

Self-evaluation form for children's centres

Name of children's centre: Heavitree & Polsloe

Section A: Self-evaluation

Introduction

This self-evaluation form is linked to the judgements that Ofsted will make at inspection. Its purpose is to:

- help you in your own self-evaluation, and
- be used as a basis of the inspection of your children's centre.

Please refer to *Children's centre self-evaluation form guidance*¹ before completing or submitting your form. The guidance sets out:

- the purpose of the self-evaluation form
- when to complete the form
- how to fill the form in
- the structure of the form.

You do not need to complete this form if your self-evaluation for your children's centre is included in another Ofsted self-evaluation form and you wish us to consider the evidence in that form.

Completing the questions in section A

Section A, the evaluative section, is structured in sub-sections that correspond to those in *Inspecting children's centres*² used by inspectors. *Inspecting children's centres* sets out what inspectors evaluate, outline guidance and grade descriptors for every inspection judgement.

Each question in this self-evaluation form starts by asking centres to grade aspects of their work on a four-point scale, as follows:

- Grade 1: Outstanding
- Grade 2: Good
- Grade 3: Satisfactory
- Grade 4: Inadequate.

You should **refer closely to the grade descriptors and guidance for inspectors** when deciding on a grade. Briefly list your major reasons for deciding on this grade. You should include only the **minimum amount of detail** in support of your judgement; bullet points are quite acceptable. If you judge that the children's

¹ Available on www.ofsted.gov.uk

² Available on www.ofsted.gov.uk

centre is close to a grade boundary, briefly say why you did not select the other grade. You do not need to include any detailed analyses or evidence – it is sufficient to refer to the existence of any such evidence and analysis held elsewhere.

Sub-section A1: The centre’s context and, particularly, any significant characteristics

Please provide information below

Action for Children (the national Children’s Charity, previously NCH) is awarded the contract to deliver the cluster model of children’s centres in the Beacon AxS Pathway, covering Heavitree and Polsloe, Whipton and Beacon Heath Children’s Centres until March 2011.

Heavitree and Polsloe Children’s Centre was designated in July 2009 and is situated on the campus of Ladysmith Infant School approximately one mile from Exeter City Centre. Heavitree & Polsloe Children’s Centre is a delivery point for services, the administration base is at Whipton Children’s Centre. Exeter is a Cathedral, University and economically vibrant County town with a population of 123,500. Heavitree and Polsloe is a 70% area of deprivation and a second phase Children’s Centre. The boundaries for the Children’s Centre area lie alongside, Whipton, Beacon Heath and Chestnut Children’s Centres. Whipton and Beacon Heath were originally 20% areas of deprivation and part of the Sure Start funding and therefore each are has a large and purpose built Children’s Centre within easy reach of many Heavitree and Polsloe families. Heavitree and Polsloe families are able to access a wide range of activities and services from the children’s centre at Ladysmith School and both Whipton and Beacon Heath Children’s Centres.

Heavitree and Polsloe Children’s Centre reach is 687 children between 0-5 years and there are currently 539 children registered with the Children’s Centre. The bulk of the accommodation in the area is privately owned terraced or semi-detached housing although there are small pockets of Local Authority housing including one estate of 2 bedroom flats.

The population is predominately white but there is evidence from the local schools that there are growing numbers of children and families from BME groups and with English as an Additional Language. The percentage of children with English as their second language is around 10% (2009 figures) it is likely that these figures have increased over the past year. Ladysmith Infants school in which the Children’s Centre is situated currently has 18% BME children. This includes, Arab, Bangladeshi, Black African, Indian, Chinese, Thai, Turkish and a range of mixed heritage children. E-Start figures show that there are still quite large numbers of families living both within and outside the area that are registered with the Children’s Centre but have not ticked the ethnicity box on the registration form.

Heavitree and Polsloe Children’s Centre has benefited from being part of the Beacon Learning Community Cluster of children’s centres which has attracted both national and local opportunities to pilot programmes where our experiences have contributed to examples of good practice and recommendation for future developments. For example the first area to implement the CAF pilot; the development of a Parent-Infant Mental Health Model in Exeter CAMHS, a counselling service used by other Children’s Centres,

Synergy Research and Consulting evaluation for the Delivery of Targeted Family Support in Children's Centres and more recently a research project on Action For Children Sure Start Children's Centres nationally and have developed a training programme series Here's Looking at You Bump, Baby and Little One, which we are commissioned to deliver to all Children's Centres and Early Years settings in Devon. A newly commissioned ante-natal programme by the Children's Centre for all first time parent-to-be in partnership with the NCT, midwifery, health visiting and Children's Centre workers attracts Heavitree & Polsloe parents. We have also introduced financial literacy programmes with a leading national bank Barclays Money Skills and community development programmes including Making Your Voice Heard and Speaking Up with CVS and a growing Volunteer Programme. This has led into a partnership with the YMCA in a Community Job's Club.

The profiles for the Heavitree and Polsloe area reflect the levels of deprivation for the area (less deprived than Whipton and parts of Beacon Heath Children's Centre areas) except in the area of childhood obesity and are as follows:

Breastfeeding figures at birth for Heavitree and Polsloe families are very good and are over 80% and above the Devon and England average for breast feeding. At 6-8 weeks the figures drop to approximately 65% and by 6-9 months have dropped to just over 30%. Whilst initial figures for breast feeding are good the drop off is quite severe by 6-9 months and therefore this may suggest that more support is needed to encourage mothers to continue to breast feed for longer even though they may have returned to employment. Children's Centre workers who have worked with many families with young babies in Heavitree and Polsloe have reported that many mothers are preparing to return to work at 9 months and are weaning their babies off breast feeding before they return to work. Therefore if this is the case further support may not necessarily mean that the figures will improve. Further support for breast feeding mothers around the 0-8 weeks would be helpful as this may reduce the numbers of mothers who give up breast feeding during this period.

Heavitree and Polsloe has high numbers of obese children at school reception age at approximately 11% which is well above the Devon and England average. These numbers significantly increased between 2006-08.

The numbers of mothers in Heavitree and Polsloe who smoked during pregnancy are under 10% and below the England and Devon average. The numbers are low in comparison to other children's centre areas but did increase between 2007-08.

Whilst emergency hospital admissions are generally quite high in Exeter, the rate of emergency hospital admissions for under 5 year olds in Heavitree and Polsloe is particularly high (26%) and above the England average.

The numbers of under 5 year old children with a child protection plan (Aug 09) living in the Heavitree and Polsloe area is around the Devon and England average. Workers have noted that this figure fluctuates considerably and over the past year we have become more aware of more children with a CP plan living in Heavitree and Polsloe. The Children's Centre staff attend all initial child protection meetings. Some of these families have been living in temporary accommodation and then have moved into Whipton once they have been permanently housed.

Whilst children being present, during a domestic violence incident in Heavitree and Polsloe is below the Devon average, they have still been present during nearly 40% of cases. We do not have the exact numbers of cases in the Heavitree and Polsloe area available to us so are unable to determine just how many children are affected.

Heavitree and Polsloe children's centre area covers one primary school (St Michaels), one junior school (Ladysmith) and one infant school and nursery (Ladysmith). There are several pre-school settings in the area. The children's centre is within the Beacon pathway where the FSP have been very concerning however recently there has been some improvement. The Ladysmith and St Michaels individual FSP are not so concerning as those of the two infant schools nearest to Whipton, who are also within the Beacon Pathway.

The numbers of children in the Heavitree and Polsloe area living in Poverty/Workless Households is below the Devon and England average at around 12%. (2007 figures). The numbers benefiting from the childcare element of working tax credits is above the Devon and England average at around 18%. The numbers of children benefiting from Free School Meals is well below the England and Devon average at around 5%.

The percentage of births to teenage mothers is low in the Heavitree area under 2% and well below the England and Devon averages (2007/08 figures). The percentage of Lone Parent families in the Heavitree and Polsloe areas is on the Devon average. (2001 figures)

The numbers of children under 5 years and living in the Heavitree and Polsloe area who have JAT/Special needs team allocation is fairly high for Devon at just under 1.0%.

The profiles for Heavitree and Polsloe area show that there are less concerning numbers in most of the profile areas. However there are small pockets of deprivation within the area. One of the most important features is to target our services as much as possible within the area.

As a Centre and Community we have taken the opportunity to use not only the Children's Centre funding but have raised additional funding from the Business Community and Local Councillors to work collaboratively to provide additional services (Centre Buildings, the Let's Talk Whole Community Campaign). We have also been fortunate to have been chosen by Action for Children to take part in a year long external National Evaluation of Targeted Family Support which is now on the EC4EO website for promising practice and being looked at by the Department of Education. We are also taking part in the Action for Children national research into Sure Start Children's Centres.

We are led by a leadership team drawn from key staff within the cluster centres, the Parent Forum and health partners.

Staffing

Our employed staff team includes 22 members of staff across four centres, but a total of 8 staff play a main role in the Heavitree and Polsloe Children's Centre.

Sub-section A2: Outcomes for children, parents and other users

This section contains judgements on the five Every Child Matters outcomes which, taken together, determine the summative judgement *How good are outcomes for users?*

Please refer closely to the grade descriptors and guidance for inspectors when deciding on a grade. You should include only the minimum amount of detail in support of your judgement.

A2.1: Being healthy

	1	2	3	4
Grade: The extent to which children, including those from vulnerable groups, are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy and families have healthy lifestyles.		✓		

Briefly list your main reasons for deciding on this grade. If you judge that the children's centre is close to a grade boundary, briefly say why you did not select the other grade.

