

Monitoring and Evaluation
Report on

**The Northumberland Park
Women and Children Centre
Outreach Pilot
(without appendices)**

Mike Williams and Lisa Dean

Park Lane Sure Start
Local Programme

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SureStart

CONTENTS	PAGE
One Page Summary of Report	1
Introduction to Main Report	2
Northumberland Park Women and Children's Centre	2
Park Lane Sure Start Local Programme	2
Haringey Sure Start Community Chest Pilot	3
The Outreach Pilot Plan	5
Findings	8
Conclusion and Recommendations	15
Summary of Recommendations	18
References	20

For enquiries, questions and comments on this report, and for more information on other Park Lane Sure Start evaluation reports please contact [Mike Williams](mailto:mike.williams@haringey.gov.uk) on [020 8489 2473](tel:02084892473) or email mike.williams@haringey.gov.uk

One Page Summary of Report

This report presents an evaluation of the Northumberland Park Women and Children's Centre [NPWCC] *Outreach Pilot*. NPWCC is a registered charity that provides childcare facilities for children from 0 to 11 years. In March 2004 NPWCC was awarded a grant of £3,510 to employ an Outreach Worker. The Outreach Worker and Centre Manager worked with the Park Lane Evaluation Officer to identify the following targets for the outreach pilot:

1. The Outreach worker to contact and record the details of 180 parents and carers who had not accessed the centre in the six months prior to the contact, between January 5th and March 31st 2005.
2. To provide a leaflet to 162 of these 180 parents and carers.
3. For 24 parents and carers to make initial contact with the centre.

Between January 5th and March 31st, the Outreach Worker made contact with, handed a booklet to and recorded the details of 91 parents. Of the 91 parents, 17 went on to make initial contact with the Centre. This means NPWCC successfully supported parents in caring for their children, and therefore helped Sure Start Park Lane achieve:

- Every Child Matters Aim Number 1, *Be Healthy*.
- Sure Start Objective Number 3, supporting parents in caring for their children to promote healthy development before and after birth.

On reflection, the Centre Manager and Outreach Worker felt they had set their targets too high, because they had not appreciated the amount of time that would be needed to travel to different places, get to know parents and record contact information. An evaluation of the methods used by the Outreach Worker showed that:

1. Direct face-to-face contact with parents was a more effective method for getting parents to access the Centre than the use of leaflets alone.
2. Most parents who accessed NPWCC did so because NPWCC provided a particular service that they had wanted to access prior to meeting the Outreach Worker.
3. Targeting parents who lived beyond the immediate vicinity of the Centre was not effective in getting parents to make initial contact with the Centre.

The Evaluation Officer, Outreach Worker and Centre Manager recommended that:

1. Future outreach work should be face to face, carried out in the immediate vicinity of the Centre, used to sell particular services rather than the Centre, and targeted at parents who need that particular service.
2. NPWCC should review and develop their monitoring system. The monitoring system should allow the Centre to measure the number of users accessing the Centre and its different services, the number of new users, how new users find out about the Centre, and why some users only attend once.
3. The Outreach Worker, the NPWCC Manager and the Park Lane Manager should meet to review these findings, and map out a new plan of action for the outreach work.

Introduction to Main Report

This report presents an evaluation of the Northumberland Park Women and Children's Centre *Outreach Pilot*. It starts by providing brief introductions to the Northumberland Park Women and Children's Centre, the Sure Start national programme and the Park Lane Sure Start local programme. It then moves on to give the background to the Haringey Sure Start Local Programmes 'Community Chest Pilot' fund from which NPWCC was awarded monies in March 2004. It explains how NPWCC employed an Outreach Worker to deliver the pilot between October 2004 and April 2005. NPWCC identified several targets and an evaluation plan for the outreach pilot. In the 'findings' section, the report explains the methods used by the Outreach Worker to achieve the pilot's targets and assesses the effectiveness of those methods. Finally, the report concludes on a number of ways in which Sure Start Park Lane Local Programmes and NPWCC can work together to develop outreach work in the future. The Evaluation Officer would like to thank NPWCC for their co-operation, and the NPWCC Outreach Worker who provided the information needed to complete this evaluation report.

Northumberland Park Women and Children's Centre

Northumberland Park Women and Children's Centre is a registered charity that provides childcare facilities for children from 0 to 11 years. The Centre is located in Northumberland Park in the north of Tottenham, a stone's throw from the Park Lane Neighbourhood Resource Centre, home to the Sure Start Park Lane local programme. The centre, like the Sure Start Park Lane local programme, is located in the north London Borough of Haringey. The Centre is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 6pm, and provides a range of services to support children and families. These include pre- and after school services, drop-ins, learning activities for children, holiday play schemes, short courses for parents and free advice. The Centre also acts as a venue to services provided by other organisations, and in particular services provided by the Sure Start Park Lane local programme. Parents who access a Sure Start Park Lane service at the Park Lane Neighbourhood Resource Centre often use the Centre's crèche facilities. The next section offers a brief overview of the Sure Start national programme and the Park Lane Sure Start Local Programme.

Park Lane Sure Start Local Programme¹

Sure Start is a governmental cross-departmental strategy which aims to improve the life chances of younger children through better co-ordinating early education, childcare, health and family services (Glass, 1999; Sure Start, 2002). It comprises over 500 local programmes, which were rolled out in six waves by the government's Sure Start Unit between 1999 and 2003. Each programme aims to improve the health and well being of families so children are ready to flourish when they go to school. They do this through delivering community based services in disadvantaged areas. Sure Start local programmes were planned to be time limited, ten year projects,

¹ <http://www.haringey.gov.uk/education/educationservices/earlyyears/surestart/surestartparklane.htm>

charged with the responsibility for innovating and piloting new services that mainstream organisations such as the local authority and health authority did not provide. Local authorities and health authorities are expected to work with Sure Start local programmes to integrate the most effective Sure Start services, practices and learning into their existing service provision. This process of integration is often referred to as mainstreaming. The Unit requires local programmes to be run by partnerships of statutory organisations, voluntary sector organisations, community groups and parents (Sure Start, 2003).

