



HM Government

Annex E: Family Hub Model Framework

**Family Hubs and Start for Life
programme guide**

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The Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme is jointly overseen by the Department of Health and Social Care and the Department for Education.

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Overview

In November 2021, we published a first draft of the family hub model framework¹ alongside the application guide for the first £12m family hubs transformation fund. The framework was created to support local authorities applying to the first transformation fund to identify a standard definition of a family hub and to use it as a tool to assess themselves against a common set of criteria when making their application.

We explained that we expected the framework to develop and iterate further. We are publishing this second iteration as part of the Family Hubs and Start for Life programme.

The family hub model framework includes criteria for two stages of family hub transformation:

1. **Level 1: Basic model.** This describes a family hub model at the early stages of development.
2. **Level 2: Developed model.** This describes a more mature family hub model.

The developed model criteria incorporate and build on the basic model criteria. We have developed these criteria based on [learning from local authority areas with existing family hub models](#)², and what evidence tells us about effective integrated service delivery³.

Your local authority will be expected to achieve, as a minimum, all the level 1: basic model criteria, as well as some specific level 2: developed model criteria, over the three years of funding. The criteria that we expect your local authority to achieve as minimum are included in the blue boxes. We are asking you to be ambitious in your family hubs transformation, which is why we have selected features of the developed model which are stretching but achievable for all 75 areas by the end of the programme. You are encouraged to deliver the other developed model criteria where possible or consider other innovative ways in which you could go further, depending on your starting point and local circumstances.

The framework is not intended to be used in isolation. We expect you to use the framework alongside the guidance and tools that you are already using to help transform

1

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1030245/Family_Hub_Model_Framework.pdf

2 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evaluation-of-family-hubs>

3 Melhuish, et al, (2007). Variation in Community Intervention Programmes and Consequences for Children and Families: The Examples of Sure Start Local Programmes. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* 68(6). <http://193.61.4.225/web-files/our-staff/academic/edward-melhuish/documents/jcppNESS%20VAR07.pdf>;
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/410378/Early_help_whose_responsibility.pdf

your services. For example, [the Best Start for Life: A Vision for the 1,001 Critical Days](#)⁴, the [Supporting Families Early Help System Guide](#)⁵, [Supporting Public Health: Children, Young People and Families](#)⁶, the [Reducing Parental Conflict Planning Tool](#)⁷, and the [National Centre for Family Hubs Implementation Toolkit](#)⁸.

We will continue to review this framework to ensure it reflects the latest evidence on effective family hubs characteristics, including deriving learning from this programme.

Glossary:

Ages 0–19 (or 25 with SEND) – this includes during pregnancy through to families with children up to age 19 or up to 25 for those young people continuing to access support via the statutory SEND system.

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-best-start-for-life-a-vision-for-the-1001-critical-days>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-families-early-help-system-guide>

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/commissioning-of-public-health-services-for-children#full-publication-update-history>

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/reducing-parental-conflict-programme-and-resources>

⁸ <https://www.nationalcentreforfamilyhubs.org.uk/>

Delivery area: access

Key criteria 1

There is a clear, simple way for families to access help and support through a hub building and approach.

1.1 Comms, information and brand

Minimum expectations

Level 1: basic model

- There is accessible communications for local families about the family hub network, its way of working and its offer to parents, carers and families and individual (for example adolescents), which includes publishing the Start for Life offer. Communication methods are designed to engage effectively with seldom heard families and groups.
- The area is using clear branding for the family hub network going beyond 0-5, including services for older children and young people.
- Family survey data shows that some families are aware of the brand and have a positive association.
- The local Family Information Service includes information on the family hub network.

Level 2: developed model

- The area is using clear branding going beyond 0-5 on all or nearly all services in the family hub network.
- There are examples of families accessing up-to-date and accurate family hub service information in a range of ways, (for example, digital, social media, physical leaflets, Family Information Service), with appropriate support to do so where this is needed.

Go further options

Level 2: developed model

- There are examples of methods of communication being discontinued or changed if they prove to be ineffective.
- Family survey data shows that most families are aware of the brand and have a positive association.

