

## Appendix 1: FFC Pathfinder Quarterly Report to the Department for Education

Reporting Period 1<sup>st</sup> July – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024

### Progress against Reform Strands

<b>Reform Strand</b>	<b>Please comment on your progress in this workstream in line with your delivery milestones and predicted outcomes – these have been extracted from the delivery plan milestones.</b>
<b>Welcoming and Effective Family Help Service</b>	<p><b>Key posts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CSC Team Manager appointed and in post since 27<sup>th</sup> August</li><li>• CSC Advanced Practitioner appointed and in post since 1<sup>st</sup> October</li><li>• 8 Family Help Social Workers appointed and in post in the locality multi-disciplinary teams since mid-September</li><li>• SWIS Team Manager appointed and in post since 1<sup>st</sup> September</li><li>• 6 SWIS Social Workers appointed and in post since 1st September</li></ul> <p>Our aim was to develop a locality-based family help model, underpinned by our systemic practice model, with the intention of creating a family help service which is more accessible to our local populations, and for the family help service to be better connected to the populations they serve, and for there to be better organisational connections between early help and children’s social care, and with our external partners.</p> <p>To achieve this aim, we have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Established four locality based multi-disciplinary teams (MDT’s)</li><li>• Located the MDT’s in family hubs to ensure family help is located where services are delivered</li><li>• Created a Family Help service including two social workers in each MDT, and appointing a team manager and advanced practitioner</li><li>• Created the environment for the development of strong professional relationships in Family Help, between Family Help and the wider Family Hubs, and encouraged the MDT staff to forge</li></ul>

similar relationship with local residents and partner agencies

- Encouraged and supported MDT's to be outwardly public facing and to promote Family Help services through the Family Hubs.
- Introduced the role of Family Help Lead Practitioner into Family Help. We have provided a lot of guidance, established supervision and line management arrangements, and provided swift access to key training opportunities
- Created processes to ensure the safe identification of Child in Need cases which can be led by an alternatively qualified Family Help Lead Practitioner, under the supervision of a social worker
- Strengthened relationships between the MDT's and their local schools by creating an additional Social Workers in Schools (SWIS) team
- Commissioned ten 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations to deliver targeted befriending services to over 300 families
- Developed and maintained an open dialogue with all practitioners and practice leads in the MDT's and Family hubs to help us develop a high functioning and supportive Family Help service.

Our four locality-based MDT's (North – Seacombe Family Hub; East – Rock Ferry One Stop Shop; West – Ganney's Meadow Family Hub; South – Bromborough Family Hub/Eastham Youth Space) are up and running and delivering services across Early Help and Child in Need to their respective communities.

Next steps are for us to introduce partner agencies formally into the MDT's (the Family Hubs are multi-agency) and work towards physical and virtual co-location, and to develop the systems infrastructure to support the MDT's. We will also be developing our IFD, so it offers a welcoming and helpful service to families.

**Unlocking the potential for Family Networks**

**Key posts:**

- 2 FNSP co-ordinators and Business Support Officer recruited and in post since 1<sup>st</sup> September. FNSP's delivered since 1<sup>st</sup> July
- 1 FGC manager and 7 FGC co-ordinators recruited and in post and will be facilitating Family Group Conferences from 1<sup>st</sup> November

We worked quickly to design and recruit to a Family Network Support Package (FNSP) team, and to develop an application pathway. To support the establishment of the FNSP offer we created a dedicated web page and literature and delivered a number of (ongoing) briefings, particularly targeting children's social care.

Wirral already had a well-developed Family Group Conferencing (FGC) model in place, but through the Pathfinder we have doubled our capacity to deliver FGC's across the continuum of need by appointing and training an additional team and have developed a direct pathway for eligible families from FGC's directly to FNSP's. We are reviewing some of the more technical aspects of our FGC processes to identify any potential beneficial changes to the offer and delivery.

As part of our promotion, we will shortly schedule a further series of briefings to CSC and EH teams to promote our offer and FNSPs as part of these reforms.