Park Lane is one of five Haringey Sure Start local programmes. Haringey is a Borough of London located in the north of the capital. Its population is ethnically mixed, mobile and 9% is made up of refugees and asylum seekers. Haringey ranks as one of the most deprived boroughs in the country, with 7.3% of the population unemployed in January 2003 (Haringey Teaching Primary Care Trust, 2003). There is an extensive area of deprivation in the east and centre of Haringey, with nine Haringey wards featuring in the 10% most deprived wards in the country (Haringey Teaching Primary Care Trust, 2003). Haringey also has high numbers of children living in poverty with associated health problems (Haringey Teaching Primary Care Trust and Haringey Council, 2002). About one-fifth of families are not permanently living in the Borough (Haringey Strategic Partnership, 2002).

As previously indicated Sure Start local programmes were rolled out in six waves between 1999 and 2003. Park Lane Sure Start Local Programme is a wave five programme, which started in 2003, and at the time of writing, is in its third year. Park Lane Sure Start requires all its services, whether internal or commissioned, to monitor and evaluate their effectiveness in meeting Sure Start objectives and in impacting on the lives of local families. The programme recognises the importance of evaluation for assessing and improving the effectiveness of local services, and informing local discussions over the integration of Sure Start services, practice and learning into mainstream service provision. The next section offers an overview of the Haringey Sure Start Local Programmes Community Chest Pilot. It was from the Community Chest Pilot Fund that NPWCC was awarded the money to carry out the outreach pilot.

Haringey Sure Start Community Chest Pilot

The Haringey Sure Start Local Programmes Community Chest Pilot was launched in November 2003. Its purpose was to enable Sure Start local programmes to share their financial resources with local communities, to support and empower people and groups to take a leading role in the development of projects, and to meet local need (Sure Start Haringey, 2003). Its aims were to:

1. Provide support and finance to build the capacity of voluntary and community groups to achieve common objectives.
2. Work with local communities to develop high quality services for children under 4 and their families.
3. Promote projects that are locally led and use the great wealth of learning and experience in our diverse communities.

The total amount of funding provided by the five programmes was £140,000. Park Lane agreed a budget of £20,000. The Park Lane local programme established a panel to allocate its funding. The panel was recruited by community development workers and comprised parents, non-parents and an 'independent' Chair (a person with experience of community development and charring meetings, who was not a user or provider of Sure Start services, or a member of the local programme Partnership Board).

Sure Start Local Programmes created a cross-programme application form for groups interested in accessing community chest funding. Each form was accompanied with guidelines for filling the form in and the set of criteria against which applications would be judged. Groups were allowed to make cross programme applications as well as programme specific ones. In early February 2004, and in preparation for the panel meetings, community development workers appraised each application against the Sure Start objectives, project implementation criteria and management criteria. The Community Chest panels met in late February (Christie and Sugarman, 2004). Each application was discussed and a decision was taken on whether to fund it, often using the appraisal as a starting point for discussion (Christie and Sugarman, 2004, p.17). The Park Lane local programme distributed £20,949 in community chest 'main grant' funds, covering fourteen different projects. As part of this package of awards, it gave £3,510 to NPWCC to employ an Outreach Worker who would identify women and carers who did not make use of the Centre's services.

Following the community chest panel meetings, the community development workers sent a letter of award and a contract of terms and conditions of funding to each group that had been awarded community chest funding (Christie and Sugarman, 2004, p.18). Groups were offered child protection training in April 2004 and project management training in May 2004. Sure Start allocated a community development worker to each funded project. The community development worker's role was to support the group in setting up, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the project (Christie and Sugarman, 2004, p.18). Each applicant was required to maintain monitoring records of their project and conduct their own evaluation (Christie and Sugarman, 2004, p.18, p.22). Some of the community chest projects funded by Park Lane were sent a 'monitoring and evaluation' form' which laid down the requirements particular to that project. The NPWCC Outreach Worker did not attend these training sessions because she was appointed after they had taken place, in July 2004. However she did attend child protection training, organised by the Park Lane local programme in October 2004.

Haringey Sure Start expected all groups to start delivering their community chest projects by September 2004. In October 2004 the Programme Managers of Park Lane and High Cross Local Programmes asked the Park Lane and High Cross Evaluation Officer to conduct a review of the progress made by the projects, and in particular to establish:

- Whether the groups in receipt of community chest monies had started to use their funding and whether they were likely to use their money by the end of the financial year.

- Whether the groups who had already completed their project, or who were in the middle of providing their project, had done so in a manner consistent with their community chest proposal.
- Whether the groups who had already completed their project, or who were in the middle of providing their project, had provided monitoring and evaluation data.
- Whether the groups felt that the Sure Start local programmes could have supported them better.

The Evaluation Officer conducted the review in three phases. First, he established contact with the community development workers appointed to the fourteen community chest projects. With each community development worker, he agreed a strategy for approaching the group running the community chest project. In the second phase the community development worker or evaluation officer contacted the group to conduct the review. In some cases the community development workers conducted the review, because they had already established a rapport with the group. Where this was the case, the community development worker fed the findings from the review back to the Evaluation Officer. In all other cases, the Evaluation Officer held a meeting or conducted a phone interview with the group.

The third phase of the review concerned the evaluation of the community chest projects. Where a community chest project had been completed, the Programme Managers required the group to either submit an evaluation report or complete the monitoring and evaluation form sent to them with their contract. Where the group had not yet started the project, the Evaluation Officer was instructed to work with the group to develop an evaluation plan using the structure provided by the Sure Start Local Programmes Project Form. Where the group was in the middle of completing the project, the Evaluation Officer was instructed to work with the group to ensure that it filled in its monitoring and evaluation form. Otherwise the Evaluation Officer was asked to develop an evaluation plan using the structure provided by the Sure Start Local Programmes Project Form.

When the Evaluation Officer met with NPWCC in October 2004, the Outreach Worker had just started in post. NPWCC agreed to work with the Evaluation Officer to develop a plan for evaluating the outreach pilot. The next section reviews the evaluation plan, and looks at the targets that were set for the pilot.

The Outreach Pilot Plan

In their application to the Park Lane community chest panel NPWCC proposed that their Outreach Worker would identify women and carers who did not make use of the Centre's services, inform them of the services available and assist them in making initial contact with the Centre. NPWCC predicted that in helping women and carers to access the Centre's services the Outreach Worker would enable parents to become a part of the local community and better equip them to help their children's development. Having met with the Evaluation Officer in early October 2004, NPWCC agreed to develop their project plan, by filling in the evaluation component of the Park Lane Sure Start Local Programmes Project Form. In practice this meant:

- Identifying the project's outputs and outcomes. An output is the material effect of a service. An outcome is the effect the service has on a person's life.
- Identifying targets for each output and outcome. A target is something that can be achieved, which can also be measured.
- Identifying the service delivery methods to be used to achieve each target.
- Designing a plan for collecting the data needed to measure the effectiveness of the service delivery methods in achieving the targets.
- Explaining how the project, and in particular its outcomes, helped achieve one or more of the five Sure Start national objectives.

