

Sure Start Chilwell West & Eastwood Programme Evaluation Strategy

Initial evaluation period of 2 years running from
1st April 2004 - 31st March 2006

February 2004
S A Handley

Commitment to Evaluation

[Why evaluate?]

The programme is committed to the development of appropriate and effective evaluation mechanisms (including training), in order that evaluation is an integral facet of all project and management activity, for the life of the programme. The evaluation strategy outlines the focus of the programmes internal evaluation processes in order that clear outputs and outcomes are both measurable and visible. The evaluation findings will be harnessed to inform and direct future programme planning and management and provide evidence to support mainstreaming by local voluntary and statutory partners.

A Total Quality Management cycle will provide a mechanism to improve, modify or re-shape/ re-focus services as a direct outcome from evaluation findings. The evaluation strategy is projected over an initial evaluation period of 2 years falling within financial year boundaries for the remainder of Year 2 and Year 3 of the programme funding.

Evaluative focus

[What should we evaluate?]

Local Sure Start programmes engage with a myriad of partners within and across the local community, in order that programmes 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 strategy therefore needs to combine a number of approaches in order to capture the complexities of programme delivery and outputs. Therefore a number of evaluation measures have been drawn together to ensure that a comprehensive evaluation package is available. The following foci will be included in the evaluation package [Also shown in **Table 1**]:

- 1) The integration and effectiveness of partnership and joint working within Sure Start/Children's Centre ethos looking at perspectives from a

number of partners [parents, carers, voluntary and sector agencies and wider community]

- 2) Reviewing the effectiveness of the programme from the perspective of programme users - parents, children, carers and where appropriate extended families who engage with the programme
- 3) Review the perspective of non-programme families within the programme catchment area, particularly families who may align with the description of the identified 'Hard to Reach' relative to the programme area [refer to Hard to Reach Strategy Nov 2003]
- 4) Following a number of families from early registration into the programme for a two year period-providing a longer evaluative journey
- 5) 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
- 6) Review progress towards PSA's and Sure Start objectives and programme 'reach'.
- 7) Review an agreed number of 'projects' [2 per year during Programme years 2 & 3] delivered by or on behalf of the programme, considering how the project is delivered and assessment of 'value for money'
- 8) Wider evaluation from the perspective of programme users and partners reviewing the impact of the programme on re-shaping and mainstreaming of services, as an outcome of programme activity
- 9) Review of Value for Money, programme 'reach' and cost benefits of services, combining interpretation of monitoring data with a chosen evaluation methodology [target end year 2]

10) Satisfaction survey of local services delivered by Sure Start and local partner providers as a means of obtaining 'satisfaction survey' to inform strategic planning of the programme for years 4, 5 & 6

11) Review the linkage with projects that provide services for older children and young people-link with evaluation focus 1, 2, 3 & 10

Training for the Core Staff team and Service Level Providers will be included in the submission for Tender, thus providing all who provide services with the skills to ensure that internal evaluation is integral to service design and development.

Sure Start Principles

As a backdrop to the above foci of evaluation, the Sure Start principles are viewed as essential elements to capture within the evaluation process and include:

- ▶ Co-ordination, streamlining and the addition of value to existing services
- ▶ Involving parents, grandparents and other carers
- ▶ Avoiding stigma by ensuring that all local families are able to use Sure Start services
- ▶ Ensuring lasting support by linking to services for older children
- ▶ Culturally appropriate and sensitive to particular needs
- ▶ The participation of all local families in the design and working of the programme

The evaluation process

[Who will evaluate?]

In order to promote evaluation objectivity, the evaluation strategy will be delivered by a number of processes and individuals:

- ▶ **Service providers**—internal evaluation, providing ongoing project evaluation [following Evaluation training]. This will provide a measure to review and inform practitioners of the local effectiveness and facilitate modifications to the project at the point of delivery.
- ▶ **External Evaluators** [individual or team] appointed by a tender process based on Value for Money & quality of provision, with SLA on 12 monthly, renewable basis
- ▶ **Application and interpretation of monitoring data** [project focus and reach] to apply alongside evaluation findings

Following agreement of the strategy by the Sure Start Management Board in December 2003 the attached tender [Appendix 1] will be advertised in the Nottingham Evening post and be circulated to a list of tenders within the region [Appendix 2]

Management of process

Evaluation will take place within the Sure Start Programme area of Chilwell West & Eastwood. Table 1, highlights the focus, timescales and provider of evaluation.

