



Families First Task and Finish Group Feedback

Children and Families Committee
15th September 2025



Introduction

- At its meeting in June 2025, the Children and Families Committee agreed the Terms of Reference for a new Task and Finish Group regarding Families First.
- The Task and Finish Group has met 4 times during July and August 2025.
- This presentation provides the Committee with an overview of the learning from the Task and Finish Group including the questions asked by Task and Finish Group members and responses provided.

Task and Finish Group Objectives

- To understand the rationale and evidence base for place-based locality working and locality proposals for multi-disciplinary and multi-agency working for children and families in Cheshire East.
- To understand how this links to the Families First Partnership approach and the **requirement to implement the reforms and be up and running by 31st March 2026.**
- To contribute towards the development of the Families First Partnership plans.

Membership and focus

Focus of the Task and Finish Group Meetings:

- 3rd July 2025: Understanding Families First
- 9th July 2025: Exploring the locality footprints
- 4th August 2025: Exploring how localities would work in practice (in line with Families First) using Family Stories
- 11th August 2025: Concluding reflections in readiness for September Committee.

Task and Finish Group Membership

The Task and Finish Group was attended by:

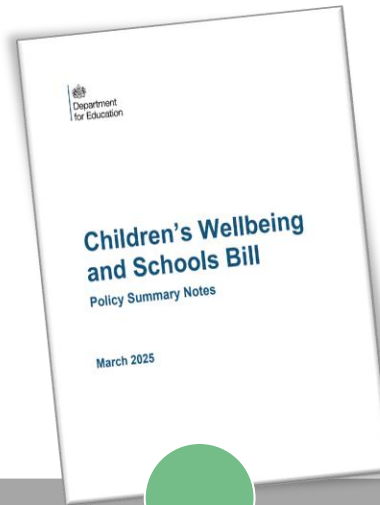
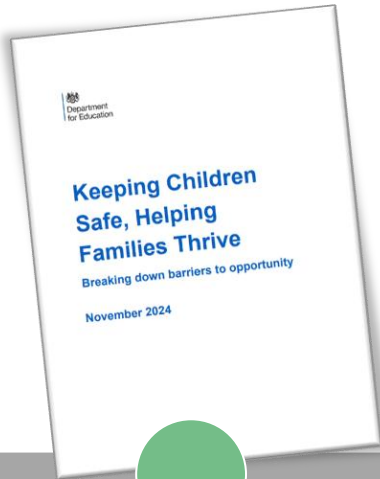
Councillor S Bennett-Wake (Chair)
Councillor L Crane
Councillor E Gilman
Councillor J Saunders

The questions asked by the Task and Finish Group along with responses are provided at the end of this slide deck

The vision and legislative journey

Background

- Following the Independent Care Review (Josh MacAlister) published in May 2022 the previous Government's published its response: Stable Homes Built on Love
- Ten Families First for Children Pathfinders were announced to 'test and learn'



Policy statement published on 18th November 2024

Outlines the Government's vision for the children's social care system and core legislative proposals

Introduced into Parliament on 17th December 2024

Breaks down the ambitions of the bill in seven parts, centred around keeping families together and children safe


Programme Guide published in March 2025

Sets out the delivery expectations for safeguarding partners
Co-signed by Department for Health and Social Care and the Home Office

Background

- The Families First Partnership Programme is a new national programme set up by the Department for Education (DfE) and supported by the Department of Health and Social Care and the Home Office. [The Families First Partnership \(FFP\) Programme Guide](#) sets out the requirements of the reforms.
- Through the programme, Government is working in partnership with local areas (local authorities, police, health, education, childcare settings and other relevant agencies) to improve their local services and systems that help and protect children and families.
- The reforms include the introduction of Family Help, strengthening multi-agency child protection, and improving engagement with family networks.
- The programme is drawing on the experiences of the ten Families First for Children (FFC) Pathfinder Programme local areas (pathfinders), who have been testing the implementation of these system reforms since July 2023.
- Implementing multi-disciplinary and multi-agency teams that work in a place-based way will be a key enabler to both the implementation of the reforms and to Cheshire East's services for children improvement journey.

Families First *Partnership*

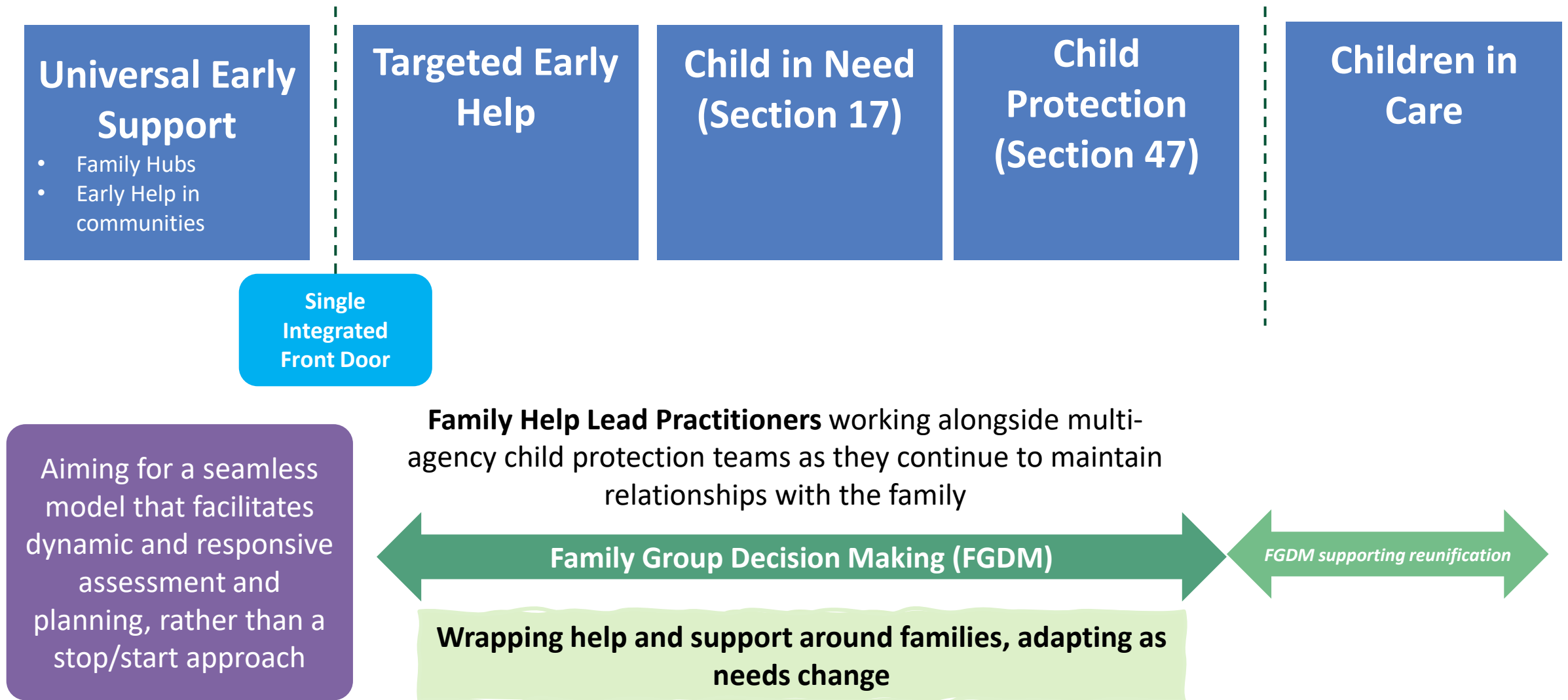
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- A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide featuring several thick, colorful ribbons (yellow, pink, blue, green, red, and black) that are intertwined and looped together, creating a complex, knotted pattern.
- The reforms are underpinned by **strong multi-agency working**
 - Partnership reform to the children's social care system – **multi-disciplinary and multi agency teams**
 - Through these reforms we will **deepen our integration with our teams and our partners**
 - Build on foundations of Working Together to Safeguard Children and the Children's National Social Care Framework - **improving safety and wellbeing children at the heart**
 - **Collaboration among all partners and relevant agencies**, including voluntary and community sector organisations that work with children and adults (**whole family approach**)

And with our families....

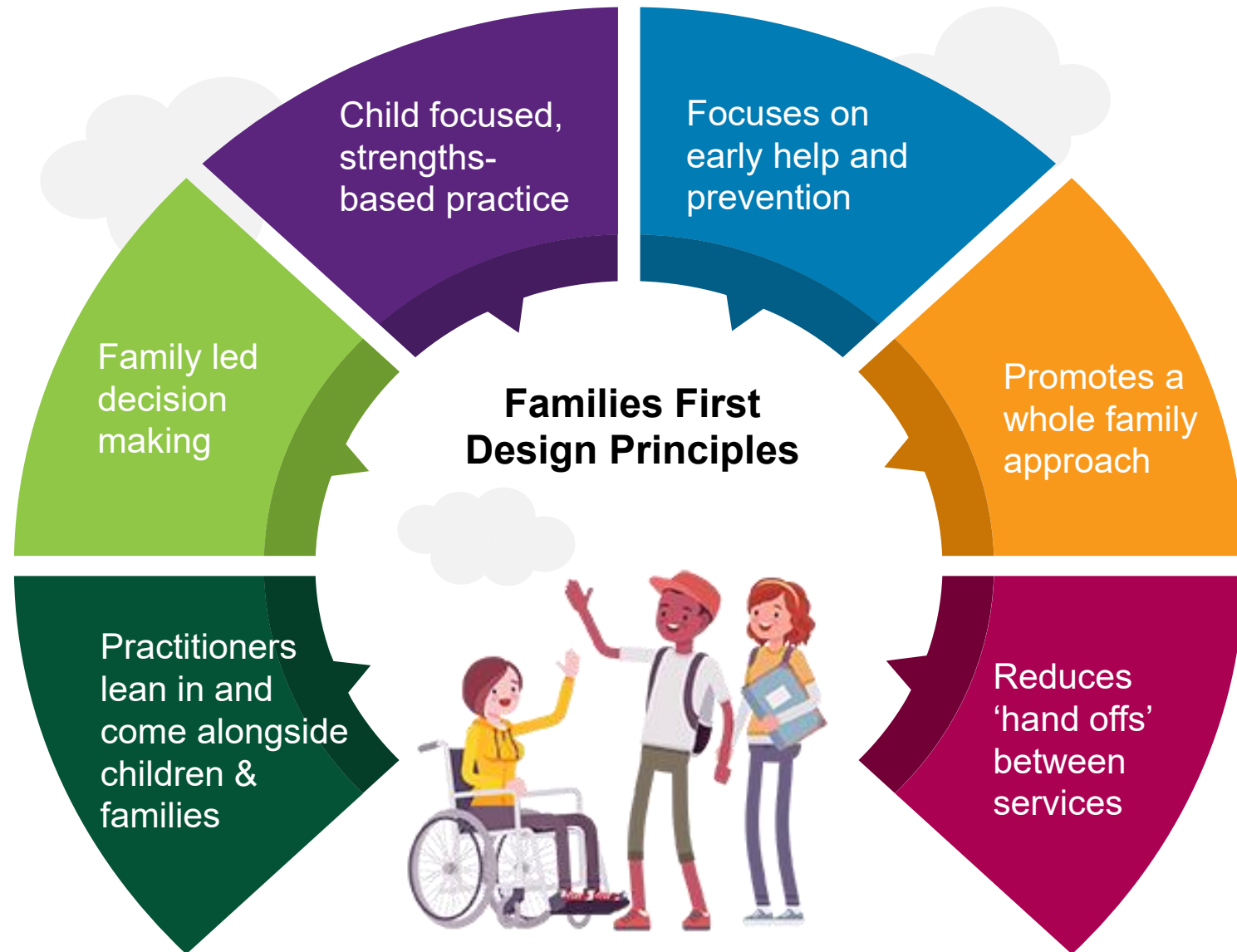
- Working in partnership with parents and carers where this is possible
- Voice of children, young people and families at the heart of design

