

# Midwives in Children's Centres

Shaping the service to the needs of  
the women and their families

By

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# How it used to be...

- Before our introduction into Children's Centres, maternity care in our area was centred in GP surgeries and health centres
- Women consulted the GP to have their pregnancy confirmed and were then booked into the midwives clinic held in the surgery
- Antenatal appointments were held in the surgery and were usually in surgery hours only
- Each GP surgery would hold clinics for the women registered there
- Postnatally, women were visited at home until their discharge into the care of the health visitor

## So Where do Children's Centres fit In?

- By definition, Children's Centres are *"situated in easily accessible areas, often a pram's push away from home and bring together a range of integrated services for children and their families through pregnancy and then birth to 5 years of age"* (DOH 2007)
- They can provide the venue for midwifery services including antenatal clinics, antenatal education classes and postnatal clinics which are accessible at convenient times
- The focus is on health, rather than ill health

# Government Commitment

- The publication of Maternity Matters in 2007 promised *“the provision of high quality, safe, and accessible services that are both women-focused and family centred”*.
- The National Service Framework (NSF) for Children, Young People and Maternity Services (2004) acknowledges the importance of good maternity care as being essential to ensure the best start for the unborn child
- Every Child Matters: Change for Children (2004) also highlights that high quality maternity care also helps to develop parenting skills for both mums and dads.

# The Early Days

- In 2008, Temple Mill Children's Centre opened and the midwives were invited to use the venue to hold a post natal clinic once a week
- There was quite a lot of opposition to this
- Midwives were reluctant to come out of GP surgeries
- Some of the women thought that Children's Centres were for "*poor disadvantaged families*"
- There were concerns around the centre not having the facilities to run a clinic e.g. Proper waste disposal facilities, hand washing facilities, couches etc
- Soon however midwives saw the advantages of the centre and began to use it for antenatal clinics from September 2009.

# GP Surgery vs Children's Centre

## GP Surgery

- Easily accessible medical information and blood results
- Easy referral to GP for any medical problems
- Good clinical facilities



## Children's Centre

- Non clinical setting
- Emphasis on health not ill health
- Comfortable waiting area
- Child friendly
- Family friendly opening hours
- Accommodating to a variety of services e.g classes, clinics, groups etc
- Serves a geographical area



# At The Beginning.....

- Women are invited to attend their Earlybird booking session at the Children's Centre
- Partners are encouraged to attend
- Children's Centre staff register all attendees so that they can in the future let them know what is happening at the centre
- The Children's centre provides a non clinical venue for the session, reinforcing the concept of pregnancy being a normal lifetime event rather than a clinical state



# The Routine Antenatal Clinic

- The Children's Centre tends to be more flexible with availability of clinic space
- This means that the midwife is able to offer appointments at times convenient to both parents
- Toddlers can play safely whilst mum sees the midwife
- Mums can chat over a cup of coffee whilst waiting for their appointment
- No difference in offering services such as venepuncture, sweeps etc



# Antenatal Classes

- Can be held at time that are convenient to parents e.g. evenings and weekends
- Quite often mums will have already met at earlybird or whilst waiting for their antenatal appointment
- Refreshments provided by the centre
- Input from centre staff on facilities on offer to new mums
- Use of centre facilities such as TV and DVD
- Relaxed atmosphere that mums feel they have ownership of



As part of our ongoing  
education we offer our  
families  
'Early Days sessions'

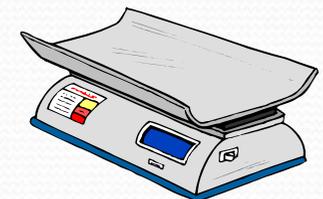
During these sessions we  
demonstrate Baby  
Bathing and Early day's  
care.

For this we invite our new  
mums and babies back  
to talk about their  
experiences and  
demonstrate bathing  
with their new little  
bundles of joy!



