

# Children's Services Early Help Strategy 2022

*Our Vision: We want all children in Wigan Borough to be happy, healthy and safe; to feel listened to and to have the maximum opportunities to be ambitious. Early Help is everyone's business. If children or their families need help and support it should be at the **right time**, by the **right person** and in the **right place** for them.*

## Objectives

- Develop and implement a number of physical family hubs within the local community and a digital offer to deliver a coordinated, universal and targeted offer to support families in Wigan Borough.
- Building on community assets and Voluntary and Community Sector organisations we will work with our families to develop the local services that meet their needs.
- Develop the quality of practice across the partnership so that families tell their story once and receive timely support and positive outcomes.
- We will create a multiagency workforce co-located in the community with shared commissioning arrangements and shared outcomes

## Family Voice – their experience and wishes

*“Better referrals between services to avoid dropping through the cracks and helping to avoid having to repeat the story countless times”*

*“Co-ordinated approach with named key worker that can support with health, social and education needs”*



*‘Every part of a child’s negative behaviour communicates a need, a need that is often unmet by their parents/carers. This means that the family needs to analyse their issues as well as their child... when the parents of that child received therapy, the kids stopped reoffending.’*

*“It would be good to have guidance on what services are available and how to access them”*



*“Community Interest Companies and charities are amazing, local authority level good but patchy and disjointed.”*



*“Going through homelessness, drug addiction, and Lyndsey dragged me out of a hole I never thought I’d come out of. She gave me hope for the future and helped me change to a person I didn’t feel I was capable of”*

*“Service is not easy to navigate, been difficult to get agencies to communicate with each other”*



# Where are we now?

## Current Service Offer

- Earliest Help is delivered by a wide range of agencies such as VCSEs, charities, universal services and online services. This support includes counselling, parenting support to build on family's own strengths and networks in the longer term.
- The Council's element of Early Help is provided by our Start Well locality teams and Family Centres led and managed by primary schools working closely with GP practices and Early Years settings.
- Start Well Family Centres work with all families in Wigan Borough through a universal offer but focus primarily on families in the top 30% most deprived areas.
- Start Well Family Centres and Locality Teams work with children and families at level three of our threshold of need, who fall below the threshold of need for statutory social work intervention.
- Targeted Youth Support Services (TYSS) support young people through the youth service, and early intervention and prevention to reduce offending and ASB.
- Services are delivered locally across the seven neighbourhoods using a strengths and relationship based approach and aim to improve school readiness, health outcomes, building families' resilience and confidence.

## Key achievements

- 1499 Early Help assessments – success 70% at closure
- Collated services to an online directory
- Reviewed and relaunched the Threshold of Need Guidance
- Developed a Team Around the School offer.
- Introduced drop-in panel sessions to guide and sign post professionals to appropriate support.
- Reduction in Start Well caseload providing targeted Level 3 support that is timely and of better quality.
- Daily meeting with Police led to reduction in Anti-Social Behaviour.
- Multi Agency Referral Hub established including Thrive partners. Signposting young people to the right emotional wellbeing support avoiding multiple and assessments.
- Systemic Consultation provided to Start Well teams by a CAMHS family therapist to develop reflective capacity and understanding of complexity.

## Early Help Data and Family Needs

75,500 children in Wigan Borough. Number of children living in households that following factors apply

- 12% BAME (census)
- 24% Free school meals
- 16% of under 16s are from low income families
- 32% single female households with children with housing/homelessness issues

### From April – September 2021:

- 3007 contacts/enquiries to Early Help.
- 1421 provided advice and guidance in response.
- 1281 Early Help episodes initiated
- 911 children received Early Help – of those 720 led by Start Well and 191 led by partners.

## Challenges

- Ensuring families can access support easily and when the need it and that support is provided across the partnership by the right service/ person.
- Building families resilience and support the growth of strong community assets including VCSE's
- Reducing the need for statutory intervention in families lives
- Improving the experience of families at transition points, for example if a change of lead professional is needed.
- Families telling their story once and this being captured in one assessment
- Increasing the number of partners as lead professional in accordance with families wishes
- Better understanding of families' needs in Wigan Borough and use of this data to inform developments.

# Early Help Review - Autumn 2021

## Self Evaluation

- Self evaluation Framework is being produced with an action plan and report – Dec 2021
- Task and Finish Groups developed and addressing actions;
  - Lead Professional Development,
  - Principles and Practice Reference Group
  - Early Help Participation and Engagement Strategy
  - Parenting Support Strategy
  - Best start for life offer/strategy

## Consultation - Families and partner agencies

Extensive consultation through surveys, focus groups and 1:1 discussions with families and young people about the services on offer and what they would want to see in the future. Many respondents wishing to be involved in shaping services or volunteering. The co-production will follow as we transform our delivery model. **This strategy is informed by the consultation.**

## Think Family Pilot

Planning and implementation of a 'Think Family' pilot to trial new ways of working including a revised whole family assessment tool, a shared outcomes framework and performance measures and extended integrated working that is place based. This is providing us with the opportunity to test out our future approach to the delivery model for Early Help.

