



Planning the Evaluation of Kennington Sure Start – Proposals for 2004-2007

Why evaluate?

Kennington Sure Start is committed to the development of appropriate and effective evaluation mechanisms so that the Sure Start Board, managers and partners:

1. know how effective local services are, especially those funded by Sure Start, in terms of how many families they are reaching, how services are received by families, and whether they represent good value for money
2. can change and improve the programme through the life of the initiative
3. are able to satisfy Government requirements that the programme offers value for money and achieves its targets

Evaluation is best set up early in the programme, so that it becomes an integral part of all project and management activity, for the life of the programme.

The evaluation plan sets out options for evaluation and makes recommendations for the Sure Start management and Board. It outlines the priorities for evaluation in order that clear outputs and outcomes are both measurable and visible.

In addition to this planned local evaluation, there is a long-term comprehensive national evaluation carried out by Birkbeck College.

What should we evaluate?

Kennington Sure Start programme engages with many different partners within and across the local community, to develop and deliver a responsive, effective range of services. The programme services are targeted to meet locally identified needs and broader national targets, defined within Public Service Agreements (PSA's) and Service Delivery Agreements (SDA's).

The evaluation plan therefore needs to combine a number of monitoring and evaluation methods in order to capture the complexities of programme delivery and outputs. Although each method will have limitations, together they will build a good picture of what the programme is achieving. In receiving the initial report, the Board agreed to some evaluation priorities, and others have emerged in the course of the preliminary work carried out in December 2003 – March 2004.

Agreed evaluation priorities:

1. User Satisfaction and Effectiveness surveys: across a range of local services delivered by Sure Start and local partner providers,[drop-ins etc. in 2004/05, parenting classes in 2005/06] and based on the programme principles that services should be inclusive, accessible, affordable and with strong parental involvement.
2. Review an agreed number of specific services [Midwifery and health visitor services during Programme years 2004-2006] delivered by or on behalf of the programme, providing independent feedback to both service providers and the Sure Start Board.
3. Monitoring the profile of service users across local services, and the take-up of Sure Start funded activities.
4. Review progress towards PSA's and Sure Start objectives and programme 'reach'.

Recommended additional evaluation priorities:

1. Assess effectiveness of early identification of children with additional needs by common assessment at 30 – 36 month entry into nursery class/school, day nursery, childminder or pre-school.
2. Assist all service providers to review their own activity and respond to the feedback they get, including the use of quality assurance schemes for early years care and education providers
3. Assist the Board and programme partners to review the impact of the programme on re-shaping and mainstreaming of services, as an outcome of programme activity – prepare for 2006.
4. Review of Value for Money, programme 'reach' and relative costs/benefits of services.

Other possible evaluation priorities:

1. Review the perspective of non-programme families within programme catchment area, particularly families identified as 'Hard to Reach' in the area.
2. Following a number of families from early registration into the programme for a two year period-providing a longer evaluative journey.
3. Review of parental involvement within the programme and their assessment of 'skill growth' as an outcome of interface with the programme-ideally this would include a methodological approach that would capture the views over a period of time-2 years.

Preliminary evaluation work

Following the Board meeting in November 2003, Peter Williams carried out a number of preliminary evaluation activities:

- Gathered further views and information about what will make a difference for parents
- recruited, trained and inducted 8 local parents and workers to interview parents
- gathered over 20 parent perspectives on drop-in and other informal sessions, thanks to the interview team
- visited a number of service providers in the Sure Start area, to check what monitoring and evaluation they already carry out and ask their views on the best way forward.

The evaluation work has supported the Christmas party and the trips to IKEA, as opportunities to bring parents together so that evaluation interviews can take place.

Proposed framework for evaluation and monitoring

AGREED PRIORITIES			
	Focus of evaluation Actions needed	Proposed Evaluator	Timescale
1	User Satisfaction and Effectiveness surveys: drop-in, toddler group, toy library sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ analyse existing information ▪ collect further 27 - 50 in total ▪ analyse total information and report 	Local interview team supported by external evaluator	2004 - 05
2	User Satisfaction and Effectiveness surveys: parenting classes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ agree common feedback sheet for all classes ▪ draft interview framework ▪ analyse total information and report 	Local interview team supported by external evaluator; + feedback collected by providers	2005-06
3	Review midwifery service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ agree feedback sheet for classes and activities ▪ link up with St Thomas' ▪ draft interview framework 	Local interview team supported by external evaluator; + self-review by midwives, supported by external evaluator	2004 - 07
4	Review health visitor and nursery nurse service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ agree feedback sheet ▪ link up with Healthy Start team ▪ draft interview framework 	Local interview team supported by external evaluator + self-review facilitated by external evaluator	2004 - 07
5	Monitoring the profile of service users across local services, and the take-up of Sure Start funded activities, check on hard-to-reach participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ agree monitoring forms and quarterly frequency 	Service providers run own monitoring systems, supported by Sure Start office after set-up by external evaluator	2004 - ongoing

6	Annual evaluation report including review of progress towards targets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ extend 'preliminary evaluation work' section of this report ▪ confirm % targets 	External evaluator with Programme Manager	May 2004, then December annually
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RECOMMENDED PRIORITIES			
	Focus of evaluation Actions needed	Proposed Evaluator	Timescale
1	Early intervention check <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ agree quarterly report format ▪ collect baseline data ▪ set up systems 	Early learning providers with external evaluator support	2004 on-going
2	Provider self-review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ agree common review format and interval ▪ draft interview framework ▪ analyse total information and report 	All funded providers with external evaluator support	2004 on-going
3	Mainstreaming Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ set up working group ▪ agree Board report frequency – annually? ▪ Agree terms of reference including inputs from all providers in Kennington 	Programme Manager and External Evaluator, with working group	2004 - 07
4	Review value for money, reach and user profiles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annual report of service monitoring and provider self-review, linked to funding allocation ▪ Address hard-to-reach issues 	Programme Manager and External Evaluator	2004 - 07

Ensuring service providers are on-board

This report was sent to providers in draft from as well as the attached more detailed version of the planned reviews.

Board decision required

The Sure Start Board and managers need to:

1. confirm the evaluation priorities for the years 2004-2006
2. set a budget for the evaluation
3. agree the framework for carrying out the evaluation
4. select an agency to carry out the evaluation