Outputs and Outcomes

The Outreach Worker had been contracted by the Centre to work between seventeen and a half hours a week. The NPWCC identified two outputs for the outreach pilot:

1. To identify parents and carers who live within easy reach of the Centre, but who do not make use of the Centre's services.
2. Inform parents and carers who live within easy reach of the Centre, but who do not make use of the Centre's services, about the services offered by the Centre.

Through achieving its outputs, the Centre aimed to achieve one key outcome:

1. Encourage parents and carers who live within easy reach of the Centre, but who do not make use of the Centre's services, to make initial contact with the Centre.

In seeking to achieve this outcome the Centre was supporting parents in caring for their children (Sure Start Objective Number 3). In order to provide a clear focus to the Outreach Worker's work, NPWCC set targets for both its outputs and outcomes. The three targets were for the Outreach Worker to:

1. Make contact with one hundred and eighty parents and carers who have not accessed the centre in the six months prior to contact.
2. To provide a leaflet to one hundred and sixty-two (of the one hundred and eighty parents) parents and carers between January 5th and March 31st.
3. For twenty-four parents and/or carers, who had picked up a leaflet, seen a poster or spoken to the Outreach Worker, to have made initial contact with the centre (either through phoning the centre, visiting the centre or being brought into the centre by the outreach worker).

SURE START OBJECTIVES

1. **Improve the availability, accessibility, affordability, and quality of childcare**
2. **Improve social and emotional development**
In particular, by supporting the development of good relationships between parents and children, enabling early identification of difficulties, helping families to function effectively and promoting social and emotional well-being.
3. **Improve health**
In particular, by supporting parents in caring for their children to promote healthy development before and after birth.
4. **Improve children's ability to learn**
In particular, by encouraging high quality environments and childcare that promote early learning, provide stimulating and enjoyable play, improve language skills and ensure early identification and support of children with special needs.
5. **Strengthen families and communities**
In particular, by involving families in building the community's capacity to sustain the programme and thereby create pathways out of poverty, developing social relationships between isolated parents and providing pathways into employment for parents.

These targets were to be achieved in the period January to April 2005. Originally, NPWCC had set targets for the period October 2004 to April 2005. However, on starting her work, the Outreach Worker had identified a need for the Centre to produce a colourful leaflet that she could use with parents. Prior to the Outreach Worker being in post, the Centre had used a black and white A5 leaflet (see Appendix, p.22). During her first week in post, the Outreach Worker had found that parents and carers were not particularly attracted to the black and white leaflet. She felt the leaflet didn't put across the message that NPWCC was a place where the children came to have fun. She discussed this with the Centre Manager and subsequently developed a new colourful pocket sized leaflet to give to parents (see p.24). In response to parents who had asked about how to get to the Centre, she included a map of how to get to the Centre, an image of the Centre and bus route information. She also inserted pictures of children doing activities to show what kind of things took place in the Centre. She estimates having spent twenty-two hours on producing the leaflet. The Outreach Worker informed the Evaluation Officer that she would only be able to meet the targets once she had the new leaflet to work with. For this reason, the start of the evaluation was delayed until January 2005, by which time the leaflet was available for use.

Data Collection

The Evaluation Officer and NPWCC Outreach Worker devised a plan to collect the data that was needed to assess the effectiveness of the outreach work in meeting the pilot's targets. Three forms were devised. The first enabled the Outreach Worker to keep a record of her work programme (see Appendix, p.26) in particular, the places that she visited, with the dates and times. The second enabled the Outreach Worker to assess whether she had been able to meet the first two targets (of meeting one hundred and eighty parents and distributing a leaflet to one hundred and sixty-two parents - see Appendix, p.28). The Outreach Worker used the form to collect:

- The names and addresses of parents she saw.
- The location she met each parent/carer.
- Whether parents had visited the centre in the six months prior to the contact.
- Which of the parents/carers she had been able to provide with a leaflet.
- Whether the parent had made any kind of contact with the Centre.

The Outreach Worker also asked for the ethnic background of the parent/carer. She asked for this information to establish whether parents/carers from particular types of group were more or less likely to make initial contact with the Centre. Whilst the Outreach Worker was able to collect the details from many parents, she found that it was not always possible to stop parents for these details, as they might be in the middle of doing other things, like going to the shops or visiting the doctor. For this reason, on some occasions the Outreach Worker recorded the contact, but was not able to record any details of the parents she contacted, and in particular, whether they had accessed the Centre before. The Outreach Worker also reported that she had underestimated the time needed to properly record her visits and contacts. The consequence was that visits and contacts were not always recorded.

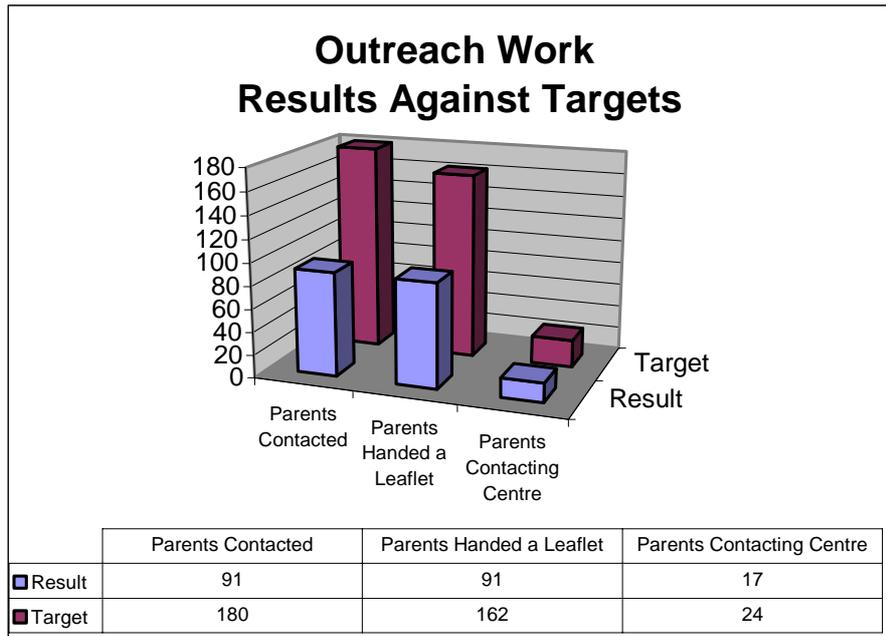
NPWCC needed to establish how many of the parents contacted by the Outreach Worker had gone on to make initial contact with the Centre. A second form (see Appendix, p.29) was created, which allowed Centre staff to enter the details of any parent making initial contact. By establishing how these parents had found out about the Centre, the Centre could establish the effectiveness of the different outreach methods being used. The form also provided a space for staff to note whether the parents who had made initial contact with the Centre had gone on to access services. Given that parents were likely to be contacting different members of staff at different times of the day, it was recognised that all Centre staff needed to be involved in filling in this form. The evaluation plan, which had been agreed by NPWCC, stated that Centre staff would need to ask parents making enquiries about the Centre for their name and how they had found out about the Centre.

