

## **Albemarle Barracks - now an outreach post of Prudhoe Children's Centre!!**

Albemarle Barracks is located in Stamfordham ward, 5 miles north of Prudhoe Children's Centre and is home to approximately 50 children under 5 and their families. These families living at the Barracks are particularly isolated due to the rural location and lack of public transport. Over the past 12 months, services have been meeting on a regular basis, working in partnership to try to eradicate some of the problems that families face living in isolation. Services including the Health Service, Prudhoe Children's Centre, the Unit Welfare Officers, Ponteland Extended Services and their parent support worker, Family Learning, Ponteland Youth Centre and the Educational Psychologist have all contributed to the vision of improving the outcomes for children and parents living at Albermarle Barracks.

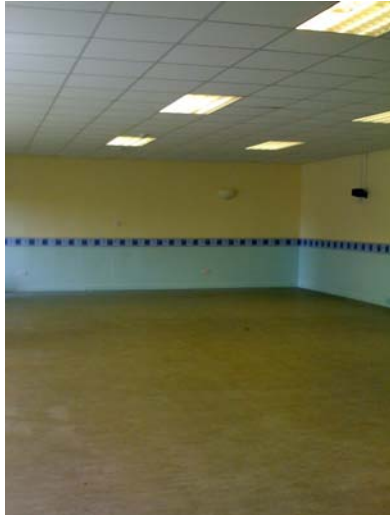
Part of that vision was to improve the premises at the barracks to make them more accessible for families with young children. Having access to grant funding, Prudhoe Children's Centre and the Unit Welfare Office have since been working together and have successfully been able to make extensive improvements to part of the premises. A nursery nurse from Ponteland Health Centre was commissioned to consult the families about the new toys and equipment and to help to design the layout of the large hall. The renovation project also included a new kitchen, painting the walls, new carpets, children's murals, notice boards and the creation of a new meeting room. Prudhoe Children's Centre has provided a range of toys and equipment to furnish this fantastic new facility, which is also available for use to Army families living in areas other than the Barracks.

Services and support now on offer include:-

- A weekly stay and play session.
- A one stop shop to signpost families to existing services
- One to one support from the Army Welfare Service
- A fortnightly baby clinic operated by the Health Visitor and nursery nurse from Ponteland Health Centre.
- 'Jellytots' baby and toddler group run by mums.
- A monthly toy library by...
- Adapt Community Transport (part funded by Prudhoe CC) providing outings.
- A 'wheels to work' project providing scooters and driving lessons to mums and young people to access work opportunities off site.
- A fenced garden with a programme of Greenstart activities through 'Growing Spaces for Play' funding.
- Senior Family Support Worker undertaking one to one work with families
- Baby Save a Life Course
- Parenting courses run by the Parent Support Partner and the educational psychologist.

Following strong support from the Unit Welfare Office and families living on camp to 'badge' this facility as an outreach post of Prudhoe Children's Centre, the grand opening took place on December 2<sup>nd</sup> 2008 attended by all the services and stakeholders.

Margaret McCormick  
Assistant Coordinator Ponteland Extended Services



Before



After



Outdoor play area