carry out childcare themselves. A majority also replied that they would like to see further childcare provision in the Southey and Shirecliffe area. These respondents said they would use childcare during the core working hours of 8am and 3pm if it was at a cost that was deemed affordable to them.

When asked to make their own suggestions for further services respondents wanted to see an improvement in the amount of parks and play areas for their children.

## **3.3 Team Evaluations**

### **Parent's Together meetings (PTM's)**

Evaluation of the PTM's has identified the following issues as important to parents:

- Face to face contact with a worker prior to the meeting helps to increase participation and parents feel most comfortable if that same that worker can be present at all meetings. Although this is time consuming and not always possible due to other commitments, making this happen is now a priority for the Parent Involvement Team
- Parents appreciate having small numbers at the PTM's as they feel small numbers enable them to have more in depth discussions on subject matters important to them. They feel large meetings are not conducive to such discussions.

### **Parental input on the Partnership Board**

The evaluation of the parental input on the Partnership Board was undertaken as a 'visioning session' facilitated by a local training provider resulting in a number of outcomes:

- Time of the meeting changed to fit in with local nursery times
- Terms of Reference altered to be more 'user friendly'
- Efforts made to ensure language used at board meetings and in written reports is 'user friendly' i.e. no abbreviations or jargon.

### **Participatory Appraisal (PA)**

Participatory Appraisal is a family of approaches and methods which enable communities to share develop and analyse local issues. It involves local people in identifying local needs and empowering them to work together to find and implement solutions. 3 members of the Parent Involvement team and 2 local parents attended the PA training. Immediately following the training the Parent Involvement team went out into the community to utilise the skills learnt and will continue to do this on a weekly basis. The evaluation of this training has identified:

- The Sure Start team and local parents have an invaluable source of new material and tools for capturing the views of the community.
- This approach raises the profile of Sure Start Southey / Shirecliffe
- Parents are equipped with skills relevant to a number of jobs within the community. One of the parents secured a permanent job as a Community Development Worker following the training.

### **Parents and Parents to be Group**

User evaluation of the infant massage programme identified parent's positive views about the training:

- *"It's is good because it is relaxed and calm and it's an enjoyable experience, we learnt a great deal..."*
- *"The course has helped him to relax and it has made us bond even more. Also it is amazing to watch his reactions, I enjoy doing massage with my baby"*

A formal user evaluation is planned for the next quarter January – March 05.

Worker evaluation of the group identified the following:

- There is a pleasant, relaxing environment in which to facilitate the group.
- The group is well attended and the parents receive a great deal of social support from each other.
- Infant massage training was positively evaluated
- There have been excellent working relationships between the facilitators and the school
- Families attending continue to attend: 'drop-off' is not a problem but the difficulty has been moving parents onto another group as their babies get older. This has caused some difficulties for the programme and requires further analysis and work.

A second group provides opportunities for ante/post natal parents who have other children as crèche is provided. The additional aim was to provide quality play and learning experiences for the children.

Additional evaluation points were:

- The quality of crèche provision was very dependent on the individual crèche workers
- Recruitment of ante-natal families has proved challenging and initiatives to recruit families to the groups is being undertaken at the time.

### **Teenage Mums Together group**

The evaluation of this group took the form of a 'post it' exercise. The young parents were asked to comment on a number of key points and their preferred method of response was to place post it notes on the corresponding flip charts. Key responses were as follows:

#### **Best things about the group**

- Learning new things
- Solving problems
- Doing things as a group
- Meeting new people, getting to know other young mums
- Having a chat

- Support that was delivered in a non judgemental way
- The ability to ask questions in a safe, non-threatening environment
- Fun 'n' laughs
- Day trips
- Babies meeting babies

### **Evaluation of the sessions**

- Benefited from the group being held in relaxing non threatening environment
- Felt safe and supported and not pressured
- Appreciated phone calls to remind them about the group
- Appreciated transport to and from the group
- The young mothers felt they benefited from the group being female only and wanted it to remain so

