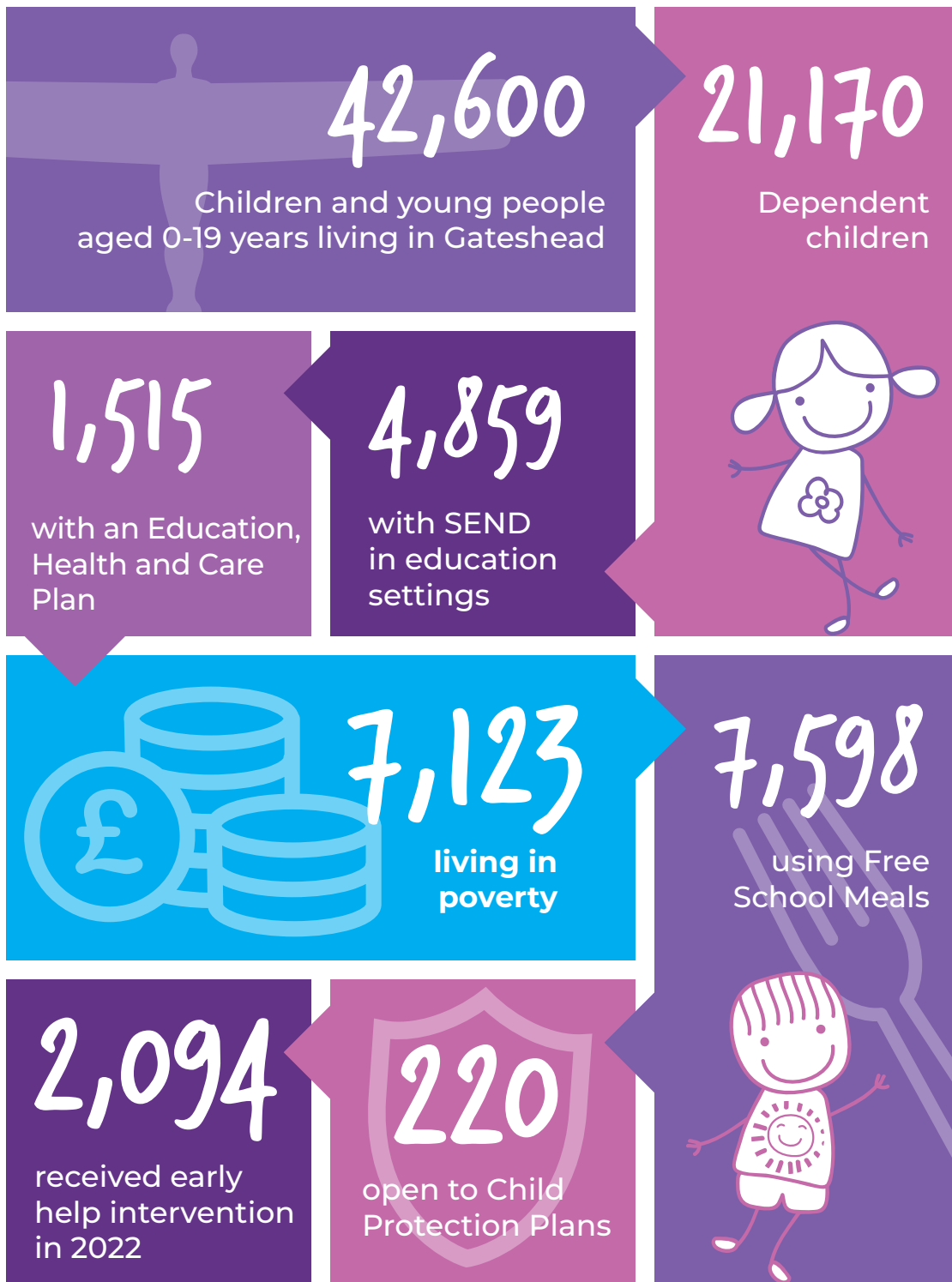




Gateshead Early Help Strategy

2023-2026

Our partnership approach to delivering family help



Foreword



The Gateshead early help system continues to remove and minimise the risks faced by many children, young people and their families before their problems become more significant and entrenched.

We know that the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has widened existing inequalities across our communities and we understand how worsening cost of living pressures will lead to increased numbers of families seeking help and support. More than ever, our strong cross-system commitment to working together will be required to support those in need.

Gateshead has long-adopted a broad partnership definition of early help, where frontline practitioners across a range of sectors are clear about their responsibility to identify concerns early, understand how and when to assess those concerns and how to provide a timely and effective response.

We know that support works best when a whole-family approach is taken and when interventions are chosen on the strength of their evidence base and combined with direct, practical help. Gateshead already has much to celebrate in terms of delivering integrated, joined-up services for families, but we should remain ambitious about how we can help families build on their strengths, develop resilience and lead safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.

I wish to thank all of those across the early help workforce and beyond who will translate this strategy into action. Our success depends on families, communities, professionals and volunteers all pulling in the same direction to make the difference.

Delivery of early help in Gateshead really is everyone's business.

A stylized, handwritten signature in purple ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke.

Heather Pearson

Chair & Independent Scrutineer
Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership

1. Introduction

Partners across Gateshead believe that early help and intervention is a force for transforming the lives of children, families and communities - particularly those living with existing vulnerabilities and disadvantages.

Effective early help can help to deliver our strategic priorities of supporting the whole family to make positive changes to their lives and to prevent or reduce the need for statutory services. We also aspire to build our community networks and resources to empower families to develop their own solutions.

That is why our 2023-26 Early Help Strategy reaffirms our commitment to do the best for Gateshead families through two key priorities:

1. Make it easier to get the right help, including the roll-out of a Family Hub network and Start for Life Offer across 2023-2026.
2. Increase our focus on family relationships, including an expansion of programmes and interventions to support family stability.

Implementation of Family Hubs as part of a joined-up locality system of help for Gateshead residents is a key, strategic goal – providing a universal entry point to a wide range of services for families with children of all ages.

For those with multiple/more complex needs, our Supporting Families Programme - known locally as 'Families Gateshead' - will continue to provide a whole-family approach based on the principles of 'one family, one lead worker, one plan' and always recognising the identity, faith and cultural heritage of those we support.

Furthermore, this strategy will present our approach to preventing young people from entering the youth justice system and reducing the impact of parental conflict on children and young people.

Partners across our early help system will always strive for a Gateshead where children and young people enjoy their childhood and have the opportunity to THRIVE and be their best selves.