Next steps are to continue the promotion across the continuum of need for both FGC's and FNSP's, and to review both the local pattern of applications, but also to start collecting feedback and evidence of impact to assure ourselves that the packages are making a real positive difference. We are really pleased with the take up so far but will closely monitor the spend over the next few months.

**A dedicated and skilled Child Protection Response**

**Key posts:**

- Two Lead Child Protection Practitioners (drawn from existing conference chairs) appointed and in post from 1<sup>st</sup> November
- Parental Advocate Team Leader appointed and in post since 1<sup>st</sup> August
- Six parental advocates appointed and in post from 1<sup>st</sup> November

Following a lot of consultation and development activity across the safeguarding partnership we have finalised our Multi-agency Child Protection Team (MACPT) to lead our response to child protection. Our local model is designed to deliver the decisive response to child protection required by the reforms, but to also retain the good practice and strong multi-agency working which exists locally.

Our MACPT model is two tiered, with a strategic team who are responsible for resourcing the multi-agency response and leading the quality assurance of practice, and an operational team, who will lead the direct response under the direction of our Lead Child Protection Practitioners. Both teams will include membership from the LA, Health economy, Police and Education, but both will also have direct links into other relevant partners including adult social care, probation, third sector and community organisations.

The strategic group will also have lay representation which includes people with lived experience of the child protection process.

As set out in our original plan we are starting the new model in one of our MDT areas and will run it for a couple of months beginning late-November, ahead of a Wirral wide roll out around February/March. We have all of our arrangements in place to start this, and we have created a direct relationship between the MACPT, and in particular the LCPP's and the MDT's.

Through the Pathfinder we have also established (through a 3<sup>rd</sup> sector commission) a team of parental advocates who have all got lived experience of child protection. Following a very comprehensive and rigorous training and preparation programme the advocates will be ready to start taking cases within the next few weeks.

We have also completed our commission of the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector to develop family friendly literature for the CP and CIN processes. Both of these initiatives will be available to families involved in child protection.

Next steps include the roll out of the befriending service across Family Help and Child Protection, and a close evaluation of the impact of advocacy on

	<p>outcomes for families. Following operationalisation of the new MACPT model, we will closely monitor its effectiveness ahead of the wider Wirral roll out next year.</p> <p>We will develop and begin testing of a new Child Protection response to cases where the harm is from outside the home. We will look to develop this initially in one locality where the majority of criminal exploitation, County Lines and organised criminal groups activity exists.</p> <p>We are also developing specific multi-agency child protection training which will include promotion of the practice standards published in Working Together 2023.</p>
<p><b>Safeguarding partners reform</b></p>	<p><b>Key posts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delegated Safeguarding Partner (DSP) for Education</li> </ul> <p>The Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership was involved in the early set up of the Pathfinder in Wirral, and the statutory partners sit on our Pathfinder Programme Board and are therefore well sighted on its aims and our determination that this will be a truly multi-agency endeavour. In preparation the WSCP moved quickly to update its operating model to ensure compliance with Working Together 2023, including having our DSP's, LSP's and Partnership Chair in place.</p> <p>One of the key reforms within the safeguarding arrangements is about testing a strategic role for education, and what it would look like for education as the 4<sup>th</sup> statutory partner. The WSCP had previously developed a safeguarding in education committee, and this now includes representation from across the education sector, not just schools and colleges.</p> <p>We have recruited a DSP for Education who is starting with us on 1<sup>st</sup> November and have set a workplan for them as the strategic lead for the sector. The DSP chairs the safeguarding in education committee and already attends the WSCP Executive. A key piece of work will be the identification of a Lead Safeguarding Partner for the Sector. This is something the newly established</p>