1.2 Single access point

Level 1: basic model

- There is a physical place a family can visit and speak to a trained staff member, face to face, who will provide them with straightforward information or advice on a wide range of family issues spanning the 0-19 (25 with SEND) age range, and connect them appropriately to further services across the 0-19 (25 with SEND) age range if they need more targeted or specialist support.
- There is a virtual place that a family can visit to access information on the advice and support available across the 0-19 (25 with SEND) age range (for example a designated web page).
- There is a phone line that families can call for queries relating to services in the family hub network, to support families who cannot access digital information. Where required, enquiries are connected into the local Family Information Service and local Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
- Family satisfaction is being measured (for example customer satisfaction surveys).

Level 2: developed model

- The family journey is central to the design and delivery of the family hub network and there are established mechanisms for reviewing this and making improvements that are co-produced with local families to ensure that families experience a smooth journey in accessing services within the hub network.
- Single physical and virtual access points are in place and their use embedded across the family hub network.

Minimum expectations

Go further options

Level 2: developed model

- Family user-data and evidence is gathered to measure the extent to which families know how to navigate local services through the family hub network and how to get help, and whether they feel their needs have been met. This evidence is then acted upon to meet the needs of local families.

1.3 Outreach

Minimum expectations

Level 1: basic model

- There is an operating model that has been or will be put in place for the family hub network to proactively and safely engage seldom heard families and groups, such as (but not limited to) ethnic minority groups, fathers and male carers, armed forces families, families in rural areas, families with complex needs, families where children have SEND, families where children have a social worker, families where children may be experiencing or at risk of harm from outside the family home or network (for example peer abuse, online harm, child exploitation, criminal exploitation or violence) or where family members are experiencing physical or mental health issues.
- There is a commitment to put in place an outreach model that is focused on overcoming any stigma associated with accessing services.

Level 2: developed model

- There is effective outreach as part of the family hub network using a range of evidence-based methods (for example intensive home visiting to engage seldom heard families).
- The family hub network is encouraged to make families aware of the services at their local family hub and connect them to the hub, particularly where a need is identified.
- Family hub networks in larger and rural areas have an outreach service where they go to smaller villages and communities that may not be close to a permanent hub building.

Go further options

We have not provided any go further options here, as we expect you to deliver all of the level 2 developed model criteria as a minimum.

1.4 Family friendly culture

Minimum expectations

Level 1: basic model

- Services within the family hub network are accessible in several ways, for example virtually, physically, via outreach services and community venues, and there is an active emphasis on openness, being welcoming, and whole family working. The family hub welcomes all types of family.
- Family hubs are friendly environments for families with babies and children of all ages. They are parent and carer-friendly and provide opportunities for families to meet each other and peers to support each other informally to help deal with the stresses and isolation that parenting may bring, such as having a new baby or the transition from childhood to adolescence.

Level 2: developed model

- Maintaining a family-friendly culture is central to the design and delivery of the services within the family hub network, including through adhering to [‘You’re Welcome quality criteria’](#).

Go further options

Level 2: developed model

- Family user-data and evidence is gathered to measure the extent to which all types of families feel valued and welcomed, enjoy using family hub provision, and can articulate the difference that family hub services have made to them and their family.
- Family user-data is gathered on the strength of the user experience, for example to measure if families are more able to find and access the right help, engage, stay engaged, and be supported to a positive outcome.
- Family user-data and evidence is gathered and used to evolve the family hub environment and services to make them more family-friendly.
- Family user-data should, where available, include demographic data and cohort-level data (for example families with a social worker, early help worker or families worked with by another service).

1.5 Accessibility and equality

Minimum expectations

Level 1: basic model

- Accessibility of family hub services across protected characteristics, as well as vulnerable and seldom-heard groups, is assessed and strategies are developed to improve accessibility, informed by a needs assessment to understand population and accessibility needs.
- Information for families meets the Accessible Information Requirement and is made available in local languages.
- The family hub and its services demonstrate and model inclusion for children, young people and families with all types of special educational needs and disability, with reasonable adjustments proactively built in. Services are accessible, ensuring environments are physically and sensory accessible.