Table 1 Evaluation focus, evaluator & timescales

| | Focus of Evaluation | Proposed Evaluator | Timescales |
|----------|---|---|------------------------------|
| 1 | Integration & effectiveness of partners within Sure Start/Children's Centre ethos | External Evaluators and analysis data from Sure Start monitoring system | Year 2 through to end year 3 |
| 2 | Programme Effectiveness from user perspective-parents, children , carers, extended family | External Evaluators and analysis data from Sure Start monitoring system | Year 2 & 3 |
| 3 | Perspective of 'Non-programme' families within the programme area-with a focus on 'Hard to Reach' | External Evaluators and analysis data from Sure Start monitoring system | Year 2 & 3 |

| | Focus of Evaluation | Proposed Evaluator | Timescales |
|-----------|---|--|--------------------------|
| 4 | Following a number of families from registration to post 2 years reviewing benefits/outcomes from their perspective | External Evaluators | Year 2 for 2 year period |
| 5 | Review of parental involvement and 'skill growth' as an outcome of programme engagement | External Evaluators and Parent Participation & Development Worker | Year 2 onwards |
| 6 | Progress towards PSA/SLA targets and objectives | External Evaluators and analysis data from Sure Start monitoring system | Year 2 & 3 |
| 7 | Review of 2/3 projects per year provided by or on behalf of the programme. | External Evaluators and Sure Start Team project lead or SLA project lead | Year 2 & 3 |
| 8 | Impact of programme on re-shaping and mainstreaming of services | External Evaluators and Sure Start Team project lead or SLA project lead | Year 3 |
| 9 | Value for Money, Cost Benefits and programme 'reach' | External Evaluators and analysis data from Sure Start monitoring system | Year 2 & 3 |
| 10 | Satisfaction Survey | Lead by External Evaluators, may be carried out by local parents who have been trained in Market Research by the SS programme to undertake this type of work | Year 3 |
| 11 | Linkage of Sure Start/Children's Centre with projects that provide services for older children and young people | External Evaluators Sure Start Team project lead or SLA project lead | Year 2 & 3 |

| | Focus of Evaluation | Proposed Evaluator | Timescales |
|--|-------------------------------|--|------------|
| | [Linked with focus 1,2 3 &10] | Analysis of data from Sure Start monitoring system | |

Evaluation Methodology

[The how]

Sure Start Team members and interested SLA service providers will be offered training, provided by the appointed external evaluation team. The training will include:

- ▶ A review of evaluation methods
- ▶ The application of appropriate evaluation methods
- ▶ The design of evaluation tools
- ▶ Data analysis
- ▶ Interpretation & presentation of findings

Following successful tender process the appointed evaluation team will develop appropriate methodology for the evaluation areas highlighted in Table 1. The presentation of findings will be agreed, within an agreed timeframe and be made available in a clear, visually orientated format to programme families and partners, the Management Board, Programme Manager and Sure Start Team. The findings will also be utilised to inform 'best practice' and influence the 'Mainstreaming' agenda.

Once appointed, the Evaluation team will be asked to appoint a named Evaluation Lead for the programme and will be requested to discuss in advance any sub contracting of the proposed work, with the programme having the right to decline the sub contracting if thought to be counter productive.

Sure Start Chilwell West & Eastwood

Local Evaluation

Invitation to Tender

Purpose of Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation is to ensure that the Sure Start programme is delivering effective, value for money services, which are underpinned by effective management and partnership arrangements. The findings from the evaluation will be used to inform future service development and support the development of effective working practices within the programme area.

Background Information relating to the programme area

Sure Start Chilwell West & Eastwood is a round 6 programme and was approved on the 18th July 2003. The programme covers the electoral wards of Eastwood North, South, part East and Chilwell West. The programme covers two distinct areas, importantly the programme is managed with a collect vision for the whole programme, with services being developed and delivered to reflect local need. The programme describes this vision by stating the programme **area** [as opposed to programme areas] Eastwood is an ex-coalfields town, whereas Chilwell West presents as a relatively isolated community, bordering on more affluent areas of Bramcote and Beeston. All electoral wards within the programme area have a predominantly white population; with a 3% ethnic mix. All wards have high levels of unemployment.

Evaluation focus

The programmes evaluation strategy has been developed to cover a 2 year period from 1st April 2004 through to 31st March 2006, with the tender period being initially for 12 months from April 2004 onwards. The programme is keen to demonstrate its commitment to local evaluation processes and therefore is

hopeful that the evaluation strategy will become a reality, commencing at the beginning of programme year 2.

The programme wishes to included the following foci within the evaluation package:

- 1) The integration and effectiveness of partnership and joint working within Sure Start/Children's Centre ethos looking at perspectives from a number of partners [parents, carers, voluntary and sector agencies and wider community]
- 2) Reviewing the effectiveness of the programme from the perspective of programme users- parents, children, carers and where appropriate extended families who engage with the programme
- 3) Review the perspective of non-programme families within the programme catchment area, particularly families who may align with the description of the identified 'Hard to Reach' relative to the programme area [refer to Hard to Reach Strategy Nov 2003]
- 4) Following a number of families from early registration into the programme for a two year period-providing a longer evaluative journey
- 5) 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
- 6) Review progress towards PSA's and Sure Start objectives and programme 'reach', with evaluation from year 2
- 7) Review an agreed number of 'projects' [2 per year during Year 2 & 3] delivered by or on behalf of the programme, considering how the project is delivered and assessment of 'value for money'