We believe that our grade is *Good* because *Being Healthy* is high on our agenda (working as closely as we do with our health colleagues) and a prominent part of our improvement plan.

The Children's Centre uses LA and City Council data to analyse and understand community profile. This data is considered by the Senior Management Team (Health Visitor Lead and Midwifery Lead invited to attend once a month), the Be Healthy Service Development Group, Antenatal Class Development Group, COMG and during the Annual Conversation which in turn influence priorities and action planning.

From our earliest origins as a SSLP and with the influence of research and evidence based outcomes we have sought to impact on improving outcomes for children through the development of services particularly that promote an understanding of early infant attachment and bonding, speech and language development and the improvement of emotional well-being.

Children's Centre Promotes Healthy Lifestyles including healthy eating, good hygiene and participation in sport or other activities.

Strengths

- Centre Cookery/Recipe Folder

- Young Parents cookery skills training (Well UK)- evaluation
- Healthy eating (snacks in the centre)
- Newsletter promoting health eating, promotion Healthy Start Scheme
- Vitamins available from Centre
- Parents Forum Healthy Eating, Sun Safe and Home Safety 'Roadshows'
- Breast feeding peer supporter training for community mothers
- Love Local Food year long promotion (2Gether Pilot parents and children farm visits) also working with Ladysmith Infants
- Child Health Clinics
- Sports Relief activity promotion in centre and in groups
- Outside/inside spaces designed to promote physical activity
- Let's Dance Partnership and Video with Change for Life
- HENRY training

Good Child and Family Health Services and child health promotion in the centres, women in transition , teenage mothers, breastfeeding, weaning, support groups for teenage parents, family and parenting support

- Access to maternity services
- Understanding the emotional needs of children
- Young Parent and Young Parents to Be Groups
- Evening midwifery ante-natal groups in centre alongside Here's Looking at You Bump and NCT expectant parent group.
- Baby Oasis Group (alongside Child Health Clinic) promoting breast feeding and annual Breast Feeding Peer Supporter training and updates – Baby Friendly status for RD& E and PCT and link to BF Breast Feeding Promotion HV. Breast pump hire via Health Team across all centres in cluster
- Child Health Clinic
- New Baby club (parenting support)
- Here's Looking at You Baby group
- Baby Massage
- Staff trained in supporting families with difficulties in eating/sleeping/weaning/toilet training/support with behaviour issues alongside health colleagues

There are services for *children with learning difficulties*

- Step-by-Step group run from Whipton Children's Centre
- Portage 'training' for parents
- Nurture Group
- Honeylands toy library and Children's Centre Resource Boxes
- Links to Honeylands Specialist Child Development Centre

Speech and Language development is at the heart of the programme

- Speech and Language Therapist assessment in Whipton children centre
- Let's Talk Campaign and funded roll out to other Children's Centres in Exeter via contract with Local Exeter Children's Trust improvement in the FSP
- Manager part of Local Authority 'Better Communication' Implementation Group
- ICAN setting in Cedars Nursery
- 2gether integrated childcare pilot promotes language development alongside home learning (excellent evaluation of outcomes)
- Toy Library at Fairbanks family centre.

Links to other services, GP's CAMHS, Portage, SEN, community mental health teams

- Own Counselling service and promotion of emotional well-being (outcome evaluation)
- Links to Adult Psychology Service (PND Groups)
- Links to Peri-natal Mental Health Clinic (antenatal hospital service)
- CAMHS worker
- Health Visiting Lead on SMT

Evidence:

Local Data (Children's Centre Profiles, Reach and participation rates (E-start data) and outcomes E-Aspire and evaluations, Counselling Data, 2Gether, Family support and intervention)

Case Studies

Evaluation of Counselling Service Outcomes

Evaluation of Let's Talk Campaign

2Gether Evaluation of children's learning journeys (language acquisition)

Annual Conversation Paperwork

Promotion of Healthy Lifestyles evaluations

Keep Children Healthy: immunisation rates, under 18 conception rate

Impact on obesity, smoking cessation

Impact on child and family health services i.e. sustaining breastfeeding, antenatal, postnatal

Impact of learning difficulties or disability and long-term conditions

Impact of Specialist service SLT

Centre links with other services CAMHS, Portage, GP's

Action Points:

The Heavitree and Polsloe childhood obesity data is concerning and we have currently trained two workers and one other is about to train in the HENRY project. There will be three HENRY course run in the cluster. Ladysmith Nursery will be starting in Autumn term 2011.

Further Breastfeeding Peer supporter training is scheduled to start on may 13 2011 and will include parents from the area.

A2.2: Staying safe

	1	2	3	4
Grade: The extent to which children are safe and protected, their welfare concerns are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them.		✓		

Briefly list your main reasons for deciding on this grade. If you judge that the children's centre is close to a grade boundary, briefly say why you did not select the other grade.

Staying Safe is very high on our agenda and we are constantly working to improve our outcomes in this area. We believe that we are good with some outstanding features.

The Heavitree and Polsloe Children's Centre has a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy which is kept up to date, is shared with parents through displaying in the reception area of the Children's Centre, available through the Children's Centre website and included in the newsletter sent to all parents with under 5 year old children in the Children's Centre area. All partners and parents attending the Core Offer Monitoring Group have also received copies of the policy through the Children's Centre Safeguarding Pack.

The Children's Centre adheres to Action for Children's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures which are consistently updated nationally. A safeguarding team meeting takes place quarterly to review all safeguarding concerns and an action plan is drawn up from each of these meetings. The Safeguarding Lead also attends the Action for Children regional Safeguarding meetings.

The Children's Centre has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Janine Broomes who has received Level 4 Safeguarding and Level 2 ADVA in the last 2 years. In the event that the DSL is unavailable the protocol is that the staff member contacts either the Children's Centre Manager Christine Cottle or the Educare Lead Ann Brandrick. In the unlikely event that any of these managers are unavailable then there is a protocol for contacting Action for Children and the Local Authority (threshold unit) line management and out of hours contact.

The DSL and the Children's Centre Manager have received Safeguarding in Recruitment Training. The DSL has also received the ADVA Marac training. All Children's Centre workers have received mandatory one day Safeguarding Training provided through Action for Children and a mandatory 2 hour Safeguarding training in their centres. All family support and Early Years leads have received Level 2 ADVA, CAF AxS Pathway training and some have also received Marac and Level 3 Safeguarding training.

There are proven outcomes that demonstrate that children are encouraged to talk about feelings to deal assertively with pressures, are listened to, and know to whom they can turn for help and advice if necessary. Children develop an excellent understanding of dangers and how to keep themselves safe especially the direction travelled from initial engagement. For example, all children who use the centre are encouraged and supported to wash their hands before they sit down for snack, this is often a new routine for the children but they quickly accept it and staff take the time to explain why we wash our hands before we eat. Home safety visits with fire safety officers are offered to parents who meet the criteria and family and outreach workers conduct these visits. Parents complete a home safety questionnaire, watch a home safety video and have necessary home safety equipment fitted to their homes.

Action for Children has a comprehensive Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedure which operates nationally. All interview panels have a member of staff who have completed the

Safer Recruitment training. A central register is kept of all CRB checks. All adverts include a Safeguarding statement and all new staff are provided with an induction which includes copies of our Code of Conduct which includes staff's individual responsibilities for safeguarding. All staff, visitors and volunteers are given a copy of the Code of Conduct and staff have signed to say that they have received it.

Procedures for the management of allegations are carried out by Senior Staff who have received training and are reported to the LADO and clear reports are kept.

Action for Children have a robust recording and record keeping policy and procedure and all family support and early year's leads are trained in its use. All other staff are supported to ensure that they adhere to the recording policy when necessary. Children's files are audited on a 6 monthly basis by senior management and 3 monthly by the DSL to ensure that record keeping is kept up to date. All staff follow policy and procedures for recording concerns for children and records are kept in the children's files.

Parents who are experiencing change, challenge or difficulties in their lives show improvement in their confidence and parenting skills. Parenting support is improving skills and reducing harm and injury in children. Knowledge and involvement with the most vulnerable families contributes to improving safety. Heavitree and Polsloe families are always offered places on the Incredible Years courses run at Whipton and Beacon Heath and two H & P parents have completed the course in the period Apr – Aug 10.

Children with disabilities and learning difficulties are kept safe, their concerns and those of their parents listened to and acted upon. Evidenced through the Step by Step evaluation and case studies.

Evidence

This can be evidenced through case studies, family support evaluation, Incredible Years evaluation, Child Protection referrals, attendance at child protection meetings, reviews, Core Groups, and Child in Need, Number of TAC meetings attended, Lead Professional, numbers of children using the centre on CP plans, CIN.