In practice it was the Outreach Worker who did most of this work, checking the drop-in attendance lists and registration forms, visiting drop-ins and activities to see if there were any new people, and keeping an eye out for any parent that she had met during her outreach work. However, the Outreach Worker could not be in the Centre at all times to record new contacts with the Centre. The Centre Manager and other staff also checked to see if parents entering the Centre were new. However sometimes they were occupied, meaning they did not get the chance to speak to all the parents. This means that the recorded number of parents making initial contact with the Centre, maybe an underestimation of the real figure. Finally, the Evaluation Officer had planned to talk to parents who had made initial contact with the Centre - to find out what had motivated them to make that contact. However, the Evaluation Officer was unable to fit this into his work schedule. The next section reports on the findings from the outreach pilot, and reviews the effectiveness of the outreach methods used.

Findings

This section reviews the effectiveness of the outreach pilot against the targets established in the evaluation plan. As shown in the chart on page nine, the first target was for the Outreach Worker to make contact with one hundred and eighty parents/carers who had not accessed the centre in the six months before the contact. In total, the Outreach Worker made contact with ninety-one parents, twenty-five of whom were from the Park Lane local programme area.

The second target was to hand a leaflet to one hundred and sixty-two of the one hundred and eighty parents who had not accessed the Centre in the six months before the contact. The Outreach Worker handed leaflets to each of the ninety-one parents she had met. In addition to the ninety-one contacts with parents who had not attended the Centre in the six months before the contact, the Outreach Worker recorded handing a leaflet to a further thirty-five parents without establishing whether they had attended the Centre. On meeting the Evaluation Officer to discuss these results, the Outreach Worker also reported having handed leaflets to a further eighty parents without recording any contact or details. This brings the total recorded number of parents contacted and receiving a leaflet to one hundred and twenty-six, although the total could have been as high as two hundred and six. However, of this number, we can be sure that only ninety-one of these parents reported not having accessed the Centre in the six months before the contact.



The third target was to ensure that at least twenty-four parents, who had not accessed the Centre, went on following contact with the Outreach Worker or having seen a flier or poster left by the worker, to access the Centre. In total, seventeen parents² went on to access the Centre, sixteen made contact by visiting the Centre or attending one of its services and one parent phoned the Centre.

Effective Outreach Methods

Table 1 (pages 11-12) shows the variety of methods used by the Outreach Worker to contact local parents. The methods are ranked by number of parents who went on to access the Centre having been contacted using the method. The Outreach Worker left leaflets and posters at a number of venues but also made direct contact with parents in a number of places. Table 1 shows that of the seventeen parents making initial contact with the Centre, only two had done so through picking up a leaflet or seeing a poster - one at Pembury House, and the other at Fore Street Baby Clinic. The remaining fifteen parents had done so as a result of coming into direct contact with the Outreach Worker. This suggests that making direct contact with parents is a more effective way of attracting parents to contact the Centre, than the use of leaflets and posters alone³.

When we look at the different types of 'direct contact' method used by the Outreach Worker, we find the most effective method was contacting families who were already on a waiting list for a local drop-in. During the Autumn of 2004, the Outreach Worker discovered that Pembury House, an Early Excellence Centre within fifteen minutes walk of NPWCC, had a waiting list of parents for their drop-in.⁴ Pembury House

² Six of these parents live in the local programme area.

³ It is a different question to ask if the method is more efficient, i.e. whether direct contact work results in more parents accessing the Centre for the time and resource invested. This question could have been answered if we had collected detailed information on the amount of time spent by the Outreach Worker on the different methods.

⁴ The Outreach Worker found out about the waiting list at the Park Lane Sure Start Outreach Forum. The purpose of the Forum is for outreach workers to share information about services to aid sign posting.

handed over the contact details of the parents and the Outreach Worker contacted each parent by phone. Of the eight parents contacted by the Outreach Worker, six went on to visit the Centre. One of those is now attending the drop-in on a regular basis.

The next most successful method for attracting parents to the Centre was street outreach. Part of the Outreach Worker's role included stopping parents with young children on the street to talk to them about the Centre. The Outreach Worker would introduce herself, hand a leaflet to the parent, take the parent's details and offer to assist them to the Centre. The Outreach Worker contacted twenty-six parents in this way, working in areas around Tottenham High Road, Park Lane, Fore Street, Lansdowne Road, Edmonton and Wood Green. She found this method of working difficult because people would often think she was stopping them to ask for a donation. Of the twenty-six parents contacted by the Outreach Worker, three went on to make initial contact with the Centre. One of these parents has since attended Razmatazz and has used the Centre's advice sessions.

The Outreach Worker also visited a number of places where parents were likely to be waiting for appointments. These places included local baby clinics and surgeries as well as the ante-natal, post-natal and maternity units at the North Middlesex Hospital. Working in this environment, the Outreach Worker would enter the setting, confirm with the receptionist that it would be OK to talk to the parents, and then proceed to talk to the parents. In the Maternity Unit of the North Middlesex Hospital, the Head of Midwifery made the Outreach Worker wait until she had confirmed her identity with the Centre's Manager. The Outreach Worker found that talking to parents whilst they were waiting, often gave her more time to find out about whether they knew about the Centre, tell them about the Centre and build up a rapport. She contacted forty parents in this way. Of the forty parents, two (from the Baby Clinic at Lansdowne Road) made initial contact with the Centre.

