

A snapshot into the work of the B48's project

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Evaluation of the B48's

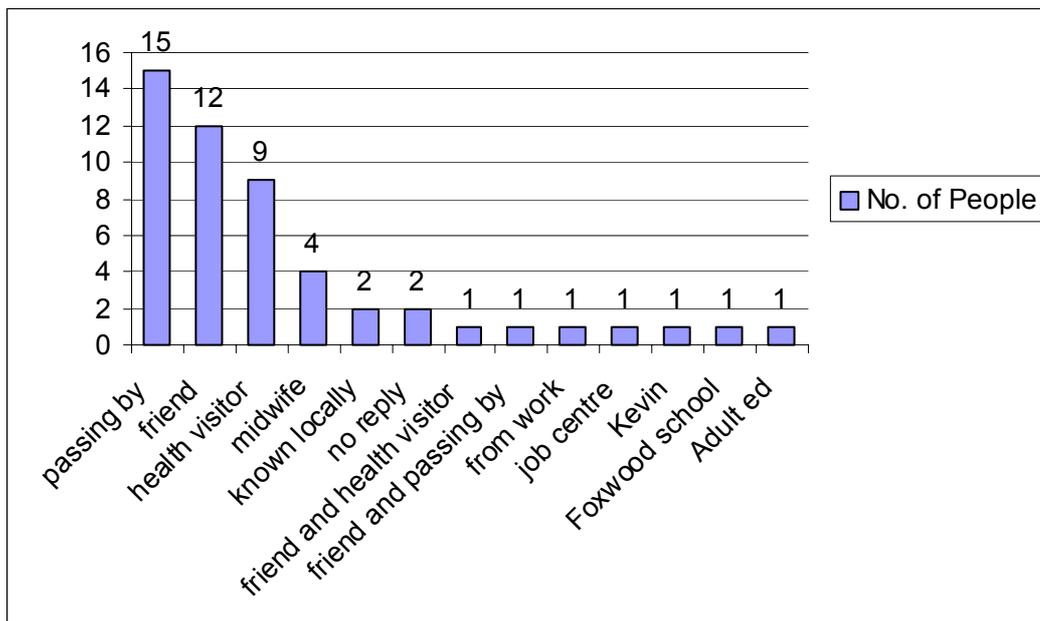
Introduction.

Discussions concerning the replicability of the B48's project at a project appraisal meeting lead to the decision to conduct this small-scale survey. The focus of the survey would be to determine why parents used the B48's facilities, what facilities were the most popular, and whether the B48's was the primary reason for parents making a trip into town. In addition, and with the aim of improving the service, questions regarding satisfaction were also included. The survey was conducted during a one week period.

The findings of the survey would then be used to reformulate the objectives of the project.

The survey began with determining how the user "discovered" the B48's before moving on to questions designed to create a profile of the typical user, including demographics and frequency of B48's visits.

Table1: Where did you hear about the B48's?



Over 50% of respondents had "discovered" the B48's through either passing by; reinforcing the view that the B48's is strategically located and thus accessible, or through friends. 16 respondents had heard of the B48's from their visiting health professional; supporting evidence of the partnership approach undertaken by the B48's and other organisations.

PAINTING THE PICTURE

Tables 2, 3 and 4 provide some basic information about the B48's user, helping to create a profile of the typical user and thus highlight those individuals not using the B48's at present.

Table 2: Basic demographical characteristics of B48's users

Nationality	Total	Relationship	Total	No. of children	Total
Albanian	2	Mother	46	0	4
Algerian	1	Father	1	1	23
British	38	Mother & Father	1	2	18
Croatian	1	Uncle	1	3	4
Czech	2	Parent	1	4	3
Hungarian	1	Au pair	2	5	1
Kosovan	1				
Russian	3				
Turkish	1				
Yugoslavian	1				
Yugoslavian/British	1				

Table 3: Frequency of visiting the B48's

How often do you visit the B48's in a typical week?		
Response	No. of responses	%
Second visit	1	1
Once a fortnight	2	4
1-2 week	33	62
3-4 week	11	21
5-6 week	4	8
7 or more	2	4

Table 4: Purpose of visit to town

Do you come into town with the sole purpose of visiting the B48's?	
Response	No. of responses
Yes	39
No	14

The typical user of the B48's resource tends to describe herself as British, and a mother of one child. She typically visits the B48's between once and twice a week, making a point of travelling into the town centre with the sole purpose of visiting the B48's. Those individuals not

significantly represented as users of the service include males; although perhaps they are at work, and members of other nationalities.