Families First Partnership

An integrated system of Family Help and Multi-Agency Child Protection



Children and families at the heart



Family Help

- **Merging Targeted Early Help and Child in Need** work bringing together family support workers and social workers into a single service (from targeted early help through to multi-agency child protection)
- **Community-based, multi-disciplinary teams** that wrap help and support around children, young people and their families and take a whole family approach
- **Family Help teams** will be multi-disciplinary and draw on multi-agency partners building on those already operating in the **early help space** and through supporting families
- We'll also consider how to effectively join up **Family Help with existing SEND services**, to improve access to support for children with special educational needs, and disabilities.

domestic abuse | substance misuse | children and adult mental health | SEND – including the Designated Social Care Officer Role, as encouraged in Working Together | parental conflict | School attendance support teams | prison and probation | public health | youth justice | youth work | adult social care, specifically Safeguarding Adult Boards | Police | victim support including wider sexual abuse support | health visiting | midwives, sexual health and school nursing | employment advisors to support parents who are out of work | homelessness and housing

Multi-agency Child Protection System



- **Effective multi-agency child protection** is where the right decisions are made at the right time to keep children safe
- **Families will stay rooted in Family Help**, including when child protection action is necessary – the Family Help Lead Practitioner will continue their relationship with the family, making sure that the day-to-day life and experiences of the child are really understood
- Statutory Safeguarding Partners (Local Authorities, Integrated Care Boards and Police) are required to establish new, **expert led multi-agency child protection teams (MACPTs)**
- New expert social worker roles, **Lead Child Protection Practitioners (LCPPs)** will be embedded within MACPTs - responsible for statutory child protection decisions, drawing on wider multi-agency practitioners in the team

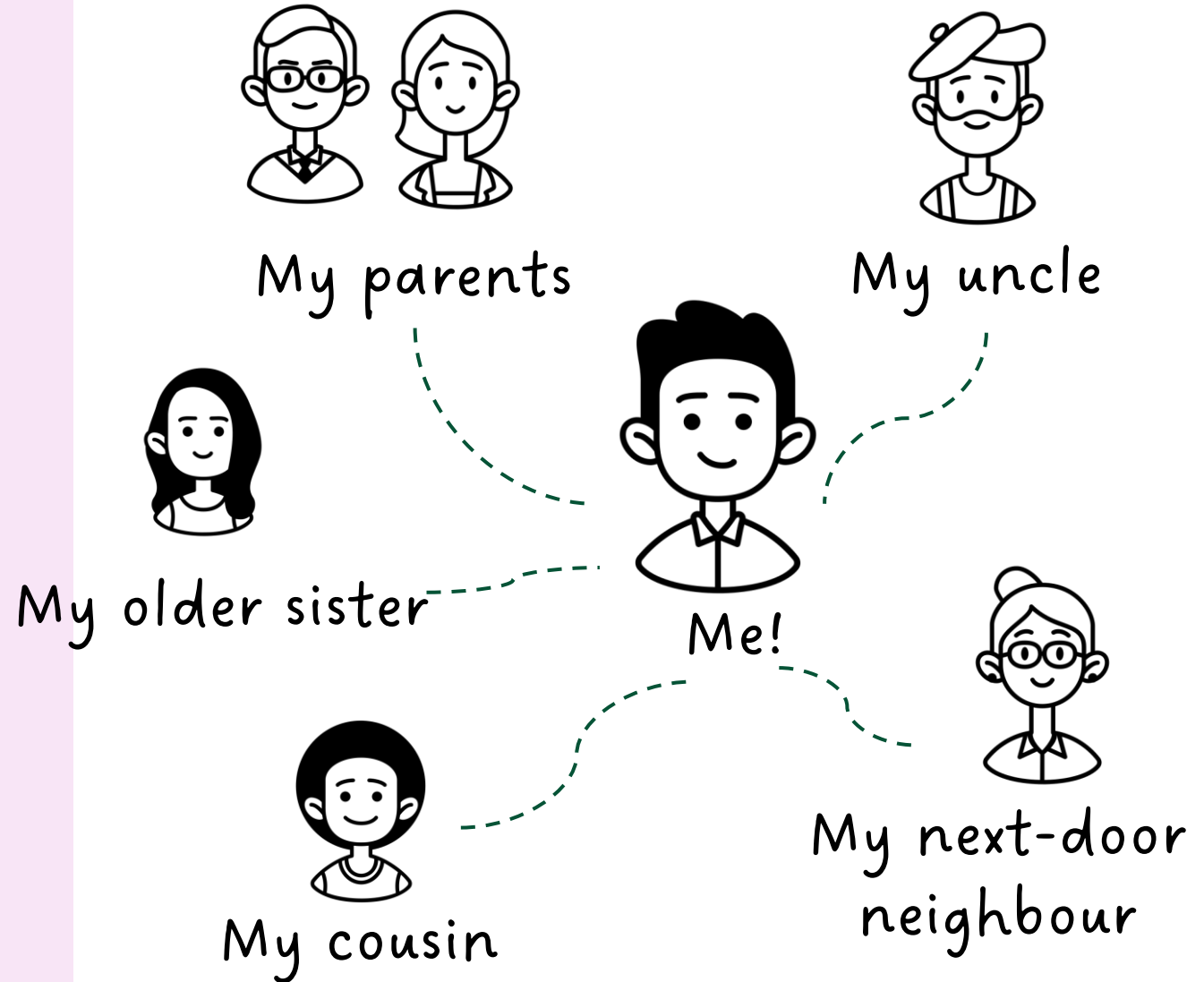
MACPTs will include:

- Social Workers (including the new LCPP roles)
- Police Officers
- Registered Health practitioners
- Education

There's also potential to include other agencies such as probation, domestic abuse services and youth workers according to local need

Family Networks

- Families should be supported to enable their children to remain living at home with their birth parents, where it is safe to do so
- **Empowering families** and wider family networks, to make plans to support children and help families stay together safely, is central to the whole family approach in the Families First end to end system reform
- **A family network** may include the child's parents or any other person with parental responsibility for the child, relatives, friends of other people connected with the child.



Family Group Decision Making



- **Is a voluntary process that enables the family network to come together and make a family led plan** in response to concerns about a child's safety and wellbeing, working alongside skilled professionals
- The plan includes **offering practical support** to parents and carers, whilst prioritising the safety and wellbeing of the child
- **Helps to ensure a family network is engaged** and empowered to participate in decision making whilst a child and their family is receiving help, support or protection
- **Family Help Lead Practitioners and Multi-agency Child Protection Teams will play a crucial role** in supporting FGDM as they know the child and family well and are delivering support through an existing plan

Integrated Front Door

Local areas should ensure families get the right support at the right time through effective "front door" systems—the first point of contact for help.

These systems vary but should be:

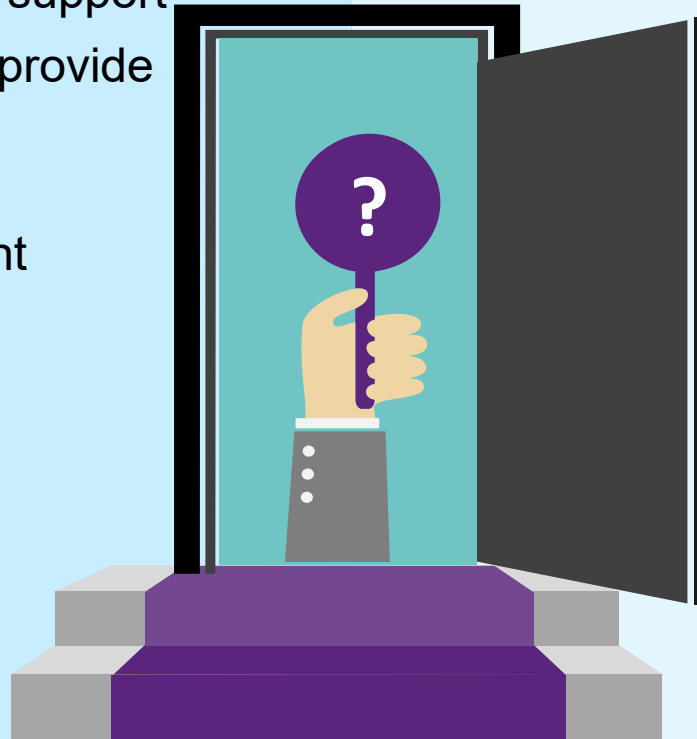
- Integrated with Family Help
- Accessible and non-stigmatising
- Focused on timely and appropriate support
- Provide an out of hours service, to provide support outside core working time

We can determine the roles at the front door, for example:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Youth work
- Domestic abuse

The Integrated Front Door should:

- ✓ Embed a relationship-based approach
- ✓ Triage contacts and referrals to the right level of support
- ✓ Connect families to universal and community services
- ✓ Strengthen how Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH) align with early help or other family contact points
- ✓ Involve a broad mix of professionals, such as education, health, police and youth workers

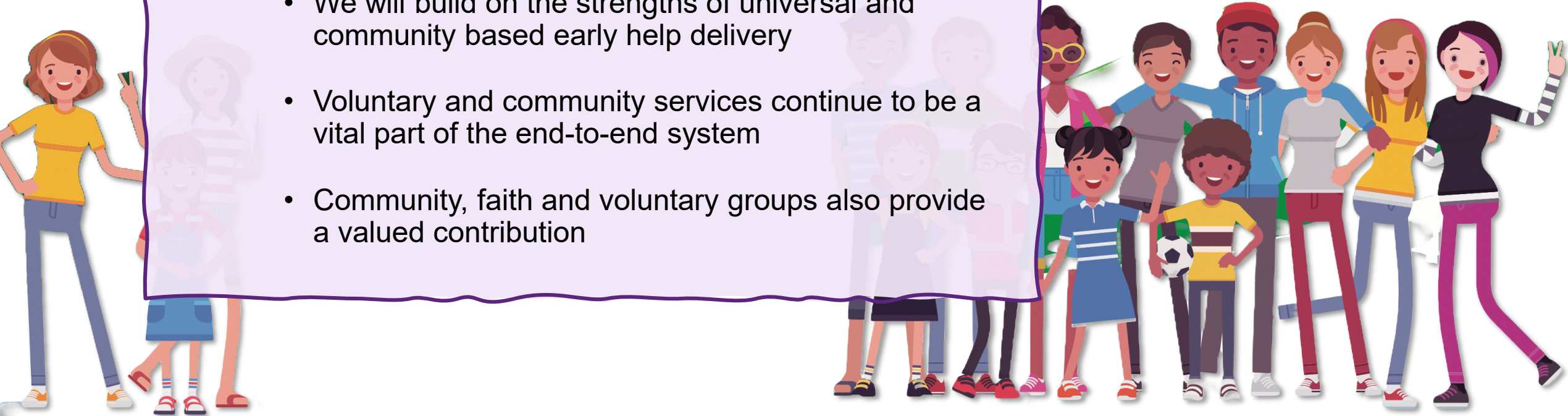


Universal and early support

Universal services and community based early help continue to play a crucial role in identifying emerging problems and providing support at an early stage

For example: Family Hubs, youth services, after school clubs and routine health and housing provision

- We will build on the strengths of universal and community based early help delivery
- Voluntary and community services continue to be a vital part of the end-to-end system
- Community, faith and voluntary groups also provide a valued contribution



