



EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION

REPORT OF:	Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education
LEAD OFFICERS:	Strategic Director of Children & Education (DCS)
DATE:	Thursday, 12 October 2023

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:	Children, Young People and Education
WARD/S AFFECTED:	(All Wards);
KEY DECISION:	N

SUBJECT: Family Hub Update

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is a concise summary of Blackburn with Darwen's Family Hub progress. We have made significant strides, met key milestones and remain on track to achieve our goals. Our teamwork, dedication, and commitment are propelling us forward.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board

- Note the progress of the Family Hub development

3. BACKGROUND

What is the Family Hubs and Start for Life programme?

In October 2021, the government announced £301.75 million would be available for 75 local authorities in England to deliver Start for Life and family services. The grant funding is over a three year term and will be administered by the Department for Education on behalf of Department of Health and Social Care. The programme's core objective is to improve the universal Start for Life offer and transform delivery of family services in local authority areas with the highest levels of deprivation and disproportionately poor health and educational outcomes, to support the government's levelling up ambitions. Local authorities will be expected to work with delivery partners (e.g. health, education, voluntary sector, and other partners) to design and implement their family hub model and Start for Life services.

What we have achieved

Transformation

Blackburn with Darwen is transforming the way our early years and early help services are designed and delivered. We now have four localities delivering a family hub model, supporting children of all ages. We are improving how local services are delivered by the sharing of information, for example the development of a Start for Life web site. This will ensure that our Start for Life offer is clearer, accessible and seamless, and voices of parents and carers are continuously sought to influence the continuous improvement of Blackburn with Darwen's offer of universal Start for Life and family services.

We are working towards addressing the fragmentation of some services that families have told us they are experiencing, for example delivering services from the Family hubs such as housing, debt and welfare support and birth registrations.

Our Parents have told us they are unsure where to go to access services and they want to be able to experience joined up care. We have created capacity through extending the space at Little Harwood and Shadsworth Family hubs, this is enabling increased co location of partners ensuring the wider incorporation of skill mix and facilitating joining-up of a multi-professional workforce to provide continuity of care to all families. Blackburn with Darwen Family Hubs are trying to make the best use of our public resources and services. For our Family Hub offer, improving integration will mean that families can access a coherent support offer, whether their needs are universal or specialist, and parents can continue to receive the support they need as their babies and children grow up.

Infant feeding

Timely, high-quality, one-to-one infant-feeding support is available in the critical post-birth period, we already have 54 hour of support on the wards at Burnley and the birthing unit in Blackburn. We are going to increase this offer to 7 days a week to 84 hours per week at Burnley and the birthing unit. We are doing this by increasing our Family Hub Infant feeding peer supporters, specialist midwives, health visitors and lactation consultants

We have purchased fantastic equipment (for example breast pumps, nipple shields) and they are available on loan from a family hub to enable Blackburn with Darwen to work towards increasing its breastfeeding initiation rates. We have developed robust referral pathways and are working with parents and carers to ensure pathways continue to be clear and that families receive timely specialist support where required.

We have continued to grow our work force development to ensure staff and volunteers receive appropriate, accredited training and they know how to work together across agencies and settings to provide infant feeding seamless support, for example Gold Lactation training for Health visitors. This ensures that our whole workforce is supported to stay up to date on training and the latest clinical guidance, ensuring infant feeding advice is accurate, helpful and consistent.

Early Language and Home learning

The funding is being used to design and deliver a cohesive offer of support to parents with pre-schoolers in the area. We have invested in evidence-based interventions (Peeps) and we are currently in the process of training all early years' practitioners to support families with the Home Learning Environment, with a clear focus on supporting education recovery for young children who were babies at the height of the covid pandemic. We will have trained 100 staff from across the borough by the end of October 2023, this includes health visitors, early year's workers and childminders. We will also be delivering a universal and targeted speech and language programme. We have established a Language Lead working mainly with 2-4 year olds in every early years setting in the borough to work with us to improve communication and language outcomes of our under 5s. We are working in partnership with ELHT speech therapy team to improve speech, language and communication pathways and join up across Start for Life services to ensure support is available and tailored when needed for families. Through the remodel of our school readiness team we will now ensure families have access to a key contact in the hub who will be able to provide appropriate information to support parents of pre-schoolers with their

HLE, identify need and connect families on to targeted evidence-based HLE interventions. There will also be a home learning resource hub in each family hub for practitioners to loan from to support the families they work with.

Early Help

The total number of children with a Child and Family assessment (CAF) currently open is 746, as an offer of co-ordinating help and support to families. In the last 6 months Primary schools continue to take the lead professional role on the greatest number of CAFs in the borough 35% followed by the Early Help service 29% and then Secondary Schools at 13 %. Feedback from Innovate CIN review (August 2023) states 'The service ensures children and their families benefit from responsive, well-coordinated universal and multi-agency targeted early help services, including out of hours, which help to reduce harm'.

The service provides intensive, non-stigmatising and effective support that is tailored to the needs of children and families and central to the offer is unlocking the potential of family networks, working within communities and the assets within them.

The Supporting Families programme provides targeted interventions for families with complex interconnected problems including unemployment, poor school attendance, mental and physical health problems, involvement in crime and antisocial behaviour, domestic abuse, and children in need of help and protection.

Early help is vital in preventing contact with expensive statutory services. The Care Review highlighted many of the positive features of early help and has put it at the forefront of the agenda for supporting vulnerable families.