- 8) Wider evaluation from the perspective of programme users and partners reviewing the impact of the programme on re-shaping and mainstreaming of services, as an outcome of programme activity
- 9) Review of Value for Money, programme 'reach' and cost benefits of services, combining interpretation of monitoring data with a chosen evaluation methodology [target end year 2]
- 10) Satisfaction survey of local services delivered by Sure Start and local partner providers as a means of obtaining 'satisfaction survey' to inform strategic planning of the programme for years 4, 5 & 6
- 11) Review the linkage with projects that provide services for older children and young people-link with evaluation focus 1, 2, 3 & 10

In addition the provision of a short tailored training package for the Sure Start Team and any interested SLA service providers focusing on:

- ▶ A review of evaluation methods
- ▶ The application of appropriate evaluation methods
- ▶ The design of evaluation tools
- ▶ Data analysis
- ▶ Interpretation & presentation of findings

Following successful tender process the appointed evaluation team will develop appropriate methodology for the evaluation areas highlighted in Table 1, which will be discussed and agreed with the Programme Manager. The presentation of findings will be agreed, within an agreed timeframe and be made available in a clear, visually orientated format to programme families and partners, the Management Board, Programme Manager and Sure Start Team. The findings will also be utilised to inform 'best practice' and influence the 'Mainstreaming' agenda.

Involvement of Parents /Carers

Further to the above, the programme wishes to support, enable and facilitate parent/carer participation within local evaluation processes and wishes to explore ways of harnessing the skills of local parents. The programme would like to explore training for parents/carers in Market Research skills to support the evaluation process, where the methodology permits.

Proposed evaluation plan

| | Focus of Evaluation | Proposed Evaluator | Timescales |
|---|---|--|------------------------------|
| 1 | Integration & effectiveness of partners within Sure Start/Children's Centre ethos | External Evaluators and analysis data from Sure Start monitoring system | Year 2 through to end year 3 |
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| 4 | Following a number of families from registration to post 2 years reviewing benefits/outcomes from their perspective | External Evaluators | Year 2 for 2 year period |
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| 6 | Progress towards PSA/SLA targets and objectives | External Evaluators and analysis data from Sure Start monitoring system | Year 2 & 3 |
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| 9 | Value for Money, Cost Benefits and programme 'reach' | External Evaluators and analysis data from Sure Start monitoring system | Year 2 & 3 |
| 10 | Satisfaction Survey | Lead by External Evaluators, may be carried out by local parents who have been trained in Market Research by the SS programme to undertake this type of work | Year 3 |
| 11 | Linkage of Sure Start/Children's Centre with projects that provide services for older children and young people [Linked with focus 1,2 3 &10] | External Evaluators Sure Start Team project lead or SLA project lead Analysis of data from Sure Start monitoring system | Year 2 & 3 |

Management

The Programme Manager will manage the overall delivery of the evaluation package. Once appointed, the Evaluation team will be required appoint a named Evaluation Lead for the programme and are required to discuss in advance any sub contracting of the proposed work. The Management Board Sub Group with responsibility to review Evaluation will shortlist and be part of the selection process for successful tender. Specific programmes of work will be agreed and developed around the areas outlined within this document and the programmes Evaluation Strategy.

Requirements

Sure Start Chilwell West and Eastwood is looking for tenders from organisations or individuals who can demonstrate the following:

- ▶ Ability to support and train parents/carers to be involved in the evaluation process
- ▶ Ability to provide a tailored training package to the Sure Start Team and providers for Sure Start services in order that they are equipped to draw effective evaluative methods into project delivery
- ▶ Experience in social/community based research
- ▶ Experience of research in services delivering provision to young children and their families, with an awareness of the ethical issues involved
- ▶ Demonstrate experience of applying both quantitative and qualitative research methods
- ▶ Skills & experience in the analysis of qualitative findings
- ▶ Experience of presenting findings in a clear, visually orientated format to programme families and partners, the Management Board, Programme Manager and Sure Start Team.

Reporting

The programme requires that all reports provided as part of the evaluation process will be the property of Sure Start Chilwell West and Eastwood. As a minimum the following reports will be required:

- ▶ An outline plan of evaluation & training planned to support the Evaluation Strategy in May 2004, including training and support to parents/carers
- ▶ Quarterly interim reports to facilitate the application of findings to practice
- ▶ A full evaluation report in January 2005

Tender Criteria

Tenders will be assessed on:

- ▶ Quality of the proposal
- ▶ Value for money
- ▶ Knowledge and understanding of Sure Start principles
- ▶ Conformance to brief
- ▶ Ability to use a range of creative approaches to gather quantitative data
- ▶ Proposed methodology
- ▶ Prior experience and skills relating to Sure Start evaluation

Form of Response

Written expressions of interest should be submitted to the address provided below and include an outline of how the work may be carried out, together with a timetable and breakdown of costs.

The programme requires a named person who will lead on the evaluation, together with information outlining the evaluator's prior research and evaluation experience and qualifications. Copies of CV's of evaluators will suffice.

Tenders should be addressed to:

Sally Handley

Programme Manager

Chester House,

2-6 Mansfield Road,

Eastwood,

Nottingham. NG16 3AQ

Email: sally.handley@broxtowehucknall-pct.nhs.uk

Closing Date for Tenders 17th March 2004

Interviews/Tender presentation week commencing 29th March 2004