Level 2: developed model

- Services across the family hub network gather and share a range of evidence and data to ensure that families in priority groups, including those with protected characteristics, vulnerable and seldom-heard groups, are accessing services through the family hub network and feel their needs are being met, and that the impact of services on individual families is effectively monitored.

Go further options

We have not provided any go further options here, as we expect you to deliver all of the level 2 developed model criteria as a minimum.

1.6 Going beyond Start for Life and 0 to 5

Minimum expectations

Level 1: basic model

- The family hub network offers access to support for families with children of all ages 0 to 19 (25 with SEND), including the ante-natal period and vulnerable children and young people, and staff feel confident engaging with families, children and young people across this age range.
- Family user-data or evidence is gathered to assess the extent to which families know that: they can access a wide range of services from 0–19 (25 with SEND) through the family hub network, and they have confidence that the family hub staff will be knowledgeable and help them to access whatever service they need.

Level 2: developed model

- The family hub network offers an extensive range of services across the 0 to 19 (25 with SEND) age range.

Go further options

Level 2: developed model

- Family user-data or evidence is gathered to assess the extent to which families: view family hubs as places that provide services for children and young people of all ages; are confident that family hub staff will be knowledgeable and help them to access whatever service they need; and use the family hub network as their default mode of access for family services across the 0-19 (or 25 with SEND) age range.

Delivery area: connection

Key criteria 2

There are services working together for families with a universal 'front door', shared outcomes and effective governance.

2.1 Co-location

Minimum expectations

Level 1: basic model

- Co-located services tend to be for 0-5s (inclusive of the Start for Life period) however, there are some 0-19 (25 with SEND) family services co-located in family hub buildings.
- There is a co-location review or strategy underway to determine amongst all partners the future balance of co-location within family hubs and necessary plans for change.
- Main hub buildings are supplemented, where appropriate, by other linked or outreach sites. The advantages of community premises should be considered and prioritised due to their accessibility, location and familiarity to families. For example, a community hall or faith building might be an appropriate premises.
- IT systems at the family hub allow professionals to easily co-locate where appropriate.

Level 2: developed model

- The environment within the family hub is appropriate to different age groups and resources are appropriately located to take account of different users' needs.

Go further options

Level 2: developed model

- There is an extensive range of statutory and non-statutory services, across 0-19 (25 with SEND) co-located within family hub buildings. These services span family support, education, health, social care, youth services and other areas.

2.2 Governance and leadership

Minimum expectations

Level 1: basic model

- Functional multi-agency governance arrangements are in place and are becoming established, with agencies delivering services through the family hub committed to better understanding: the demand for services; the family experience; how to embed an early intervention approach delivered through the family hub network locally.
- A more joined-up approach to the services which can or could be accessed through the family hub network is championed by some local advocates, reflecting that progress can still be made on service integration.
- Some senior leaders give a consistent message about the importance of a more joined-up approach to family hub services and have started work on further service integration.

Level 2: developed model

- An effective multi-agency board owns the family hub strategy and leads delivery confidently across local agencies, including the voluntary, community and faith sectors as key partners.
- The board also performs, or is closely linked to, strategic oversight of other core functions of integrated early help, such as Supporting Families, and other relevant agendas and partnership structures, such as local drugs strategy partnerships, school attendance strategy and partnerships and Violence Reduction Units. The board has clear routes into local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and non-statutory partners, such as education and youth work.
- The board has identified routes to engage with, influence and inform decision-making about relevant services at Integrated Care System (ICS) level and other relevant partnerships and structures. For example, they have a relationship with a local authority member of the Integrated Care Partnership, and through this route can influence the ambitions for children and young people set out in the Integrated Care Strategy. Family hubs are well placed to recognise commissioning gaps, and to collect data on need for and uptake of services, which should inform ICS planning.
- The board is linked to the local data governance board and data-sharing routes are considered with relevant agencies including health, children's social care, education and the police.
- The board includes parent, carer or family representatives. There is also a role for the single, identifiable leader of the Start for Life offer.