During the consultation in developing the Heavitree & Polsloe Children's Centre an existing family support service was provided by the Ladysmith Action Group (Parents and Teachers working together). The Children's Centre continue to fund this community development and the two staff involved in family support work within the school setting and adhere to Children's Centre policies, procedures monitoring requirements

Parent Satisfaction Survey

Home Safety Visits

2gether evaluation

Children's Centre policies/procedures/ training/signage/cleaning maintenance/Health and Safety/Fire Drills

Action for Children Safeguarding Policy and Procedure, Code of Conduct, Whistle blowing, lone working

Newsletter – advertising PCSO, Fire Officer, NHS Direct, Parentline Plus, No Smoking Promotion

Information and Advice

Domestic Violence referrals, Marac, other domestic violence services

Children's Records

Established Links with other agencies – Home Start
 Single Central Record CRB
 Recruitment and Selection
 Supervision and Appraisal
 Training and Qualifications regularly updated
 Consistent referral process for family support, counselling and 2gether pilot.
 Accident Forms – reviewed termly in centre and nationally through Action for Children.
 Use of Language interpreters to ensure that EAL families can communicate their needs
 Minutes of Safeguarding Team meetings
 Photo board identifying staff and ID cards
 All group and family support evaluations
 Centre meetings, family support meetings with health, Senior Leadership meetings with health
 Policy Board
 Adult Learning – Paediatric First Aid courses and volunteer training
 COMG provided with safeguarding pack 14.09.10
 2gether pilot evaluation integrated working and improvement in parenting skills as well as children’s development
 Annual Child Safety Week Event
 Incredible Years evaluation

A2.3: Enjoying and achieving

	1	2	3	4
Grade: The extent to which all users enjoy and achieve educationally and in their personal and social development.		✓		

Briefly list your main reasons for deciding on this grade. If you judge that the children’s centre is close to a grade boundary, briefly say why you did not select the other grade.

The area is served by one infant school and school nursery, one junior school and one primary school. The schools are in the Beacon Pathway where the foundation stage profile although improving is still a concern. However, this relates more to the two schools in close proximity to Whipton children’s centre and not the Heavitree and Polsloe schools where the individual school FSPs are less concerning.

The children centre provides a wide variety of groups aimed at supporting and educating children and parents from birth to 5 yrs old. We also support and publicise various community toddler groups via outreach and our newsletter. The Children’s Centre groups are tailored to suit different stages of development, offering support, guidance and information to parents, whilst providing enjoyable space for children to play, explore and learn with their parents/carers. Staff are well qualified and trained to support the parents/carers to develop their skills. The Children’s Centre staff work closely with Trio to provide support, training and recourses for childminders.

Resource Boxes
 Childminding Support

International Stay and Play
 Monster Music
 Treasure Baskets
 New Baby Group
 Community toddler groups

Evaluations from the parents demonstrate that these services are valued and effective. We are currently revising the way we evaluate to demonstrate more effectively how services improve outcomes for children and families and also incorporate the views of the children. Further work is needed to improve our reach target in the community.

Volunteering Programme at the Children’s Centre.

The volunteer coordinators role is to support and enable potential volunteers to become active volunteers. Support is prioritised to local people and those with additional needs and people who lack the skills and confidence to progress further. As well as the management of volunteers the volunteer coordinator is involved with the team that organise the adult learning courses that take place within the centres. Adult learning often leads to parents/carers thinking about first steps into volunteering. Volunteering and adult education is promoted by website, newsletter, A boards, display boards, Exeter CVS, open sessions, local media, outreach, flyers given to local schools and nurseries and through centre staff.

The Volunteer Coordinator facilitates a 12 week volunteer preparation course, with centre staff and partners such as Speech and language therapist and occupational therapist delivering the training. 17 volunteers completed the course that ended in February 2011.

Volunteers have taken up further training opportunities such as:

• Food hygiene	• Additional Safeguarding training
• Paediatric First Aid	• NVQ’s
• Money Skills	• Here’s looking at you
• BME/Migrant CAB training	• Breastfeeding Peer Support training
• Fire awareness training	• Speaking up
• Paediatric Lifting and Handling	

The coordinator ensures inductions and ongoing supervision of the volunteers. A lot of work goes into finding suitable placements within the Children’s Centre or with local settings for the volunteers. Volunteers are invited to participate in team days.

The Parent Forum members are also recruited as volunteers but the Parent Forum coordinator is then responsible for their participation in the centres.

Our service users have up to date information on volunteering opportunities across the whole of the City with the “Exeter Volunteering Opportunities” sheet displayed and updated weekly in our reception area. Job centre plus and Exeter CVS have referred

people to the volunteer coordinator.

We currently have 7 volunteers that live in the Heavitree & Polsloe area and over the past year 17 volunteers have been active in the Heavitree & Polsloe Children's Centre area. There have been 335.5 hours contributed by volunteers from April 2010 to March 2011 at Heavitree & Polsloe. Volunteers have included young parents, parents of disabled children, parents in workless households, lone parents, and volunteers from various ethnic backgrounds and volunteers with disabilities.

We have had volunteers in various roles including Parent Forum, Dads group, Publicity and Events coordinator, breastfeeding peer supporters and groups such as New Baby group, Child Health Clinic, Ladysmith Parent & Toddler group, Heavitree United Reform Church toddler group and Ladysmith school nursery.

There is an annual celebration of volunteers in the children's centre with certificates presented. We encourage volunteers to include this certificate along with their volunteer course certificates in their CV and include in their record of achievement file in readiness for job applications.

Monitoring of volunteer hours has been developed over the last year and records have been kept since April 2010.

Our volunteer programme helps parents develop economic stability through giving them support to access training which helps them gain confidence, independence and skills to go onto further training and/or employment.

The volunteer recruitment and selection process can develop employability skills and prepare volunteers for applying for jobs. As part of this process we interview potential volunteers, ask them to fill out application packs, CRB forms and provide references as they would do when applying for another position.

Having a cleared CRB can appeal to future employers and is another point to include on their CV's. Volunteers are provided with a role description which helps them to fill out job application forms in the future. We have an in depth induction which is particularly useful for a volunteer that has either never experienced employment or has had a poor experience. It can introduce them to a positive working environment and because they undertake regular supervisions it can support them to achieve the standards expected as set out in the volunteer agreement.

This results in the Children's Centre having good retention of volunteers and a number of volunteers returning to the centre.

Once volunteering with us our volunteers often express an interest in finding employment and we will sign post them to Jobcentre Plus, our display boards and Job Club. Several volunteers have become members of staff and references are given to most volunteers for further learning, university entrance and employment.

We have a Jobcentre Plus board with various information on benefits, training, adult education and employment opportunities.

Leaflets and information for parents include;

• Exeter College courses	• Next step (organisation)
• Advice for lone parents	• Overcoming barriers to work and training
• New deal for young people	• Free IT workshops at St James school
• New deal for disabled people	• DISC Plus childcare information
• Leading, learning and skills	• FSA parents guide to money
• Financial advice from Devon Home Choice	• Plough and Share

We also have DISC, Learn Direct, and Next Steps information in our newsletter and on our website.

There is a public access computer available for service users.

Families who are vulnerable due to low income (including some families with additional needs as identified through the CAF process and some families at level 3, child in need or child protection) access 2gether childcare which enables them to attend adult education sessions.

Adult education sessions that we have had in the area include;

• First Aid Training	• Adult literacy
• Speaking Up	• Adult numeracy
• Funding workshops	• Money Skills
• Skilled for health	• Incredible years
• Parents with prospects	

We promote the YMCA Community Job Club which aims to help people who are looking for employment, voluntary work or training by assisting them in searching for a job, creating a CV/ cover letter, completing applications etc.

The Job Club is currently held at a local community venue, however we are hoping to run this session in one of our building to make it easier for our service users to access these sessions. This may also have the effect of encouraging people to take part in our volunteer programme.

Evidence

Volunteer coordinator reports

Volunteer hour's records

Volunteer course outline, reflective diaries and course evaluations

Volunteer newsletter articles and information

Volunteer website information

Volunteer information on display boards

Volunteer course certificates

Certificate for volunteering activities

Volunteer personnel files
 Job Centre Plus Board
 Leaflet displays

Further Action

- Improvement in the monitoring of volunteer hours
- Increase the number of volunteers coming from our children’s centre area.
- Improve the links between the community job club and our volunteer programme.
- Further work is needed to improve our reach target in the community through further publicity and outreach re: the extended, refurbished and re-focused Children’s Centre

A2.4: Making a positive contribution

	1	2	3	4
Grade: The extent to which children engage in positive behaviour and develop positive relationships and users contribute to decision-making and governance of the centre.		✓		

Briefly list your main reasons for deciding on this grade. If you judge that the children’s centre is close to a grade boundary, briefly say why you did not select the other grade.

Parental Involvement

Parents are at the heart of the governance of the centre and take a central part in the groups listed below:

- Partnership and Monitoring Board (COMG)
- Service Development Groups
- Operations Group
- Senior Management and Leadership Team
- Team Day
- Parent Forum committee and working groups

Our buildings were designed with families and the environment has been positively praised via PICL quality Assurance and ECCRS and we are influenced by the philosophy of Reggio Emilia (Educare Lead has been to Italy and currently trying or organise for Early Years Leads and Nursery Manager to visit for CPD). The Heavitree & Polsloe Children’s Centre has recently gained an additional room and the Children’s Centre and Health staff work closely to maximise room use.

Let’s Talk Community Campaign

The children’s centre has a Participation Team which consists of a (volunteer co-ordinator, parent forum co-ordinator and marketing and publicity co-ordinator).

The participation team are responsible for:

Parent Forum Membership, Website, newsletters, Outreach and Events, Child Safety Week, Parent Satisfaction Survey and City Play Events, Money Skills Workshops, volunteer programme, additional training for parent forum.

The children's centre has developed a Volunteer programme which provides opportunities across all our children's centres. We encourage people from the local community to complete our volunteer training and then support them to provide volunteer services for local groups. This is very important to small community groups to support the parents who run the groups. This also maintains a link between the children's centre and the community group.