B48'S SERVICE USAGE

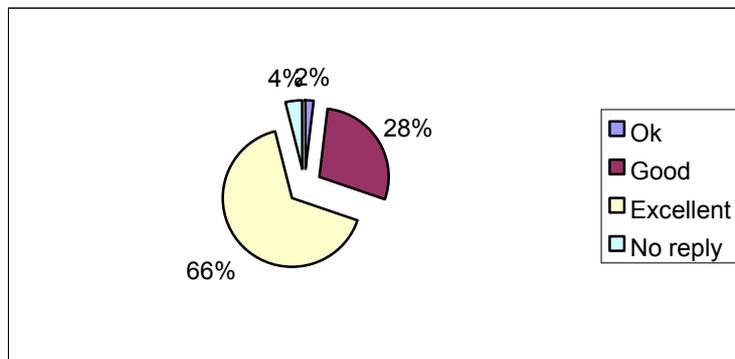
Respondents were required to indicate which services they used. The chart below shows this information. Numbers highlighted in red represent the actual number of responses.

Table 5: Facilities used

General drop in	28	Meeting facility						
Meeting facility	14	19	Play facility					
Play facility	20	14	35	Toilet/Baby Changing				
Toilet/Baby Changing	18	12	19	23	Info & Advise			
Info & Advise	15	12	20	12	25	Support group		
Support groups	13	13	15	11	12	26	Computer facilities	
Computer facilities	14	11	19	11	12	7	24	Others
Others	2	2	2	1	1	2	0	3

35 respondents indicated they used the B48's for the play facilities offered, whilst 28 respondents indicated using the B48's as a general drop in. Figures in black show the cross-reference of two services. 20 people indicated they used the B48's as a play facility and as a general drop-in facility, whilst a further 20 people indicated they used the service because of the play facilities and to gain information.

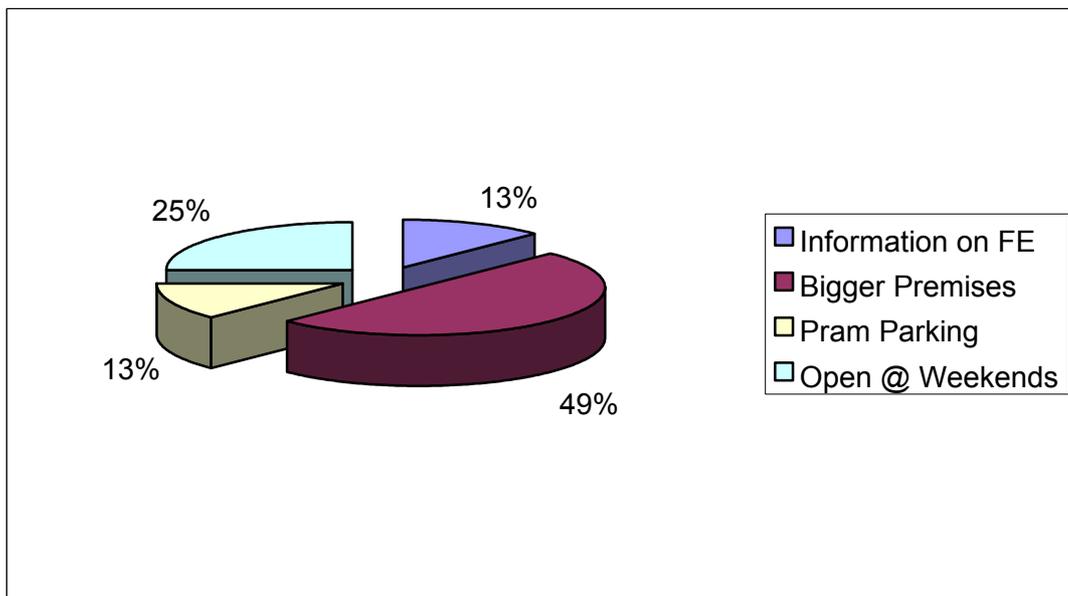
Table 6: Satisfaction rating for the B48's



As the pie chart shows, the vast majority of users rate the B48's as excellent or good. Mathematically, 94% of users responding to this question rated the service as either excellent or good, with 66% rating it as excellent, and 28% rating the service as good.

Suggestions for improving the B48's were not so forthcoming, with the vast majority of respondents omitting this question. Of those who did, locating to larger premises was the most common response.