Education and childcare settings

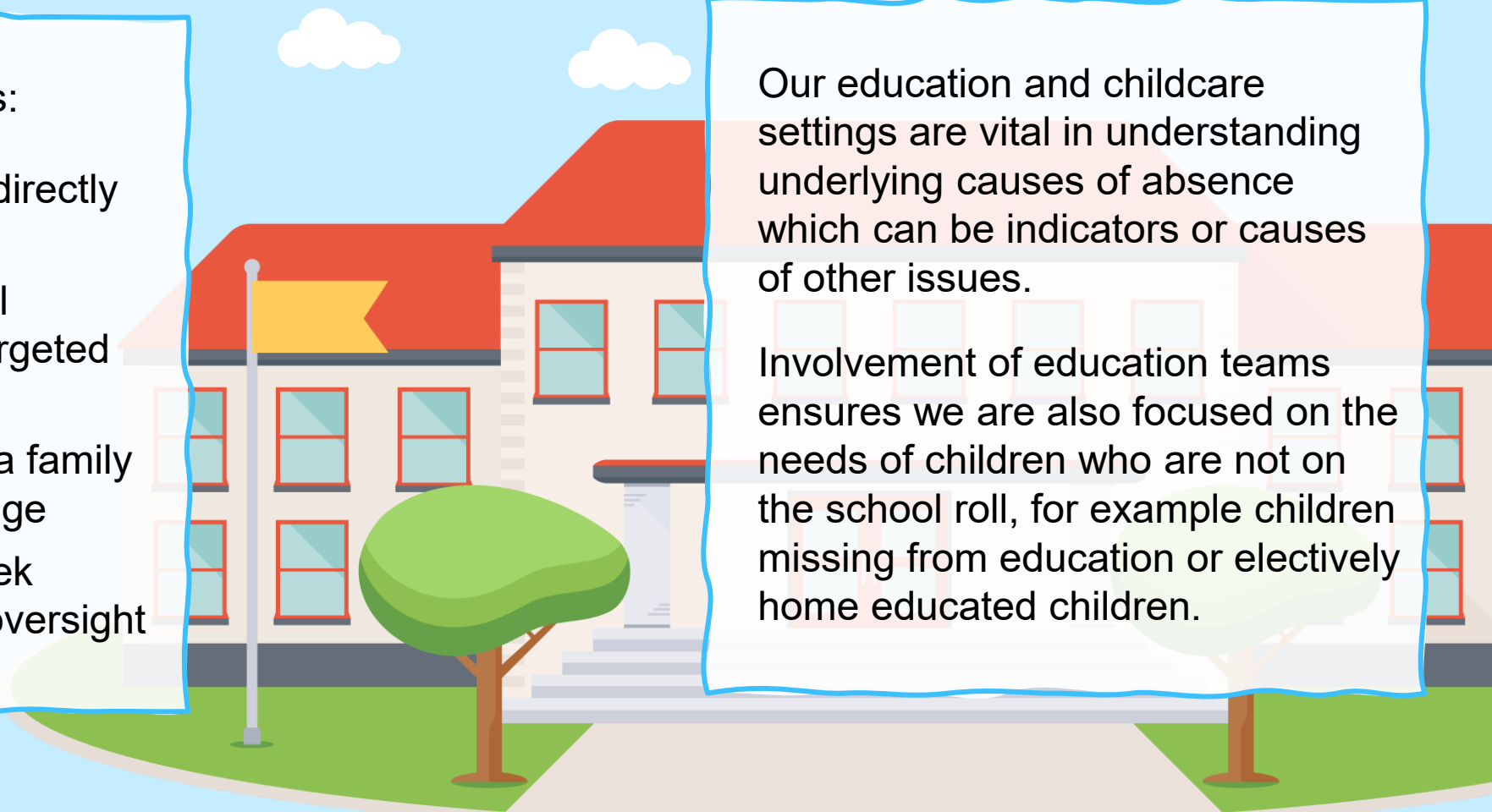
Education and childcare settings often have the strongest relationships with children, young people and their families. They will often be the first to identify when help or protection is needed.

Education and childcare settings:

- ✓ May be able to offer support directly to families
- ✓ Connect them with other local services that provide more targeted support
- ✓ Have continued contact with a family to monitor progress and change
- ✓ Know when to escalate to seek further input, intervention or oversight

Our education and childcare settings are vital in understanding underlying causes of absence which can be indicators or causes of other issues.

Involvement of education teams ensures we are also focused on the needs of children who are not on the school roll, for example children missing from education or electively home educated children.



Key principles and enablers

There are many practical things that will help us to implement the reforms:

- **Making sure we're delivering in line with national policy:** e.g., Working Together to Safeguard Children and Children's Social Care Framework and Dashboard
- **Information Sharing:** Data, Case management system changes
- **Multi-agency safeguarding arrangements:** including implementing changes in Working Together and strengthening the voice of education across safeguarding arrangements
- **Delivering evidence-based interventions:** understanding local needs, learning from others
- **Local Policy and Practice:** Updating our local policy guidance and key documents e.g. forms, templates
- **Workforce development:** Learning and development to support practitioners to implement new ways of working



**We're building
something
special that
will last.....**





Cheshire East

TOGETHER for Children and Young People

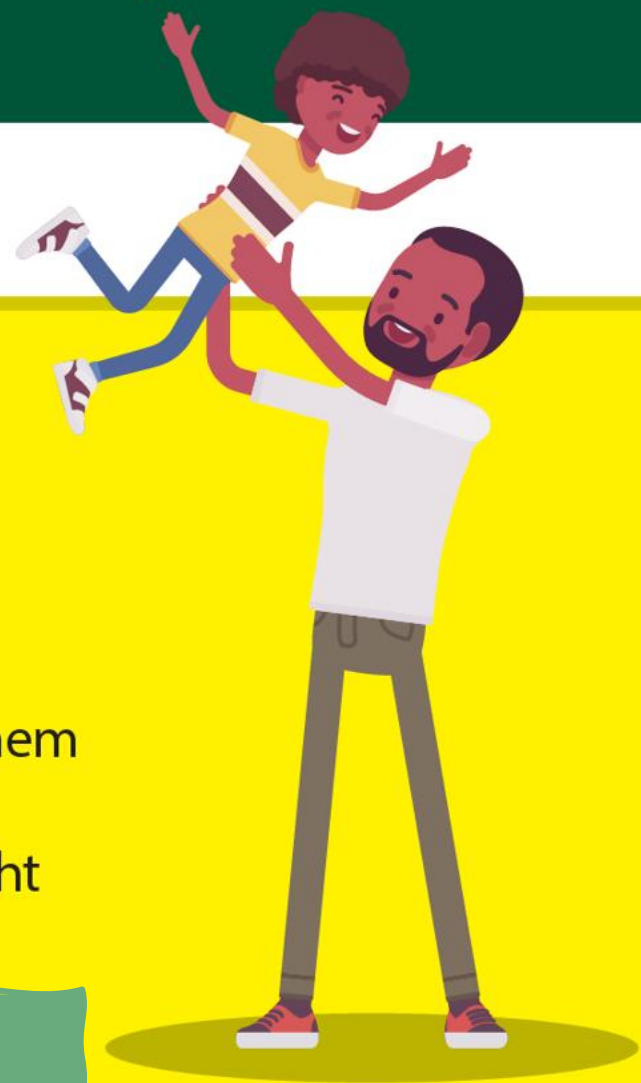
Together we will make Cheshire East a great place to be young

What we want to achieve

We believe that...

- Children are best supported within their families and their communities.
- All children should enjoy the best education which prepares them to thrive in adulthood.
- Families and communities are strong and resilient, with the right help, by the right people, at the right time.

We already have an established vision in Cheshire East
- Families First aligns well



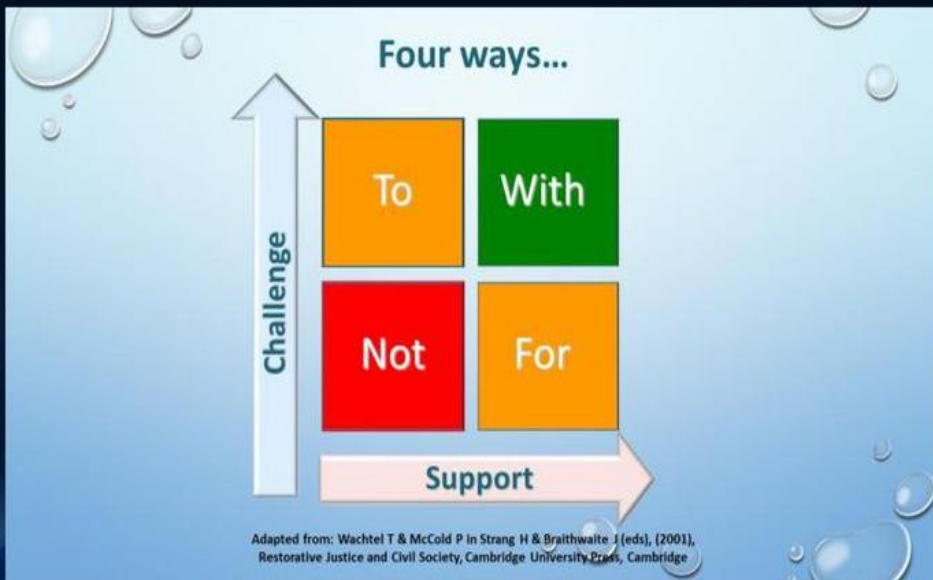
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Practice model

Restorative Practice

Families First aligns with our practice model – our way of working, working with our families

Social Discipline Window



- Restorative Practice is based on relational practice - working with children and their families to build relationships, seeking to understand their perspectives and working with them to build on their strengths
- High Support, High Challenge approach

Family Hubs

- Oakenclough Family Hub | July 2023
- Oaktree Family Hub | July 2023
- Monks Coppenhall Family Hub | October 2023
- Ash Grove Family Hub | November 2023
- Congleton Family Hub | November 2023
- Crewe Lifestyle Centre Family Hub | April 2025

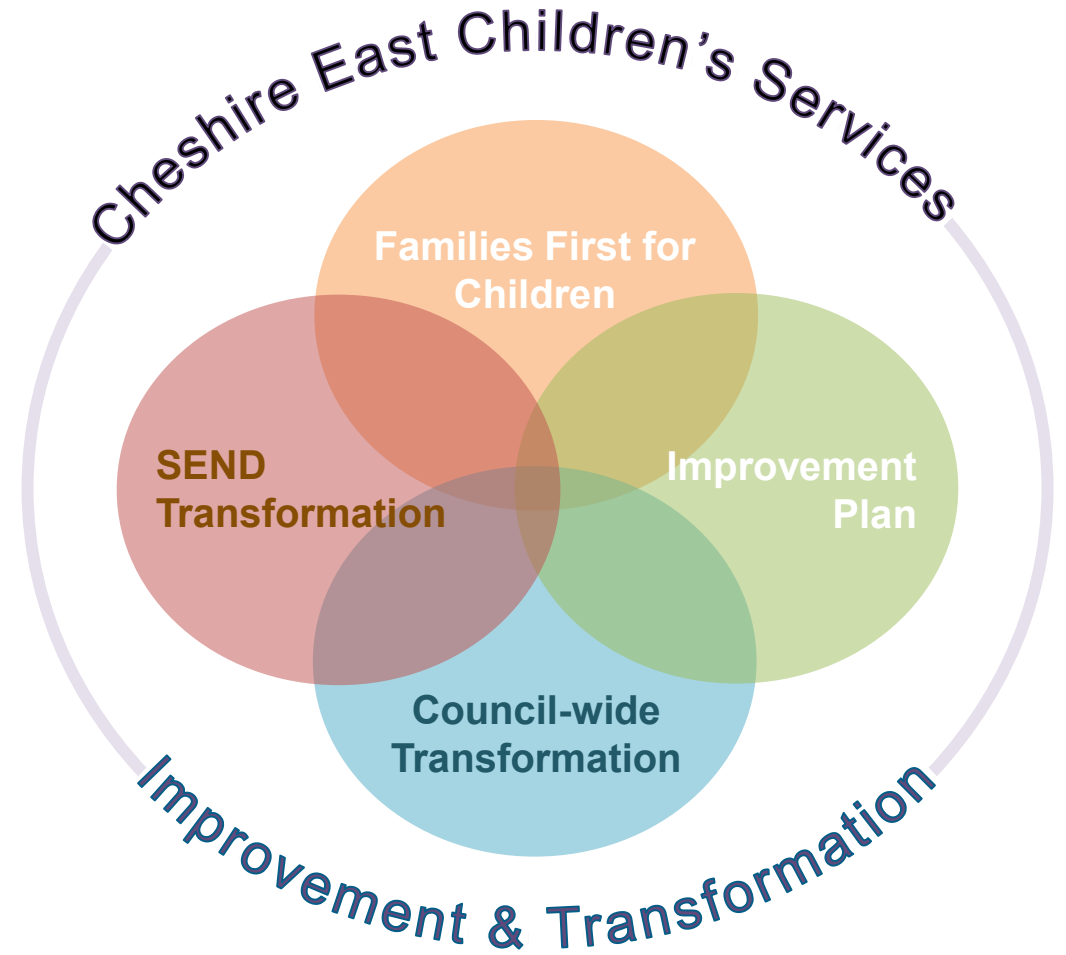


Our Family Hubs are established in communities



Context of the reforms

- We're implementing the reforms in the context of improvement
- As a Directorate, Council and partnership



Building on our work in Family Hubs



- We have established place-based working within our Early Years and Family Hubs through Collaboratives
- We want to build on these foundations as we implement our approach to Families First
- The following slides highlight the evidence base that was put into place to inform the Collaboratives

These following slides summarise the work undertaken in the Autumn of 2022* to inform the development of Collaboratives and include:

- Population information for Cheshire East
- Key headlines from ONS (Office for National Statistics)
- Ward and LSOA information
- IMD (Indices of Multiple Deprivation) and Tartan Rug
- Service Mapping

*Some data still applies as the 2021 ONS census is still the current census, we have updated population estimates on the following slides where new data ONS/ DFE or knowledge hub data has been released.