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Helen Fergusson".

Helen Fergusson
Strategic Director
Children's Social Care & Lifelong Learning

2. Our Vision

Our vision is that Gateshead will be a great place to grow up and live, where excellent health and wellbeing outcomes are experienced by all and where children develop well and achieve their potential. For some children, this can only be achieved with additional support.

This vision is consistent with the five key pledges set-out in Gateshead Council's Corporate Plan, 'Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives', including the focus on putting people and families at the heart of our work, tackling inequality, supporting communities, extending opportunities for employment and working together for a better future.

The vision will support the priorities of the Gateshead SEND Strategy (2023-2026), including providing the right support at the right time, listening to families, working together across services to keep children safe and to ensure that children and young people are positive about taking their next steps.

Furthermore, our vision will help deliver the priorities of the Gateshead Health and Wellbeing Strategy to give every child the best start in life, enable residents of all ages to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives, create fair employment and good work for all, ensure a healthy standard of living, develop healthy and sustainable places and communities and strengthen the role and impact of ill health prevention.

Helping children, young people and their families is not about doing it for them; it is about helping them to find the right solutions to improve their situation. This means that those coming into contact with children (including police, teachers, health visitors, midwives, housing officers and childcare professionals) have a responsibility to identify emerging needs at the earliest opportunity so that children are kept safe and achieve good outcomes.

Gateshead's Early Help Strategy (2023-26) underpins this vision.



3. Guiding Principles



Our guiding principles of practice shape the way we deliver services across our early help system. We will do this by:

- taking a whole-family approach;
- using interventions on the strength of their evidence base;
- personalising support, including practical help, advocacy and brokerage;
- delivering integrated, co-ordinated and sequenced services;
- listening to the voice of children and young people;
- taking a strengths-based, contextual approach with families;
- focusing on reducing the impact of parental/adult vulnerabilities on children;
- timely responses which prevent escalation of vulnerability and risk;
- targeting extra help to those with more complex needs and additional vulnerabilities.

This approach is supported by our Early Help and Children's Social Care 'Relationship Focused' Practice Model (Figure 3) on Page 19.

We also seek to ensure that:

- a clear early help offer is promoted across our borough – supported by the implementation of Family Hubs;
- the offer is understood by children, young people, families and communities;
- early help pathways are effective and draw on a recognised evidence base;
- we develop a strong, capable early help workforce across all sectors;
- more partners in a variety of contexts take responsibility for the Lead Practitioner role.

Our vision for early help in Gateshead is consistent with that set-out in the Early Help System Guide and the Family Hub Programme Guide, actively promoting the principles of 'access, connection and relationships'.

4. Early Help in Gateshead – a partnership responsibility

We already know that early help is delivered by a wide range of practitioners and volunteers across the public, voluntary and private sector in Gateshead, providing a strong existing foundation on which to develop our support to families.

The (DFE) Social Workers In Schools model was introduced in 2021 and will extend into 2022-23, providing a designated social worker for 6 Gateshead secondary schools, along with funded social work oversight of Designated Safeguarding Leads in 6 secondary and 35 primary schools.

Education partners include schools and Further Education (FE) providers and the internal workforces focused on children and young people's wellbeing and safety, including Designated Safeguarding Leads, SENCOs and pastoral teams and Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) workers.

Health and wellbeing partners include Growing Healthy Gateshead (Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust), Children and Young People's Service – Newcastle and Gateshead (Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust), North-East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board and the Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust.

Voluntary sector partners include, but are not limited to, Citizen's Advice Gateshead, Gateshead Carers Service, Change Grow Live, Gateshead Young Women's Outreach Project, North East Young Dads & Lads, Edbert's House, St Chad's Community Project, North East Counselling Services, Relate, Gateshead Foodbank and the Children's Society.

NHS ICB colleagues are developing a version of the Little Orange Book for parents of older children - The Little Book of Useful Stuff - and are working to develop a young-person-friendly kitemark for local GP practices.

Statutory partners include Northumbria Police, Tyne and Wear Fire Service, North East Ambulance Service and Northumbria Probation Service.

NHS ICB colleagues are leading a partnership approach to preventing Sudden Unexpected Death in Infants (SUDI) by introducing new practice guidance, a new risk assessment tool, workforce training and public awareness campaigns.

Our Early Help Service provides a range of functions to support Gateshead families, including:

- Targeted Family Support – whole-family intervention through the Team Around the Family (TAF) process
- Team Around the School – designated worker time on secondary and primary school sites
- Parenting and Reducing Parental Conflict Programmes – an evidence-based menu of parenting and relationship support
- Children's Centres & Family Hubs – community-based family support for children aged 0-5 and their families, moving towards an all-age offer
- Play Service – holiday activities, SEND clubs and community outreach
- Domestic Abuse Team – support for victims of domestic abuse
- Behaviour Change Team – support for perpetrators of domestic abuse

Our Youth Justice Service (YJS) supports young people in the youth justice system subject to Out of Court Disposals – 12 weeks of support following assessment to prevent re-offending - and statutory court orders. The YJS works closely with police to reduce the number of young people going to court – known as 'divert from charge' - unless their offences are serious or they are subject to repeat arrests. Young people receive support from a designated worker. Victims of youth crime are also supported by a dedicated YJS worker who helps the victim to understand and manage the impact of the offence. .

- Family Group Conference Service – development of family-led plans and solutions, including a mediation service
- Return Home Interviews – support for children and young people following missing episodes

The Growing Healthy Gateshead service launched an innovative new App for families in February 2022, including locality content, feedback options and live chat functions.