### **Components of a successful session**

- Good food
- Equipment for the babies and childcare
- One to one support
- Private space to discuss any issues
- Private breast feeding room

### **Ideas for the future**

- Infant first aid training
- Infant hand and foot prints
- Infant massage
- Making things for the baby i.e. toy boxes or treasure basket
- Swimming
- Tips out to the local parks etc
- Pamper days
- Post-natal exercise

### **Men's Project Worker**

The post holder has undertaken an informal evaluation of his first 6 months in post and the findings are as follows:

- Drop in sessions were poorly attended despite extensive flyer distribution
- The most effective contact was from referrals from other workers both within the Sure Start team and other agencies and 'word of mouth' from the other Dad's
- 1:1 work tailored to individual needs is preferred by a small number of Dad's
- 19 Dad's have been worked with over the past 6 months and 5 have moved on into employment
- A Dad's and young Dad's ante-natal group has been set up in response to identified need and will commence in Spring 05.

### **Webster Stratton Parenting Programme**

Sure Start Southey / Shirecliffe have commissioned a local provider – C'mon Everybody to provide the Webster Stratton Parenting Programme for parents within the programme

area. The Webster Stratton Programme provides evidence based, group based parenting programme that is developmental in its approach and is cost effective. The C'mon Everybody undertakes detailed individual evaluations with each participant at the end of the 15 week course and they also undertake a group evaluation. The findings from the close of the most recent programme reported the following:

- 62% of attendees found the course very helpful
- 37% of attendees found the course helpful
- 1% of attendees reported a neutral impact

Parent's comments were as follows:

- *“Good to know other people have some of the same problems”*
- *“Really enjoying the sessions, noticing a change with myself and my children”*
- *“Very pleased so far. Lots of useful advice given. I am enjoying myself”*
- *“Feel I can learn a lot from this group. I am looking forward to the remaining sessions”*
- *The teaching and discussions helped me understand the video clips much better”*

### **Young Families Advice Project**

Sure Start Southey / Shirecliffe have commissioned a local advice service to provide a ½ time worker to give specialist welfare and benefits advice to families with children under 5 living in the programme area. The evaluation from this provider has supplied quantitative data relating to outputs i.e. numbers of families seen and amount of money brought into the area in relation to benefits etc. The findings for the last quarter Oct – Dec 04 are as follows:

- 67 families have been seen by the advice worker.
- 54% of the work was related to housing – this highlights the particular problems young families have with housing. Further analysis of this area revealed a worrying amount of homelessness and disrepair of housing stock in the area.
- 23% of the work was related to welfare benefits.
- 12% related to debt.
- Referrals to the project come from a variety of sources – increasingly self referrals from ‘word of mouth’.
- An additional £37,429 was ‘claimed’ by families seen by the service – this includes Tax Credits, other welfare benefits, grants, debt write-offs and charity payments.
- Other benefits have been the immeasurable difference made to families by facilitating their move from poor inappropriate housing to improved, appropriate housing.

### **3.4 Monitoring and Data Evaluation Activity**

The baseline data is the number of children in area on a particular day of the year as supplied by the NHS.

Aged under 1	270
Aged under 2	221
Aged under 3	230
Aged under 4	212
Total	933

Graph 1 shows the number of children in area, the number of children currently registered and the children seen in 2004. Though the data is not considered to be an accurate representation of what took place<sup>2</sup>, it does demonstrate that emphasis has been placed on capturing children aged less than 1.

Graph 2 shows the number of parents and children seen each month as presented by the M3 return with a significant rise in June when a backlog of registration forms are entered onto the system (Appendix 3).

Graph 3 breaks this down by the child's age. It suggests an improvement in the capture of < 1 and < 2 years olds during 2004.

171 children are recorded as seen during home visits in 2004.