Parent Forum members have been involved in the Take Part initiative to promote active citizenship in the community. In addition, parents including some Parent Forum members have attended the Speaking Up programme which is an accredited course run by Exeter CVS which promotes parents getting involved and having a say.

Parent Forum members participated in a consultation for the Select Committee for the Sure Start programme, which promoted interest within the parent forum about how parliament works. This led to Parent Forum having a learning session with a parliamentary outreach worker which then resulted in Parent Forum and Speaking Up parents visiting the Houses of Parliament and taking part in questions and answer session with the then Cabinet member Ben Bradshaw. The impact of this is to build parents self confidence and ability to engage in and play an active role in their community. This raises not only parents but also their children's aspirations about what they can achieve.

Parent Forum members undertook a consultation for Heavitree and Polsloe parents, sending a questionnaire to all Heavitree and Polsloe parents and also attended all community groups. The consultation was around all the services for children under the age of 5 years. This helped raise awareness of the issues for local community groups, some of these around new resources. Others were around access to groups for parents and their babies as there was an emphasis on toddler groups at the time. The consultation identified a need and we were able to provide services to meet this need. Parents are now taking a lead in running one of these baby groups in the children's centre.

Parent Forum also took part in a Devon wide participation project which resulted in a piece of work called the Participation Ladder which is now used as a model Devon wide for anyone working with parents.

Health visitors worked with Parent Forum in consultation looking at the possibility of providing self-weigh clinic facilities. Health staff took on board all the parent's comments, for and against this idea and as yet the self-weigh idea has not been taken forward.

Parent Forum worked with the Children's Centre safeguarding lead on developing a more user friendly Safeguarding Leaflet for Parents.

Initially we were asked to provide a Father's Group in the Heavitree area. However Fathers who attended this group were unhappy with the facilities available and wanted the group to continue within the Whipton and Beacon Heath children's centres.

The Parent Forum has now become a constituted group with the hope of fundraising as community group. To support this we have had training from SPAN (the Single Parent Action Network), to provide workshops on fundraising. There are plans to join with other Parent Forums across the city to benefit the wider community of families with young children. The Parent Forum Coordinator has also been working with Dawlish and Teignmouth Children's Centre to develop a participation network, this is to facilitate meeting with other participation workers to share good practice and ideas on this area of work.

Community Outreach

The children's centre provides outreach workers in the following groups:

Ladysmith Toddler Group x2 per week

Ladysmith Child Health Clinic

St Michaels Monster Music group

Heavitree HURC toddler group x 1 (2 x Volunteers)

The Ladysmith Toddler Group is run in partnership with Ladysmith School. The Children's Centre funds the workers for the group with the support of local volunteers and the children's centre outreach worker.

Staff support parents via the CAF process and other methods and especially those who are less confident in communicating their views to make their voices heard.

Families can access support for themselves and their children through the Nurture Group and 2gether pilot run at Beacon Heath and Whipton children's centres.

Future Jobs Fund (local young people)

Six local young people have been given work opportunities in the Children's Centre via the FJF and partnership working with St Loye's and Westbank.

Job Centre Plus and links to Devon Family Learning, Exeter College (parents improving skills and achievement and first steps into volunteering or work)

Staff support parents via the CAF and other methods and especially those who are less confident in communicating their views to make their voices heard (Manager part of original CAF pilot steering group)

Parents and Staff Governors of local schools including, Willowbrook, Whipton and St James

Parents and staff at heart of development of Out of School Club – Meerkats
Partnership with local schools

Children's Centre allotment/container gardening links to local growing food project

Children's Centre Cookbook/Veg box scheme

Young Parents

The centre's Young Parents have been actively involved in the Childcare Sufficiency Questionnaire and attend groups for young parents to be and young parents to increase

literacy and numeracy skills as well as parenting and life-skills (cooking etc)

Evidence:

- Partnership working with local secondary schools (St James and St Luke’s) and Infant/Primary Schools inc student placement and Modern Apprentice placements
- Evaluations: Financial Futures, Volunteers Programme, Let’s Talk, and all services evidence of improvement in skills knowledge and confidence
- Parent Satisfaction Survey
- Case Studies and counselling outcomes
- Outcomes Star evaluation
- Devon’s Learning Journey (2Gether pilot showing evidence of improvement in children’s outcomes)
- Parents of children in 2ether show improvement in parenting and supporting home learning evaluation in progress)
- Step by Step folders
- Children’s evaluations of their setting
- Parent’s Progression (into volunteering/paid work or study)
- Impact of QT and EYP in supporting settings to improve ECCRS and practice
- PICL and ECCRS documentation
- COMG, SDG, SLT, Operation Group and Parent Forum minutes
- Newsletter 3 per year
- Website www.surestartexeter.org.uk

Action

To reach more fathers in the Heavitree and Polsloe area though targeted events during 2011.

A2.5: Economic and social well-being

	1	2	3	4
Grade: The extent to which children are developing skills for the future and parents are developing economic stability and independence, including access to training and employment.			✓	

Briefly list your main reasons for deciding on this grade. If you judge that the children’s centre is close to a grade boundary, briefly say why you did not select the other grade.

Heavitree and Polsloe is not an area with high levels of unemployment. This can be seen through the profiles for Free School Meals and workless households which are well below the England and Devon average. Nevertheless, there are still pockets of unemployment; all the Job Centre Plus vacancies are advertised weekly on the children’s centre notice board which is available to all parents when attending the children’s centre. Unemployed parents can also be directed to the Job’s Club in Beacon Heath where they can receive support from other agencies.

Extensive volunteer programme to provide opportunities for parents to gain confidence and new skills in preparation for work.

Signposting and referrals for parents to other services or agencies for example, Devon Welfare Rights, Exeter CVS and CAB.

Employing local community in part-time and sessional roles within the children's centres.

* Please see section on Volunteering in Enjoy & achieve

Sub-section A3: How good is the provision?

This section is about the quality of the centre's provision and the impact this has on outcomes for users.

Please refer closely to the grade descriptors and guidance for inspectors when deciding on a grade. You should include only the minimum amount of detail in support of your judgement.

A3.1: Assessing needs

	1	2	3	4
Grade: The effectiveness of the assessment of the needs of children, parents and other users.		✓		

Briefly list your main reasons for deciding on this grade. If you judge that the children's centre is close to a grade boundary, briefly say why you did not select the other grade.

We believe that we are *Good* because:

Action for Children provides the E-Aspire model (CAF centric) for assessment and outcomes. We are continually developing the potential of this programme to evidence the detail of our involvement with families – assessment is used well to ensure services meet individual user's needs. In individual work service users' needs are sensitively and appropriately assessed to ensure services can be tailored to suit the individual child and family needs. Family workers are involved with and initiate CAF assessments for families where there are additional needs. Information sharing between children's centre workers and other agencies follows the guidelines for the AxS Pathway and the LCSB 'Golden Rules'.

Family Project workers are part of Safeguarding meetings and core group meetings for families, contributing to assessment and review processes. Our own Safeguarding Group (key leads from Children's Centres services, Safeguarding lead and Children's centre manager) meet regularly to review processes, policy and local intelligence.

The LA E-Start data allows us to interrogate information on families' usage of centre

services and provides the COMG and SDG's with the detail to scrutinise centre monitoring.

A monitoring officer (working closely with LA) interrogates the data and presents to Senior Leadership & Meeting once a month and to the COMG once a term.

The LA CC Profile Data and the Exeter City Council Child Well-Being Index along with local knowledge (many staff live within the community) and good partnership working ensures that we have a good understanding of our local data. This is used to produce the Service Plan, Review and Annual Conversation, Action for Children Business Plan and to drill down into the needs of our community. We know our users well and most make demonstrable improvements across some if not all of the five outcome areas.

Our Health Visitor Lead and Midwifery lead are part of the Senior Leadership team and we hold regular joint meetings (Senior Leadership team once a month, Family Workers and Health meetings/ twice termly operational meetings termly where progress of families and use of centre timetable is discussed. Through the CAF process we evaluate with families the impact of interventions – all this ensure that assessment is robust.

All of our groups are evaluated both from the service user perspective and practitioner self reflection.

Qualified Teacher and staff assess children's outcomes and development using Devon's Learning Journey for the most vulnerable children that have been given a place in either the Whipton or Beacon Heath Nurture Group or 2gether pilot.

Evidence

- Number of CAFS undertaken
- Number staff CAF trained
- Assessments undertaken
- Other Assessment (e.g. Home Safety, Home Inventory etc)
- Case studies
- E-Aspire
- E-Start
- Children's Files
- Minutes of meetings
- One centre in the cluster is open 6 days a week

Actions:

Increase the use of the Family Life Plan with service users 'to negotiate the objectives of programmes of work with adult learners to accurately reflect their abilities and aspirations'.

A3.2: Learning and development

	1	2	3	4
Grade: The extent to which the centre promotes purposeful learning, development and enjoyment for all users.		✓		

Briefly list your main reasons for deciding on this grade. If you judge that the children's centre is close to a grade boundary, briefly say why you did not select the other grade.

We believe that our grade is *good* and we provide a range of evidence based approaches to our work across the centre provision and these are detailed on our website, newsletter, poster and flyers and provide information about other agencies services as well as our own.

Provision to help children learn and develop is good with outstanding features as evidenced by Devon's Learning journey for the most vulnerable children who are able to access the 2gether pilot and Nurture Groups at WCC and BHCC centres.