## Family Hubs

Our approach to the review has encompassed a Council wide commitment for early intervention and prevention, building on the place-based working of our localities, we will see the development of family hubs.

## Key Deliverables 2021 – 2022

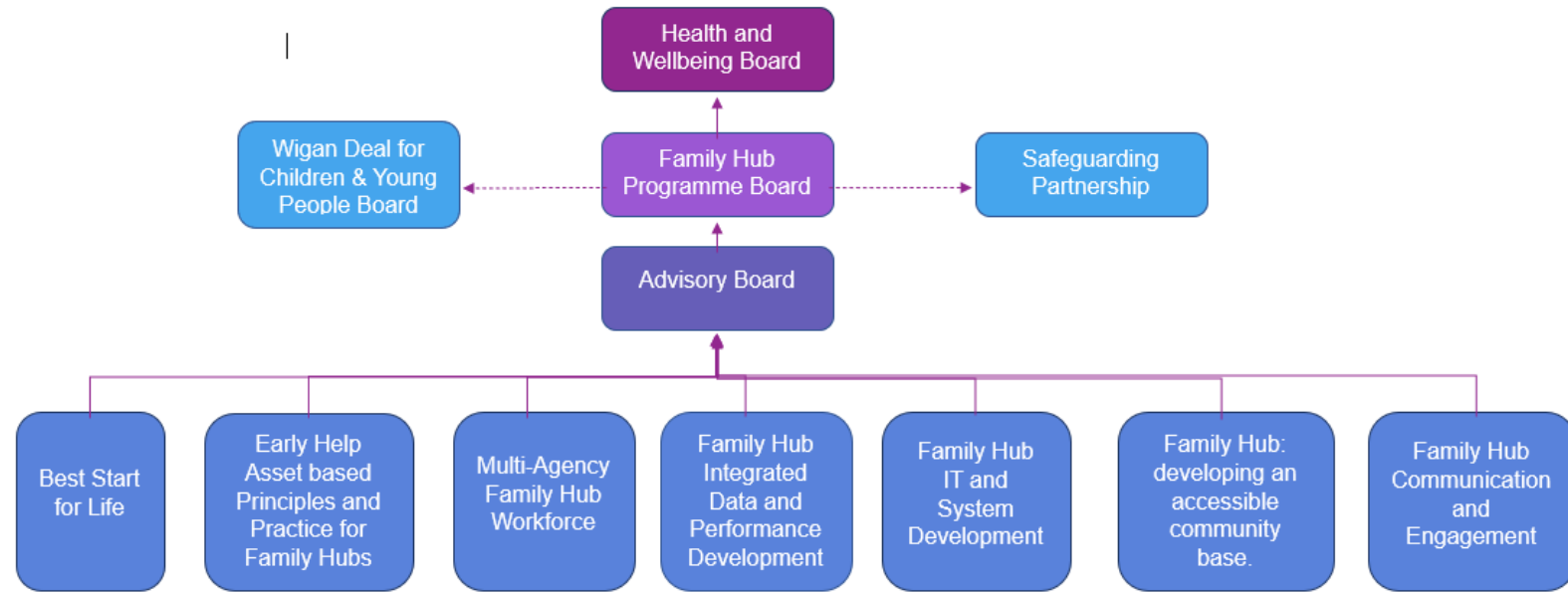
- Development of the Transformation Delivery Plan
  - Revise, develop and implement whole family Early Help Assessments and electronic early help recording system
  - Continue to develop the Supporting Families programme, including shared outcomes and performance measures.
  - Develop Lead Professional role and increase partnership Early Help Assessments
  - Produce 'best start for life' offer/strategy
  - Increase children and family engagement,
- participation and co-production in service design/delivery across Early Help partnership – introduction of a parent advisory board
  - Further progress the FIS offer/ i-Thrive Early Help website
  - Further map the need and locality profiles to understand community need data to inform services
  - Develop the quality assurance processes for Early Help
  - Continue to develop the Reducing Parental
- Conflict programme and embed into practice
  - Comprehensive Early Help strategy to be created by partners and families in 2022.