## **SECTION 4 - NEXT STEPS**

### **4.1 Ongoing Combined Evaluation – Sheffield University**

Sure Start Southey / Shirecliffe have commissioned the Sheffield University team to undertake the second phase of their evaluation alongside the other 5 participating Sure Starts. This combined evaluation will enable a collaborative approach to demonstrating best practice in relation to the mainstreaming agenda for young children's services.

This evaluation will be outcomes focussed and will concentrate on child development outcomes in relation to the 5 key outcomes for children and young people identified in Every Child Matters (2003)

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

The 5 key themes will be the framework on which to interpret and assess the impact of Sure Start Southey / Shirecliffe.

The methodology to evaluate these outcomes will consist of an observation based review based on selected elements of the 'Mosaic Approach' (Clark and Moss, 2001), this is an imaginative multi-method strategy for accessing and responding to the view and experiences of young children. This work will be conducted with parent researchers where possible to:

- identify good practice in facilitating inclusion and development of under 4s in activities offered by the SSLP
- review targeted work to enhance specific developmental outcomes – highlighting good practice and developing mechanisms for the sharing of this work
- utilise the skills and experience of parents involved with the SSLP as researchers and active participants in evaluating child development outcomes

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<sup>2</sup> For example X was born on 28/03/2004 and seen 19 times between 02/04/04 and 04/07/04. When the software calculates the M3 return it gives the child an age of -1. We actually saw between 250 and 292 children over this period. (Appendix 2)

- map various exemplars of work carried out by the SSLPs aimed at securing specific developmental outcomes for under 4s with the 5 Laming themes
- establish what works well in respect of facilitating children's inclusion and development – with a view to disseminating good practice
- identify specific interventions which could improve outcomes for under 4s engaged with the SSLP's provision

The work undertaken – and its report – will contribute to service development and change and give exemplars for the development of innovative practice elsewhere.

#### **4.2 Building on User Satisfaction Data**

Sure Start Local Programmes are required to undertake a further user satisfaction question after 3 years of operation to assess the impact of the programme. This second survey will be carried out towards the end of 2006.

A number of key issues raised during the initial survey undertaken in 2004 require further action and are a focus for the Sure Start team and are also being discussed by our relevant partners in the statutory agencies:

- Low use of Library by families with young children
- Dissatisfaction with local play spaces
- Dissatisfaction with local transport
- Difficulty in accessing and NHS dentist

#### **4.3 Monitoring and Data Evaluation Activity**

##### **Areas indicated for improvement:**

1. The need to make data more visible to staff during 2005. This will help staff identify resident children prior to a home visit and remove any inconsistencies between the paper and the electronic system leading to greater accuracy. Hand held computers have been purchased to achieve this end.
2. None-registered families need to be entered on the database to give a more accurate rendition of the number of children in the area. This will also identify families who have not been seen. An agreement is now in place with the NHS to enable this.
3. Families attending Sure Start activities that are out of area will now need to register to enable accurate cost evaluation. Clearly we also need to record the cost of home visits where the parent is not at home. This can only be entered through the handheld.

#### **4.4 Team Evaluation Activities**

The evaluation activity from within the team and with our contracted partners has concentrated to date on process, outputs and soft qualitative data i.e. views of users etc, whilst this is important there is need to move towards a more rigorous outcome focused evaluation.

The jump from outputs to outcomes has not been an easy conceptual shift for many team members and partners alike and has required the adoption of a simple framework to aid the process. The emphasis for 2005 is to ensure evaluation is embedded within everyday working practice of the team. This will place Sure Start Southey / Shirecliffe in a stronger position to assess the impact the programme has had on the lives of the children and families within the programme area.

**Jo Zasada**  
**Programme Manager**  
**January 2005**

# APPENDICES

## Appendix 1

### **Developing a Positive Outcome Approach - The Model**

#### **1. Common Purpose - the shared vision**

Sure Start Southey / Shirecliffe is working alongside the community offering a range of opportunities for parents and carers to enable all children under 5 to reach their full potential.