The Centre promotes purposeful learning and activities are of good quality and this is evidenced by evaluations and case studies alongside Take Part evaluation, PICL portfolios, Devon's Learning Journey, Parent Satisfaction Questionnaire and the experiences of students, parents, staff and children alike. Our local Modern Apprentices progress from work experience to level 2, 3, Foundation Degree, to Honours Degree, EYP qualification and one of our MAs was a finalist of the national Student of the Year award. Our volunteers progress from volunteering into training, paid work, being governors of local school, sitting on the Partnership Board and working for the Children's centre and personal development generally.

Personal development and achievement are celebrated; volunteers have an annual appreciation day when they are rewarded with certificates of achievement and flowers; young parents receive certificates of attendance and more formal certification for learning; the local press help us in celebrating centre and learners achievements (see press cuttings folder)

In response to the needs of the community a new 6 week group has been set up called 'Starting School' supporting families where English is a Second language.

A3.3: The range and appropriateness of services provided

	1	2	3	4
Grade: The extent to which the range of services, activities and opportunities meet the needs of users and the wider community.		✓		

Briefly list your main reasons for deciding on this grade. If you judge that the children's centre is close to a grade boundary, briefly say why you did not select the other grade.

We feel that our grade is *Good* as we provide a wide range of services, some in conjunction with the community and health staff both at the Heavitree and Polsloe children’s centre and through access to Whipton and Beacon Heath, for our children and families. Services are delivered on the H & P site part time, but there are services across Heavitree and Polsloe 5 days a week during term time and the Centre is open for 50 weeks of the year. The quality of services are good meeting the needs of most service users as evidenced by E-Start and the review of services through the Service development Groups, the Partnership and Monitoring Board and the Senior Leadership and Management team, and the Local Authority Annual reviews.

A wide range of practitioners support children and families through integrated and cohesive services planned via multi-agency involvement (Operations Group) e.g. Due to the low numbers of teenage parents in the area we do not run a specific group at Heavitree and Polsloe. However teenage parents in H & P are able to access Young Parents and Young Parents to Be groups, education, health advice, parenting support, housing advice and the support of Connexions at a one-stop multi-agency supported group at Beacon Heath Children’s Centre;

Children and parents from minority ethnic groups are supported by the 2Gether pilot and Nurture group via translator services and where necessary links to Romany and Gypsy Traveller Services. Disabled children are supported through Step– by- Step and access to Honeylands and Fairbanks Toy Library and their parents via Portage training. Over the past year there have been weekly Father’s Stay and Play sessions on Saturdays.

The Children’s Centre has a balance of universal and targeted groups available across the cluster for families. E-start data demonstrates good access from H & P parents. We are aware that we need to try to increase the numbers of Fathers using our services.

Our Participation Team through outreach to other settings, the community in general and within the centre discuss and consider changes to the programme and bring feedback into the SMT meetings.

Participation and attendance rates are good as evidence by E-start monitoring and local authority reach figures.

Action:

Increase the numbers of Heavitree and Polsloe Fathers accessing services through the children’s centre.

A3.4: Care, guidance and support

	1	2	3	4
Grade: The quality of care, guidance and support offered to users within the centre and the wider community.		✓		

Briefly list your main reasons for deciding on this grade. If you judge that the children's centre is close to a grade boundary, briefly say why you did not select the other grade.

We believe that we are *Good* in this area because:

Staff in the children's centre are trained to support and listen to parents using the centre and work with the parents to empower them and improve their confidence. Children's Centre staff have made 44 home visits to families in the Heavitree and Polsloe area over the period Apr-Dec 10 and provided 32 one to one support sessions with families in the centre.

In times of crisis families report feeling well supported by the centre. Staff are particularly effective at empowering families and raising expectations for themselves and their children. (As evidenced in BHCC Ofsted Report Nov 2010)

The Whipton counsellor has provided 12 counselling sessions for Heavitree and Polsloe families in the children's centre in the period between Sept – Dec 10. Child care is offered to all parents requiring counselling at Whipton.

Case studies, case-recording e-aspire and positive evaluations of support received by families

Staff training – mandatory and other training opportunities

Partnership working with Child Health Clinic/Breast-feeding peer support and antenatal support group

External Evaluation (Skilled for Health, Speaking Up Level 2 course)

Progression from crisis support to community based services

Adult & Community Learning Programmes

There are a wide variety of adult and community learning programmes to meet learners needs and staff promote take-up of these courses and adults returning to employment etc

EVIDENCE:

Case files

Partnership Board

Parent Forum

Volunteers Files (progression data)

Jobs Club

Making Your Voice Heard/Speaking Up Evaluation and Portfolios

Sub-section A4: How effective are the leadership and management?

This section is about the effectiveness of significant elements of the centre's leadership and management.

Inspectors will always use their professional judgement when weighing up the evidence to determine the grades to be awarded. However, the judgements on safeguarding and equality and diversity are significant. Where a judgement of inadequate is awarded for safeguarding or equality and diversity it is unlikely that the leadership and management judgement will be better than satisfactory.

The overall judgement on leadership and management is a significant factor in determining the capacity to improve judgement.

Please refer closely to the grade descriptors and guidance for inspectors.

A4.1: Governance and accountability

	1	2	3	4
Grade: The extent to which governance, accountability, professional supervision and day-to-day management arrangements are clear and understood.		✓		

Briefly list your main reasons for deciding on this grade. If you judge that the children's centre is close to a grade boundary, briefly say why you did not select the other grade.

Governance and Accountability is good overall

Governance Arrangements
Action for Children is the Responsible Body for the Heavitree and Polsloe Children's Centre.

The Children's Centre manager attends Action for Children county and national meetings, Local Authority and county wide meetings, Children's Centre Learning Network meetings, Partnership and Monitoring Board meetings, (COMG), Service Development Groups and sits on the Exeter local Children's Trust Board and is a Governor of St James High School

The children's centre has leads across the children's centre clusters for Educare and Safeguarding and Family Support. The Senior Leadership Team includes partners, centre leads, children's centre manager and participation workers, including the Parent Forum representative.

Senior Leadership Meetings are held weekly, Centre Meetings are held on a fortnightly basis. Whole Team meetings are held twice termly.

An Operational Group including partners is held termly for service planning and delivery.

Evidence

Agendas/minutes/actions for all above meetings
 Activities related to service planning based on local data sets/Operations Group
 Minutes of other cross professional meetings e.g. antenatal development group and breast-feeding support.

Accountability Arrangements

Clear links between strategic planning and service provision. Service plan is linked to ECM/SSCC Core Offer and local data sets. These are moderated by the Local Authority with the PCT and other partners and monitored through out Partnership Board/Action for Children/Local Authority with Annual Reviews.

Evidence

Service Plan
 Service Plan Reviews
 Management Team minutes
 Action for Children Line Management supervision minutes
 COMG minutes

Professional Supervision Arrangements

Regular supervision and appraisal of all staff (generally monthly but more frequently if working with CP cases) including external supervision for particular professional groups, e.g. counselling. Monitored quarterly

Evidence

Action for Children Performance Management Policies, Procedures, training (recruitment, supervision, appraisal)

A4.2: Ambition and prioritisation

	1	2	3	4
Grade: The extent to which ambitious targets drive improvement, provision is integrated and there are high expectations for users and the wider community.		✓		

Briefly list your main reasons for deciding on this grade. If you judge that the children’s centre is close to a grade boundary, briefly say why you did not select the other grade.

We feel that we are *good* because:

The Children’s Centre leadership (partnership board/parents and team) are focussed on promoting a good range of relevant services that are matched to the wants and needs of the users in our community.

Development Plan

Priorities and challenging/stretching targets for improvement

Service Plan – targets determined by LA and Data sets from various partners

Parental expectations

Children’s Centre lead on a number of initiatives for Devon’s Children’s Centres (training)

Children’s Centre Manager speaks at conferences e.g. C4EO on promising practice etc

Volunteer programme and Parent Participation seen as excellent practice and often cited as such

EVIDENCE

FSP – Let’s Talk

Poor Baby room experience nationally – HLYB training

Developing Partnership with Flying Start Children’s Centre re: Job’s Club /volunteering

Developing Partnerships with CVS /Exeter College re: Learning Opportunities/ FJF and local community working in Centre

Tackling poor health outcomes (FJF Horticultural Project with St James/ Veg Bags and recipes with local greengrocer/ activity promotion via Let’s Dance and St Luke’s Skilled for Health

SMT links with local schools as Governor’s

Developing links with other children’s Centres in Exeter through regular Children’s Centre Manager meetings

Community involved in identifying priorities via the Parent Forum working groups

A4.3: Value for money

	1	2	3	4
Grade: The extent to which resources are used and managed efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of users and the wider community.		✓		

Briefly list your main reasons for deciding on this grade. If you judge that the children’s centre is close to a grade boundary, briefly say why you did not select the other grade.

We believe that we are *Good* because resources are well managed across the cluster and the impact on outcomes for children and families generally good.

Although Heavitree and Polsloe is a 70% area and therefore the funding is less than that for the 30% area’s, H & P benefits from being part of a cluster model where it borders 2

other children's centres and services at these centres are well attended by H & P families. This is evidenced in the E-start data. Parents are able to access a wide range of services including some with childcare which they would not otherwise be available to them. Targeted families and those with additional needs have been able to access the 2gether pilot, Nurture Group and the Step by Step group at Whipton and Beacon Heath children's centres.