	<p>regional safeguarding partnership (LSP's group) is very interested in supporting.</p> <p>The safeguarding partnership has also begun the design of a single partnership practice framework. This is underpinned by our systemic practice model and will illustrate how we support children, young people, and families throughout the continuum of need.</p> <p>The WSCP is also closely aligned to the regional development work (also supported by the DfE) across children's services. We have led input into the education part of this work and are identifying further synergies with Pathfinder.</p> <p><u>Next steps</u> include the identification of the LSP for education and the publication of the single practice framework. Planned work also includes the design of an outcomes framework, and also an evaluation of the impact of the strengthened role for education. As part of its workplan in this strand the safeguarding partnership is also establishing parental forums, and a model for independent scrutiny.</p>
<p><b>System Reform</b></p>	<p><b>Key posts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Systems support officer</li> <li>• Comms officer</li> </ul> <p>We have appointed a systems support officer who has begun to help us shape a number of pieces of work including the design of a single assessment to replace the current early help and children's social care assessments. The new One assessment has been designed and built into the test module of LiquidLogic where robust testing has just begun.</p> <p>The systems support officer is also helping with the development of our outcomes framework, and a specific dashboard to support the members of the MACPT by providing key child protection indicators of performance. We have set aside some funding from the Pathfinder budget to support physical LiquidLogic systems change, and we have begun conversations with LiquidLogic about what that might look like.</p> <p>We have commissioned a consultancy organisation to work with us on a multi-agency basis to help develop our leaders and senior strategic managers with embedding systems change in a joined-up way</p>

	<p>that supports our working with families. We have also commissioned work to review the innovative Family Toolbox to see how this can be developed to further support Family Help.</p> <p>We have also recruited a dedicated comms officer who is tracking and recording our Pathfinder journey, and also leading on gathering case studies, feedback and stories from professionals and families and part of our celebration of outcomes and our measurement of impact.</p> <p><u>Next steps</u> include completion of the One assessment and new workflows to support Family Help and the leading of CiN cases by alternatively qualified staff. This includes systems change with LiquidLogic.</p> <p>As we establish new and amended ways of working across the continuum of need, we will be able to capture these changes and amend our procedures, and also inform the single practice framework. There is also a big piece of work to do in reviewing our current thresholds and ensuring our thresholds support practitioners and families in the reformed system.</p>
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## Recruitment and Training

<b>Recruitment – please set out current posts filled in the last quarter</b>	
<p>How many staff do you have in your CSC workforce?</p> <p>Please indicate the number of staff involved in the FFC Pathfinder?</p>	<p>LA Children’s Social Care Workforce: 359 people and 27 vacancies Early Help and Prevention Workforce: 285 people and 30 vacancies</p> <p>Please not. Figures do not include corporate back-office staff who support the directorate. All staff are involved to a greater or lesser extent with Pathfinder.</p>
<p>How many people have you employed in the last quarter by the following job role types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Lead Practitioners (SW and non-SW separated out)</li> <li>b. Lead Child Protection Practitioners</li> <li>c. Social Workers (not including any SWs who have been recruited as LPs or LCPPs)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>a.</u> We have used existing staff social workers and other Local Authority staff (alternatively qualified) to fulfil these roles to start with.</li> <li><u>b.</u> We provided funding for the CSC Safeguarding Unit to recruit a Child Protection chair so that we could use two experienced CP</li> </ul>

<p>d. Other Workforce (non-social workers, and not including any staff who have been recruited as LPs)</p> <p>For d) Other Workforce, what are the specific job roles?</p>	<p>Chairs to take on the role of LCPP under the FFC Pathfinder.</p> <p><u>c.</u> We have recruited 6 social workers for the SWIS Team.</p> <p><u>d.</u> We have employed a Systems Officer, A Comms Officer, 2FNSP Officers, 1 Business support Officer, Team leader, 6 FGC Co-ordinators, 6 Parent Advocates, Team Manager, Advanced Social work practitioner.</p>
<p>Please give a brief job description for each role</p>	<p>Job and role descriptions are available here: <a href="#">Pathfinder Roles - Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership</a></p>