Cheshire East - Demographics



With an estimated **population of 421,298** Cheshire East is the third **biggest unitary authority in the North West**, and the **seventeenth largest** in the country.

In the period from mid-2021 to mid-2024, the population estimate of Cheshire East increased by 5.2%.

Over this slightly longer period, Cheshire East was also among the 20% fastest growing local authority districts in England and Wales.

Cheshire East is a relatively affluent area and we are aware that most children and families do not live in poverty. However there are areas of the borough where child poverty and associated deprivation is endemic and intergenerational. In some cases living in a rural area can make these issues somewhat worse due to the lack of access to services, isolation and lack of community can compound these situations and the challenges faced.

It is estimated that within Cheshire East, there are around 15.2% of **children living in poverty (knowledge hub 2024)**. This reinforces the importance and role that Early Help and Early Intervention has with regards to improving the outcomes for our children and families. Where there is child poverty, this is evidenced by;

- High levels of unemployment
- Low educational attainment
- Homelessness/Poor and inadequate housing
- High incidence of lifestyle behaviours that contribute to ill health.

The source for these population figures are the [2021 Census](#) and the most recent 2024 ONS population estimates.

Key Findings

- Cheshire East population estimate in 2023 for 0-17 year olds was 81634 (Knowledge hub matrix 2025)
- Over the same decade (2017-27), using the 'policy on' forecasts from the Local Plan:
 - Overall, the population would increase by 31,000 residents (8.0%)
 - The number of children (aged 0-15) is **estimated to increase by 5,300 (7.8%)**
- **96.7%** of the borough's population is White British. (Census 2021)
- **5.4%** of Cheshire Easts school population have an EHCP and **10.9%** have SEN support. The 0-25 population with a plan is **4.9%**. (July 25 score card data)
- In 2023, 75.5% of Cheshire East's working population (16-64) residents had a qualification at or above an NVQ Level 3. This proportion is significantly higher than in the Northwest or England.(Latest ONS data)

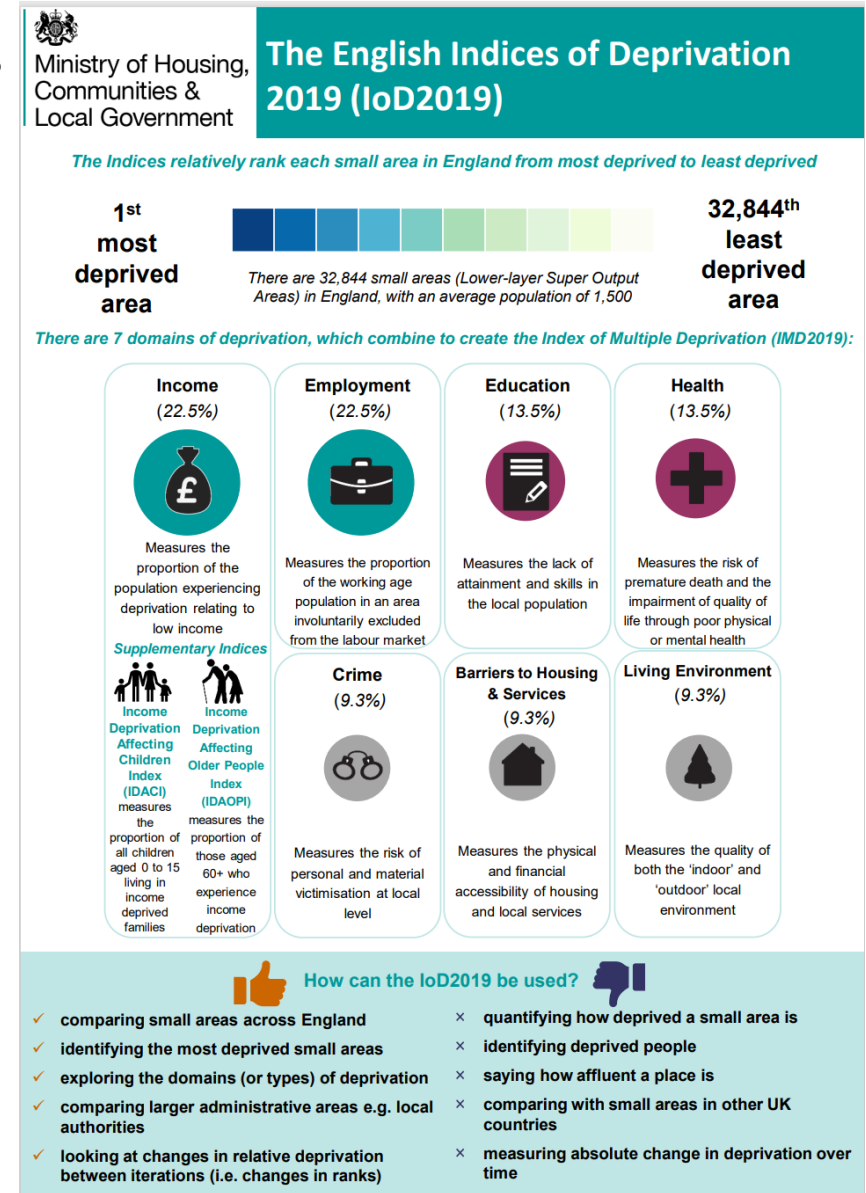
Background Information – Ward Profiles and LSOA's

The Index of Multiple Deprivation, commonly known as the IMD, is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in England. The Index of Multiple Deprivation ranks every small area in England from 1 (most deprived area) to 32,844 (least deprived area). These small areas are **Lower-layer Super Output Areas**, also known as LSOAs.

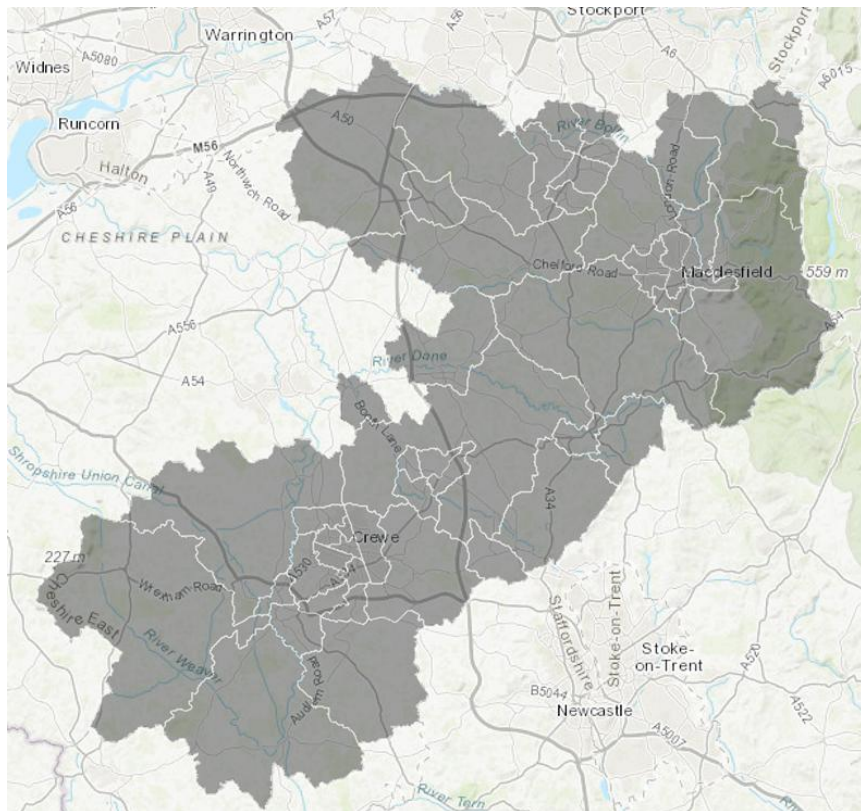
On average, each LSOA area contains around 1,500 people. Across Cheshire East there are 234 of these areas. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) combines information from the seven domains to produce an overall relative measure of deprivation.

The domains are combined using the following weights:

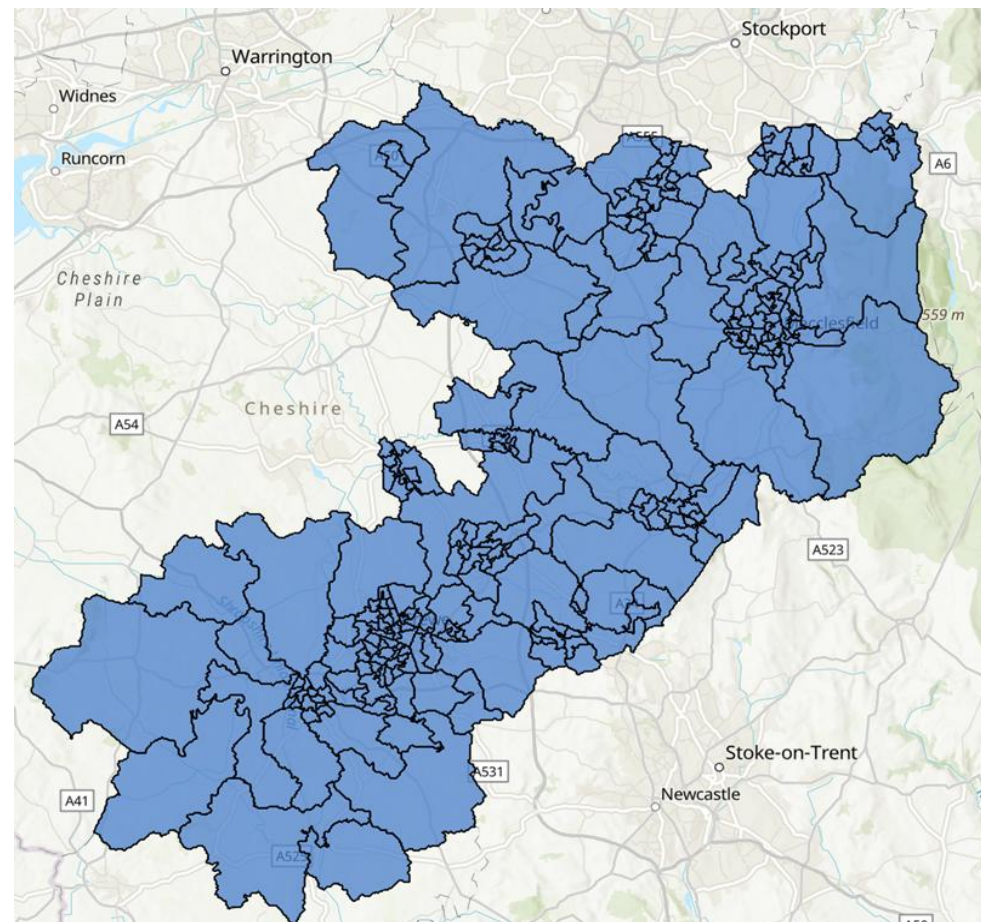
- Income Deprivation (22.5%)
- Employment Deprivation (22.5%)
- Education, Skills and Training Deprivation (13.5%)
- Health Deprivation and Disability (13.5%)
- Crime (9.3%)
- Barriers to Housing and Services (9.3%)
- Living Environment Deprivation (9.3%)



Cheshire East – Wards and Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA's)