Table 7: Suggestions for improvement



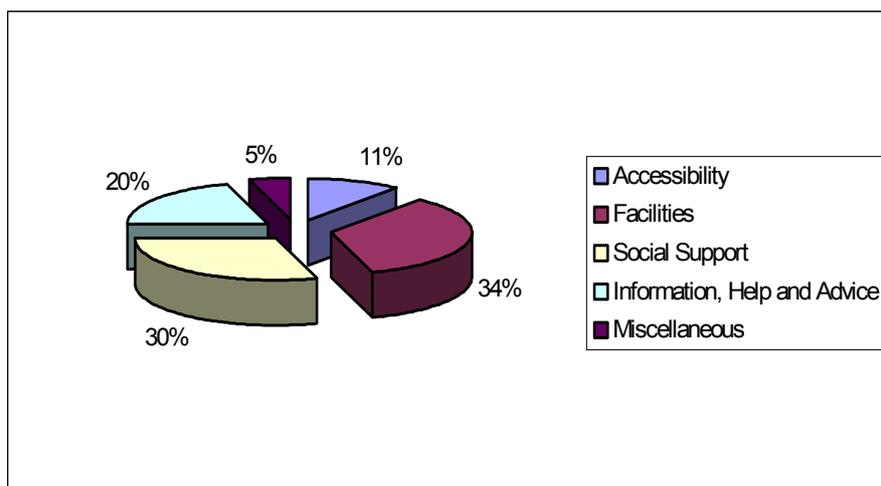
CENTRE USEFULNESS

An open-ended question, this question was analysed using the theme extraction process. Responses were seldom made independently, but tied with other comments. As such themes were extracted and recorded separately.

There were 30 responses to this question, centred around 4 key themes: Accessibility, Usage of facilities, Information, Help and Advice, and Social Support.

The use of facilities and the social support available were often cited as reasons for finding the B48's useful, and to a lesser degree information, help, advice and accessibility. This is shown in table 8 below.

Table 8: Themes relating to the usefulness of the B48's



Accessibility	7
The relaxing atmosphere	1
Location, and opening hours	1
You can pop in anytime	5

The most frequently cited theme involved the opening times. Lending support for the need to open the B48's on alternative Saturdays.

A recurrent theme in terms of accessibility concerns the B48's location in town. Evidenced by the 28% of respondents who first noticed the B48's whilst passing by.

Accessibility is also referred to in terms of the relaxing, and friendly atmosphere at the B48's.

Facilities	22
Children can play freely	9
Baby Change Facilities	6
Somewhere you I can feed the baby	4
Computer Facilities	4

The most popular theme regarding what people had found useful about the B48's centred on the facilities it provided. Respondents often cited a number of facilities rather than just one. For instance one parent noted that 'it's great for.... to stretch their legs and play with unfamiliar toys.

Social Support	19
Having a cup of tea and a talk	5
Good place to make friends	5
Meeting other children of all ages.... For my daughter this important, as most of the	4

time she sees only me at home	
Staff are helpful and always willing to help	4

The B48's has proved most helpful for many users as a means of providing social support on many levels. This has been through providing facilities, both for mother and child, and information, in addition to the various support groups throughout the week.

The B48's also provides social support more informally. It provides parents with somewhere they can go for a cup of tea and a chat, both with the staff at the B48's and with other users of the B48's. Indeed staff are seen to play a pivotal role in informing, helping and advising parents on a range of issues.

Consequently, it is not surprising that several comments were made regarding the B48's acting as catalyst in meeting new friends and socialising.

Furthermore, parents also reported the benefits social support from their child's viewpoint. Interactive play with other children was a high priority for one mum.

Information, Help and Advice	13
I go to pick up information	5
They always have up to date information	2
Excellent advise and Fantastic Staff	4
Child Development	2

In total there were 13 comments regarding the B48's being useful in terms of providing information help and advice. Information was reported to be of a high standard whether in the form of literature or verbally by staff. There were three other comments as to how the B48's was useful.

Miscellaneous	3
Respite for me	2
Charity Clothes	1

Summary

The B48's is used for a number of reasons. Facilities were cited most frequently, especially concerning children's play facilities. However, themes did not occur in isolation. Alongside use of facilities other themes regarding Social Support, Accessibility and for Information Help and Advice were also cited. Social Support was the second most popular theme, frequently mentioned not just in respect for being a support for parents, but also providing the chance for children to make new friends and use computer software. Social support is also given through information, help and advice – not just in the form of literature but from staff and possibly other parents too concerning a number of matters including child development. The B48's location friendly atmosphere was also a pull factor.