5. Early Help in Gateshead – a partnership system

Our definition of Early Help

We have a clear definition and understanding of early help which means:

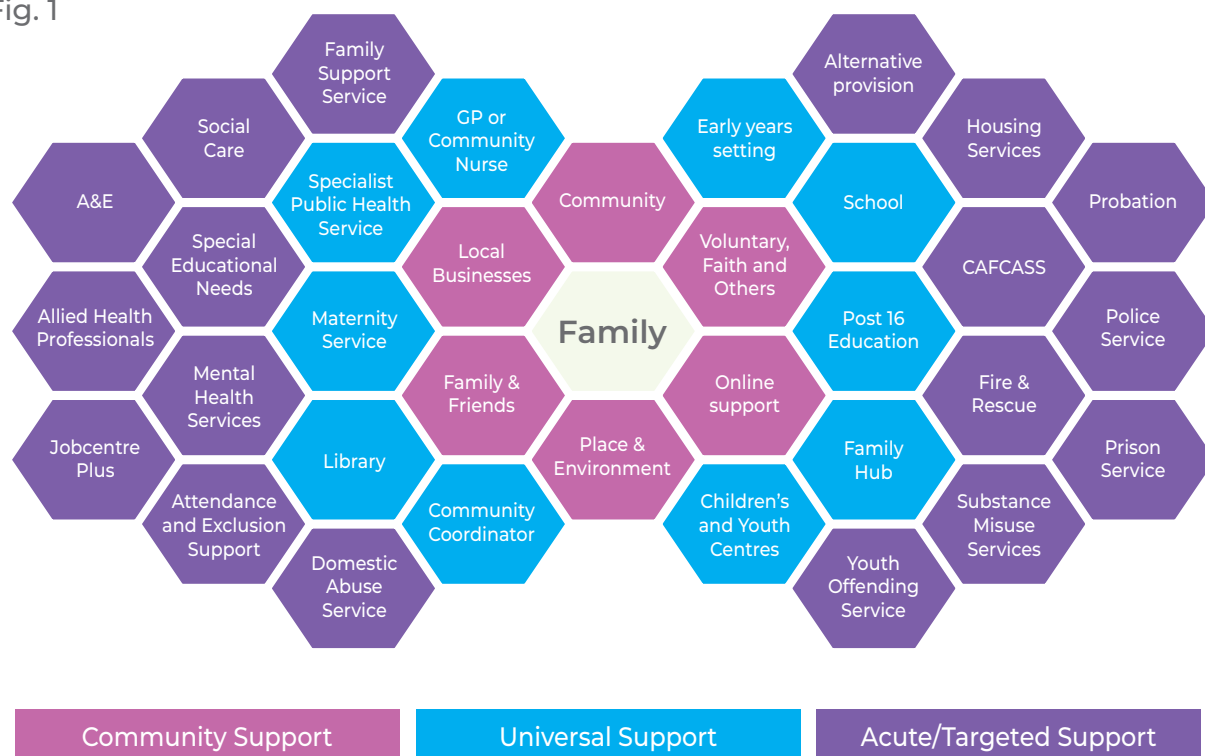
- identifying needs within families early, providing preventative support and intervention before problems become complex and entrenched;
- using evidence-based interventions which draw upon families' own strengths and promote resilience and self-reliance, starting with the capability of the family and avoiding deficit-led assessments.

We believe our definition is consistent with the broad philosophy of early help set out in the Working Together (2018) document:

“Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. Early help can also prevent further problems arising”.

In Gateshead, early help is not a service but a way of ‘thinking and working’ across a varied system of support (see Figure 1) comprising universal, targeted and specialist services, along with families' own informal and peer networks.

Fig. 1



6. Early Help as part of a continuum of need

The interplay between early help and statutory social work assessment is viewed on a continuum of need and risk.

This was highlighted in the Ofsted Focused Visit report on our 'front door' published in September 2021:

"Decisions by managers to step up and down to early help services are appropriate. Partner agencies have a shared understanding of thresholds, augmented by the daily multi-agency triage meeting, which includes the early help service. Proportionate checks are undertaken with professionals; they work closely together and collaborate well".

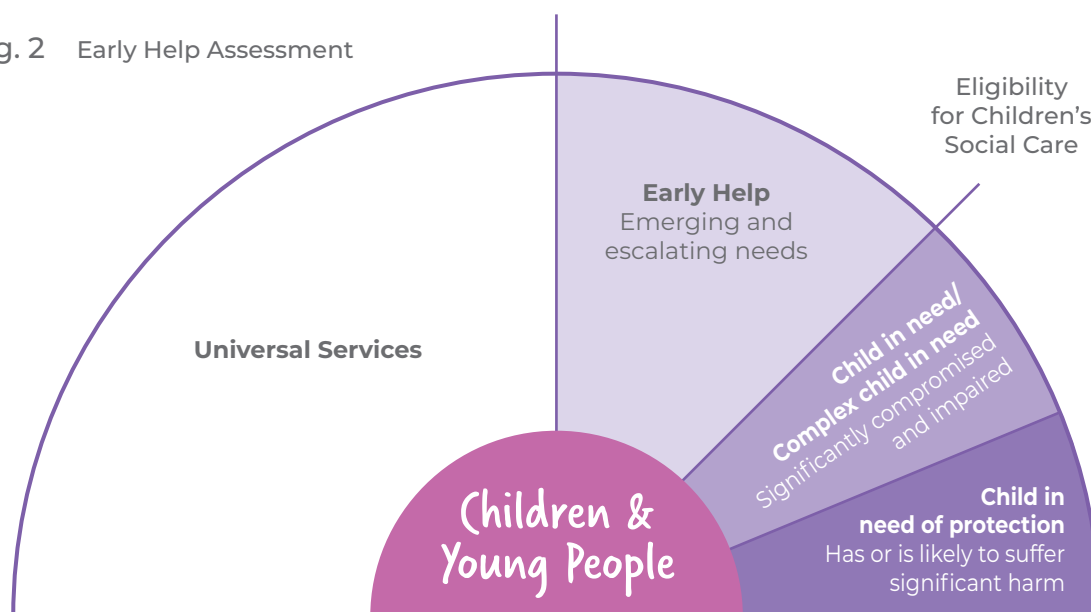
This continuum of need is underpinned further by common practice standards used by staff across the children's workforce within the Local Authority. A new 2022 practice model will also be implemented (see 'Workforce Development' section) to further embed the common approach with a thematic focus on systemic, relational, strengths-based and restorative working.

"You truly have been the glue that held my family together through a rough year. You really went above and beyond for us - thank you." - Parent

While based on a clear interpretation of safeguarding thresholds and distinct from statutory services, early help is positioned within a spectrum of support which seeks to maintain effective relationships with families and avoid 'stop-start' experiences of help and intervention - see Figure 2 below.

Gateshead's Safeguarding Children Partnership clearly defines need and risk in a multi-agency document which uses detailed guidance indicators segmented into three age categories reflecting the key stages of child development.

Fig. 2 Early Help Assessment



Universal interventions – these may be provided by voluntary and community sector organisations and/or professionals working in police, education, housing and health services. Children's Centre and Family Hub provision can provide support at this level, differentiated according to need. These services and interventions may be referred to as 'Tier 1' or 'universal' services. Encouraging and supporting families to access services on their own and making use of community-based resources, including group provision, is a typical feature of this support level.