We have received very positive feedback from evaluations given by parents for our services, the International Stay and Play has become so popular we have had to increase the sessions from 2 to 4 per week and have managed to do this without increasing costs.

For the targeted families who have attended groups such as Nurture Group, Incredible Years, and the 2Gether Pilot the centre can provide evidence of tracking the children and families progress. The progress of users is recorded via Devon's Learning Journeys (for individual Children); Progression Data (for community members returning to work via volunteering etc; E-Start Data (use made of Centre by communities), E-Aspire tracking on individual families and vulnerable children, counselling outcomes tracking data etc

The Children's Centre has over the last three years carried out two separate unit costing exercises.

1. One of four projects for Action for Children (external national evaluation of targeted family support services) published
2. Together For Children costing pilot one of a few Devon CC to be involved in this pilot on the strength of the previous exercise

Alongside these more specialist approach to targeted costing the Children's Centre has

- Service plan
- Action for Children Business Plan
- COMG scrutiny of finance quarterly returns provided by Finance Officer
- Action for Children scrutiny re: Financial Requirements
- DCC Financial Requirements
- LA Annual Conversation
- Risk Assessments

Users state that provision and support are generally well aligned to their needs and make an effective contribution to improving outcomes. The Participation Team Outreach notes, Parent Satisfaction Survey, Parent Forum minutes and SMT minutes will support this statement.

The environment is conducive to learning for both parents and children and is welcoming and safe (ECERS / ITERS rating scales), the Quarterly Risk Assessments, Ofsted Inspection of full day care, LA inspections etc

Resource Planning takes into account the skills and training needs of staff and the deployment of staff across the Children's centre cluster and sustainability of services. Centre records of training and development, the Children's Centre also run Devon wide training for LA in Here's Looking at You Baby and Post-natal depression etc

Evidence

Value for Money Pilot and individual service/unit costing
Minutes of Partnership Board and Quarterly returns

Progression and tracking Data Profiling Reports Learning Journeys E-Start Data on users E-Aspire data on users Counselling Tracking Data Ofsted Incredible Years evaluation ECRS Individual Staff learning and skills analysis

A4.4: Equality and diversity

	1	2	3	4
Grade: The extent to which equality is promoted and diversity celebrated, illegal or unlawful discrimination is tackled and the centre fulfils its statutory duties.		✓		

Briefly list your main reasons for deciding on this grade. If you judge that the children’s centre is close to a grade boundary, briefly say why you did not select the other grade.

We believe that we are **Good** in this area because:

The centre promotes Equality and celebrates diversity through all children and families being central to the Centre’s vision (audit of each service/evaluation/Parent Forum/COMG. All staff are required to attend mandatory Equality and Diversity training with Action for Children and regular training on Equality and Diversity is held in Full Team Days. Action for Children has a clear policy and procedure for Equality and Diversity, Equal Opportunities and Inclusion which is displayed in the children’s centre where it can be easily accessed by parents. The children’s centre has an Equality and Diversity Plan and an EINA action plan. Diversity is celebrated via groups and services acknowledging key festivals. The SMT and staff team monitors outcomes for its key target groups and takes steps to narrow the gap.

The Ladysmith Infant School profile for BME groups demonstrates that one fifth of the children in the school are from BME groups. There is no one particular ethnic group and families are from diverse backgrounds encompassing many different languages. The children’s centre does use interpreters when necessary. We have identified that there is a need for the Children’s Centre to make better use of translators. The children’s centre works in partnership with the school to respond to the needs of the community by providing an International stay and play for parents with under 5 year old children. The group is to help support BME and families where English is a Second Language meet other families and combat social isolation. Families are supported by children’s centre staff in this group and signposted on to English classes when they are requested. The children’s centre provides a bi-lingual worker and funds a further worker in the group.

The group runs 4 sessions per week.

Equality and Diversity legislation is implemented/accessibility of services/adults with disabilities.

The diversity of users reflects the community and this is shown by the link between LA/ECC data on the groups of potential users and Centre's E-Start data.

The children's centre works in partnership with health colleagues to identify and support 'hard to reach families'/ 'families finding services difficult to access', through our referral and individual home visiting and support. Evaluation of our referral system identified that 18% of families referred were from BME groups The referrals were from a wide range of ethnic groups which can create social isolation. A home visiting service is provided to inform and bridge families into the children's centre services. Interpreter services are used for families where English is an Additional Language and where the parent does not speak English. Resources for promoting speech and language between parents and their young children are available in the children's centre in 12 different languages. Translation of key documents would be provided if this was identified as a need for the family.

Action for Children has a clear complaints procedure which is provided to parents both in the centres and during home visits with encouragement to use.

The centres/Multi-disciplinary Management Team have a good knowledge of our most vulnerable groups and take steps to engage them – increasing contact with hard to reach through outreach and family support programmes, the 2gether pilot, Nurture Group. The 2 year old pilot particularly offers evidence of narrowing the gap and improving outcomes (Language and Social and Emotional Development).

The new ante-natal programme provision pioneered by the Children's Centres SMT in partnership with NCT, Midwifery, Health visiting and the Children's Centre will enable first time vulnerable parents to be identified and supported and all parent's to have additional support in the transition to parenthood than has previously been available.

Range, co-ordination and accessibility of services for children or adults with learning difficulties or disabilities e.g. deployment of family support lead working with existing external services will increase the numbers of adults with learning difficulties /disabilities attending services and being supported. We acknowledge the tension between being inclusive within existing centre services and providing targeted services. We provide advice and support for parents of disabled children and work effectively alongside other partners e.g. Step by Step.

Evidence

Service Plans and range of services to meet community need

Action for Children policies and procedures

Strategy for reaching those with needs less well met EINA and Action Plan

Supervision files /Quarterly Returns

Mandatory Training

Lead worker on disability

Makaton Training

Case histories highlighting inclusive practice

Language services

Action

Audit of services for children and adults with learning difficulties and disabilities to look at registration forms to see if disabilities are correctly identified on our registration forms.
 Appointment of Lead for Children and Adults with disabilities.
 Development plan to address gaps and improve.
 Better use of translators for records, information and advice.

A4.5: Safeguarding

	1	2	3	4
Grade: The effectiveness of the centre’s policy, procedures and work with key agencies in safeguarding children and, where applicable, vulnerable adults.		✓		

Briefly list your main reasons for deciding on this grade. If you judge that the children’s centre is close to a grade boundary, briefly say why you did not select the other grade.

We believe that we are *Good* with outstanding features in safeguarding. We have a Senior Designated Person for safeguarding who is a qualified and registered social worker. In her absence the manager or the Educare Lead can both cover for safeguarding concerns. In the unlikely event that any of these managers are unavailable there is a protocol for contacting Action for Children and the Local Authority (threshold unit) line management and out of hours contact.

The DSL and the Children’s Centre Manager have received Safeguarding in Recruitment Training. The DSL has also received the ADVA Marac training. All Children’s Centre workers have received mandatory one day Safeguarding Training provided through Action for Children and a mandatory 2 hour Safeguarding training in their centres. All family support and Early Years leads have received Level 2 ADVA, CAF AxS Pathway training and some have also received Marac and Level 3 Safeguarding training.

There are proven outcomes that demonstrate that children are encouraged to talk about feelings to deal assertively with pressures, are listened to, and know to whom they can turn for help and advice if necessary. Children develop an excellent understanding of dangers and how to keep themselves safe especially the direction travelled from initial engagement. For example, all children who use the centre are encouraged and supported to wash their hands before they sit down for snack, this is often a new routine for the children but they quickly accept it and staff take the time to explain why we wash our hands before we eat.

Home safety visits with fire safety officers are offered to parents who meet the criteria and family and outreach workers conduct these visits. Parents complete a home safety questionnaire, watch a home safety video and have necessary home safety equipment fitted to their homes. All parents attending the Centre for particular groups also have the opportunity to watch the Home Safety Video.

Action for Children has a comprehensive Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedure which operates nationally. All interview panels have a member of staff who has completed the Safer Recruitment training. A Single Central Register is kept of all CRB checks. All adverts include a Safeguarding statement and all new staff are provided with an induction which includes copies of our Code of Conduct which includes staff's individual responsibilities for safeguarding. All staff, visitors and volunteers are given a copy of the Code of Conduct and staff sign to say that they have received it. Procedures for the management of allegations are carried out by Senior Staff who have received training and are reported to the LADO and clear reports are kept.

Action for Children has a robust recording and record keeping policy and procedure and all family support and early years' leads and outreach workers are trained in its use. All other staff are supported to ensure that they adhere to the recording policy when necessary. Children's files are audited on a 6 monthly basis by senior management and 3 monthly by the DSL to ensure that record keeping is kept up to date. All staff follow policy and procedures for recording concerns for children and records are kept in the children's files.

All staff comply with Action for Children Confidentiality and Information Sharing procedures which are compliant with the Devon Local Safeguarding Children's Board 'The Golden Rules'.