- Governance structures enable different agencies to take collective responsibility, share risks and jointly invest in early help, whole-family and whole-system working, including the development of the family hub network.
- Service managers working in or through the family hub network understand the governance structure and how it relates to them.
- Senior leaders, including local politicians, speak with ‘one voice’ on the importance of early help, whole-family and whole-system working, including the development of joined-up family hub services and are advocates and champions for the delivery of the local strategy and local vision for the family hub network.

Go further options

We have not provided any go further options here, as we expect you to deliver all of the level 2 developed model criteria as a minimum.

2.3 Commissioning and funding

Minimum expectations

Level 1: basic model

- Single agencies are currently responsible for commissioning services but there is commitment to develop an outcomes based joint commissioning framework between different agencies for the services which are or could be accessed through the family hub network locally. The framework is in the development phase and includes all relevant partners in its development.
- The family hub has established relationships with Integrated Care Board commissioners of healthcare services and has identified appropriate routes to influence health service commissioning (e.g., through the local Health and Wellbeing Board, through the Integrated Care Board).

Level 2: developed model

- The family hub network is a key priority in the local budget-setting process.
- All decisions about commissioning or redesigning the family hub network take account of the strength of the evidence-base.

Go further options

Level 2: developed model

- There is a joint-commissioning plan between the local authority and other partners, such as health commissioners, for the services accessed through the

family hub network. It is extensive, routine, formally agreed, and covers the majority of family hub services.

- The family hub network considers commissioning in the wider context of early help commissioning decisions and aligns budgets from a range of funding sources such as the local authority, health commissioners and potentially other public sector partners.

2.4 Outcomes

Minimum expectations

Level 1: basic model

- Services that are part of the family hub network share a local theory-of-change and population level and/or cohort outcomes framework. Measurement of family level outcomes through the Supporting Families programme feeds into local population level outcomes. There is commitment to develop this further

Level 2: developed model

- There is a clear theory-of-change about how family hub inputs and outputs relate to target outcomes and impact the key risks and protective factors that influence child development.

Go further options

Level 2: developed model

- Different agencies delivering services through the family hub have a clear view of which parts of the family hub network are working well and use this to inform strategy and service development and take action to improve underperformance against target population outcomes.
- In developing a local population and/or cohort level outcomes framework, the family hub has regard to objectives for children, young people and families set out in local strategies, including the Health and Wellbeing Strategy produced by the local Health and Wellbeing Board, the 5-year forward plan produced by the Integrated Care Board, and the Integrated Care Strategy produced by the Integrated Care Partnership.
- The local population and/or cohort level outcomes framework builds clearly on measurement of family level outcomes through the Supporting Families programme.
- The family hub network uses data to analyse the impact on services and families, and can report on the journey of the family to understand how often they present to early help or social care after engagement with the family hub.

2.5 Evidence-led practice, evaluation and quality improvement

Minimum expectations

Level 1: basic model

- Family hubs are delivering evidence-based programmes and interventions with a commitment to increase this across more of their services.
- Local strategic needs assessments include data on family needs.
- Family feedback data collected and collated on experiences of using family hub services.
- Regular family hub network staff and professional time for reflective practice and learning from past experience and projects.

Level 2: developed model

- Regular reviews of the latest evidence base on family hub practice, programme and intervention effectiveness.
- Regular family hub network staff-training and learning and development on delivering evidence-based programmes and interventions.
- Local evaluation evidence for family hubs and their constituent services is regularly reviewed at operational, management and strategic level and leads to improvements and refinement of practice, services and interventions.
- Regular events, forums and supervision time for professionals and staff to reflect on practice and learn from projects and pieces of work as part of the family hub network.

