



INVESTING IN CHILDREN

Membership Evaluation

Date June 2005

PROJECT NAME NCH St Anthony's Children's House

PROJECT LOCATION Thomas Gaugham Community Centre
Yelverton Crescent
Newcastle upon Tyne NE6 3SW

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ASSESSOR Helen Mulhearn

SUMMARY OF EVALUATION

Sector Youth Provision
Ages 5-14 years
Area East
Ward Walker

Number of beneficiaries



investing in children

Evaluation for Investing in Children membership:

St Anthony's Children's House - NCH

St Anthony's Children's House at Thomas Gaughan Community Centre, Walker is an NCH funded project with Children's Fund after school activities. (Please see attached timetable).

Most of the staff team are part-time and are employed specifically to provide drop in after schools activities at times best suited to meet the needs of children in the surrounding area.

An evaluation of Newcastle Children's Fund:

7-11 Example of Good Practice

This Service operates as an Open Access facility

Children can self refer, but they need their parents consent

Parents can also refer children to the service

Parents are involved in the service as volunteers, and local parents are employed at the Service

A Parents' Committee has been established and a separate Children's Committee has been established

Children identify issues with staff that become their groups aims and objectives and the children design the ground rules for these groups

Children evaluate at the end of sessions

The Service is embedded in the local community and has strong networks and links with other CF Services

The Service offers support to children on a broad range of issues identified by children as affecting their lives e.g. eating disorders, domestic violence, anger management etc.

Networking and strong links with other CF Services in the local area ensure that children are met with a consistent response and approach at all times.

St Anthony's Children's Houses provides 'time out' for the children who access the service. As highlighted, children can self refer but do need parental consent. Some children are referred but most of the children who attend and participate want to be there.

The staff team are in themselves a huge resource for the children, in that they have an understanding of what is happening in their lives. They have good links with the schools and in general the children enjoy coming. Attendance can go up and down as children deal with their lives daily, sometimes things go well and other times not so good.

St Anthony's Children's House offers the children a variety of opportunities, experiences and activities. **What is on offer is negotiated with the groups, the group decide where trips are to, and how they run. All in all the children can, and do participate in what happens within the timetabled programme.**

For example:

Girls Group – Art Matters

The girls group were involved in a project with NCH – Art Matters 2005. The girls painted and drew pictures of bridges in Newcastle and other things. They visited places to prepare and created many beautiful pictures. The result was their work was displayed in Tate Britain Art Gallery in London, then they held a special exhibition in the Thomas Gaughan Community Centre for people that **they** wanted to see their work. A separate showing was held for other local people and sponsors etc. Please see appendix 2.

Boys – Northern Architecture

Some of the boys from St Anthony's children's House worked with an artist from Northern Architecture. The boys visited the University and Whickham Thorns. It is hoped that the work created will also be displayed at St Mary's church.

After Schools Clubs

As part of the planning for all the sessions during the week the staff team include activities requested by the children and young people. They also record all comments made by the groups as evidence of how the session went.

Activities include:

- Arts and Crafts
- Cooking
- Sports
- Games

Anything and everything that the children want.

Spending Money

As part of their sessions the group plan trips and outings, as well as buying new equipment. Please see appendix 3 and 4.

On my visit to meet some children and young people who use the project I made scoobies! As there were not many young people around that day the girls enjoyed a relaxed session and showed me how to make scoobies.

Part of the session was spent planning and preparing for the summer activity programme. **The girls chose their favourite places to visit out of a selection of options.**

Jodey, Emily and Zoe all wanted to go to Whickham Thorns but have to wait until all the children and young people have been consulted.

The girls also told me about their trip to London. How they all thought it was brilliant and they had a really good time. All of the girls involved in the trip to London were involved in the planning.

The girls were paired and had a nominated worker. They talked about what could go wrong, life in London, and rules for the day. Each one had their own camera and now they each have a photograph album with their photographs and their comments on their special day.

Helpful Kids

The boys I met with, Dylan and Liam are part of a larger group of 'Children Decide', a group of Children's Champions run by the Voices Project on behalf of the Children's fund.

Their current project is to try and get a new park around their area. They are making a petition, some posters and sending letters to councillors and other local people to help them take their ideas forward.

As St Anthony's Children's House is part of Thomas Gaughan Community Centre it also supports activities in the centre and staff work different sessions to provide a variety of resources i.e. Kids Café.

Over the holidays a 'healthy roadshow' was held. Healthy activities were on offer and the children rotated every twenty minutes, doing craft, sports and cooking. At the end of the session everyone shared in a meal and the children and young people received a goodybag.

St Anthony's Children's House is a hive of activity working with and for the children and young people who attend. The sessions are timetabled but the children fully participate in what happens and how it happens.

All the children I met with enjoy coming to the house and taking part. Therefore, it is on their behalf that I would like to recommend that St Anthony's Children's House receives its Investing in Children membership.

**Helen Mulhearn
Investing in Children
Project Worker**

August 2005

After-school fun

St Anthony's Children's House at Thomas Gaughan Community Centre provides a range of after-school activities for children. The service is open to anyone who has parental consent. Its children's committee comes up with aims for the group, designs its ground rules and evaluates sessions, and staff record all the children's comments after each session.

The service provides time out for children, and a chance to get support on the things that affect their lives, such as eating disorders, domestic violence and anger management. It also offers a variety of experiences and activities, in a packed timetable negotiated with the children. These include producing artwork for an exhibition in Tate Britain, working with a local architect on designs, cooking, sports and games, and planning trips.

Jodey, Emily and Zoe all want to go to Whickham Thorns but know they have to wait until all the others have been consulted. When planning a trip, they talk about what could go wrong and rules for the day.

“...working with and for the children and young people...”

A group of the children are trying to get a new park around their area. They are making a petition and posters, and sending letters to councillors and other local people to help them take their ideas forward.

“St Anthony's Children's House is a hive of activity working with and for the children and young people who attend,” says the Investing in Children assessor. “The sessions are timetabled but the children fully participate in what happens and how it happens.”

[suggested pics – art exhibition, or petition and posters for the new park]