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Grandparents - we salute you

What's going on in Children's Centres?

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children's  
centre  
**chatter**



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**Sure Start  
Children's Centres**

  
**Sunderland**  
Children's Centres

# Hello...

Welcome to the third edition of Children's Centre Chatter, jam-packed with all the latest news from Sunderland Children's Centres.

Children's Centres offer a huge range of activities and services for you and your family to enjoy and you'll be able to find out all about them in this latest issue. Nearly everything is free so spending time as a family won't break the bank.

There's also loads of useful family information and activity timetables for every area of the city, so you can see exactly what's happening at your favourite centre. Anyone caring for a child aged under five years is welcome to come along and join in, whether you're a parent, grandparent, carer or childminder.

There's always plenty happening so visit your local centre today – check out the map inside the activity timetable to find the closest one to you.

## Save now to reap rewards next Christmas

Christmas 2011 may seem like a long way off but families can start looking ahead and begin saving for next year.

Every parent wants to give their family the best Christmas possible so early planning and budgeting can help reduce the festive headache. By putting some money aside every month, you can dramatically reduce the financial worries and stresses which most people feel in the run up to December.

Preparing well in advance can help to ensure a relaxed and happy family Christmas. To start saving now contact WearsideFirst Credit Union on 0191 514 7491, or for further information or advice about managing your money visit: [www.librasunderland.co.uk](http://www.librasunderland.co.uk)



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“ A great place for parents-to-be, children birth to 5 and their mams, dads, carers, grandparents and childminders. ”

## Keeping children and young people safe is everybody's business...

Sunderland Children's Centres are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Staff and volunteers share this commitment and consider the safety of all children to be paramount and central to their work.

If you have concerns about a child's safety or well-being please speak to a member of staff as soon as possible.

This information can be made available in large print, Braille, audio and other languages. Please contact Communications on 0191 561 5627 or email [communications@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:communications@sunderland.gov.uk) for help.

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City Council

Children's Centre Chatter 

# Bite size news

What's going on in your Children's Centres



## Vegetable patch gets green light

Green fingered families from Monument Children's Centre are gearing up for the spring after enjoying the fruits of their last harvest.

Last summer saw the centre's Dads and Kids Group successfully tend to their outdoor oasis as they grew their own vegetables, including tomatoes and cabbages. They even made bird feeders and scarecrows to frighten away any unwanted wildlife.

Now the group's family men are looking forward to working with their children as they prepare the vegetable patch, which was donated by Dubmire Primary School, for this spring's produce.

## Centre receives volunteer boost

Two Silksworth mams are doing their bit to ensure their local Children's Centre runs smoothly.

Linsey Cowell and Vicky McCrae have volunteered their time and efforts to help with the administration at Grangetown Children's Centre.

Both ladies are finding the experience is helping them back into the routine of working, after taking time out to have children. Linsey said: "It's a great opportunity to give something back and to help keep the community informed about what activities are going on in the centre."





### **Cooking up a treat**

A group of volunteers from Washington have found the recipe for culinary success at the Rainbow Family Centre.

The group volunteers at the Children's Centre three days a week, helping in its popular café cooking and serving food to the local community.

Keeping the café running on a day-to-day basis has helped the group to learn new business skills such as bookkeeping and budgeting.

Volunteer Joanne Langley says her cooking is going from strength to strength and she enjoys creating delicious dishes to keep the centre's visitors full and happy.

### **Pilot helps parents back to work**

A pilot to support single parents returning to work is being developed after a positive trial in Southwick.

Jobcentre Plus joined up with Children's Centres to help encourage parents to use the centres' childcare facilities as they look for work. The programme aims to tackle concerns that parents may have about using childcare.

One parent that took part said: "Through the pilot we were able to visit the nursery and meet the staff. I now feel really comfortable about my son joining. Since the visit I've successfully returned to work with help from my Jobcentre Personal Adviser."



### **Praise for Thorney Close Children's Centre**

Thorney Close Children's Centre has been rewarded for its excellent services after it became the city's first centre to be Ofsted inspected.

The Centre was judged to be good overall with outstanding aspects. It was found to be doing 'exceptionally well' in some areas, with extra praise given to its Bosom Buddies breastfeeding group.

Inspectors said the centre is working hard to give parents 'exactly what they feel they need'.



# Grandparents – we salute you



## Grandparents play a huge role in children's learning from an early age.

And what better way for grandparents and grandchildren to spend time together than at one of the many free play activities taking place in centres throughout the city.

Grandmother Linda Boshier is already taking advantage of the sessions. She said: "At the groups I get to chat to

parents and grandparents, while the children let their hair down. It's brilliant that there are sessions that grandparents can come along to, and I've really appreciated this quality time with my grandsons."

To find out when activities are happening in your local area see the timetable pages further on, or visit [www.sunderlandchildrenscentres.co.uk](http://www.sunderlandchildrenscentres.co.uk)

“ It's important for me to spend time with the boys and for them to mix with other children. ”

# Help on hand in local libraries

Valuable family advice can now be found in libraries across the city.

Alongside the Children's Centres' Triple P Parenting Programme, families can find useful tip sheets in all Sunderland libraries.

