

Delivering targeted and universal services for all families

- **How Local Authorities can manage the change in requirements of Children's Centres moving in many places from universal services to more targeted services.**
- **How these services can achieve the best possible outcomes**

Direct Gov Website

Defines Children's Centres as providing;

A variety of advice and support for parents and carers.

Their services are available to you from pregnancy right through to when your child goes into reception class at primary school.

Core set of services they must provide:

child and family health services

most centres offer high quality childcare and early learning - those that don't can help advise on local childcare options

advice on parenting, local childcare options and access to specialist services for families like speech therapy, healthy eating advice or help with managing money

help for you to find work or training opportunities, using links to local Jobcentre Plus offices and training providers

Other services you might be offered

see a dentist, dietician or physiotherapist, visit the 'stop smoking' clinic

get faster access to expert advice, support and short-term breaks if your child has learning difficulties or disabilities

talk to Citizens Advice, take parenting classes

improve your English if it is not your first language

OfSTED's Inspection Schedule covers a centre's contribution to:

- facilitating access to early childhood services by parents, prospective parents and young children
- maximising the benefit of those services to parents, prospective parents and young children
- improving the well-being of young children.

Residents in Barnet protest over council budget cuts

Centres providing subsidised childcare services may be asked to raise fees, close or reduce childcare services, as funds are reallocated to those centres judged to be in areas of greater need.

“Without Newstead I wouldn’t be able to have a life, or do anything outside what I’m doing with Samantha,” she said. “It’s a fantastic family unit.”



Council could cut Sure Start provision by one third
Melanie Defries, 15 December 2010, 12:00am
Sure Start provision in the London borough of Barnet could be cut by almost a third

"Armageddon." Not my words, or those of an irate opposition politician, but those reportedly used by Barnet council's head of children's services, Robert McCulloch-Graham, to describe the financial position faced by his department. It's looking at cuts of up to 50% in grants, and up to 20% in its core budget over the next three years

Coppetts Wood Children's Centre

London Borough of Barnet

OfSTED Report 12 October 2011

It is a phase 2 centre and offers a full range of family support services, including early education and child-development sessions, health services, outreach sessions, home visiting, employment and support advice and a programme of adult education and training.

Health services are well integrated into the plan of activities and information and support to help young mothers, for example, are easily accessible.

Children are helped to behave safely and sensibly in a way they understand. Children who have child protection plans or Common Assessment Framework (CAF) support have their needs carefully monitored through detailed record keeping and a number of external professionals working effectively together.

The centre has got off to a good start in addressing the current targets set by the local authority, particularly those related to reaching families in greatest need where it is apparent that they are narrowing the gap for the most disadvantaged.

The provision is good and rapidly improving, particularly since the recent local authority re-organisation, when the centre inherited two other sites, North Finchley Library and the Freehold Community Centre, both of which have been quickly developed.

Evidence clearly shows, for example, that there has been a significant increase in the number of families who have been referred to the outreach team since it has been working from North Finchley Library.

Centre staff have developed good links with local schools. As a result, staff in schools point families to the centre or allow its staff to use their facilities to put on courses and activities for them. This really helps the centre to increase the number of families it reaches out to.

Detailed case studies show that families, especially those in crisis, receive very good support within, or coordinated by, the centre's outreach team.

Better for Less

13 Children's Centres now work with 25% more families than they did with 21 Centres

We have stronger more practical opportunities for working with other universal services, including schools, GP Clinics, Libraries and the extended voluntary sector within the borough.

Outreach work and targeted work with troubled families is helping the borough meet its target of turning around 710 families by 2014.

Louise Casey - Listening to Troubled Families

Report based on in depth interviews with 16 families

What she found was a history of sexual and physical abuse, repeated through generations, involvement of the care system with both parents and children, very young parents with children expressing many behavioural problems, leading to school exclusion and crime. All of this repeated and repeated over again and again.

www.communities.gov.uk

What do Children's Centres bring to this work?