Targeted interventions – these may be provided by a range of providers, including the Early Help Service, where a Lead Practitioner undertakes the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) or Early Help Assessment (EHA) process and identifies if a single agency response or a multi-agency support plan is required. If more than one service intervention is needed, the Team Around the Family (TAF) process is used to co-ordinate a multi-agency support plan. The GSCP threshold guidance distinguishes between 'emerging' and 'escalating' needs within the Tier 2 threshold to guide interpretation of need and risk by professionals, volunteers and the public.

Safeguarding and social work interventions – this includes assessment and intervention under the oversight of children's social care, including Child in Need (CIN) and Child Protection (CP) as part of 'Tier 3' support. Early Help, using the TAF process, will not only respond to increasing, escalated needs, but also where families have stepped-down from social work intervention. A Lead Practitioner from across the Tier 2 workforce will be identified at the point of closure to children's social care to help sustain the family plan and work towards agreed goals.

We believe that assessment and intervention should be based on clear, consistent thresholds which have been developed using a collaborative, partnership approach. Colleagues from across the early help, health and social care sectors continue to facilitate training on thresholds as part of the GSCP (Level 3 Safeguarding) training offer to the children's workforce.

7. Our Priorities

7a. Family Hubs & Start for Life

Family Hubs will provide a single access point – a ‘front door’ – to universal and early help services for families with children of all ages (0-19) or up to 25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), with a Start for Life offer at their core.

Family Hubs involve co-location of services and professionals to make it easier for families to access the help they need and can include walk-in sites, outreach activities and online support.

Family Hubs are a way of delivering the Supporting Families Programme vision of an effective early help system, providing place-based access to SEND services, 0-5 activities, youth services, advice on debt and housing, support for mental health, smoking cessation, nutrition and weight management, help for those experiencing domestic abuse and relationship conflict, plus funded strands of enhanced support for:

- Parenting
- Perinatal mental health and parent-infant relationships
- Early language development and the home learning environment
- Infant feeding

Many services offered in a Family Hub network will be for families who do not need intensive, whole-family Lead Practitioner support; however, hubs will ensure seamless access to a whole-family Lead Practitioner where needed.

In Gateshead, we will work closely with our partners to evolve a Family Hub and Start for Life offer by utilising our Sure Start Children’s Centre sites and building upon our key assets across this estate, including excellent facilities and locations, effective partnerships, existing co-location arrangements and the great foundations of a strong, all-age, universal offer.

We believe that families’ voices should be at the heart of everything we do. New Parent/Carer Panels will be developed to actively involve local families in shaping the support they receive.

We will ensure that Family Hubs form part of a clear, recognised network of locality-based help provided by our VCS and other partners.

7b. Reducing parental conflict and improving family stability

Gateshead remains committed to raising awareness of the impact of parental conflict on children and young people. We believe that a focus on the couple and co-parenting relationship is key to understanding family functioning and how best to reach and maintain stable, healthy relationships. We also know that families who have children with SEND may be more vulnerable to experiencing relationship distress.

Gateshead has acted as the lead Local Authority for the North-East region's DWP-funded Reducing Parental Conflict Programme, providing a regional 'Referral Gateway' function from 2019 to four evidence-based pathways of provision up to September 2022.

"We would argue and he (Relate MBT Practitioner) could see the problem. It made you think how to handle it better"

Utilising further (DWP Local Grant) funding, the Early Help Service will further develop a local, sustainable Reducing Parental Conflict offer by taking the following measures:

- Fund the digital support pathways from One Plus One for Gateshead parents and co-parents
- Increase the facilitator pool for the (Parents Plus) Parenting When Separated programme
- Provide facilitator training for the (Fatherhood Institute) Becoming Dad and Staying Connected programmes
- Fund a (Relate) relationship counselling and helpline/webchat service

The Reducing Parental Conflict (Self-Assessment) Planning Tool is submitted to DWP on an annual basis.

Parenting interventions - delivering 'what works'

Advice and support for parents and carers is available from a wide variety of sources in our borough, including informal peer support opportunities and guidance online.

Where parenting programmes are delivered by the Early Help Service, we will ensure that these are:

- widely promoted across the early help workforce;
- drawn from a clear evidence base to promote real change in family life;
- delivered by trained, experienced facilitators;
- provided in a range of community settings, including school sites.

The current offer of parenting programmes includes:

- Mellow Bumps
- 123 Magic
- Incredible Years (Babies)
- Parenting When Separated
- Family Links Nurture
- Respect Young People's Programme
- ADHD Parenting Factor
- Caring for Children

From 2022/23, we will develop this offer further by:

- Recruiting a Healthy Relationships Co-ordinator to plan, evaluate and review our evidence-based offer for parenting.
- Training a multi-agency facilitator pool for Standard Teen Triple P and the (Fatherhood Institute) Family Foundations Programme.
- Working with our Family Hubs Parent/Carer Panel to identify gaps in provision and plan parenting support to meet those needs.

7c. Youth Crime Prevention

Our local partnerships work to identify children and young people displaying behaviours associated with offending to prevent entry into the formal youth justice system and offer a combination of early and targeted intervention.

This is delivered through:

- Specific, evidence-based interventions from the Early Help Service
- Support for young people suffering abuse in personal/intimate relationships from the Domestic Abuse Team
- You Only Live One (YOLO) Project for those aged 8-14 years
- Youth Navigator Role
- Criminal Justice Liaison Service
- Targeted health and substance misuse services, including Change Grow Live (CGL) from November 2022.

Supporting Families Programme

While progress against the (1-10) thematic areas of the Supporting Families Programme Outcomes Framework will reduce the triggers for offending behaviours and strengthen protective factors, it is Section 7 which focuses directly on prevention of youth crime and provides a recognised performance framework against which to measure progress.

Youth crime prevention through whole-family support

The Early Help Service's Targeted Family Support Team provide a whole-family intervention service for vulnerable families with dependent children. Referrals are taken from a variety of sources across the early help system, including police, education, housing, health and social care.

The service provides a duty response to parents/carers of around 3,000 children per year featuring in new police contacts and supports 1,200 children and their families per year with a whole-family plan as part of the Team Around the Family (TAF) process.