# Postnatal Clinics

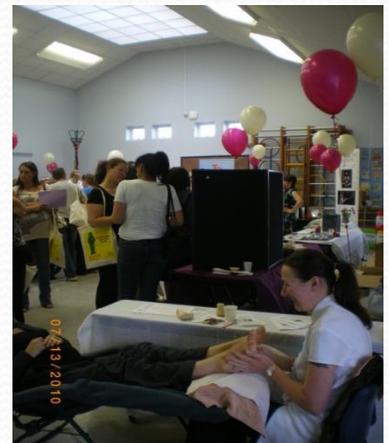
- After an initial home visit, mums are invited to the Children's centre for their babies PKU test
- This is often the first time they will venture out as a new family
- All routine postnatal checks can be done
- An appointment time is given to avoid mum staying in all day "*to wait for the midwife*"
- All babies can be weighed, often a great source of reassurance to mums that feeding is going ok
- A final discharge appointment allows the midwife to discuss such issues as registration, contraception and the role of the health visitor



# Pregnancy Information Evening

- The event was thought up by a midwife who wanted to let women know the different facilities available to pregnant women and their families
- It started 3 years ago as a modest affair with about 5 stands and was held in a health centre
- As the event grew and more people were keen to exhibit their services the premises proved to be too small and also too restrictive
- Temple Mill Children's Centre was approached and the event moved there in 2008
- It has continued to grow and in July we held a special 3<sup>rd</sup> Birthday event

- There are now approx upwards of 20 stands ranging from midwives and health visitors, NCT, reflexologist, homeopath, water birth, hypno birth real nappies etc etc
- The event is completely free to parents, stands are charged a nominal fee of £10.00 and are encouraged to donate a prize to the free draw held at each event
- All women are given details of the event at booking regardless where they receive their antenatal care
- We write to companies and ask for info leaflets and free samples to give to the women
- Some women attend more than once in their pregnancy!



**As part of our  
service we invite all  
our mum's and  
dad's to be to our  
'Early Pregnancy  
Evening'**

Here our parents can  
meet a variety of  
agencies who they may  
possibly come across  
during and after their  
pregnancy.



We then offer our families a continuous service through to when their children begin school!

Here we can see some of our newest members beginning to explore and learn with the support of their parents and carers, this is often a natural transition from their ante natal care and they have the opportunity to continue through the service until they access school



## We Aim to include dad's and partners right from the very beginning !

By working together in the relaxed atmosphere of the Children's Centre we encourage dad's to attend all appointments and support sessions. We aim to offer 'Parent Craft at a time that is accessible for both mum and dad's to be.



# And the List goes on.....

- Following on from the post natal clinics, women are encouraged to attend the centre for an informal midwife led group until they feel confident to join the various baby groups
- Health visitors run clinics and postnatal groups at the centre
- There are specialised groups for mums of twins and triplets, young teenage mums, mums of disabled children
- There is a counselling service attached to the centre and midwives/health visitors are able to refer women directly

- The centre also runs a hire service for birthing pools, TENS machines, gym balls and breast pumps which have been purchased using money donated by parents using the centre and raised by events such as quiz nights and pamper evenings
- There is a Dads group on a Saturday morning to give new mums a bit of “me time” and dad’s some special time with support if required by centre staff.
- Baby massage courses, first aid courses, and a homebirth support group are all hosted by the centre
- Midwives are considered very much as “part of” the centre and sit on the Advisory Board allowing them a real say in what the centre offers pregnant women

# What Do the Women Think?

## Earlybird and Antenatal clinics

“So much more convenient to come here, and they make a lovely cup of tea”

“My toddler loves coming...the only problem is getting him home again!”

“Loved the Earlybird, felt that the midwives were really interested in me right from the beginning, so different from **Temple Mill**

## Information Evening

“Very informative, friendly & helpful. Well worth coming!”

“Excellent idea, great info, loved the freebies!”

## Postnatal Clinics

“Much better than waiting all day for the midwife to call”

“Loved showing off my baby to the centre staff!”

“Relaxed atmosphere, good to get out of the house and reassuring to have baby weighed”

We believe, that pregnancy should be a time for the whole family and by working together right from the very early stages of pregnancy we can offer our women a service that is shaped by their needs. The Children's Centre is more than just a venue for their care, it is in effect the "mum round the corner" there to give advice, lend a sympathetic ear, point them in the right direction, or simply make them a great cup of tea!

By working together we hope that we can offer the families in our care the very best start and carry on working with them to ensure that they acquire the knowledge and skills to fully embrace their new roles as parents .

# Thank You



**Temple Mill**  
A Sure Start Children's Centre