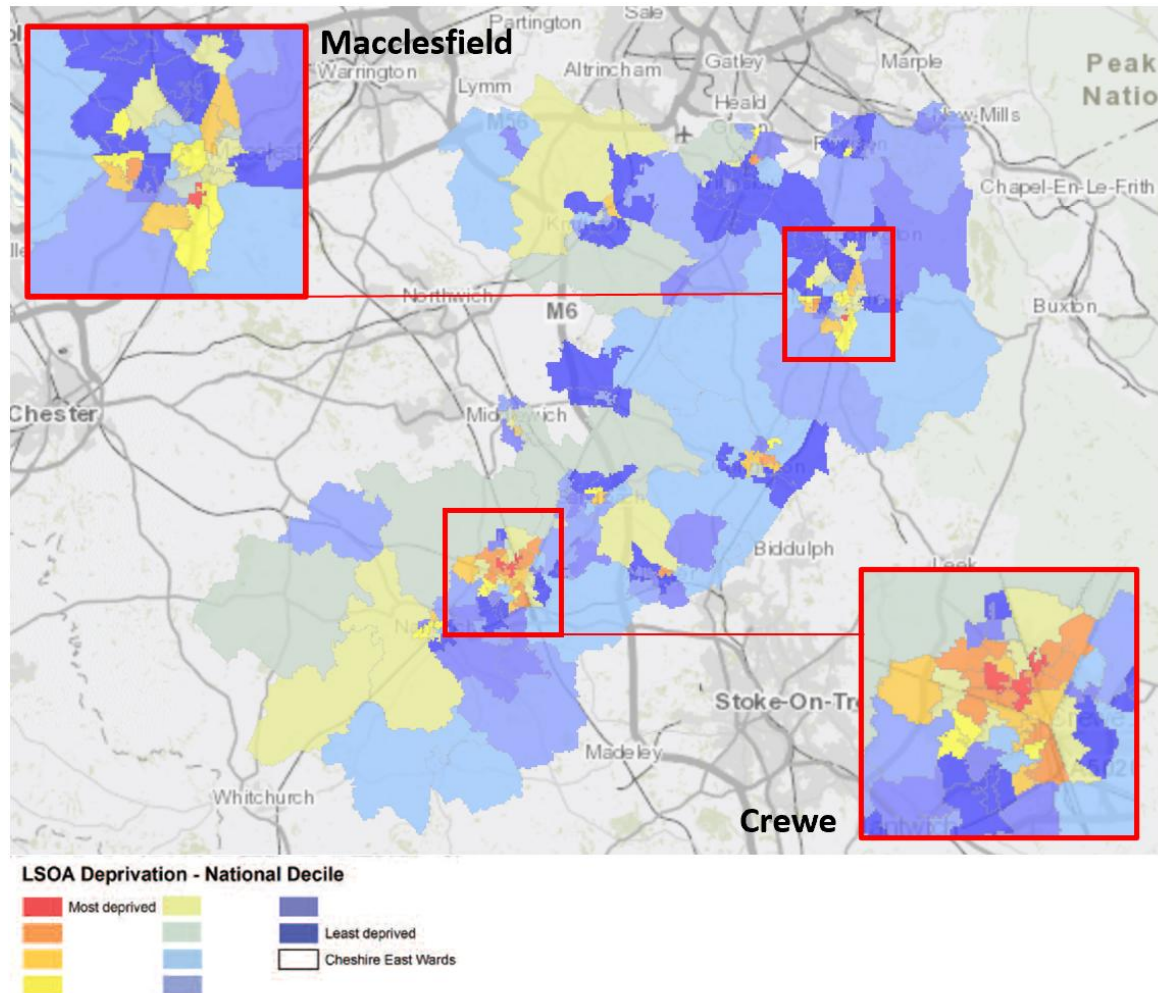


There are **52 wards** within Cheshire East



There are **244 LSOA's** within Cheshire East. Following the 2021 Census, to reflect changes in local population, LSOA's were updated. In Cheshire East, of the 234 former LSOAs - 11 LSOAs were abolished to become 21 new LSOAs, which were sub-divisions of the former LSOA boundaries.

Indices of Multiple Deprivation/Tartan Rug – Cheshire East



The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is currently being released approximately every three to four years and has been since 2004. The 2019 release was published on the 26th September 2019. Deprivation measures are available at Local Authority (council) level. The image to the left shows council level deprivation in 2019. The key/legend in the bottom left-hand corner shows that the orange/red colours signify the most deprived areas, whereas the blue/purple colours signify the least deprived areas across the borough.

- Based on the headline measure of deprivation – the number of small areas (LSOAs) in the most deprived 10% of areas – Cheshire East has improved from 161st (out of 326 English LAs) to 171st (of 317). This improvement is due to there being a reduction in the number of areas in the most deprived 10%, from **6 to 4**.
- However, the rank of extent, the second headline measure of deprivation for councils, has declined – from 174th to 167th. This measure is based on the population living in England's most deprived 30% of areas, with more weight given to the residents of the more deprived areas – in Cheshire East this has increased from **32 areas to 36 areas**.
- Finally, the rank of average rank has declined from 241st to 228th – this score takes into account the population in each area and the level of deprivation in each area.
- The map clearly shows that there are two areas within the borough where there are areas of deprivation (Crewe & Macclesfield). However, there are some outlier LSOA's which are in other areas of the Borough.
- The most significant structural factors affecting deprivation within Cheshire East are **Health, Education & Employment**.

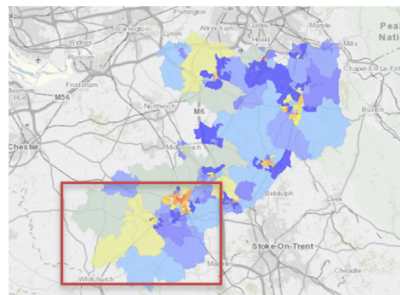


Mapping Exercise – Further Information

This is an example of the information shared during the development of the collaboratives.

It sets out the type of information available to us regarding Lower-layer Super Output Areas e.g. population, no of LSOA's, deprivation breakdown.

South Locality - Overview and LSOA Detail (0%-30%)

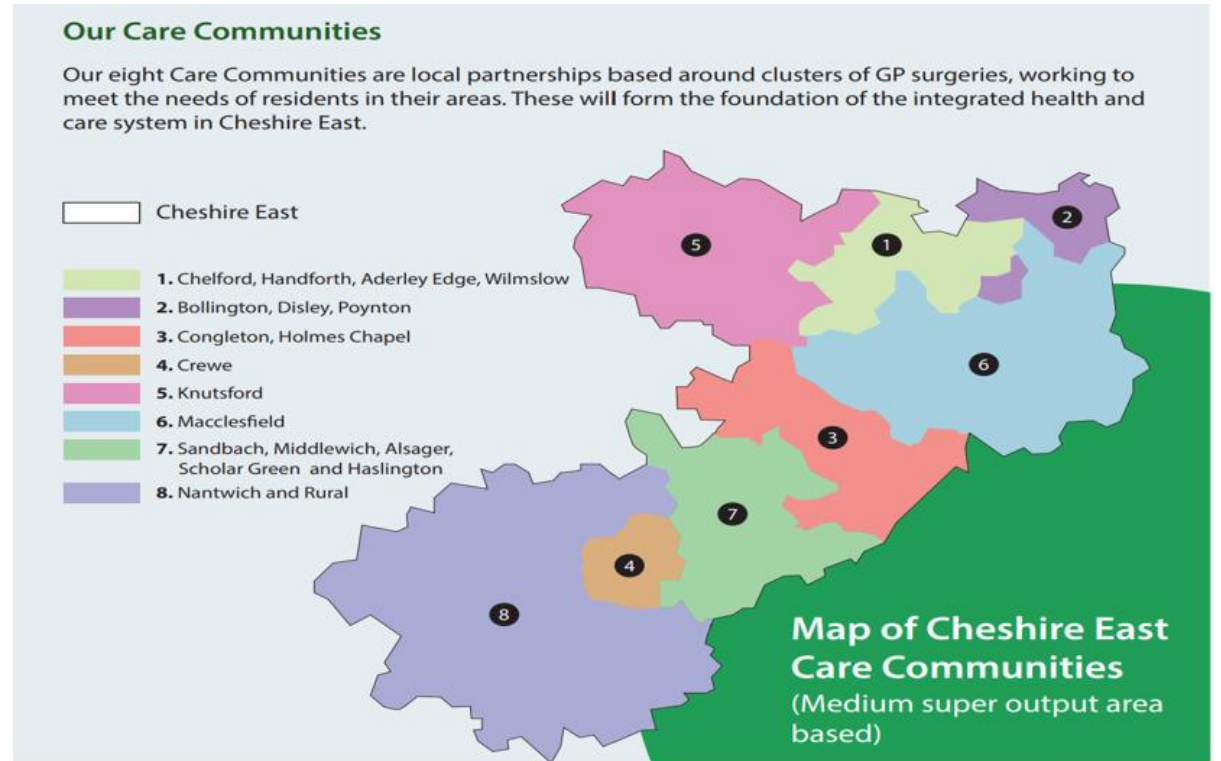


- The south locality of Cheshire East has a population in the region of **106,500 people**.
- Within this locality there are **73 LSOA's**.
- The table across shows the details of the **21 LSOA's** within this locality that are classed as being in some of the most deprived areas within the UK, based on their **IMD (0%-30%)**.

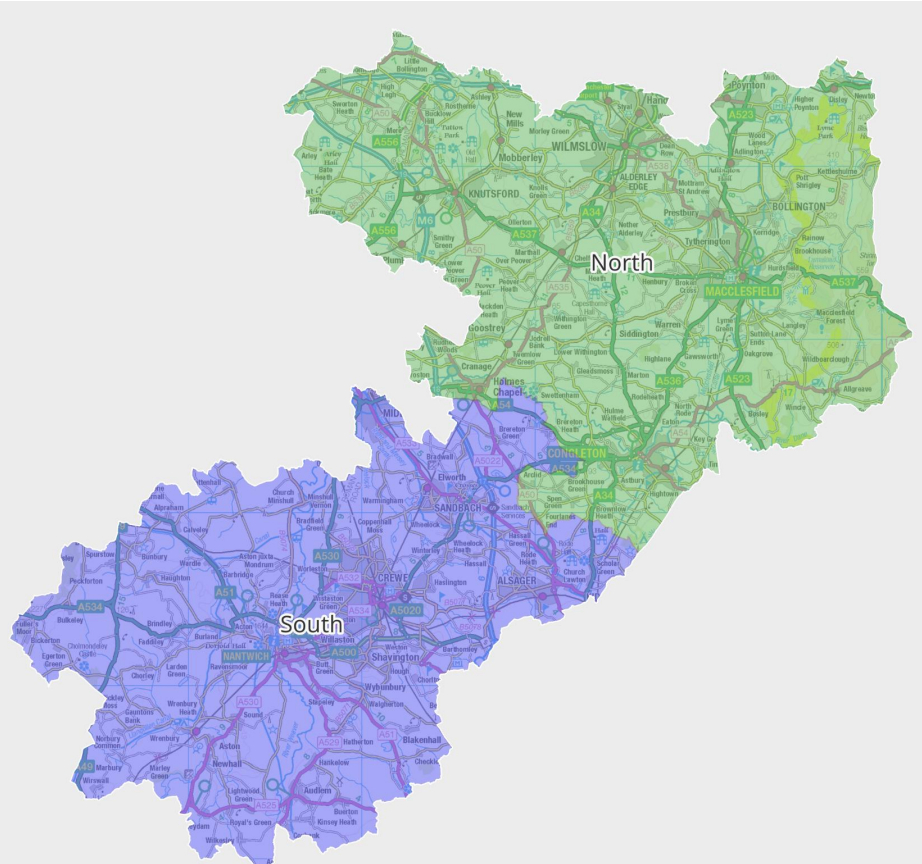
LSOA	Area	Overall IMD	Income	Employment	Education	Health	Crime	Housing	Living	RAG Rating
E01018445	Crewe	2	2	2	2	1	3	3	5	
E01018446	Crewe	3	4	3	3	3	1	5	10	
E01018454	Nantwich	3	3	4	2	3	5	9	5	
E01018459	Crewe	2	2	2	1	3	2	6	4	
E01018461	Crewe	3	3	2	2	3	3	8	4	
E01018462	Crewe	1	2	2	1	1	1	9	1	
E01018463	Crewe	2	3	3	2	2	1	8	1	
E01018464	Crewe	3	4	6	2	3	1	9	1	
E01018466	Crewe	1	1	2	1	2	1	9	2	
E01018467	Crewe	2	3	3	2	3	1	9	1	
E01018476	Crewe	1	1	1	1	1	1	5	8	
E01018477	Crewe	2	3	2	2	2	3	6	8	
E01018478	Crewe	2	3	3	1	2	5	8	6	
E01018482	Crewe	3	3	3	2	3	5	2	7	
E01018484	Crewe	2	3	3	1	1	6	6	8	
E01018485	Crewe	2	2	2	1	3	2	8	6	
E01018486	Crewe	2	3	3	2	2	1	6	1	
E01018487	Crewe	3	4	5	2	4	2	8	1	
E01018489	Crewe	3	4	5	3	5	3	6	1	
E01018497	Crewe	3	4	5	2	3	2	10	1	
E01018498	Crewe	2	2	2	1	1	3	5	9	