Other methods that were effective in getting parents to make initial contact with the Centre were making direct contact with parents at local drop-ins, libraries, the Park Lane Healthy Living Day⁵, and accompanying the Park Lane Early Years Family Support Worker on home visits. A number of methods were not effective in getting parents to contact the Centre. These included standing outside local supermarkets, visiting local dentists, and visiting the Domestic Violence Team. Finally, the Outreach Worker also tried to visit Wood Green Play Station during her street work in Wood Green. However, as the Outreach Worker explains below, she was not able to freely promote the Centre's services within the Play Station:

I decided to go to Play Station because they have a Baby and Children's Drop-ins during the morning. I went in and explained who I was and where I was from. I asked if I could speak to the parents to raise their awareness about our services. They told me "You'll be taking business away from us". I asked to see the manager but the receptionists said "She's not here yet, but if you'd like to pay we can let you into the Play Station" - I said "OK no problem" and walked out.

⁵ Parents were invited to attend health-related workshops and taster sessions.

TABLE 1: A LIST OF THE DIFFERENT METHODS USED BY THE OUTREACH WORKER TO CONTACT PARENTS/CARERS (RANKED BY NUMBER OF PARENTS WHO WENT ON TO MAKE INITIAL CONTACT WITH THE CENTRE)

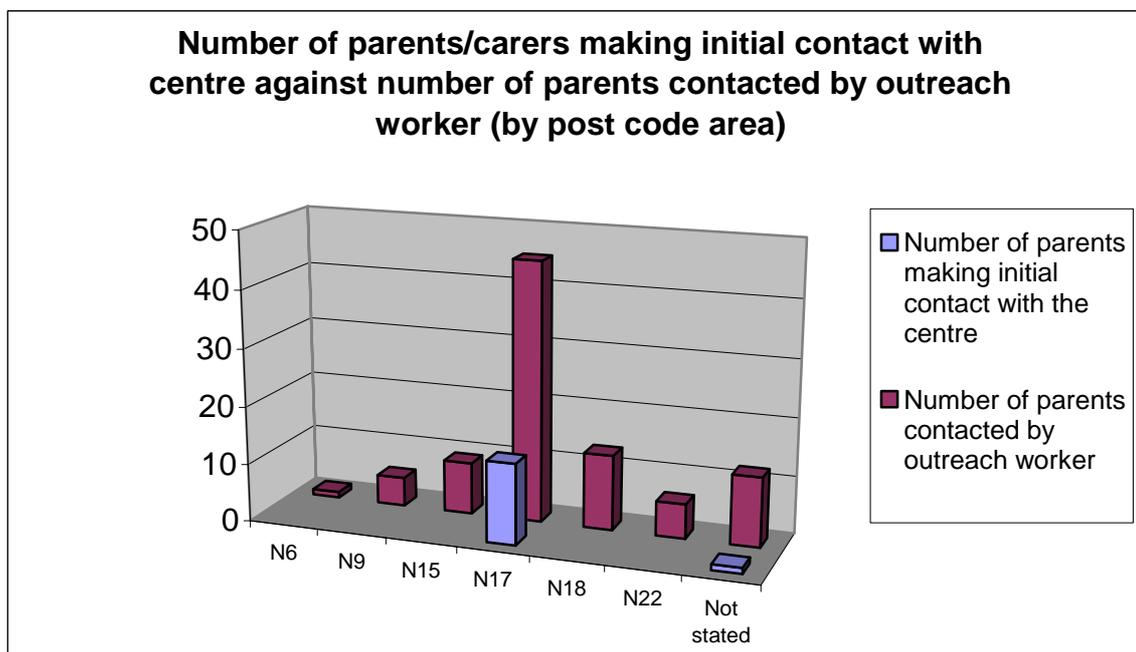
Key: V = Number of visits made by the Outreach Worker C = Number of parents/carers contacted by this method I = Number of parents/carers making initial contact with the Centre

Location	V	Methods Used	C	I	Number of Parents who went on to Access the Centre's Services
Pembury House Waiting List	NA	During Park Lane Outreach Forum Meeting - the Outreach Worker found that Pembury House had a list of parents waiting to access drop-ins. She visited Pembury House, took details of parents and went on to contact eight of them by phone.	8	6	Six parents, who were on the waiting list for Pembury House made initial contact with the Centre. One parent is now regularly attending the drop-in with her daughter. One decided that she felt she lived too far away. Another two attended once and have not returned. The Outreach Worker does not have information on the remaining two parents.
Street Outreach - street not specified	3	Talked to parents on the street, and informed them about NPWCC.	7	2	The first parent was on her way to Pembury House - when the Outreach Worker met her. She explained to the Outreach Worker that she was looking for a drop-in. The Outreach Worker showed the parent what was on offer at NPWCC, and the parent went straight to the Centre. According to the Outreach Worker, this parent has not returned to NPWCC. The second parent phoned the centre to ask about pre-school places and enquire about the waiting list. However he has not come to the Centre since this time.
Baby Clinic and Surgery Lansdowne Road	4	Confirmed with receptionist that it was OK to talk to parents. Talked to parents whilst they were waiting to see nurse or preparing to leave.	6	2	Two parents visited the Centre, one attended a drop-in. The Outreach Worker does not know if they have visited the Centre since their initial contact.
Baby Clinic Fore Street	6	Confirmed with receptionist that it was OK to talk to parents. Talked to parents whilst they were waiting to see nurse or preparing to go. Left leaflets.	19	1	This parent picked up a leaflet in Fore Street Baby Clinic. No information is available on whether the parent has gone on to access services following her initial contact.
Healthy Living Day Event	1	Attended Healthy Living Day Event at Park Lane Neighbourhood Resource Centre - 22 nd March 2005.	12	1	This parent attended the NPWCC drop-in the next day. The Outreach Worker does not know if she has attended the Centre since her initial contact.
Home Visiting	6	Accompanied Early Years Family Support Worker on Home Visits.	4	1	This parent has attended Razmatazz and she has also talked to the NPWCC Advice Officer about housing issues.
Street Park Lane	1	Talked to parents on the street, and informed them about NPWCC.	3	1	This parent has been to Razmatazz and used the advice worker's services.
Coombes Croft Library	5	Left fliers with the library. Informed parents about NPWCC. Put a poster up.	1	1	The Outreach Worker met this parent at Coombes Croft Library. The parent has attended a few drop-in sessions.
Park Lane Family Learning Centre Baby Session Drop-in	2	Talked to parents attending the drop-in and informed them about NPWCC.	1	1	Parent has attended the sewing class, which is held on a Friday at NPWCC.
Pembury House	3	Talked to parents attending the drop-in and informed them about NPWCC. Put a poster up. Left leaflets.	0	1	This parent picked up a leaflet about the Centre at Pembury House. She has since started attending Razmatazz.