### Training

<p><b>Training – what training has been provided in the last quarter</b></p>	<p>Bespoke FGC Training specifically for the new FGC team. The team manager is an approved and recognised FRG national standard trainer. The new FGC coordinators are currently now participating in experiential learning by shadowing colleagues ahead of holding their first cases.</p> <p>The WSCP provides a comprehensive multi-agency training programme for staff, and it is well established in Wirral that all staff make beneficial use of it. We have ensured that sufficient training has been available to all staff involved in Pathfinder in the following key courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neglect and GCP2 Training for the MDT based social workers and SWIS social workers</li> <li>• Systemic practice training</li> <li>• Level 2 Domestic Abuse training</li> <li>• Training for the Dash/Ric assessment</li> </ul> <p>The following training has also been offered to all staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Exploitation</li> <li>• Restorative Practice</li> <li>• Alcohol and substance misuse</li> <li>• Trauma Informed Practice.</li> </ul>
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	We have and continue to deliver a programme online and in person briefings about Pathfinder to the wider workforce. We estimate that over 600 staff from across the partnership have attended these events so far. Briefings are also recorded so staff unable to attend can access the information.
Type of training and which roles were involved? (internal/External)	All our training and briefings is delivered on a multi-agency basis. All staff directly involved in Pathfinder have attended the required training for their roles.
Number of staff trained.	The WSCP typically delivers between 6-8 courses a month and trains between 120-160 professionals every month.
How many left to train? Plans for this training?	We offer a rolling programme of training and encourage staff to refresh their knowledge every few years.

### Strategic Meetings

**Please list any FFCP multi-agency safeguarding strategic meetings taken place this quarter – please list attendees/agencies represented**

As part of our governance arrangements, we currently hold monthly Programme Board meetings which are attended and chaired by our AD's for Children's Social Care and Early Help and Prevention. Regular attendees include: Pathfinder Programme Leaders; HoS for Family Help; DSP for Police; DSP for Health; local Ofsted link person (non-participating observer). From November the Board will also include the DSP for Education.

We also report on a quarterly basis into the multi-agency Partnership for Children, Young People and Education. This group includes representation from the LA Children's and Adults services, Health, Police, Education, Public Health, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector and Probation.

FFCP is also a standing agenda item at the bi-monthly meetings of the WSCP Executive which includes the three statutory partners and education.

### Other DfE Programmes

**Other DfE Programmes – please indicate how other DfE programmes are being incorporated into the Pathfinder work including Family Hubs and the use of upfront funding from Supporting Families (due to earned autonomy status)**

**Family Hubs** – As part of our strategy for Family help to be locality based and outward facing it made sense to locate it within Family Hubs. As part of the roll out of Family Hubs over the past couple of years, the Council had identified four locations where there was already community provision for children and families, e.g. youth hubs, children's centres. We decided that the four main Family Hub sites in N, S, E and W Wirral would make perfect locations for the developing

multi-disciplinary teams as these are already known in the local neighbourhoods, and many staff are already located in the Hubs delivering services to Families.

**Changemakers Programme** – Wirral is one of four areas working with the DfE and Youth Endowment Fund to participate in the Changemakers programme. Changemakers is designed to create local capacity to address the reasons why evidence-based interventions can struggle to translate into the local context. As part of the programme, we will be delivering three specific parenting interventions through our Family Hubs and MDT's.

**Supporting Families** – Funding from Supporting families has directly supported the development of the Family Hubs and the MDT's and has provided us with a strong outcomes framework to build upon to help us evaluate the impact of the Pathfinder reforms.

### Changes to Delivery Model

<b>Reform Strand</b>	<b>Please specify any areas where you have had to make changes to the delivery model set out in the delivery plan and why</b>
Overall Design for the system and safeguarding partners	We spent less than anticipated on staffing, which gave us an opportunity to spend more on system design. This has included two commissions for consultancy to help us embed good multi-agency leadership in system change, and for a review of the impact of the Family Toolbox to inform how we develop this as a central resource in Family Help.
Welcoming and Effective Family Help Services	Following consultation with the DfE we changed the originally proposed SEND project as it was not supported by the specification. We have recently developed a different SEND proposal to one which strengthens access to information, advice and guidance and peer support for families..
A dedicated and skilled Child Protection Response	No changes
Family Network Support Packages + Family Group Decision Making	No changes

## Family or Practitioner Feedback

**Family/Practitioner feedback** - Please provide any feedback you have gained from families and/or front-line practitioners regarding their experiences within the system if this is available to share. This can be in any format and can be sent alongside this template.