## Early Help Partnership Shared Outcomes

- Children, young people and their families are physically healthier and emotionally well
- Children's development in early years is good and children are 'school ready'
- There is a reduction in parents and young people's involvement in crime and/or anti-social behaviour.
- Substance misuse is managed or ceased.
- Children achieve high levels of school attendance, suspensions and permanent school exclusions are reduced and achievement and educational inequalities are reduced.
- Children are safe from abuse and exploitation
- Children and their families live in secure homes.
- There is a reduction in domestic abuse
- Children grow up in families with financial stability and employment
- Adults and young people are supported to access employment, education and training
- There are positive relationships between children and their families

## Output Measures

- Output measures are being developed to show progress on all of the above outcomes in addition to the following:
- Increase in the number of families being supported through partners undertaking Early Help Assessments.
  - Increase in number of "request for Early Help" from a wider range of agencies.
  - Increase in the number of whole family Early Help Assessments completed per agency (once new form in place)
  - Increase in % of cases with a positive outcome at point of closure
  - % of feedback from those that receive Early Help service that indicate that it was timely, helpful and resulted in them being more resilient and confident in parenting their children and improved their capacity to meet their family's needs
  - Increase in % of referrals to the Integrated Front Door triaged and allocated to Early Help



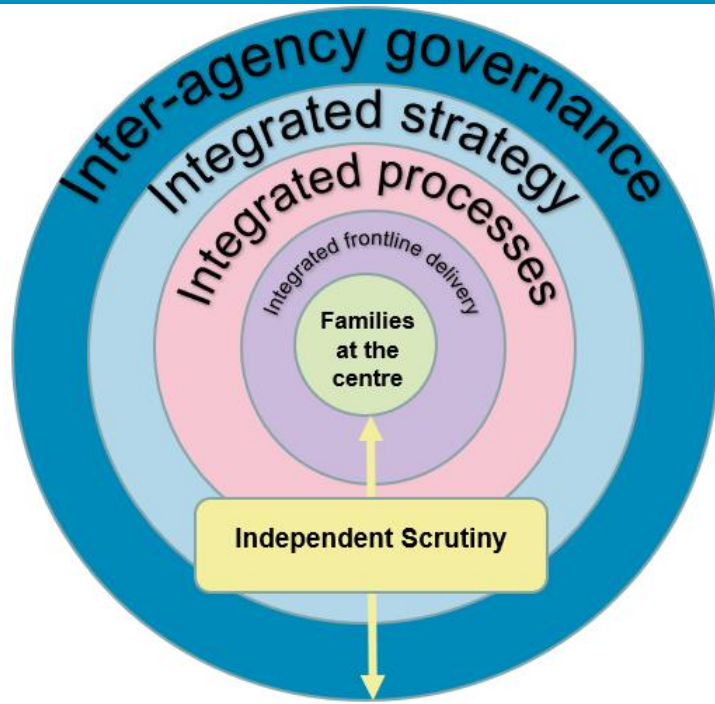
## Government Policy, Reviews and Tools

- Supporting Families Programme
- Best Start for Life 1,001 Critical Days Dame Andrea Leadsom review (March 2021)
- Case for Change: Care Review (July 2021)
- Marmot Review: Building Back Fairer (December 2020)
- Dame Carol Black Independent Review of Drugs (July 2021)
- Early Help System Guide (May 2020)
- Reducing Parental Conflict Planning Tool (January 2021)

## Interdependent Strategies

- [Domestic Abuse Reduction Strategy](#)
- [Wigan Borough's Road to Recovery](#)
- [Neglect Strategy](#)
- SEND Priority Plan (link to follow)
- Excellence in Education Strategy (link to follow)
- Wigan Borough's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (link to follow)
- Wigan Borough's Mental Health Transformation Strategy (link to follow)

# Family Hub Transformation Programme



Families at the centre	Families are involved in the design of their support wherever possible and empowered through devolved budgets and family-led decision making.
Integrated frontline delivery	Empowered and assertive practitioners provide tailored and joined-up support around the whole family, Identifying needs early and proactively engaging families.
Integrated processes	Shared assessments and information across agencies give a full picture of a family's needs and help ensure support is fully co-ordinated.
Integrated strategy	Joined-up planning and commissioning drive a focus on families at risk across all agencies.
Inter-agency governance	Accountability for family outcomes is clear, with strong leadership at the top and protocols setting out agreed responsibilities between agencies.
Independent scrutiny	Peer support from a local authority that has moved to a family hub model and an external independent consultant to provide an objective view of the current service ensuring rigorous independent scrutiny.

## System Conditions

### Enabling System Conditions

- Accessible support exists in the community and utilises community resources with welcoming hubs for 0-25
- Focus on universal services and clear routes to referral.
- All families are aware of and able to contribute to what is available - they have a voice and are heard
- The capacity and capability of the community is supported and strengthened - both on the ground and through strategic commissioning
- Data sharing with agencies and shared case management.

### Leadership & Governance Conditions

- New inter-agency governance model
- Place-based leadership within a high trust culture
- Local, blended teams that care about the neighbourhood with a locality identity first (before service identity)
- Funding, decision-making and permissions devolved and trusted to local governance
- Integrated commissioning
- Develop a digital offer

### Workforce Conditions

- Community located and community connected workforce co-located where possible
- Frontline workers feel they own the issue and can design and broker solutions without needing to refer
- Practitioners value families as assets and co-designers of strategies - needs are not pre-judged
- Relationship Practice Model strengthening family relationships.
- Training and development for a multi-agency workforce