Baby Clinic Tynemouth Road	3	Confirmed with receptionist that it was OK to talk to parents. Talked to parents whilst they were waiting to see nurse or preparing to go.	9	0	
Street Tottenham High Road (Tesco, Somerfields)	15	Talked to parents on the street, and informed them about NPWCC.	8	0	
Street Wood Green	1	Talked to parents on the street, and informed them about NPWCC.	5	0	
North Middlesex Hospital	8	Attended the ante-natal clinic, post-natal clinic and maternity unit at the North Middlesex Hospital. Talked to parents whilst they were waiting to be seen.	4	0	
Baby Clinic Somerset Gardens	4	Confirmed with receptionist that it was OK to talk to parents. Talked to parents whilst they were waiting to see nurse or preparing to leave. Left a poster.	2	0	
Street - Fore Street		Talked to parents on the street, and informed them about NPWCC.	2	0	
Street Outreach Lansdowne Road	1	Talked to parents on the street, and informed them about NPWCC.	1	0	
Park Lane Surgery	4	Put up a poster, left leaflets.	0	0	
Street Outreach Bruce Castle	1	Talked to parents on the street, and informed them about NPWCC.	0	0	
Doctors Surgeries	1	Put a poster up. Left leaflets.	0	0	
Domestic Violence Team	1	Talked to staff, left leaflets and a poster.	0	0	
Street Outreach Tesco	1	Talked to parents on the street, and informed them about NPWCC.	0	0	
Street Outreach Social Services - Tottenham High Road	1	Talked to parents on the street, and informed them about NPWCC. Put a poster up. Left leaflets.	0	0	
Tesco Lee Valley	8	Talked to parents on the street, and informed them about NPWCC.	0	0	
Tottenham Green Library	3	Left fliers with the library staff.	0	0	
Tottenham High Road Dentists	1	Left leaflets with the dentists and talked to parents who were waiting for their appointment.	0	0	
Housing Office - Wood Green Road	1	Leaflets left.	0	0	
Housing Office - Tottenham High Road	1	Leaflets left.	0	0	
Fore Street Dentists	1	Leaflets left.	0	0	
Hairdresser	1	Put poster up.	0	0	

Proximity to the Centre is a Key Factor in a Method's Effectiveness

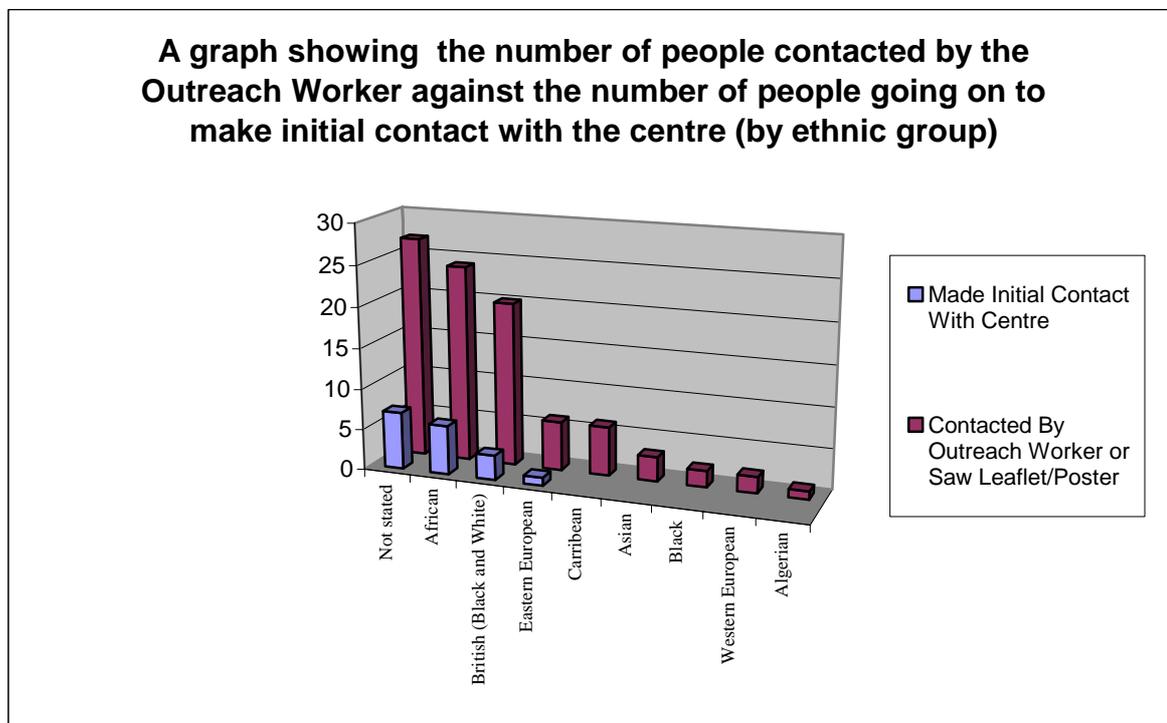
It appears that one of the most important factors in determining whether parents go on to make initial contact with the Centre is the Centre's proximity to the parent's home. The Outreach Worker asked parents and carers for their address and postcode. The chart below shows that fifty percent of the parents the Outreach Worker made contact with were from N17, the area in which the Centre was located. The other fifty percent were from the N6, N9, N15, N18 and N22 areas. The chart also shows that, with one possible exception, all the parents who went on to make initial contact with the Centre were from the N17 area. This finding strongly suggests that when a parent considers whether to make contact with the Centre, the Centre's proximity to their home is a key factor.



Ethnic Background

The Outreach Worker asked for the ethnic background of the parents and carers she spoke to. The Evaluation Officer used this information to analyse whether parents/carers from particular types of group were more or less likely to make initial contact with the Centre. In total, parents and carers provided the Outreach Worker with twenty-three different ethnic identities (see Appendix, p.30). These twenty-three categories have been collapsed into eight categories, to aid the reader's understanding of the data. The chart on page fourteen shows the number of parents contacted by the Outreach Worker against the number of parents going on to make initial contact with the Centre by ethnic group. It shows that twenty-five per cent of all Africans contacted went on to make the initial contact with the Centre - this was the highest proportion of any named group to make contact with the Centre. The Manager of the Centre noted that this trend reflected the fact that a large number of African families were on the waiting list for their pre-school services. Fifteen per cent of British parents/carers went on to access the group. However when the term British is broken down (see Appendix) one can see that none of the four people who described

themselves as Black British made contact with the Centre, and the only person describing him/herself as Asian British did not make contact with the Centre. It should also be noted that no-one describing themselves as Black, Turkish, Caribbean, Asian or Western European went on to contact the Centre.