Other considerations

- ✓ **Early Help & Prevention Team Structures** – more teams to support the south locality
- ✓ **Children's Social Care Team Structures** – more teams to support the south locality/A50 road used
- ✓ **Care Communities**

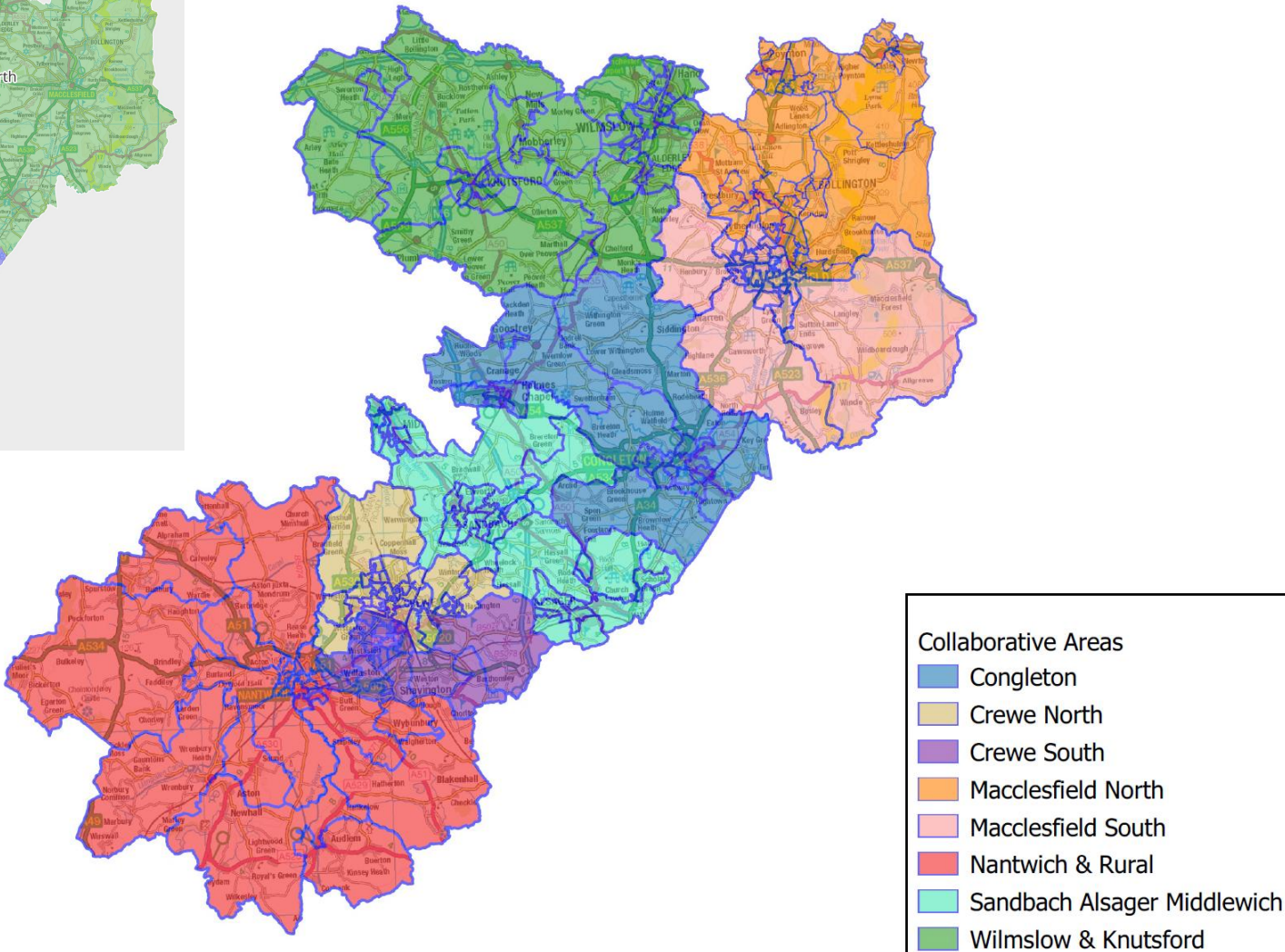
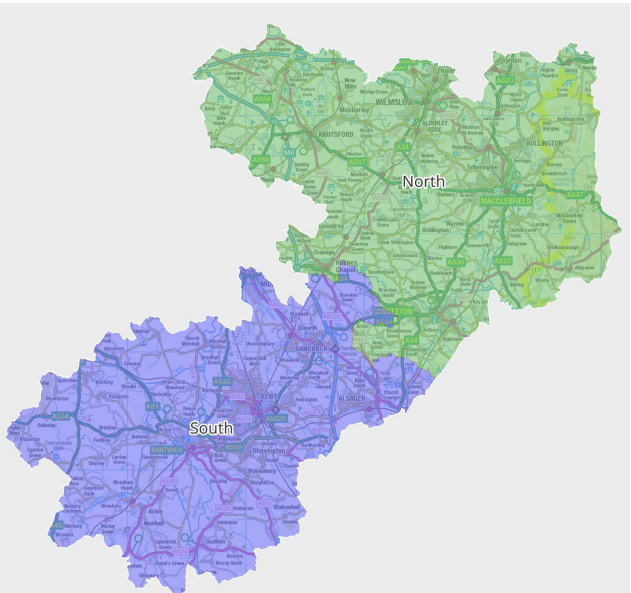


Cheshire East – LSOA's (Lower Layer Super Output Areas)



	North	South
Number of Collaboratives	4	4
Number of LSOA's (Lower-layer Super Output Areas)	129	122
Number of LSOA's in the 0-30% of the most deprived areas in Cheshire East	12	24

Locality development



We formed **8 collaborative areas across** the Borough to establish local targeted action plans informed by data and intelligence to improve the way that we work together, prevent duplication and identify the key areas of focus to have a positive impact on the outcomes of children and families. There are 4 collaboratives in our north locality, and 4 collaboratives in our south locality.

North	South
Wilmslow & Knutsford	Sandbach, Alsager, Middlewich
Macclesfield North	Crewe North
Macclesfield South	Crewe South
Congleton	Nantwich & Rural

Examples of Collaborative Partnership Priorities – Autumn 2023

Knutsford & Wilmslow

- Mental Health
- SEND
- Cost of living
- Parental Conflict

Congleton & Holmes Chapel

- Mental Health
- SEND
- Cost of living

Macclesfield North

- Mental Health
- Cost of living/poverty
- SEND
- Rural Isolation

Macclesfield South

- Mental Health
- Cost of living/poverty
- Whole Family Support (parenting and SEND)

Crewe South

- Mental Health
- SEND
- Domestic Abuse

Crewe North

- Mental Health
- SEND
- Health

Nantwich and Rural

- Mental Health
- SEND
- Rural Isolation

Sandbach, Alsager, Middlewich

- Mental Health
- SEND
- School Attendance

Collaborative projects

Congleton and Holmes Chapel – Cost of Living

Idea/Concept To ensure that white goods/basic home essentials are available to those families in need. Holistic view of family situation to ensure need is met, including benefits advice, parent groups, wrap-around support.

Joint T&F group leads: New Life Church (NLC) and Plus Dane Housing.

Updates – May 2025

- 5 meetings have taken place.
- Form filling sessions are being offered at NLC.
- Counselling sessions are available (for a small fee) at NLC.
- Plus Dane Housing are progressing a proposal to enable outgoing customers to donate suitable white goods.
- NLC have bought some second-hand refurbished goods for families - awaiting outcome of Lottery 'Awards For All' funding bid.
- NLC are now a Family Hubs Affiliated Partner.
- Family Hubs attended the Toddler group held at New Life Church - Bookstart and oral health products provided to families as part of outreach.

Next steps Further meetings to take place over the summer.

Wilmslow and Knutsford – Cost of Living

Idea/Concept

- Inclusivity** – those who are working are struggling, not means tested.
- Address inequalities** – Debt advice to be available to families, as gap identified in Knutsford.

T&F group lead: Citizens Advice Cheshire North

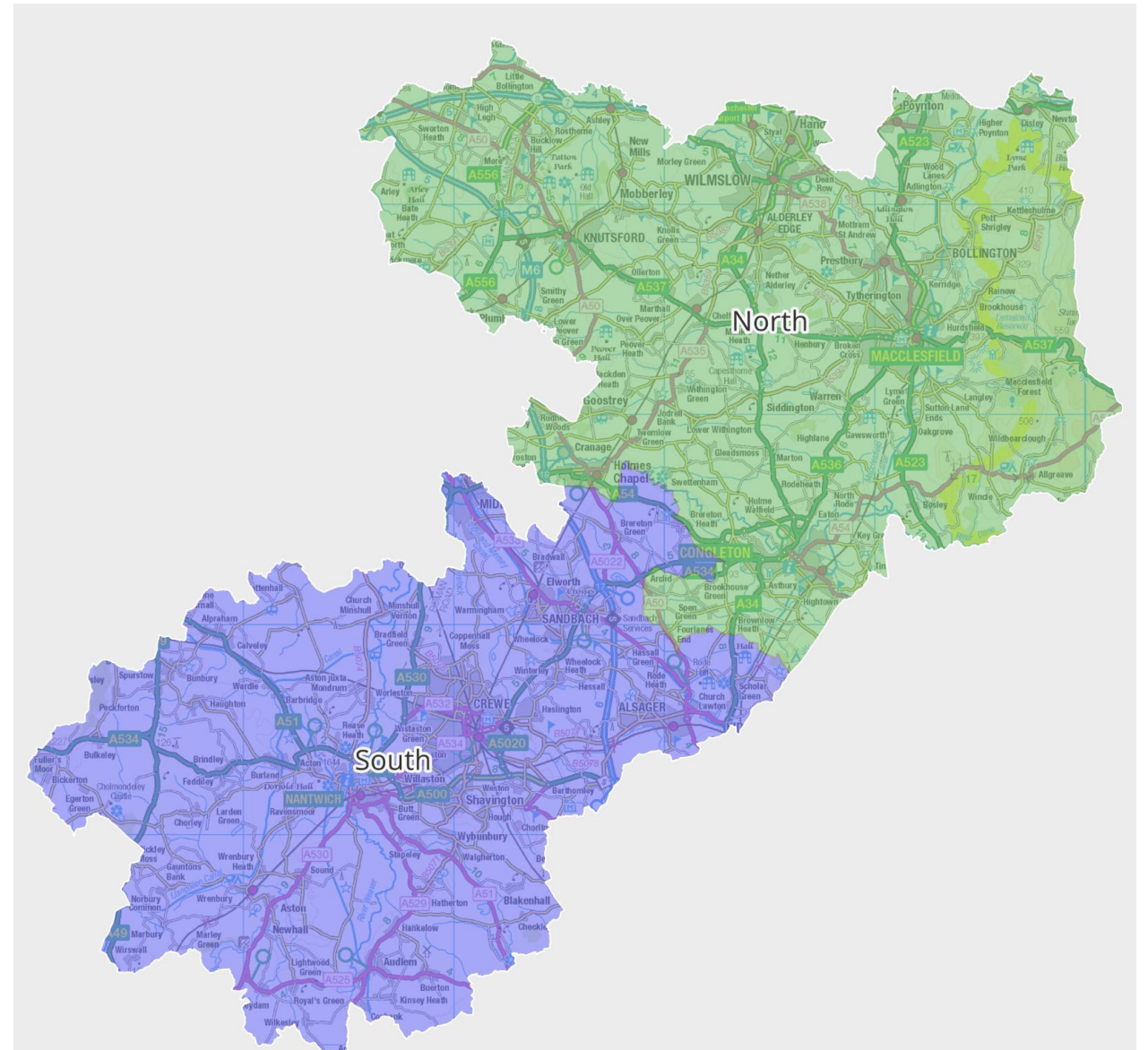
Updates – May 2025

- 3 meetings have taken place to date
- Citizens Advice Cheshire North are now a Family Hubs Affiliated Partner.
- Great Places Housing have funded a 0.5 day Citizens Advice Service in Knutsford, timed to coincide with The Bread and Butter Thing surplus food project. Key focus of support is around debt and benefits.
- Great Places Housing have contributed funding towards Healthy Start Champions, to increase uptake. Healthy Start vouchers can be used to purchase bags of food from The Bread and Butter Thing.