Evidence

Children's Centre policies/procedures/ training/signage/cleaning maintenance/Health and Safety/Fire Drills
 Action for Children Safeguarding Policy and Procedure, Code of Conduct, Whistle-blowing, lone working
 Newsletter – advertising PCSO, Fire Officer, NHS Direct, Parent-line Plus, No Smoking Promotion
 Information and Advice
 Domestic Violence referrals, Marac, other domestic violence services
 Children's Records
 Established Links with other agencies – Home Start
 Single Central Record CRB
 Recruitment and Selection
 Supervision and Appraisal
 Training and Qualifications regularly updated
 Consistent referral process for family support, counselling and 2gether pilot.
 Accident Forms – reviewed termly in centre and nationally through Action for Children.
 Use of Language interpreters to ensure that EAL families can communicate their needs
 Minutes of Safeguarding Team meetings
 Photo board identifying staff and ID cards
 All group and family support evaluations
 Centre meetings, family support meetings with health, Senior Leadership meetings with health
 Policy Board
 Adult Learning – Paediatric First Aid courses and volunteer training
 COMG provided with safeguarding pack /training (14.09.10)
 2gether pilot evaluation integrated working and improvement in parenting skills as well as children's development

Annual Child Safety Week Event
 Case-studies of children on or those who have been on CP plan
 Evaluation and case-study of children who do not settle
 Family Support annual evaluation
 Outcomes from Nurture Group and 2Gether plus observation that children developing excellent understanding of danger and keeping themselves safe
 Cross-site policy re: hot drinks in the centres
 2Gether evaluation re: integrated working and improvement in parenting skills as well as children's development
 Children's Centre about average in terms of emergency hospital admissions (this has improved)

Action Points

- All Managers to have completed Level 4 Safeguarding Training /Manager & ADVA Managers training.
- Multi -lingual and interpreter service to ensure that EAL families can communicate their needs - quantitative and qualitative evaluation and case-study
- Annual Child Safety Week Event (before and after knowledge evaluation)
- Update website with Keeping children Safe and Policies Pages
- Update 2Gether leaflet about Keeping children Safe and Safeguarding Statement

A4.6: Evaluation

	1	2	3	4
Grade: The extent to which evaluation is used to shape and improve services and activities.		✓		

Briefly list your main reasons for deciding on this grade. If you judge that the children's centre is close to a grade boundary, briefly say why you did not select the other grade.

We feel that the centre is good in this area because:

The Children's Centre took part in the Parent Satisfaction Survey and 98.5% were either Satisfied or Very Satisfied with the activity or service provided. This is higher than the Devon average. 97.8% of parents using the centre services were either Satisfied or Very Satisfied with the staff who provided the service or group they attended. This is slightly lower than the Devon average of 98.2%.

All children's centre services are evaluated on a termly basis and this information is used to plan the following terms programme and services. Therefore parents are influencing the decisions made for planning. The participation team facilitate parent's involvement at Partnership Board (COMG), Operations Meetings and Service Development Groups. The participation team are also on the SMT representing parent's views.

The children's centre plans all its services in partnership with the health team who attend our Partnership Board, (COMG) Service Development Groups, Operations Group

(Planning) and SMT. The overall effectiveness of the centre services are discussed through the Service Plan and the Service Plan review at the Service Development and Partnership Board meetings. The Service Plan and Service Plan review has now been replaced by the SEF and Development Plan.

The Children's Centre are working in partnership with the NCT and midwifery team to provide ante-natal services to pregnant women and their partners. This is a new service and is being evaluated by our NCT and midwifery partners. The outcomes will determine how the service will be provided in the future.

The Children's Centre works in partnership with portage to provide the Step by Step group for children with disabilities. This service is jointly evaluated between the children's centre and portage workers and decisions about how the group is run in the future are made.

An evaluation of all the children the 2gether pilot and the services that their parents have received and the outcomes of these are currently underway and will be completed in April/May 2011.

A4.7: Partnerships

	1	2	3	4
Grade: The extent to which partnerships with other agencies ensure the integrated delivery of the range of services the centre has been commissioned to provide.		✓		

Briefly list your main reasons for deciding on this grade. If you judge that the children's centre is close to a grade boundary, briefly say why you did not select the other grade.

We believe that we are Good with elements of Outstanding in this area.

Services are fully integrated with firm partnerships between the Children's Centre and Midwifery, Health, Chiropractors, Exeter CVS, Plough and Share, Ladysmith Infants School, City and County Councillors, Community Jobs Club, Police and Community Support Officers, Job Centre Plus, Early Birds, Portage, Exeter College, Beacon Learning Community, Axs Pathway, Devon Family Learning, Well Uk, Connexions, Trio, Early Years, Fire Officers, and Local Press. These activities make a considerable contribution to meeting the widest needs of the community.

Our relationships with most of our Statutory Partners are firmly established but not so with Children and Young People's Services (Social Care) at this point in time although we are continually developing in this area. Therefore we do not feel that we meet the Outstanding grade.

User involvement is firmly established through our Participation Team and our Parent Forum who contribute at all levels of our programme.

Evidence

- SMT minutes
- Partnership Board Minutes
- Service Development Group Minutes
- Newsletter and Centre programme
- Evaluation documents
- E-start data
- Display boards in the Children’s Centre
- Leaflets and Information from partner organisations available in the Children’s Centre

Actions:

Further develop our partnerships with CYPS (social care teams)

A4.8: User engagement

	1	2	3	4
Grade: The extent to which the centre supports and encourages the community to engage with services and uses their views to develop the range of provision.		✓		

Briefly list your main reasons for deciding on this grade. If you judge that the children’s centre is close to a grade boundary, briefly say why you did not select the other grade.

We believe that we are good with aspects of Outstanding because:

Children and their families are at the heart of our programme as we strive to have parents involved at every level of our programme and this is done through the comments books held at the centre, newsletter, termly evaluations of all of our groups, the Parent’s Forum involvement through the Partnership Board, SDG, Operations, SLT. The participation team also attend meetings for Exeter Play Association and this influences play provision across the city. They network with other Children’s Centres and their parent forums to share ideas, challenges, good practise and resources.

The centre Participation Team and family support and outreach staff are continually working towards reaching families who are not accessing services in the centre in order to identify and meet their needs. The 2gether pilot has been very successful in reaching families that would not otherwise have engaged with the children’s centre.

Parents are encouraged to participate in recruitment through the support of the participation team who have all received recruitment training and there is always a parent representative involved in recruitment.

The newsletter and website inform parents and carers about local services and opportunities available to them. We encourage parents to use the feedback forms on the

website. The newsletter is produced termly and is sent to all families on our database and available in local settings, doctors' surgeries, and schools. It can also be downloaded from our website. Health Visitors and Midwives give out the newsletter at home visits. There are always articles about parental participation and articles that demonstrate parents and children's involvement in activities, groups and events.

Our volunteering programme provides opportunities for local parents and other community members to gain new skills through volunteering in the Children's Centre. This is a successful programme and for many volunteers is part of their journey into / back to work.

We currently have volunteers that live in the Heavitree & Polsloe area and over the past year 2 volunteers have been active at Heavitree and Polsloe Children's Centre.

Evidence

- Summary results of Parent Satisfaction Survey
- Parent Forum AGM report
- Parent Forum minutes
- Service Development Group minutes
- Newsletters and website
- Partnership Board minutes and reports
- Volunteer reports and records of hours
- Minutes from Exeter Play Association meetings
- 2gether evaluation
- Action for Children recruitment records

Sub-section A5: Summative judgements

This final section draws together all the evidence and judgements made in the preceding sections of the evaluation schedule. There are three key judgements: *How good are outcomes for users? How good is the provision? and How effective are the leadership and management?*

The judgement on *The centre's capacity for sustained improvement* draws on the quality of leadership and management in securing past improvement and ensuring the centre will continue to make progress.

All of these summative judgements inform the final judgement on *Overall effectiveness*.

Drawing on your judgements made in sections A2 – A4 above now make your summative judgements.

A5.1: Outcomes

	1	2	3	4
Grade: How good are outcomes for users?		✓		

Briefly list your main reasons for deciding on this grade. If you judge that the children’s centre is close to a grade boundary, briefly say why you did not select the other grade.

Heavitree and Polsloe Children’s Centre provides a wide range of support to families and contributes to improving outcomes in a number of different areas. We have made our judgement as good overall and we feel we have some outstanding areas for outcomes, for example the improvement of the foundation stage profile, but we also recognise the challenges for areas such as our health profile. We work hard with our partners to find ways to improve outcomes, i.e. health profile – obesity rates are poor with trends getting worse, (this is a national problem), and the Centre has been proactive in getting staff trained to run HENRY training next term. Another example is where parents have been reporting on their concerns around the government spending review and the impact of that on families through increased costs on bills and potential cuts in benefits, possible redundancies and concerns of increased debts (parents have a direct access to the Radio 4 Today programme through audio diaries). We will be running Money Skills workshops at Whipton Children’s Centre next term and these can be offered on a one to one basis or in groups, to improve outcomes for achieve economic and social well being.

H & P parents attending the Incredible Years and other specific targeted parenting groups over the past year have benefited from the intervention and this can be evidenced through the evaluations completed.

The early indications of outcomes from the 2gether pilot are very good and we will be able to fully report on the outcomes for both parents and their children by April/May 2011.

A5.2: Provision

	1	2	3	4
Grade: How good is the provision?		✓		

Briefly list your main reasons for deciding on this grade. If you judge that the children’s centre is close to a grade boundary, briefly say why you did not select the other grade.