Because only a small number of people went on to access the Centre then the significance of these findings is very low. However if the Centre continues with its outreach work, it should continue to monitor the attendance of parents and carers from Black British, Asian, Caribbean and Turkish communities.

What the parents did after making initial contact

In the Data Collection section it was explained that whilst the Outreach Worker's job was to do no more than get parents to make initial contact with the Centre, the Centre was encouraged to note whether parents who made initial contact with the Centre had gone on to access services. Of the seventeen parents that went on to make initial contact with the Centre:

- Six continued to attend services, including the drop-in sessions, sewing classes, advice sessions, Pilates and Razmatazz⁶.
- Five parents did not follow up their initial contact, and the Outreach Worker has no information on whether the remaining six followed up their initial contact.
- Of the five that have not followed up their initial contact, one did not because she felt that the Centre was too far away from where she lived (the Outreach Worker gave her the contact details for the Sure Start Roundway Local Programme).

⁶ Razmatazz is a Sure Start funded creative play and drama service, which runs every Monday between 1.30 and 2.15.

Other ways in which the Outreach Worker has encouraged parents to access the Centre

The focus of this evaluation has been on how many parents went on to make initial contact with the Centre having been in contact with the Outreach Worker, or having seen a poster or flier. However, the Outreach Worker facilitated parents use of the Centre in other ways. Through attending the Park Lane Outreach Forum, she heard that the Family Support Worker for Teenage Parents was looking for a local venue for her support group. The Outreach Worker suggested the Support Worker use the Centre. Between November 2004 and February 2005, the group used the Centre every Thursday. Now the Support Group is running from the Park Lane Neighbourhood Resource Centre, but the parents still use the Centre's crèche facilities (parents from the support group leave an average of eight children with the Centre each week).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The purpose of this report was to present an evaluation of the Northumberland Park Women and Children's Centre *Outreach Project*. This section offers a brief review of the findings, before going on to identify the key learning points and recommendations from this evaluation.

The Park Lane Sure Start Local Programme awarded funding to NWPCC for the outreach project in March 2004. In early October 2004, NPWCC agreed to develop their project plan, by filling in the evaluation component of the Park Lane Sure Start Local Programmes Project Form. They identified three targets, to be achieved between January 5th and March 31st 2005.

- The first target was for the Outreach Worker to make contact with one hundred and eighty parents/carers who had not accessed the centre in the six months previous to the contact. In total, the Outreach Worker made contact with ninety-one parents.
- The second target was to hand a leaflet to one hundred and sixty-two parents. The Outreach Worker handed leaflets to each of the ninety-one parents that she met.
- The third target was to ensure that at least twenty-four parents, who had not accessed the Centre, went on following contact with the Outreach Worker or having seen a flier or poster left by the worker, to access the Centre. In total, seventeen parents went on to access the Centre in this way.

This result shows that NPWCC has successfully encouraged parents and carers who live within easy reach of the Centre, but who do not make use of the Centre's services, to make initial contact with the Centre. In so doing they have successfully supported parents in caring for their children, and therefore helped Sure Start Park Lane Local Programme achieve Every Child Matters Aim Number 1, *Be Healthy*. They have also helped the Programme achieve Sure Start Objective Number 3, supporting parents in caring for their children to promote healthy development before and after birth.

The Outreach Worker has suggested that the recorded results may be lower than the actual results, because she did not always note down her contacts with parents. The Local Evaluation Officer discussed with the Outreach Worker why she did not always collect contact details. The Outreach Worker said she had underestimated the time needed to do this task (e.g. by dedicating one hour at the end of the day to data collection). It is not uncommon for service providers to underestimate the time needed (*see the WannaBees Evaluation Report*). Based on this experience and in discussion with the Local Evaluation Officer, the Outreach Worker has resolved to start planning evaluation time into her work schedule and to be more protective over the time she has allocated to data collection. She has also resolved to give herself daily targets, which will allow her to assess her own progress, and make changes when it seems that a particular method is not working.

The Outreach Worker feels that the number of parents who went on to access the Centre may also be deflated. This is because the Centre did not establish a systematic approach for recording whether those who phoned or visited the Centre were new to the Centre, and how they found out about the Centre. The Outreach Worker reported that Centre staff were sometimes occupied and unable to attend to each carer that walked into the Centre. If the purpose of outreach work is to increase the number of users of the Centre, then the Centre needs to keep accurate records of the number of users accessing the Centre and its different services, the number of new users, and how new users find out about the Centre. Without this system in place it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of the outreach work. If one cannot measure the effectiveness of the outreach work, it makes it difficult for Sure Start Park Lane local programme to know if it is making the best use of its money. It is for these reasons that Park Lane Sure Start local programme and NPWCC may wish to consider implementing a more systematic monitoring system to capture the data needed to assess the effectiveness of the outreach work.

The Local Evaluation Officer reviewed the findings with the Outreach Worker in April 2005 and then with the Centre Manager and Outreach Worker in August 2005. The Centre Manager and Outreach Worker felt the targets that had been set were too high. This is because at the time they had set the targets, they had not appreciated the amount of time needed to travel to different places, get to know parents and record contact information. The Evaluation Officer and Outreach Worker also discussed why people who had been informed about the Centre did not come to the Centre. They came up with four possible reasons.

1. Some parents might have felt the Centre was too far away. This was given as a reason by one parent who lived in the Sure Start Roundway area, and is suggested by the fact that the majority of parents who made initial contact with the Centre were from the N17 area.
2. Parents were not interested in what the Centre had to offer. The Outreach Worker found that some carers were looking for a playgroup or a nursery where they could leave their children (which the Centre did not provide) rather than a drop-in.
3. Parents might have felt their children were too young to be taken to the Centre, but would have wanted to take them when they were older.
4. Some of the parents, and especially those in a rush, might not have paid full attention to what the Outreach Worker was saying to them.

This evaluation has not been able to show why parents did not attend the Centre. Sure Start Park Lane and NPWCC might consider surveying the parents who didn't make contact with the Centre, to establish why they chose not to make contact.