#### **2. Strap Line - the 'punchy' expression of the common purpose**

A Sure Start to Life

#### **3. Comprehensive Outcome Statements**

**Comprehensive outcome statements are aspirational and focus on desired outcomes for all children - the end points.**

1. Every child achieves their best possible health (Health)
2. Every child achieves their educational potential (Education)
3. Every child will feel confident and secure (Emotional & Behavioural Development)
4. Every child has a sense of self as a separate and valued person (Identity)
5. Every child has the ability to develop and maintain positive relationships (Family & Social Relationships)
6. Every child is able to present themselves positively (Social Presentation)
7. Every child is able to develop the skills required to care for themselves (Self Care Skills)

**When working towards achieving these outcomes consideration should be given to the individual needs of the child, which will vary depending on such factors as age, gender, culture and ability.**

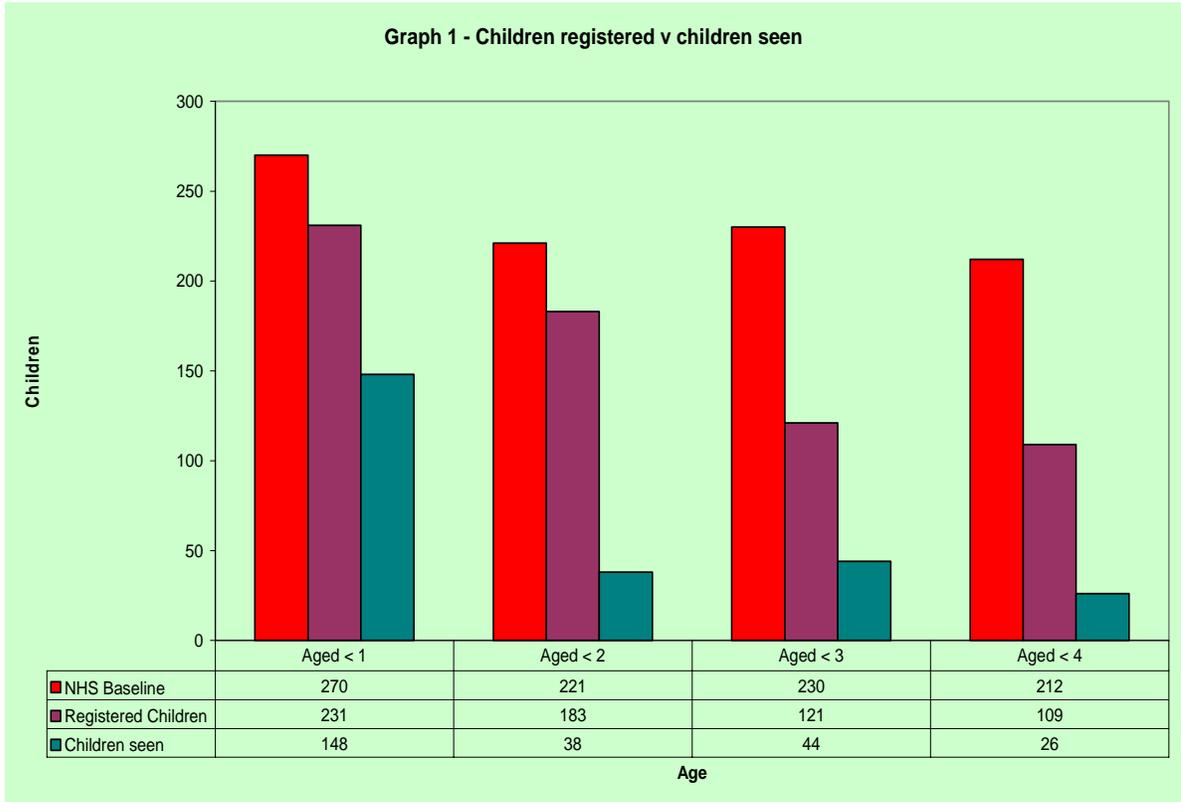
#### **4. Contributory Outcome Statements - components**