USEFULNESS OF INFORMATION

Most parents reported information as being either good or excellent.

Table 9: Usefulness rating of information gained

How useful was the information?		
Response	No. of responses	%
Ok	1	1
Good	24	45
Excellent	27	51
No reply	1	1

Table 10. depicts those types of information that have been of most use. In terms of usefulness it has been Early years groups, General information and Other Support Agencies that have proved most handy.

Table 10: Types of useful information

What information have you found useful?	
Early Years Groups	12
Playgroups, Nursery's, Childcare, Baby Groups	
Child Health	6
MMR, Injections, Disabilities, Weaning, Breastfeeding	
General Health	4
Dental and Health Advice, Illnesses, Feeding and General Health	
General Information	9
Various incl. Doctors, Internet, Computer facilities	
Information Help and Advice	2
Pointing in right direction for Home schooling	
Support Agencies and Organisations	7
Child Care, Aspergers and Autism Groups, Sure Start, Toy Library	
Miscellaneous	2
Learning English, children's play	

There were three comments regarding unavailable information. These included 'information on clubs for over 5's' and requests for more information on college entry and courses. Finally, a regular newsletter covering what is happening and future events was requested.

COMPUTER USE

Within the provision of the B48's is a UK online centre, a government initiative to increase access to ICT. There are currently 150 registered users at the B48's. Unfortunately this information is not represented in the data collected during this period.

Table 11: Computer use

Do you use the computer facilities?		
Response	No. of responses	%
Never used them	22	42
Occasionally	20	38
Alot	10	19
No reply	1	1

Table 11 suggests that just under half of the users currently do not use the ICT facilities. Those that do, use them mainly for games, general information and emailing.

Table 12 provides information concerning the use of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT). 16 people indicated they used the ICT to access children's software, whilst 14 people indicated they used the ICT to find information. 12 indicated they used the facilities to find information and to use the e-mail chat.

Table 12: Computer options used

	To find information								
To find information	14								
Careers Advise	1	1							
CV Building	1	0	1						
Job searching	3	0	1	3					
Children's Games	7	0	0	0	16				
Children's Special Needs	1	0	0	0	2	3			
Education	0	0	0	0	0	0	5		
Other (e-mail and others)	12	1	1	1	8	1	0		15

SUPPORT GROUPS

The Baby café and the English as a second language seemed to be the most popular support groups.

Table 13 Support group

What Support Group do you Attend?	
Support group	No. attending
Alpha	4
Aspergers and Autism	4
Lone Parent Advisor	2
Toddle along	4
Baby Café	10
KCC English Pathways Project ESOL	8

Table 14: Support group ratings

How would you rate the support group?	
Good	4
Excellent	17

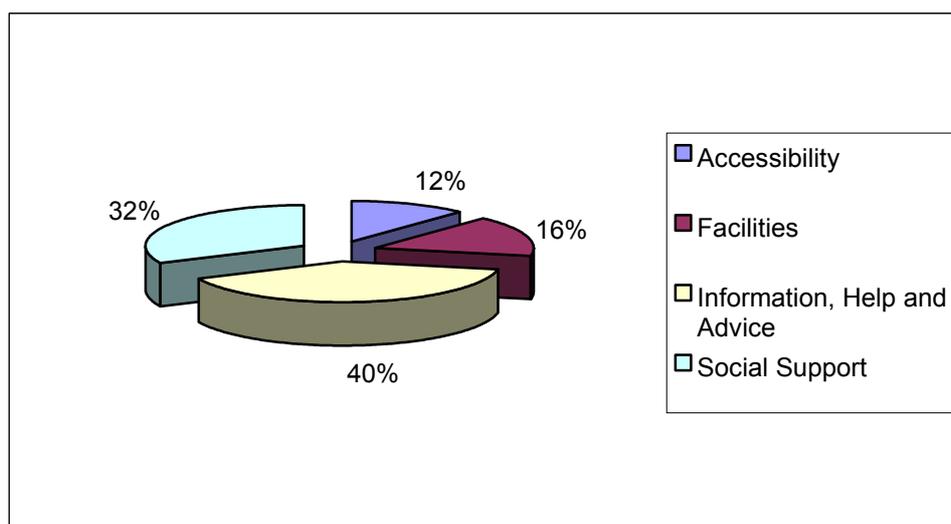
There were 21 respondents who rated their support groups, all of whom rated their support groups as either good or excellent. When asked why they had rated their support groups as such there were a range of different answers as to why they were useful. The following section expands on why the support groups are useful.