We believe that our provision is Good but not quite Outstanding. The main reasons why we have chosen good is because we make good use of data provided by health and the Local Authority to understand and meet the needs of our community through the provision of a wide range of relevant services. However, although our services are integrated and we deliver cohesively our relationship with some statutory partners i.e. Health is much stronger than it is with others - CYPS for example. We are aware that we need to further develop our services for families where English is an additional language. We have recently acquired and equipped a purpose built playroom in the children’s centre

which will give us much more scope to run more groups in the H & P area, some with childcare provided which will improve our provision further and allow for business support workers to be on site on a part-time basis.

We have an established use of the CAF process with a team of staff who can provide the Lead Professional Role and complete CAF assessments for families with additional needs. We also attend and contribute to all CP meetings and Core Groups and provide a bridging role to the children's centre services for families at Level 3. Our 2gether pilot has enabled us to extend our Outreach role and engage with families who would not otherwise have attended the children's centre.

We have very clear and well established user involvement through our Parent Forum who are involved with the programme at every level.

The centre is continuously developing services with a variety of different agencies for example, Plough and Share (Credit Union), Dentist, Early Birds to meet the needs of our community.

A5.3: Leadership and management

	1	2	3	4
Grade: How good are the leadership and management?		✓		

Briefly list your main reasons for deciding on this grade. If you judge that the children's centre is close to a grade boundary, briefly say why you did not select the other grade.

We believe that our leadership and management are good because the Senior Management Team are extremely committed and passionate about the Children's Centres. The Children's Centre vision is 'to build future generations of happy, healthy confident children' and staff and parents are reminded about this daily as the Mission Statement is clearly displayed throughout the Children's Centre. All groups that are run at the centre are evaluated regularly and planning for Early Years groups is undertaken through the Early Years Foundation Stage. Personal, social and emotional development is measured for all children attending our child care sessions and plotted on the Devon Learning Journey.

Heavitree and Polsloe is part of a cluster model of 4 Children's Centres, three in Exeter, which are managed through the Senior Leadership Team. The SLT is made of up of Leads with specialist skills in all the different areas of the Core Offer who all carry responsibility across the cluster. The SLT meet on a weekly basis to ensure the smooth running of the Centres.

The recent Ofsted Report (Nov 2010) at Beacon Heath Children's Centre stated about our leadership and management "They inspire all they work with to improve outcomes, including staff, partners and users. Clear line management arrangements and effective supervision mean that staff are well supported. This includes clear governance

arrangements provided by Action for Children”.

The Children’s Centre has good working relationships with our partners and services are well integrated.

Evidence
Beacon Heath Ofsted Report Nov 2010

A5.4: Capacity for improvement

	1	2	3	4
Grade: The centre’s capacity for sustained improvement, including the quality of its leadership and management.		✓		

Briefly list your main reasons for deciding on this grade. If you judge that the children’s centre is close to a grade boundary, briefly say why you did not select the other grade.

We believe our Capacity for Improvement is *Good* because it identifies our strengths, our outstanding care, guidance and support given to families and our effective leadership and management team. It also identifies the areas where we need to concentrate to improve outcomes for example in reducing levels of obesity in children under the age of 5 years, HENRY; increasing our reach to H & P Fathers; continually updating our safeguarding knowledge and training; increasing our use of the Family Life Plan; increasing the amount of services delivered from the Ladysmith site; using translators as well as interpreters and further relationship with CYPs.

Our plans for the future include services to meet these health needs, through running the HENRY courses for parents and working with midwifery and the NCT to promote breast feeding and support parents who do breast feed through peer support programmes and services. In addition, we need to make our services more inclusive through developing further services in particular for families with English as an additional language and for parents with learning disabilities.

A5.5 Overall effectiveness

	1	2	3	4
Grade: The effectiveness of the children’s centre in meeting the needs of and improving outcomes for users and the wider community.		✓		

Briefly list your main reasons for deciding on this grade. If you judge that the children's centre is close to a grade boundary, briefly say why you did not select the other grade.

We believe that we are *Good* in this area because:

The children's centre provides outstanding care, guidance and support to parents and their families, building trusting relationships and engaging well with targeted families and those with additional needs. Partnership working with the Local Authority and the Devon Fire Service has enabled us to help promote safety in the home through the home safety scheme. Staff are well trained in Safeguarding and in supporting parents through domestic violence. The children's centre has set actions for the next year to promote further inclusive working, particularly in the areas of parents with learning difficulties and families with English as an additional language.

The profiles for the H & P area demonstrate that there are not high levels of deprivation within the area. However there are small numbers of families who do have additional and complex needs and due to the centre being part of the Beacon cluster, they are able to access a much wider range of services to meet these needs.

We are also working with our health partners to develop new initiatives to reach more parents through our HENRY scheme /new antenatal programme. The children's centre also only promotes breast feeding with supporting literature available throughout the children's centre and peer support schemes.

The children's centre works hard to raise parents and children's aspirations by offering a wide range of adult learning opportunities and through the volunteer development programme run through the WCC and BHCC. Further opportunities for adult learning are available within the H & P community groups and the children's centre provides the link between parents and these groups. Parents are involved with the running of the children's centre at every level through the Parent Forum and parent's views are continually sought.

There are lots of good examples of Partnership working and H & P is a very community-minded area; parents are quite able to develop groups for themselves but are always appreciative of the support provided by the children's centre.

Section B: Factual information about your children's centre

Section B is a record of statistical and other factual information about your children's centre.

Sub-section B1: Information about your children's centre

B1.1: Name of children's centre

Heavitree and Polsloe Children's Centre

B1.2: Address (main site)

Ladysmith School, Heavitree Exeter

B1.3: Local authority

Devon

B1.4: Name of centre leader

Christine Cottle, Children's Centre Service Manager

B1.5: Telephone

01392 204654

B1.6: Email

Christine.cottle@actionforchildren.org.uk

B1.7: Website

www.surestartexeter.org.uk

B1.8: Alternative contact (name and contact details)

Janine Broomes, Safeguarding and Family Support Lead

B1.9: Number of sites which form part of the children's centre

3

Address(es) of other site(s) which form part of the children’s centre

Whipton Children’s Centre
Beacon Heath Children’s Centre

Sub-section B2: Organisation and services

B2.1: Date of designation

21/07/09

B2.2: Services currently directly provided by the centre from the main centre site

Please give brief details of the number and type of services provided, including any family support and outreach services, and any adult learning.

<p>Universal Services Father’s stay and play Treasure Baskets New Baby Group Targeted Here’s Looking at You Baby Counselling Family Support one to one home visiting CAF/TAC Axs Pathway CP, CIN attendance</p>
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B2.3: Services delivered from the main centre site but provided by another public sector organisation or third party through partnership or commissioned arrangements, including who manages and delivers these services

Include any health services and adult learning classes.

<p>Health Antenatal Parenting Group Baby Oasis Baby Massage Baby Club Child Health Clinic Ante-natal appointments</p>
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B2.4: Services delivered by or on behalf of the centre but from another site

Ladysmith International Families Group
 Toy Library
 Nurture Group
 Stay and Play
 2gether pilot
 Step by Step
 Rhyme Time
 Incredible Years
 Here's Looking at You Little One
 Heuristic Play
 Young Parents Group
 Parents with Prospects
 Ante-natal group
 Volunteer Training
 Paediatric First Aid
 Parent Forum
 Basic Skills
 Dentistry
 Jobs Club (St Sidwell's)

Sub-section B3: Governance arrangements

B3.1: Please describe the governance arrangements for your children's centre (for example managed directly by the local authority, managed by a school governing body on behalf of the local authority, managed by a charitable organisation on behalf of the local authority)

Managed by Action for Children (as the Responsible Body) on behalf of the Local Authority, the Accountable Body, under commissioning arrangements.

Core Offer Monitoring Group (multi-agency) independent Chair by Chief Executive CVS (termly)

Service Development Groups (Be Healthy/Stay Safe SDG, Making a Positive Contribution/Achieve Economic Wellbeing SDG, and Enjoy and Achieve SDG chaired by Staff Leads with local practitioners and parents (termly).

Senior Leadership Team (weekly) meetings composed of Manager and Centre Leads, Volunteer Co-ordinator, Parent Forum Co-ordinator and Publicity/Marketing Co-ordinator as a core with Health visitor and Midwifery Lead once monthly, Qualified Teacher and Nursery Manager once monthly and Finance and Monitoring Officers once a month.

Sub-section B4: Registered childcare/early years provision

B4.1: Does the centre provide or commission childcare/early years provision which is registered by Ofsted?

No

B4.2: If yes, on how many sites is registered childcare/early years provision provided?

B4.3: Please complete the following for EACH registration that forms part of the centre's services

Ofsted URN

Setting name

Setting address

Telephone

Email

Registered person's name (organisation or individual)

B4.3 continued

Ofsted URN

Setting name

Setting address

Telephone

Email

Registered person's name

Sub-section B5: Information about staffing

B5.1: Number of staff employed directly by the children's centre who deliver services and activities for users

Briefly list their job titles and the numbers of staff in this role.

<p>Early Years Lead x1 Counsellor x1 Outreach workers x 3 Safeguarding and Family Support Lead x1 Business Support Officer x1 Family Support Workers x2 Children's Centre Manager x1 Operational Lead x1 Parent Participation Workers x3 Finance Worker x1</p>

B5.2: Where applicable, the number of staff delivering childcare or the Early Years Foundation Stage

B5.3: Number of staff employed by partnership agencies who deliver services and activities for users of the children's centre

Briefly list their job titles and the numbers of staff in this role.

Health visitor x2 Health assistants x1 Midwives x3 Family Support worker x1 Group Leader x1 (International Families Group)
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