The handy guides offer useful advice on a range of subjects from preparing your child for a new baby and sleep patterns, to tantrums and toilet training.

Triple P aims to support parents and give them the skills they need to encourage positive behaviour.

Find out more at [www.familiesinfoservice.com](http://www.familiesinfoservice.com)

## Triple P Tip Sheets



  
Sunderland  
Children's Trust

# Breastfeeding champion

A supporter of breastfeeding in public has been making a big impact in Hetton.

A life-sized female mannequin breastfeeding a baby has been placed in the entrance of Hetton Children's Centre in the hope that she helps to change people's attitudes towards breastfeeding.

Gillian Lund, Breastfeeding Coordinator for Sunderland, said: "Breastfeeding can have many positive effects on a baby's health and well-being, but some people feel embarrassed by the idea of mothers nursing in public.

"It's great that the mannequin has encouraged families to feel more comfortable about breastfeeding in Children's Centres and hopefully this confidence will grow into the wider community."

The breastfeeding mannequin has been such a talking point in the area that extra mannequins are being recruited to spread the message even further throughout the city.

Look out for a breastfeeding mannequin at a centre near you.



# a silent hero

“Breastfeeding can have many positive effects on a baby’s health and well-being.”



# spotlight on...

**Name:**

Emma Forster

**Age:** 25

**Family:**

One son, age two

**Lives:**

Easington Lane,  
Sunderland

**Work:** Volunteer

Peer Supporter at  
Bosom Buddies

**Hobbies:** Spending time with my family,  
walking the dogs



## What do you enjoy most about your role?

“I’ve attended Bosom Buddies since my son was two weeks old and the support of the group really helped me to continue breastfeeding for longer. I decided to train as a peer supporter so that I could help other mams to do the same.

“I think breastfeeding is one of the most beneficial things you can do for your child, but it can be challenging. It’s a great feeling that through volunteering I’ve helped someone to breastfeed their baby.

“The group is also a great chance to meet new people who share your views and I’ve made lots of good friends.”

To find out more about the benefits of breastfeeding visit [www.sunderlandchildrenscentres.co.uk](http://www.sunderlandchildrenscentres.co.uk), or contact your nearest Children’s Centre.



# An inspiring anniversary



Sunderland's community groups are helping to make children's lives that little bit better, as the Children's Centres' Inspiration Fund invests over £80,000 in just one year.

The fund was introduced to provide support to local community and voluntary groups to improve the lives of children aged from birth to five years old.

Since its launch, £83,360 has been awarded to help community groups offer a helping hand to some of Sunderland's families.

Groups have applied for grants of up to £750 to fund a variety of projects. Shiney Row Childcare successfully applied for funding to renovate its outdoor space for

the weekly 'Fun on Fridays' parent group, whilst Farringdon Detached Football Club bought football training equipment with their grant.

Family Focus parents' group based in the west of Sunderland, applied to the Inspiration Fund to fund a visit to Whitehouse Children's Farm at Morpeth. Many of the children had never been to a farm before and enjoyed the hands on experience of feeding the animals and finding out about the different environments in which they live.

To find out more about Inspiration Fund, or to download an application form visit: [www.sunderlandchildrenscentres.co.uk](http://www.sunderlandchildrenscentres.co.uk)



## On 27 March 2011 all homes will be taking part in a census.

The census is carried out every ten years to count people and households in England and Wales. It's vital that you complete your confidential census questionnaire as the information gathered is used to make decisions about our community.

Our area receives funding from government, based on the number of people living here, funding that can be used for housing, schools, hospitals, transport and other important services.

So, in early March you will receive a white envelope through your door with a purple census logo on it just like the one shown above. Inside the envelope you will find your 2011 census questionnaire.

The form is straightforward to complete and should not take too long to do. If you want you can fill the form in online, otherwise once you have completed it simply post it back.

Either way it's all confidential so no one will see your personal information and if you need help there is a wide range of support available such as language guidance booklets, large print format, as well as online help and telephone call centres.

At the moment we are looking to recruit local people to be a part of the Census team. Find out more at [www.census.gov.uk](http://www.census.gov.uk) and the jobs at [www.censusjobs.co.uk](http://www.censusjobs.co.uk)

**Choking.  
Chest pain.  
Blacking out.  
Blood loss.**

For immediate, life-threatening emergencies call **999**

**Cuts.  
Strains.  
Itches.  
Sprains.**

If you need help quickly or suddenly feel ill, but are not a 999 emergency use a **Minor Injury and Illness Unit** or **Walk-in Centre**

**Vomiting.  
Ear pain.  
Sore tummy.  
Back ache.**

When you have an illness or injury that won't go away, contact your **GP** for an appointment

**Diarrhoea.  
Runny nose.  
Painful cough.  
Headache.**

For advice on common illnesses and the best medicines to treat them, use a **pharmacy**

If you become unwell or are injured, make sure you choose the right NHS service.

Choosing well ensures you receive the best possible treatment, leaving A&E and 999 for people who are badly injured or very ill.



**NHS**

*South of Tyne and Wear*

[www.sotw.nhs.uk](http://www.sotw.nhs.uk)