### Practitioner Feedback.

*Early Help Schools Advisor Team Leader Leanne Roles advised that she can already see a reduction in the number of referrals since the Pathfinder SWIS team was established in September, in particular in the Wallasey area where the new SWIS social workers are now based.*

#### *SWIS Team Manager*

*Thanks to Pathfinder and the expansion of SWIS in Wirral, we have been able to develop closer working relationships with our colleagues in the Education Inclusion Team and LACES. This has allowed more co-production of plans to support vulnerable young people in Care and attending our Alternative Provision. It has also allowed social workers and managers to develop a greater understanding of roles across the service. As a result of this we are able to support more young people when they have been excluded from school and we can also assist in identifying and securing the right setting for children earlier to help reduce the risks of exploitation and associated vulnerabilities that often come from them not being in school.*

#### *Secondary School Head Teacher*

*Our school Social Worker is Donna Hojord-Beard.*

*She is based in school in the same office as Mr Smith (Assistant Head teacher - Pastoral Care & Wellbeing) and Lauren Quigley (Senior Pastoral Lead)*

*Donna has several cases for pupils at Woodchurch High. These families are those who are in need of the most support and this includes at home, but also the pupils in school.*

*Donna supports with home visits to families, the majority being those which are not on her caseload. These may be those whose attendance is of a concern, but also if there is a welfare concern.*

*Donna also attends weekly school Gateway meetings. These meetings involve the SEND, Pastoral, Mentoring, Looked-After and Safeguarding teams. Individual pupils are discussed, and Donna has been able to contribute with advice and guidance.*

*Donna has also been able to advise school and families on external professionals and bodies which can offer support, often in complex cases.*

*A huge benefit has been consultation. Should school require advice or guidance on a particular matter, the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub helpline often involves a long wait and then we are advised to complete an EMAFT (electronic referral) for the child or family. Having Donna in situ has allowed for immediate advice and guidance on how to proceed. This timesaving support has been of huge benefit.*

*Donna has also attended meetings with families who are not part of her caseload and has been able to offer advice and support when needed.*

*Senior Manager AP and Inclusion*

*Children, Family and Education - Education*

*Its early days. But we are seeing much more joined up thinking approach and more knowledge for schools around the IFD and the knowledge SWIS have around other external services that they can access much easier, and pupils signposted to the correct areas and support.*

*For Family Help Social Workers in the MDT's*

*"We have been able to discuss families and work as an MDT to discuss services that best suit the needs of the family"*

*"More organic conversation around families are happening which allows us to identify roles and responsibilities, rather than sending emails and referrals"*

*"Rather than requesting a threshold review we discussed a family with our Family Hub Social worker and the Team Manager we agreed that a social worker intervention/support was needed so they picked this up and went out with our worker all within 24 hours rather than 2 weeks."*

*From the Social Worker's in the MDT's*

*"The team supported me in getting respite funding at a nursery provision as childcare was a barrier for Mum to attend the ACES course, and she has very little support around her. Not only has this been great for Mum, it's really helped the little girl broadening her social circle and learning opportunities"*

*"It's been good getting to know the other L3 service what they do to support families, and how we can get them involved with our families. They have given me advice and I have been able to offer them support around particular families; it is a really positive working experience."*

*From Families*

*Quote from a Parent: "You're the first person that ever listened to me and took me seriously, it's because of you that my son is getting all this support". " All those referrals you made have got us where we are". "I honestly don't know what I'd have done without you and all you have done for us". "I just felt like I was telling everyone my concerns and no one listened until i spoke to you".*