Support plans seek to adopt a 'child first' approach and address issues known to expose young people to an increased likelihood of offending and risk-taking behaviours, including:

- School exclusion
- Missing episodes
- Low income, debt and illegal money lending
- Adult criminality
- Alcohol and substance misuse
- Ineffective and inconsistent parenting styles
- Unsecure or transient living arrangements
- Family relationships and parental conflict
- Unmet support needs for behaviour and emotional regulation
- Negative or risk-taking peer group
- Online abuse and threats

Progress - our prevention journey

Since the publication of our 2018 Early Help Strategy, we have:

- Participated in the (DLUHC) Supporting Families, Youth Justice and Early Help deep dive exercise in January 2022
- Met the outcomes for the Troubled, now Supporting Families Programme
- Introduced a designated Family Intervention Worker into the High Fell ward where crime/ASB reports were among the highest in the borough
- Embedded the Team Around the School (TAS) and Social Workers In Schools (SWIS) models
- Improved our response to missing episodes through designated support for return interviews and information-sharing with schools (Operation Endeavour)
- Improved support for young people suffering from abuse in personal/intimate relationships (Domestic Abuse Team)
- Delivery of a comprehensive holiday activities offer through the (DFE) Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme, providing a menu of diversionary activities for young people

In the next 12 months, we will:

- Develop a partnership prevention strategy with a central ethos of prevention being ‘everyone’s business’
- Work with partners to map existing provision, identify gaps and utilise the early intervention or ‘Turnaround’ element of the new (2022) national funding settlement
- Develop Mosaic functionality around recording and analysis of prevention data to inform service improvement
- Work with key stakeholders to develop a network of Family Hubs to improve the universal, place-based offer in our most vulnerable communities
- Complete evaluation of the Social Workers In Schools (SWIS) pilot and work with schools to agree a sustainable funding model
- Introduce and develop a new ‘Healthy Relationships Pathway’ to broaden the offer of evidence-based interventions to improve parenting capabilities and to reduce parental conflict
- Expand the Team Around the School (TAS) model to provide designated family intervention time with primary schools in wards of identified needs and high persistent absentee rates
- Increase and develop the pool of practitioners able to offer case consultations for the Respect Young People’s Programme (RYPP).

7d. Supporting a skilled, confident and knowledgeable early help workforce

Workforce development is at the heart of our approach to delivering effective support to families and has two key strands:

- Local Authority early help and social care staff are provided with regular, high-quality supervision and professional development opportunities, including training in a range of evidence-based practice. Organisations and services across the early help sector take responsibility for the development of their workforce to deliver effective family intervention;
- the wider early help workforce is provided with a strong GSCP offer of professional development opportunities which supports effective frontline practice with families – see below.

To enable early help to become everyone's business, practitioners must feel confident and capable in their abilities to respond to presenting issues. We will support the multi-agency children's workforce to recognise and identify early signs and symptoms and understand the help and support available to children, young people and their families.

We will know that our approaches to workforce development are successful if practitioners:

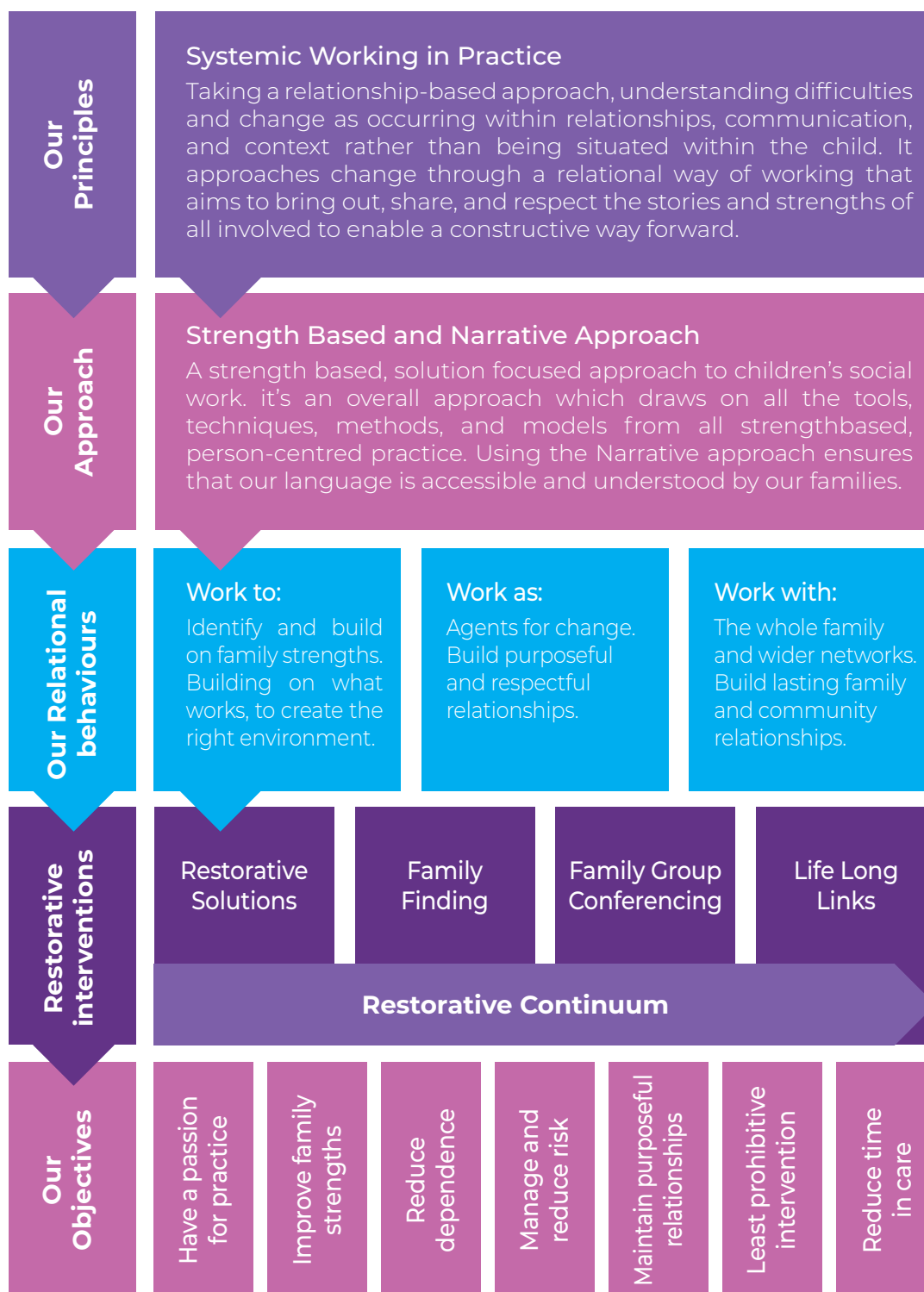
- actively identify and assess a child and family's holistic needs as they arise;
- respond to child and family's needs at the earliest opportunity;
- are confident as Lead Practitioners and collaborate effectively as members of the TAF;
- facilitate the involvement of children, young people and families in the services they receive.