Next steps Further meetings to take place over the summer.

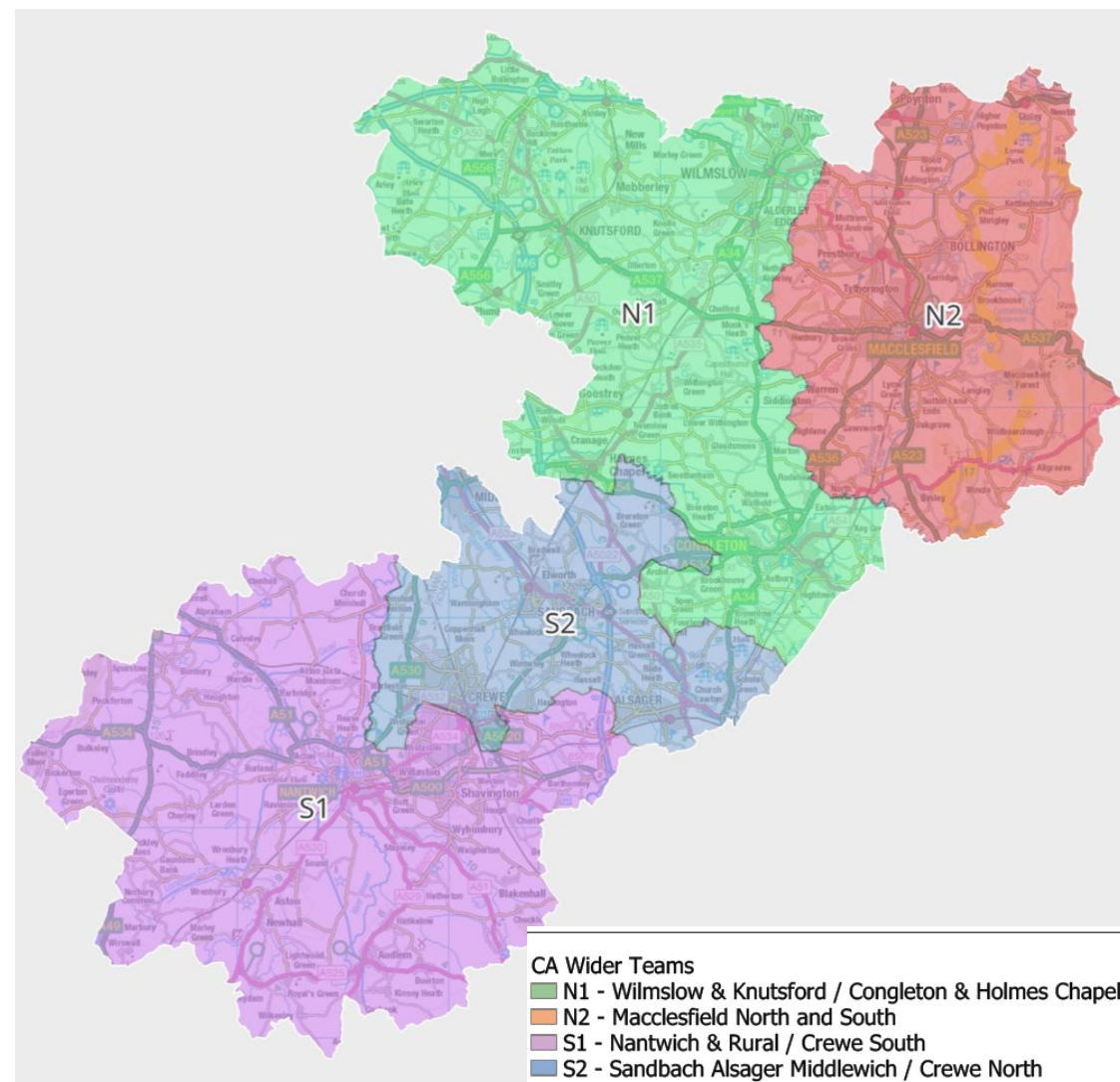
Locality development

North/South



Locality development

- We're thoughtful about how we shape to deliver Families First localities
- We think using collaborative areas to create 4 teams is workable and makes sense
- This would mean we could build upon the work so far as we shape teams to deliver Family Help
- We have called these N1/N2 and S1/S2



Locality working in practice...