Go further options

Level 2: developed model

- Evidence-based programmes and interventions are at the core of family hub service provision and are delivered with fidelity across most services.
- Robust and up-to-date multi-agency data (for example health, education, social care) on families is routinely analysed, covering population needs and service use, based on data from across the family hub network. The analysis is routinely used (as it pertains to family hubs) to identify target groups, design services, agree priorities, forecast trends and plan, set strategy, and influence wider family and community strategies.
- Routine monitoring, tracking and analysing of family hub service performance using valid and reliable outcome metrics, and linking with caseload data, children social care data, and data from local and national partners. Proven effectiveness

of family hub services at improving child and family outcomes, with findings published.

- Established evaluation partners that offer independent scrutiny and review of the family hub network.
- Regular benchmarking, learning and activities that assure the quality of the services against intended outcomes, alongside service users experiences. Activities may be undertaken with other local authorities with family hubs and could include data and outcome benchmarking or themed audits.

Key Criteria 3

There are professionals working together, through co-location, data-sharing and a common approach to their work. Families only have to tell their story once, the service is more efficient, with safeguarding at its core, and families get more effective support.

3.1 data- sharing

Minimum expectations

Level 1: basic model

- The family hub has a data-sharing agreement in place as part of existing data-governance structures and there is regular and consistent data-sharing across the family hub network that feeds into the wider system.
- Consistent and regular data-sharing across the family hub network is used to inform whole-family working and decisions about the family hub network. There is commitment to develop this further.
- There is senior commitment and a strategic dialogue underway to improve data-sharing to benefit the family hub through existing agreements amongst education, health and social care partners.

Level 2: developed model

- N/A

Go further options

Level 2: developed model

- The family hub is a key contributor to data-sharing practices across the wider local system, sharing and receiving information across local services to inform strategic decision making and improve delivery.
- Senior leaders in the family hub network are consistently using data analysis to inform decisions about the family hub network.

3.2 Case management

Minimum expectations

Level 1: basic model

- Agencies delivering family hub services across the family hub network have case management system(s) in place which allow for accurate whole family case-recording.

Level 2: developed model

- N/A

Go further options

Level 2: developed model

- A common case management system or interoperability between case management systems, which includes the case management elements set out in the Early Help System Guide, is used across the family hub network for families with all levels of need.

3.3 Common assessment

Minimum expectations

Level 1: basic model

- There is a clear process in place and used across the family hub network to assess need as part of formal early help activity and connect families to the services they need. Common assessment and recording processes are based on the Supporting Families Outcomes Framework.
- There is senior commitment and work underway to roll out a formal coordinated common assessment process across the family hub network for universal services and families at an earlier level of need than those engaged in formal early help activity.

Level 2: developed model

- Across the family hub network there is a clear, consistent and aligned process for identifying need and risk, and for providing appropriate support at an early stage within an agreed common assessment approach. This should cover need at both formal early help level, and below (including universal).

Go further options

Level 2: developed model

- Practitioners across all agencies in the family hub network use the agreed approach to ensure effective targeting.
- There is active monitoring of impact at individual case-level using valid and reliable measurement tools, as detailed in the Supporting Families Outcomes Plan for formal early help activity, including tracking over time of paths between family hub and wider universal or specialist services.

3.4 Safeguarding

Minimum expectations

Level 1: basic model

- All agencies and services within the family hub network are aware of their duty to safeguard children, young people and families in line with the statutory guidance, and adhere to all local safeguarding guidelines.
- All family hub staff are trained to identify safeguarding concerns – whether these be intra-familial or originate outside of the home, or where there are multiple overlapping threats, and staff are aware of and able to connect individuals to the appropriate statutory agencies, where required.

Level 2: developed model

- Information sharing pathways with statutory and non-statutory partners are understood by all staff and measures are in place to ensure information is shared in a proportionate way.

Go further options

We have not provided any go further options here, as we expect you to deliver all of the level 2 developed model criteria as a minimum.

Key Criteria 4

Statutory services, the community, charities, and faith sector partners are working together to get families the help they need.

4.1 Partnerships and co-location with voluntary, community and faith sector

Minimum expectations

Level 1: basic model

- There are agreements in place for family hubs to signpost and connect families to relevant voluntary, community and faith sector and peer support offers.
- There is senior commitment and a strategy underway to grow voluntary, community and faith sector involvement in the family hub network, including considering co-location.