- 2 Every child achieves their educational potential
  - 2.1 Being able to play and learn
  - 2.2 Being able to play and socially interact
  - 2.3 Having positive adult support
  - 2.4 Having toys / books / learning resources
  - 2.5 Having the practical and emotional support to learn
  - 2.6 Having accessible safe and purpose built facilities

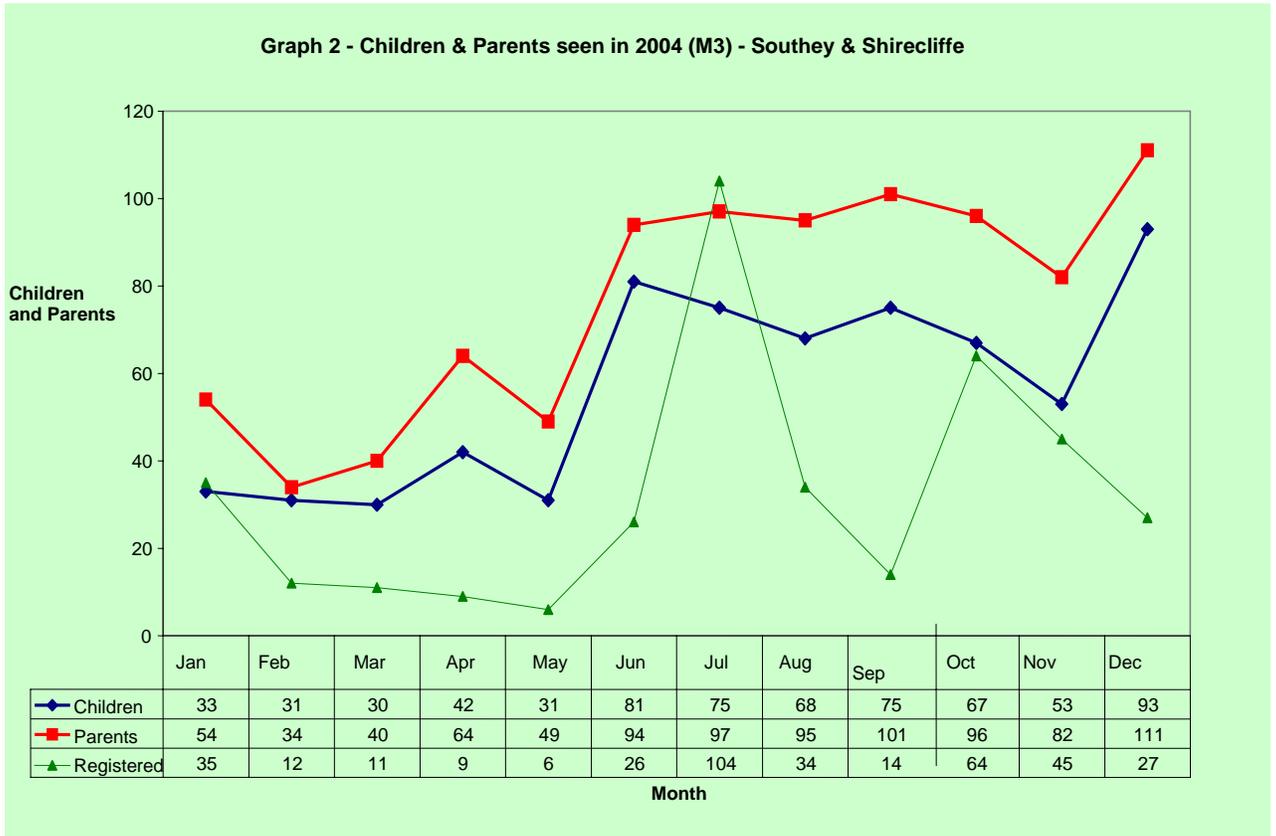
#### **5. Developing Indicators - measure to quantify achievement of outcomes**

- In operational programmes, a % increase in the proportion of babies and young children aged 0-5 with normal levels of development.

**Appendix 2**



**Appendix 3**



**Appendix 4**