How we
currently work



What could this
look like -
Families First
new ways of
working

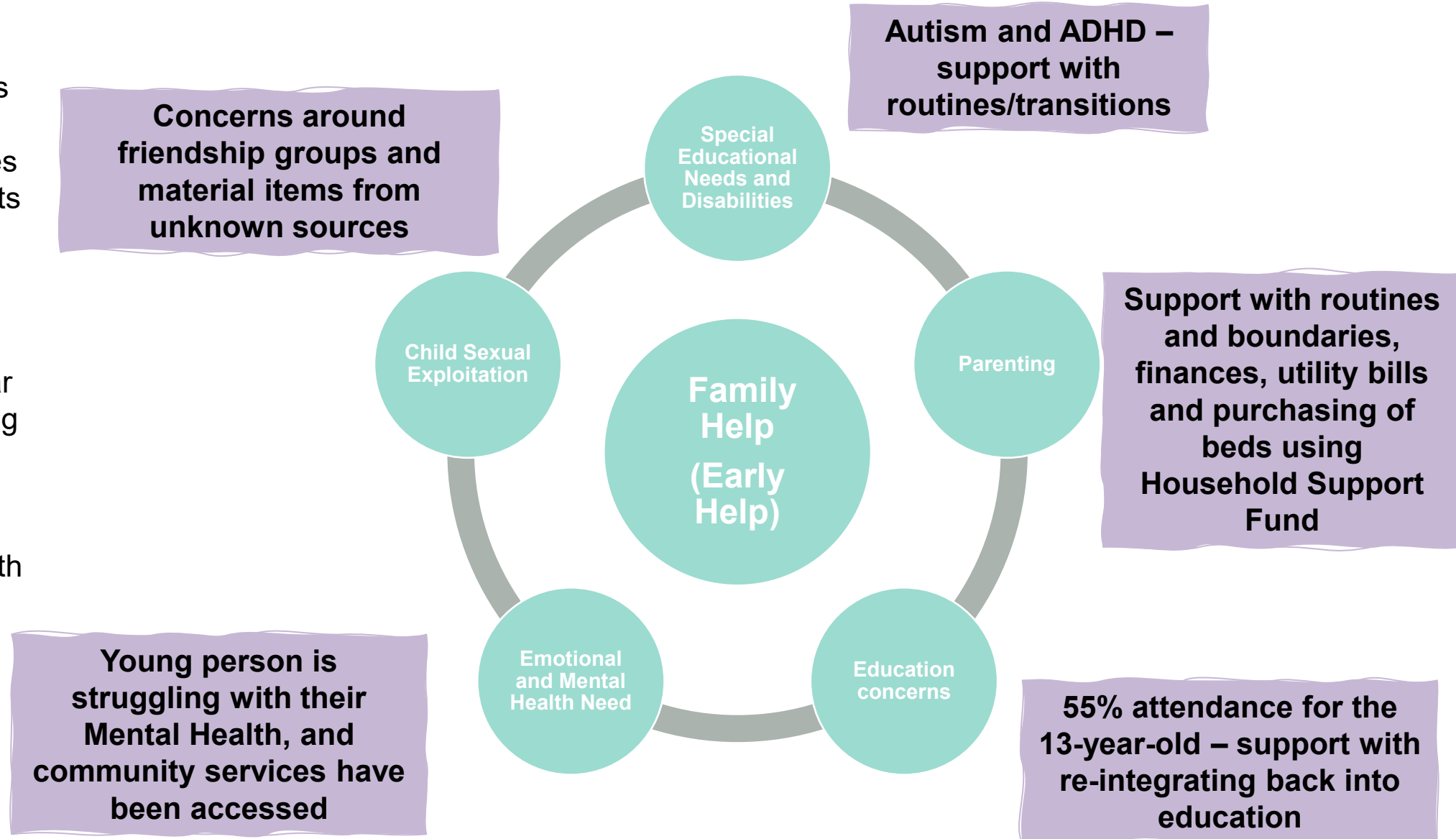


Opportunities
to build on our
work in
collaboratives

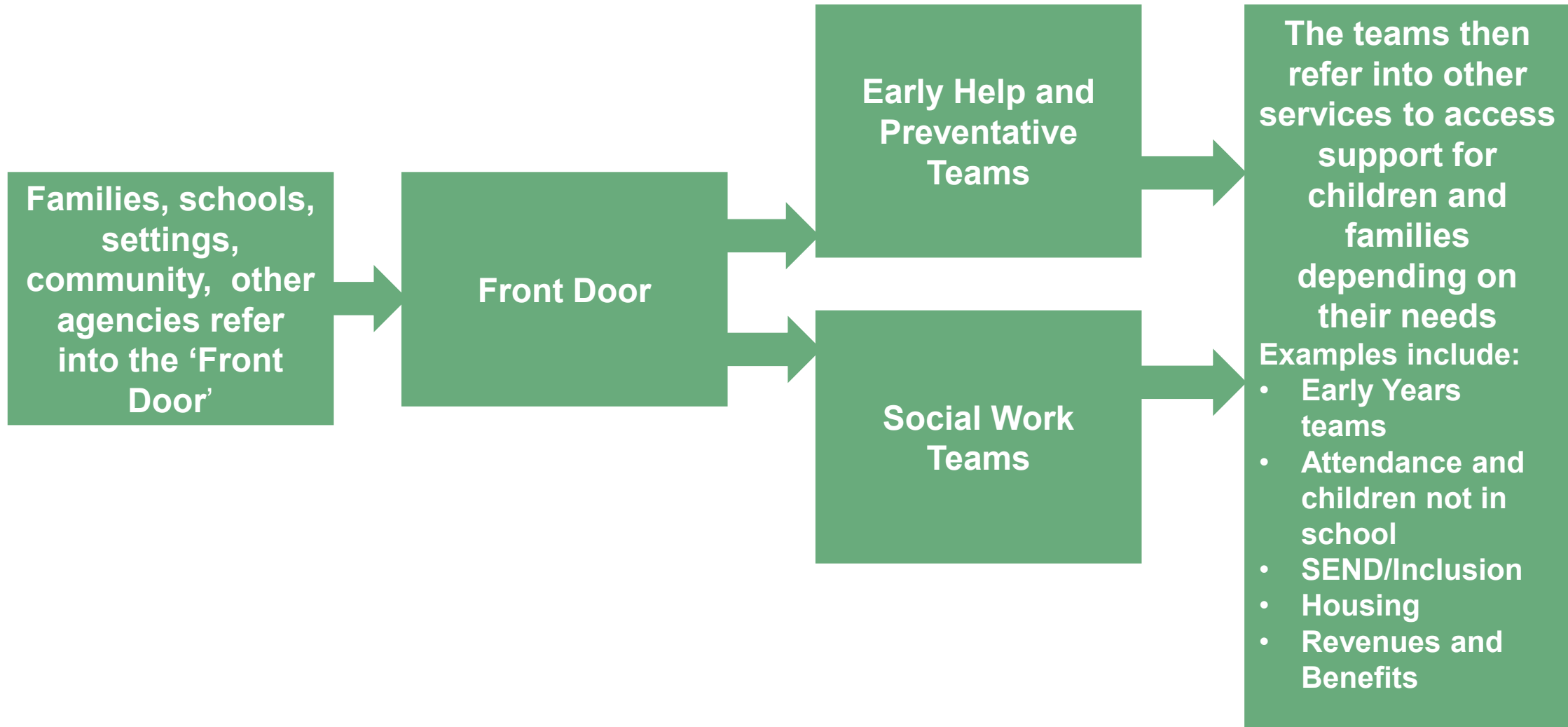
Fictional example of a Family Story

The Family

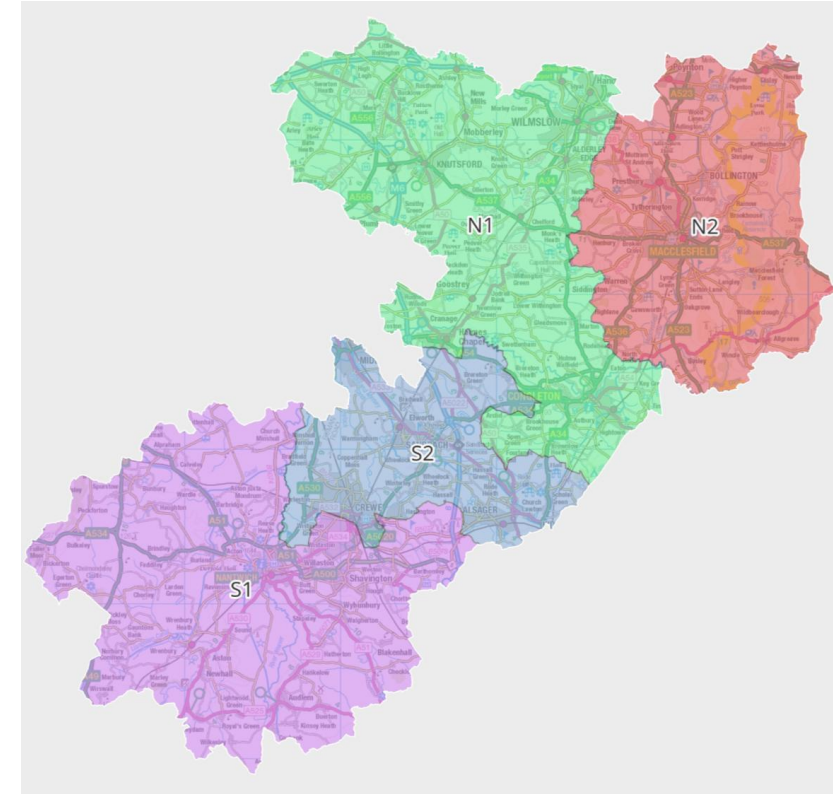
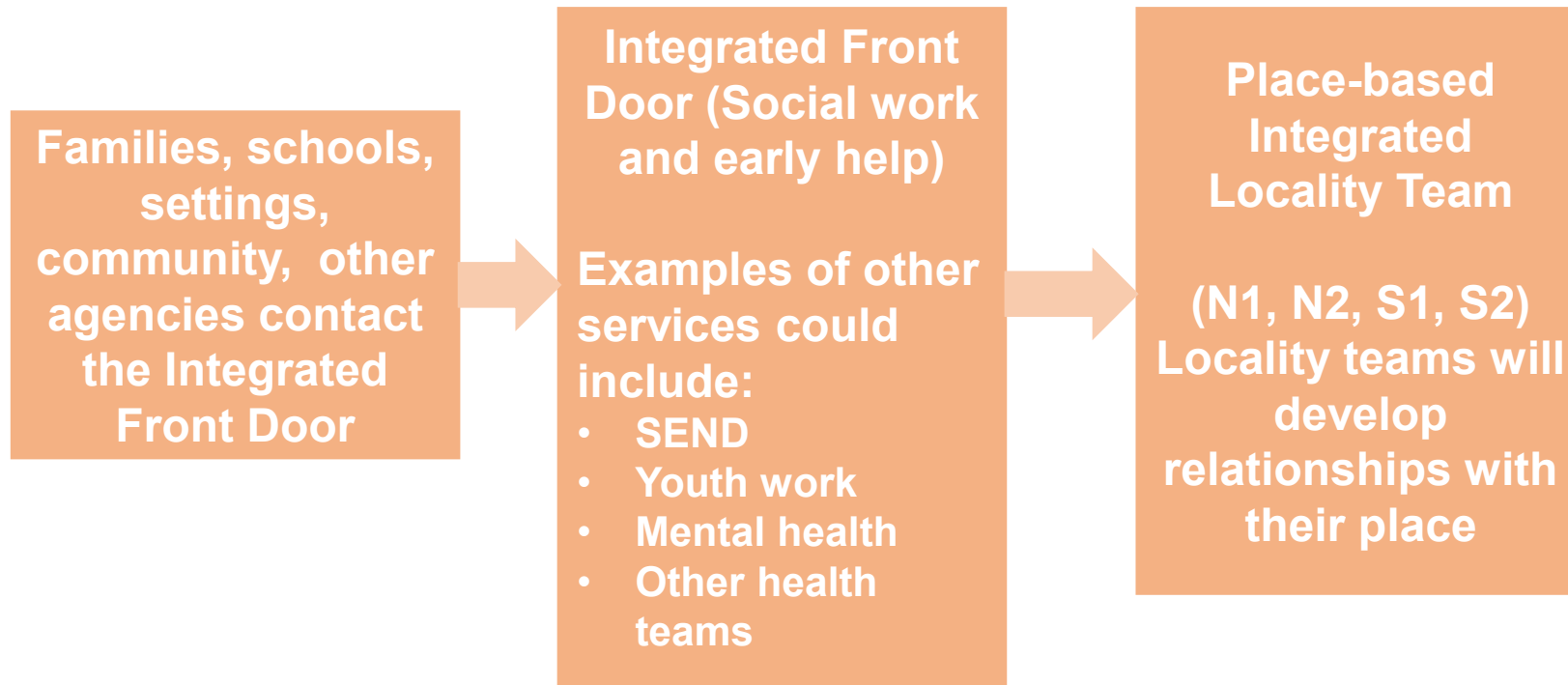
- Children are siblings age 13, 11 and 8
- The 13-year-old lives with Dad and parents co-parent all the children together
- Referral to Family Help via the Front Door from the 8 year old's school following a disclosure of smacking
- The family requires help and support with routine and boundaries



How we work now



How we will work: Families First



During our work to design our Families First approach we will look to integrate services at a locality level where possible and implement strong links and relationships with services in localities
Our model will evolve over time

- Practitioners will focus on a particular area
- Relationships – getting to know each other, really understanding what each other does – building trust
- Practitioners working together in one place, alongside each other, sitting next to each other where possible
- Knowing children and families
- Relationships with schools and settings
- Understanding community
- Understanding community assets for example voluntary sector, faith sector

Things that make it work in practice:

- Practical arrangements that maintain the integrity of expertise and professional disciplines (e.g. social work, youth work, early help) – different skills, experience, qualifications, professional supervision to maintain quality of practice
- Practice guidance and standards
- Practical - good organisation, bringing people together regularly to build relationships and teams
- In touch at a community level – information sharing, agile to respond to need – can make things happen



Responses to Questions asked by the Task and Finish Group

Families First questions: strategic

Question	Response
Will the guidance relating to the Families First become statutory once the Children's Wellbeing Bill was passed by Parliament?	<p>The Families First Partnership (FFP) Programme Guide is not statutory guidance and does not replace existing statutory guidance, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance is the multi-agency statutory guidance for every organisation, individual and agency who is involved in helping and supporting families and protecting children; or the• Children's social care national framework which sets out the purpose, principles and enablers of good practice of children's social care and the outcomes that should be achieved. <p>The Families First Partnership Programme Guide describes the programme vision and objectives and sets out the practice change Government expect to see to improve the support provided to children and their families.</p> <p>Government plan to update relevant statutory guidance and provide additional practice guidance for local authorities to support legislative changes set out in the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill. Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill: policy summary notes</p>
What funding will Cheshire East receive to implement the reforms?	<p>Every Local Area has received funding to support with the implementation of the Families First reforms. Cheshire East has received an allocation of £905,253 - Children's Social Care Prevention Grant. Further funding will be provided over the following two years, allocations are yet to be confirmed.</p>
Is this reinventing the wheel?	<p>The reforms aim to address historical challenges of services having to refer on or transfer support for children and families to other teams when their needs increase.</p> <p>The aim is to reduce 'hand offs' between services, with an integrated multi-agency child protection team with expertise in child protection working alongside teams.</p>

Families First questions: localities

Question	Response
How will our rural areas be included, and how will they be able to access services?	Every area and community within the Borough will be included in one of the 4 locality areas.
How will Families First work in practice?	It is for each Local Area to shape how it will work in practice, for example putting into place systems for allocating of work from the Integrated Front Door to localities, decision making as needs of children and families change, and ensuring social work oversight. We will need to make sure our ways of working are designed in line with Statutory Guidance: Working Together to Safeguard Children. Learning from Pathfinders is available and the team are reflecting on this in design workshops.
How will frontline workers be included in the journey, including wider services that are place based such as libraries?	<p>Staff engagement is an important part of implementing the reforms and Staff events have already taken place with over 300 staff so far attending and colleagues from across the partnership also attending a Families First event in June. These events will continue over the coming months. Co-design workshops are also taking place.</p> <p>When locality teams are established, they would be connecting with the services in that community, building on the work of the collaboratives. This would include connecting with services such as libraries.</p>
<p>It was felt that using four locality areas to create four dedicated locality teams was workable, and these teams would each connect to two Collaborative areas.</p> <p>What does the next phase look like and how will we put this into place?</p>	Work would be undertaken to understand what the shape of the teams needed to be, in line with the Families First reforms. It was agreed that there needed to be flexibility to respond to changing/emerging needs of communities. Teams would be integrated including family workers, social workers and other practitioners (in line with the National Families First reforms).

Families First questions: Family Help

Question	Response
<p>Is there a mechanism for recording support for children and families taking place in universal services such as schools, early years, and community settings?</p>	<p>Children's services record their work on the Liquid Logic system. We will be exploring how Family Help provided by partners can be recorded as part of our Families First development.</p> <p>A single unique identifier for children is being introduced as part of the reforms and this will help support information sharing across all services.</p>

Families First questions: Staffing

Question	Response
What qualifications do our Family Workers have?	<p>Family Workers hold a Level 3 qualification in a relevant discipline.</p> <p>The term 'Alternatively Qualified' is used as Family Workers have a range of different backgrounds and qualifications. For example, they could have been a teacher, a SEND professional, a Youth Worker.</p>
Are our teams and staff who work in locality spaces getting same the training as everyone else?	<p>Staff events for all staff across Children's Services took place from April to June. Our staff are aware of what the vision is and how it will be shaped over next few months. Our partners are actively involved in the co-design and there will be more Families First multi-agency learning and development opportunities over time as our model develops. We have recently introduced a page on the Safeguarding Children Partnership website dedicated to Families First.</p>
Do we expect Families First changes to impact negatively on the number of social work vacancies and reliance on agency workers?	<p>The Children and Families Directorate is currently reviewing its structure and is focusing on moving towards having a permanent workforce.</p> <p>The Directorate has an ongoing focused approach to recruiting social workers, this includes the International Social Worker recruitment project.</p> <p>The Families First approach brings together alternatively qualified staff and social work staff into Family Help. The role and expertise of Family Workers has been recognised in the reforms.</p> <p>We are able to recruit Family Help workers and there is an established 'flight path' for career progression for Family Workers, for example Family Advisors moving into the Family Help Assistant role and then onto Family Help Worker roles.</p> <p>There are also examples of Family Help Workers progressing into Social Work roles. There are Family Help Workers currently on the social work apprenticeship too.</p>

Families First questions: Impact

Question	Response
<p>Have the Families First Pathfinder areas reported a noticeable change regarding engagement with families when it is likely that the consistent worker will be a Family Help Worker rather than a social worker.</p> <p>Is there less stigma about asking for help?</p>	<p>Anecdotal learning has been shared by the Pathfinders, with families and practitioners reporting positive impact of the Family Help Lead Practitioners and reduced stigma regarding changes to language and processes that have been co-produced with families.</p>