Plus:

- focus first on families and their strengths;
- work closely with families to build trusting relationships;
- are skilled, knowledgeable and are co-creating new approaches;
- make time to learn, analyse, reflect in an open and honest way;
- have a shared vision and understanding of outcomes and success.

These principles and ethos are represented in our new (2022) practice model for practitioners working across early help and social care (see Fig 4 on the next page).

Fig. 3
Early Help & Children's Social Care 'Relationship Focused' Practice System



Practitioners across the early help (all sectors) and social care workforce also have access to a comprehensive training offer from the Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership, Gateshead Safeguarding Adults Board and Gateshead Community Safety Board.

8. Our early help improvement journey

Strengths identified in our 2019 Ofsted inspection have been developed further, as shown in this summary of key achievements from across Gateshead's family support system:

- Provided the regional 'Referral Gateway' for the national Reducing Parental Conflict (RPC) Programme – exceeding the referrals target
- Secured the maximum DWP Workforce Development and Local Grants to develop a local RPC offer

100% of Supporting Families Programme outcomes have been achieved since programme start date in 2012

- Delivered a comprehensive range of holiday activities for children and young people, supplemented by the (DFE) Holiday and Food grant
- Introduced the (DFE) Social Workers In Schools (SWIS) model into 6 Gateshead secondary schools
- Introduced Family Drug and Alcohol Court (FDAC, May 2021) and Kinship Care Teams (June 2021) in our children's social care services

Early Help work is well-embedded across partnership setting – 55% of Early Help Assessments are completed by practitioners outside of the Early Help Service in 2022.

- Introduced a Behaviour Change (Domestic Abuse Perpetrator) Service (September 2020)
- Expanded the Team Around the School (TAS) model into 4 secondary schools and a new primary school cluster from July 2022
- Restructured our Children's Centre workforce, increasing Parent Outreach Worker capacity
- Co-located a new community-based Early Help Worker with VCS partner Edbert's House in the High Fell ward

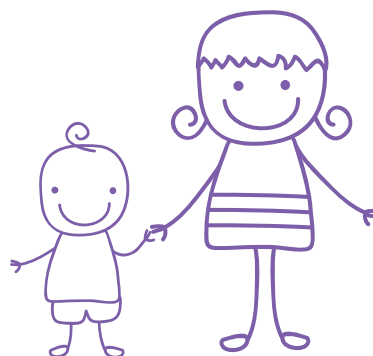
Contacts/referrals for 5,344 children were received by the Early Help Service in 2022 from a diverse referral base, including education (76 schools), police, housing, health, social care and voluntary sector

- Expanded our digital offer through a new online Family Advice Hub and new e-learning opportunities
- Introduced a new (Servelec Mosaic) system and database in January 2022
- Created a designated role for completion of return interviews following (young person) missing episodes
- Increased frontline capacity in the Early Help Service Duty Team

Only 9% of families completing their Team Around the Family (TAF) support plan with an outcome of 'all needs met' are referred to children's social care within 12 months of closure to the Early Help Service 4 children were received by the Early Help Service in 2022

- Merged the Early Help and Children's Social Care Directorates
- Increased the capacity of our Family Group Conference Service
- Expanded Play Service small group and outreach support for children and young people with SEND
- Introduced all-age community hubs in partnership with VCS partners
- Improved the SEND Local Offer online portal and set-up a SEND Young People's Forum
- Introduced Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) roles to support young people to return to/remain in education.

Total of 93 young people were diverted from the Youth Justice Service (2022)



9. Key Actions – our plan for 2023 – 2026

9a. Making it easier to get the right help, where and when families need it

What action will we take?	How will we know we have achieved this?	What difference will this make to children, young people and families?	How will this impact on outcomes for families, as defined by the Supporting Families Programme Outcomes Framework?
Implement a network of Family Hubs across Gateshead and integrate these into locality-based systems of support	Launch of four Family Hubs by March 2023 and seven by July 2023. Commission VCS partners to develop a family support offer through a network of 'Houses' in our communities of highest need by July 2023.	Easy, walk-in access to universal early help services, and improved access to support for parenting, infant feeding, perinatal mental health and parent-infant relationships, alongside an all-age offer of advice and support.	Good education and attendance, Good early years development, Improved physical and mental health, Reduce harmful substance misuse, Improve family relationships, Children safe from harm and exploitation, Preventing and tackling crime, Safe from domestic abuse, Secure housing, Financial stability
Broaden and improve the range of virtual information and support available to families, including a clear Start for Life offer for families with young children	Launch a Gateshead Family Hubs and Start for Life offer by March 2023, including an online portal with aligned social media platforms, information products and clear telephone contact/helpline details.	Access to clear, accurate information in a variety of formats on a wide range of family support topics, including a joined-up picture of support available to new and expecting parents.	Good education and attendance Good early years development Improved physical and mental health Reduce harmful substance misuse Improve family relationships Children safe from harm and exploitation Preventing and tackling crime Safe from domestic abuse Secure housing Financial stability

(Continued...)

Map and develop a range of prevention services for young people at risk of entering the youth justice system	We will publish a Gateshead Youth Crime Prevention Strategy by Sept 2023 and implement the 'Turnaround' whole-family assessment and support model from December 2022.	Broaden access to whole-family assessment and support through the 'Turnaround' model for eligible young people aged 0-17 years and their families.	Good education and attendance, Improved physical and mental health, Reduce substance misuse, Improve family relationships, Children safe from harm and exploitation, Preventing and tackling crime, Safe from domestic abuse, Secure housing, Financial stability
Improve access to early help services in education settings	We will expand the Team Around the School (TAS) model to more secondary and primary school settings.	Broaden access to a designated Family Intervention Worker in educational settings, providing direct support to the child/young person on emotional wellbeing, peer pressure, managing family relationships as part of a whole-family plan.	Good education and attendance Improved physical and mental health Improve family relationships Children safe from harm and exploitation

Increase focus on family relationships, parental conflict and engaging with fathers and co-parents