Level 2: developed model

- There is improved connectivity between third sector, community, faith sector and other statutory services delivered through the family hub network.
- There is a strategy to grow and support voluntary, community and faith sector organisations working towards shared outcomes with the family hub network, not just the partnerships themselves.

Go further options

Level 2: developed model

- Third sector, community and faith sector partners and education settings that work through the family hub network are working in a whole-family way.

4.2 Integration and connection

Minimum expectations

Level 1: basic model

- There is join-up between different agencies in the family hub network and a commitment to developing integrated referral pathways so that families can access services when they need them.
- There is join up between the family hub and education partners to ensure there is a clear route of support for children, young people and their families, for example where appropriate the family hub can connect families to the attendance support team within the local authority.
- The Making Every Contact Count approach is embedded.

Level 2: developed model

- Comprehensive, integrated referral pathways are used for a full range of family hub services.
- Referral pathways include voluntary, community and faith sector partners and education settings.

Go further options

Level 2: developed model

- Pathways have been revised to take account of impact, user feedback and new evidence on what works.
- Integrated monitoring systems are used across family hub services to target interventions to families with different needs identified in the local needs assessment.
- Services are flexed to respond to demand using live data.

4.3 Community ownership and co-production

Minimum expectations

Level 1: basic model

- Some resident and parent/carer engagement exercises are undertaken to ask families about their interest in using existing local services that fall within the scope of family hubs (for example statutory consultation on service re-design).
- Families can submit feedback based on their experience of accessing and using family hub services.
- Parent and Carer Panels, which focus on conception to children aged 2, are used to help shape early years services in family hub models in each locality.

Level 2: developed model

- Families and young people co-design family hub services and programmes by being on relevant governance and partnership boards.
- Families and young people participate in the delivery of family hub services or programmes (for example peer support programmes, mentoring programmes and volunteer-led programmes).

Go further options

Level 2: developed model

- Families and young people act as champions and advocates for family hub services.
- Families and young people are routinely involved in planning and directing their family hub service pathways and sources of support.
- Specific efforts are made to seek the input of seldom heard groups, including those not in a family unit such as looked after children.
- Some small-scale budgets may be available for families and young people to use to fund family hub services and support, or participatory budgeting is undertaken routinely.

Delivery Area: relationships

Key Criteria 5

Family hubs prioritise strengthening the relationships that carry us all through life, and building on family strengths, recognising that this is the way to lasting change. This idea is at the heart of everything that is done.

5.1 Whole-family, relational practice model

Minimum expectations

Level 1: basic model

- There is an expectation, understood by all family hub staff, to work in a whole-family way that prioritises safely strengthening relationships and building on families' strengths. There is senior commitment and a plan to develop this further.

Level 2: developed model

- Where appropriate, families have a consistent point of contact in the family hub to help build a trusted relationship.

Go further options

Level 2: developed model

- Professionals across the family hub network engage families and build high-quality, trusting, relationships with them. This is supported by family feedback and outcomes data.
- Support provided through the family hub network builds on families' strengths, drawing on the wider relationships that families have, and on the capacity and potential for support and advice from within local communities, including education settings, voluntary, community and faith organisations.
- Children and young people are connected to mentoring programmes to help increase support networks for those who would benefit most.

5.2 Training and development

Minimum expectations

Level 1: basic model

- There is an initial version of a multi-agency workforce development plan, in which training offers are coordinated to help all partners in the family hub network understand and identify need early, and work in a whole-family way. There is commitment and a plan to develop this further.

Level 2: developed model

- It is widely understood locally what workforce diversity, capacity, skills and knowledge is required to impact on children and young people and family outcomes through a family hub model.
- There is an agreed and high-quality training and supervision offer which supports the family hub network's workforce to apply the latest evidence to their practice.

Go further options

Level 2: developed model

- The family hub network has a learning culture, and feedback informs future training and practice across agencies.
- There are development pathways for existing and new staff, to support retention and ensure areas are growing the staff they will need in the future.



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