SUPPORT GROUP USEFULNESS.

There were 15 responses to this open-ended question. The theme extraction analysis revealed 4 themes Accessibility, Social Support, Facilities and Information, Help and Advice.

The most popular response to this question centred on the information, help and advice received. This was closely followed by the social support received at the support groups. The following pie chart shows the breakdown of this information.

Table 15: Reasons for finding the support groups useful



Accessibility,

In addition to the central location, recurrent themes included the atmosphere of the groups, with respondents suggesting that they were relaxing. Staff were regarded as being very welcoming and friendly in an environment where parents could “take time out”.

Accessibility	3
Good atmosphere, relaxing.....	1
The B48's is always very welcoming	1
It's good to be out and good for children to play, while I can relax and take time out	1

Facilities

Respondents highlighted both computer software and other play materials as being useful in the support groups.

Facilities	4
Lovely clean environment with all necessary facilities needed for young children	2
The computer software is good for children so they can express themselves a bit more	1
I can learn to read and write English	1

Information, Help and Advice.

Respondents emphasised that the B48's offers useful information and advice. This includes both the information held and given by B48's staff and the information included within the support groups.

Information Help and Advice	10
It's very Helpful, great way to find out info	4
Always good advice and help available	1
The opinions and advice I was given has helped me to relate and understand my child more	1
Very informative, answered questions I needed answered	4

Social Support

As well as being a form of support through providing information on relevant services the B48's also provides support through its activity groups. In essence, this is by providing practical support, for example in teaching English and in the helpfulness of staff. Finally support groups and the B48's have provided a stepping-stone for introducing parents and facilitating friendships, which is exemplified in the following comments.

Social Support	8
Because we had support and fun at each one	1
Great way to meet other mums and find out info	2
Because I have made some good friends	2
Because the staff are very helpful	2
My confidence has grown, I've met so many people, Kevin is very helpful	1

When asked what future support groups would be useful the responses were very diverse. Essentially, many requests were for more of the same. For example, requests were for **Challenging Behaviour** group, and more **English Classes and Toddler Groups**.

Lone Parents Groups and **Parenting Advice** were also requested as well as Classes for **Computer Skills** that could be run and a representative from **Headway** or **KCA**.

Groups that are run sporadically such as **Baby Rhyme Time** were also requested. One respondent suggested that **'talks on relevant topics'** would be useful. The parents attending the B48's after consultation with Kevin could possibly decide this. **Literacy groups** were also requested encouraging reading to children by parents, even an **'international mother tongue day'** where children could be read stories in their native tongue.

OBJECTIVES 2003-2004

The objectives for the B48's project are presented under the relevant heading of the Sure Start targets. A broad statement regarding the overall aim of the B48's is presented first, followed by, an outcome objective where relevant and appropriate.

Social inclusion & strengthening families.

The B48's will help deliver this Sure Start objective by continuing to engage families and by encouraging take-up of B48's services, responsive to the expressed needs of parents.

Outcome Objective 1

To increase use of the B48's by the "marginalised" groups. Increase number of male users to 5 and non-British users to 6.

Improving the overall health.

Providing information and presenting the choices available to families on health related topics and co-ordinating support groups where there has been an expressed need by the users of the B48's.

Increasing abilities to learn.

The B48's will feed into this Sure Start objective by maintaining high attendance and satisfaction with all current education programs.

Outcome Objective 2

Increase the use of capacity building ICT programs amongst current users. I.e. CV Building, Job Searches, Educational Software, Service Searches.

Outcome Objective 3

Increase the overall use of ICT systems by 25%

Outcome Objective 4

Raise Profile of 'Learning Support Groups' i.e. Homework club.

Promoting Social and Emotional Development.

The B48's will add to this Sure Start goal by maintaining positive links with parents through drop in sessions and support groups, and children through play facilities.

Outcome Objective 5

Improve and sustain 'Parental Satisfaction' above 75% 'excellent' for next annual review
2 suggested actions were proposed in addition these objectives. These are not essential to the project evaluation, however it is recommended they are completed.

Suggested Action

Implementation of a 'B48s Newsletter' supervised by Kevin but written by and for parents. This will enable parents to work together and support other parents in informing on relevant issues/ topics. Thus resulting in information, social support and increased computer skills.

Suggested Action

Continue seeking out the feedback and opinions of parents. This could be through the implementation of a 'Suggestions Box' or research probing into what parents want.