Develop and embed a clear Reducing Parental Conflict (RPC) offer for parents and co-parents	We will broaden our offer of evidence-based RPC programmes at a variety of community locations and promote our (One Plus One) e-learning options, including support for fathers and co-parents.	Broaden access to specialist interventions which remove and reduce relationship distress in families, improving stability or relationships – including those where co-parenting arrangements apply.	Improve family relationships
Develop and embed an improved offer of support for family relationships	We will introduce a 'Healthy Relationships Pathway' from January 2023 and broaden our parenting offer to include peer support options at VCS hubs and introduce new, evidence-based programmes to engage with more fathers. We will further embed the use of Family Group Conference approaches.	Parents/carers will have access to an improved offer of support to help develop positive relationships with their children, including increased access to online advice, group interventions and more informal peer support opportunities.	Improve family relationships

9.b Delivering our priorities - the key enablers driving improvement in our early help system

What action will we take?	How will we know we have achieved this?	What difference will this make to children, young people and families?
Review the common early help assessment process and with key stakeholders and align with other local assessments	We will launch the new Gateshead Early Help Assessment (EHA) in February 2023 and develop a range of accompanying practice tools.	The new EHA will provide a more usable/ bespoke process for the assessment of families' needs in a wide range of settings, helping to identify needs early and when single or multi-agency support is required.
Train and support more practitioners across the early help system to adopt the Lead Practitioner role and deliver through the Team Around the Family (TAF) process	We will develop a specific training module for the Lead Practitioner role by June 2023 and provide this to partners across the early help system.	Improved, early access to Lead Practitioner support in a variety of settings, often with a trusted professional or volunteer already working with or linked to the family without the need for later referral to more specialist services.
Broaden the range and quality of practice resources for those supporting families in a range of settings, including better connectivity to peer support for practitioners	We will develop a range of practice tools to support the assessment of and support provided to families by June 2023 (then reviewed and developed thereafter) and introduce a new social media platform to improve professional peer connectivity and understanding of the local early help system.	Improved, early access to Lead Practitioner support (as above) which uses practice tools and resources which are effective in identifying needs early and in providing direct support.
Invest further in developing a relational, trauma-informed workforce skilled in the use of narrative practice and contextual safeguarding	Delivering a robust partnership training offer through GSCP and commission bespoke training opportunities to ensure the early help and social care workforce are able to deliver the relational practice model to a high standard.	Support is delivered in line with robust principles of restorative and relational practice, engaging families early and maintaining relationships which lead to the family making sustained changes.
Develop data maturity across the early help system to further enhance analysis of performance	We will further embed the use of Mosaic across early and social care and develop analytical tools to assess/ analyse performance.	We will measure progress using the Supporting Families Programme Outcomes Framework and undertake/complete the Supporting Families Data Maturity Self-Assessment on an annual basis to measure progress and identify areas for development.
Improve the strategic oversight of, and accountability within, the early help system	We will review governance structures across the local early help system by March 2023 and identify opportunities for improved strategic collaboration to deliver shared objectives. Governance arrangements will also be reviewed and reported as part of the (DLUHC) Early Help System Guide annual self-assessment.	Services will work together to increase collaboration and integration, reducing the need for families to navigate a complex system of support. Duplication of remit will be minimised and resources deployed where they are need most – both in terms of needs/risks and geographical location.

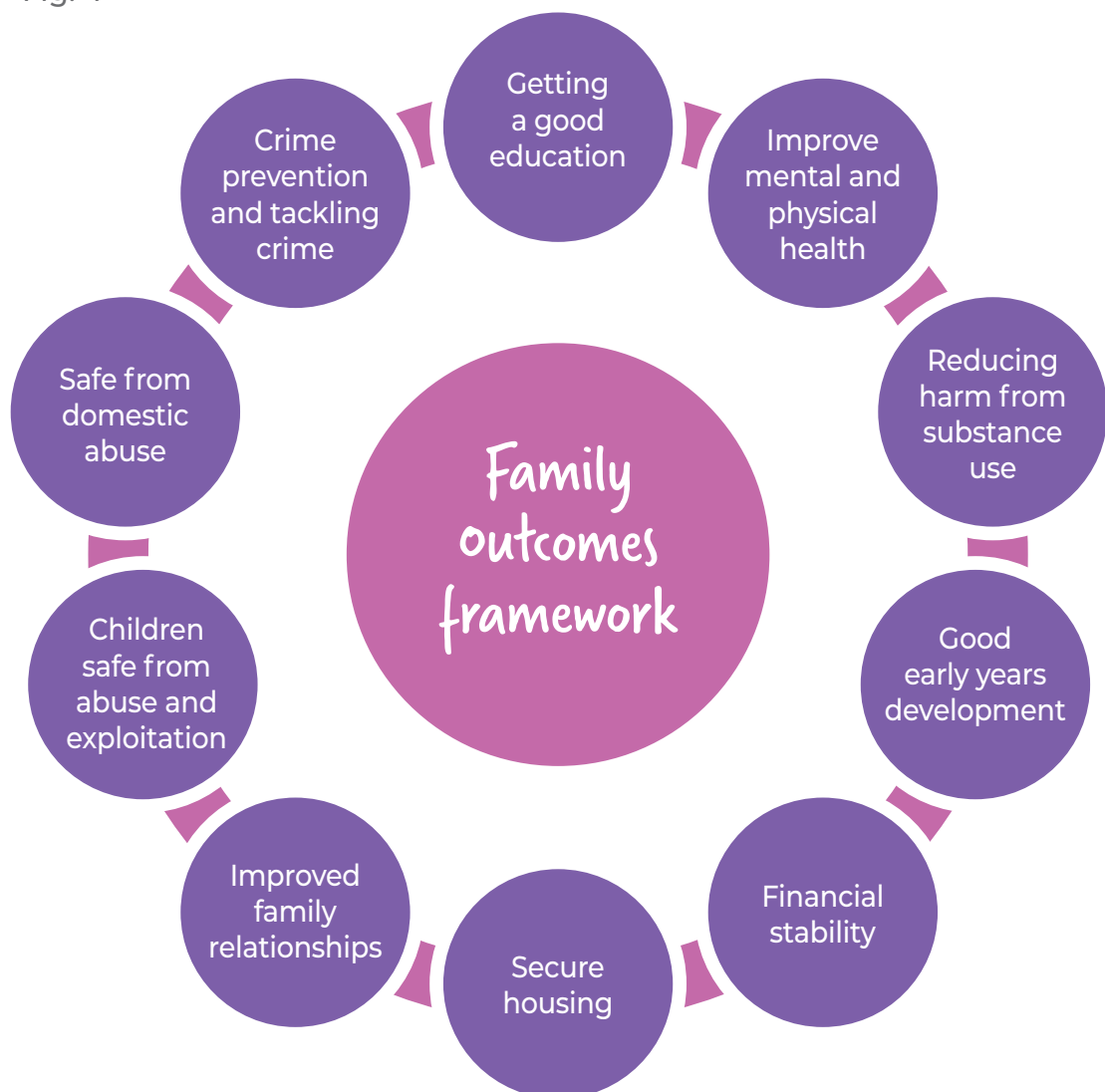
10. Measuring Impact

Supporting Families Outcomes Framework

From October 2022, the Supporting Families Programme Outcomes Framework has been adopted as the recognised suite of performance measures for families being supported through an early help (or other) whole-family assessment and plan.