In 2022-2023 Supporting Families programme target of 312 was successfully met and over achieved, which evidences six months of sustained changes and progress for families. Data Maturity for the programme-remains a manual task and the target for 23-23 is 505. Whilst this is an ambitious target and a big increase, plans are in place to start to address this with a Project Data Lead and Data analyst (funded by the Family Hub grant), alongside a digital solution purchase, which will enable a number of data feeds to identify potential families.

Parenting Support

The parenting family hub funding is being used for the provision of an offer which will help make the transition to parenthood as smooth as possible and which stresses the importance of sensitive, responsive caregiving. This includes both universal provision and some more targeted programmes available for parents/carers with further needs. Evidence-based parenting interventions are provided directly to families in each Family hub building and some of the children centres. Parenting training is provided as professional development to local early years and /or health practitioners. The Family Hub grant has also enabled our Parenting Team to be trained in Triple P baby, and Best Start for Life video interactive guidance (VIG). We have also purchased Triple P Baby online which will be our digital parenting offer for new and expectant parents from December 2023.

We are engaging our community, voluntary and faith partners through quarterly learning sets, where we bring partners together to share practice and learn from each other providing networking opportunities to get together to share ideas and support one another moving forwards, in line with the transformation to family hubs and the services available for our children families, with a real focus on pre conception to 2 years.

Reducing Parental Conflict

Supporting Parental relationships is Integral and fundamental to our Family Hub delivery plan. We have delivered training. We are developing a culture in which we normalise conversations about relationships with all families, not just when parental conflict has been identified. We have a well-established Steering group which has representation from partnerships and CVS who are supporting

with leading and driving this work. We have developed a suite of reducing parental conflict digital interventions for parents.

Parent carer panels

We appointed an engagement and co-production lead and she has been consulting with families, including young people, parents and carers to co design and improve our services. It is important to us that Blackburn with Darwen family hub model includes community ownership and co-production with our families, children and young people. We have now established four Parent carer panels which have a focus from conception to age two. They designed the Family Hub branding for Blackburn with Darwen and are currently heavily involved in the design our Start For Life web site. We are working with our parents and carers to develop opportunities for them to build social networks which will be flexible to meet local needs for example there is now a dads group at Shadsworth Family hub. Our next step is to have an overarching Family Hub panel with representatives from each panel. This will be part of our Family Hub governance.

Comment from one of the panel members *‘ Being part of Family Hubs has been an absolute pleasure and meeting you and the team has been an incredible rewarding journey. I have learnt so much from you and I have always felt I have been listened to and heard. It is a privilege to be part of influencing change to help our community move forward and make the most of what is available to them. I hope to see great things from this fantastic family group and I know there will be many more great topics to talk about and improve so we can bring change for the better’*

Wider services

There is a list of core services we must deliver within our family hubs within the family hubs by 2025. We have in place within the family hubs and children centres 13 out of the 15 services.

1. Reducing parental conflict ✓
2. **Dispute resolution - support for out of court options (private law children cases) – to be confirmed**
3. Debt and welfare support ✓
4. Oral health improvement/tooth brushing ✓
5. Substance misuse support ✓
6. Wider family health services (e.g. healthy weight and nutrition, contraception and sexual health, stop smoking support) ✓
7. Supporting Families programme ✓
8. Housing support ✓
9. Youth services ✓
10. SEND support ✓
11. **Early childhood education and care and financial support for childcare – this will be in place from April 2024**
12. Early language skills (HLE) ✓
13. Parenting programmes ✓
14. Domestic abuse support ✓
15. Start for Life Universal Services (midwifery, health visiting, parent-infant mental health, breastfeeding, safeguarding, SEND) ✓

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

Future Plans for the Family Hubs

- Birth registration at Little Harwood Family hub by March 2024
- Youth Hub at Audley Children centre by July 2024

- Youth activities at Wensley Fold Children Centre (evening and Weekends) by January 2024
- Video conferencing appointments with Shelter to increase accessibility to housing support and advice – this will be initially at Little Harwood Family hub with the possible roll out to all hubs – by March 2024
- Vaccination and immunisations for children 0-5 in all family hubs and some children centres – from October 2023
- Peri natal mental Health and Parent infant commissioning process to begin in October 2023

The four hubs have now been aligned with our neighbourhood model of working and link with our Primary Care networks. This funding is helping us to take that next step. Our integrated offer is now providing Health, Care and Education services across the full 0- 19 age groups (25 with SEND) and becoming the ‘front door’ for families in their neighbourhoods. This will ensure a neighbourhood model of service delivery, aligned to the four Primary Care Neighbourhoods improving outcomes in early years and beyond.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are no policy implications arising from the contents of this report.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Blackburn with Darwen Children’s LA received a grant of 2.9 million for the delivery of the following programmes: Based on our strategic considerations and the Department for Education guidance we propose the allocated spend to be:

Work area	Allocated budget
Family hub transformation	£606,778
Parenting support	£449,693
Parent – infant Relationships and perinatal mental health	£960,988
Infant feeding support	£539,016
Early Language and HLE	£246,407
Publishing the start for life offer and developing parent, carer panels	£126,284
TOTAL	£2929,165

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising from the contents of this report.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The capacity within teams to support with commissioning large projects to ensure we keep to grant spend deadlines.

9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.

Option 1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA link here)*

Option 3 In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA attachment)*

10. CONSULTATIONS

No consultations required for this update report

11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

VERSION:	1
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CONTACT OFFICER:	Maria Nugent
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DATE:	03/10/2023
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BACKGROUND PAPER:	
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