The Evaluation Officer and Outreach Worker also discussed the reasons for why parents attended the Centre. One of the key reasons seems to be the Centre's proximity to the parent's home. This is borne from the fact that fourteen of the fifteen parents who accessed the Centre having spoken to the Outreach Worker were from the N17 area. The chart on page nineteen shows the range of methods used by the Outreach Worker during the pilot, and the postcodes of the parents that were contacted by each method. Taken together with the findings on proximity it suggests that talking to parents at Fore Street Baby Clinic, and doing outreach work on Fore Street and Wood Green have not been and are unlikely to be effective methods for getting parents to make initial contact with the Centre. It also suggests that the more effective methods will be those that target parents living in the Centre's immediate vicinity and in the N17 postcode zone.

A second key reason for why parents accessed the Centre is the appeal of particular services. For example, the most effective method was where the Outreach Worker targeted the drop-ins at parents who were on the waiting list for a drop-in. One parent, who was already attending a drop-in at Pembury House, made contact with the Centre to attend their sewing classes. This suggests that it might be more effective to target particular services at particular groups, rather than selling the Centre to everyone. In future, the Outreach Worker might like to review each of the Centre's service, and identify which kind of parents would be most likely to need or want it. She could then target the service at that group of parents. Furthermore, when talking to parents on a one-to-one basis, the Outreach Worker should get to know their personal interests and needs and then sell particular services to address those needs.

A third reason might be that a person is more likely to make contact with the Centre once they are able to identify and trust a person connected with it. The findings showed that of the seventeen parents making initial contact with the Centre, only two had done so through picking up a leaflet or seeing a poster. The remaining fifteen parents had done so as a result of direct contact with the Outreach Worker. Other local evaluation findings suggest that people are more likely to access a service when it is recommended by someone they know and trust, than by simply reading a leaflet or flier. For example, when we asked the nine parents who attended a drama workshop service about how they had found out about the service, most said they had found out about it as a result of attending another group or through being told about it by someone they already knew. Only one of the nine parents attended as a result of receiving a mail out. The Outreach Worker may wish to consider spending more time and effort on methods that allow her to build up a rapport with parents, rather than those which don't (e.g. standing outside supermarkets where people are generally too busy to speak for very long). The Outreach Worker for example found it easier to talk to parents who were waiting for appointments in health clinics and who were attending events like the Healthy Living Day. She may also want to book appointments to speak to groups of parents, where she can field questions and answers. Finally, she may want to follow up her initial contact with parents, by making a phone call to ask them if they would like to pay a visit to the Centre. In the High Cross Sure Start Local Programme evaluation of La Famille a number of parents

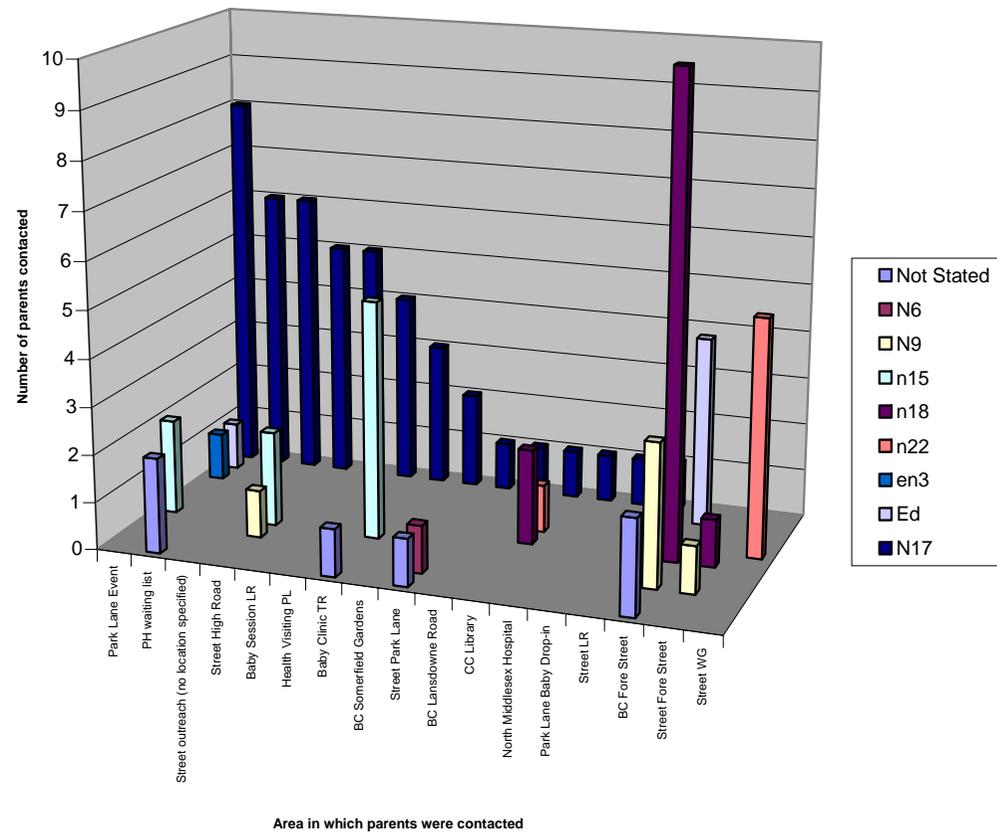
have reported continuing their attendance on the basis of frequent phone calls from the La Famille Project Manager. They commented that the calls made them feel more included and wanted, and for this reason they continued to attend.

Sure Start Park Lane committed itself in April 2005 to funding the work of the Outreach Worker for another year (at seventeen hours a week). It is important that both Sure Start Park Lane and NPWCC show they have learned from this evaluation. For this reason, the Local Evaluation Officer has recommended that the outreach worker, the NPWCC Manager and the Park Lane Manager should meet to review these findings, and map out a new plan of action, for the outreach work. The Centre Manager also feels that the experience has shown that NPWCC needs to look at developing monitoring and feedback systems.

Summary of Recommendations

1. Future outreach work should be face to face, carried out in the immediate vicinity of the Centre, used to sell particular services rather than the Centre, and targeted at parents who need that particular service.
2. NPWCC should review and develop their monitoring system. The monitoring system should allow the Centre to measure the number of users accessing the Centre and its different services, the number of new users, how new users find out about the Centre, and why some users only attend once.
3. The Outreach Worker, the NPWCC Manager and the Park Lane Manager should meet to review these findings, and map out a new plan of action for the outreach work.

Chart showing number of parents contacted by outreach worker at each outreach site (by post code area)



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