Eligible families must be assessed as meeting a minimum of 3 out of the 10 headline areas of need set out below to receive whole-family support under the programme.

Fig. 4



The Supporting Families Outcomes Framework can inform, guide and supplement existing performance management arrangements across services and sectors. Services should take responsibility for their own performance management functions. The framework also aims to embed a shared understanding of what progress and positive outcomes look like for families and to provide a common language when describing concerns, risks and changes to family life.

The overall effectiveness of the local early help system (outcomes) will be determined by the key measures set out in:

- Gateshead Supporting Families Outcomes Framework
- Gateshead SEND Strategy
- Gateshead Youth Justice Plan
- Gateshead Early Help Service Performance Clinic
- Gateshead Children's Safeguarding Partnership Learning Reviews
- Ofsted Self Evaluation Framework (SEF) review
- Service-specific audits and performance reporting

Review of the support pathways available (system) is undertaken through the following annual exercises:

- Supporting Families Programme Early Help System Guide and Data Maturity Survey (Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities)
- Reducing Parental Conflict Planning Tool (Department for Work & Pensions)

11. Governance

The delivery of an effective early help offer is not the responsibility of a single agency.

This requires a whole-family approach owned by stakeholders working with children, young people and families. These include health, police, probation, education, housing, adult services and voluntary and community organisations.

The Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership will be the responsible partnership board for the oversight and development of our Early Help Strategy.

Scrutiny on the implementation of the Strategy will be provided by:

- Children & Young People's Portfolio
- Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Strategic oversight of the Strategy will be provided by:

- Gateshead Health & Wellbeing Board
- Gateshead Children's Systems Board
- Gateshead Youth Justice Board

Early Help Service data is reviewed regularly in the Early Help Performance Clinic chaired by the Deputy Strategic Director for Children's Social Care and Early Help.



12. Appendix – Supporting Families Outcomes Plan

1. Getting a good education

Criteria	Family need	Intended Outcome
1.1	Average of less than 90% attendance (inclusion of authorised absence is optional) for 2 consecutive terms	Sustained good attendance
1.2	Average of less than 50% attendance unauthorised and authorised for 2 consecutive terms	Sustained improvement from very poor attendance
1.3	Not able to participate and engage with education – motivation, emotional regulation and behaviour difficulties, risk of, or subject to, exclusions, concerns around suitability of Elective Home Education, child is off-roll and not receiving an education otherwise, risk of NEET	Improved engagement with education (e.g., pupils no longer on report, reduction/no detentions)
1.4	Child's special educational needs not being met	Family happy that special educational needs being met, and school / early years settings are providing adequate support.

2. Good early years development

Criteria	Family need	Intended Outcome
2.1	Expectant or new parent/carers who require additional or specialist support (e.g., young parents, parents who have been in care, parents with learning needs)	Families are engaged with appropriate support that is seen to be making a difference; capacity for positive, effective parenting increased and they are accessing and engaging with services
2.2	Child's (0-5 yrs) physical health needs not met (e.g., immunisations not up to date, concerning accidental injuries, dental hygiene)	Child's physical health needs met, better awareness of home safety and accident prevention
2.3	Child's (0-5 yrs) developmental needs not being met (e.g., communication skills/ speech and language, problem-solving, school readiness, personal, social and emotional development)	Developmental needs being met, allowing child to make progress AND/OR has the right support in place to make progress AND/OR Child/young person with probable/confirmed prenatal alcohol exposure and significant physical, developmental or behavioural difficulties are referred for FASD assessment.

3. Improved mental and physical health

Criteria	Family need	Intended Outcome
3.1	Baby/child needs support with their mental health	The baby/child's mental health and/or wellbeing has improved AND Family/parents/carers feel better equipped to manage the child's mental health and well-being. AND/OR Early attachment relationships are improved/parents feel bonded to baby.
3.2	Adult needs support with their mental health	The adult's mental health and/or wellbeing has improved AND Family/parents/carers feel better equipped to manage the adult's mental health and well-being.
3.3	Child and/or parent/carer require support with learning disabilities, neurodiverse conditions and/or physical health needs that affect the family (e.g., long-standing health conditions requiring management, physical disabilities requiring adaptations)	Physical health needs are being well-managed and family have sufficient / the right support in place.

4. Promoting recovery and reducing harm from substance use

Criteria	Family need	Intended Outcome
4.1	An adult has a drug and/or alcohol problem	Adult reducing / abstaining from substance use (as measured by rescreening) AND Adult better equipped to manage the substance use. Adult understands the risk / impact of the substance use on the family and children and is able to promote safety and implement actions to reduce harm. AND Assessment undertaken with child/family to determine impact of substance misuse upon child and child is benefitting from appropriate support (e.g., whole-family substance misuse work, affected-by service, young carers service, appropriate therapeutic support).
4.2	A child or young person has a drug and/or alcohol problem	Child reducing / abstaining from substance use AND Family / Child better equipped to manage the substance use and find alternative coping strategies, and understands risk / impact of substance use.

5. Improve family relationships

Criteria	Family need	Intended Outcome
5.1	Parent / carers require parenting support	Parent / carer demonstrates improved, positive parenting (e.g., improved parent / child interactions; positive attachment etc).
5.2	Harmful levels of parental conflict, i.e. when it is frequent, intense or poorly resolved	No harmful parental conflict and improved family relationship AND Parents /carers understand the impact of the conflict on the children
5.3	Child /young person violent or abusive in the home (to parents/carers or siblings)	No harmful child to adult or sibling abuse AND Child is better equipped to understand behaviours, develop coping mechanisms and self-manage AND Parent or carers better equipped to manage child's behaviour and relationship improved
5.4	Unsupported young carer or caring circumstances changed requiring additional support	Unsupported young carer now supported, including with change in caring circumstances



6. Children safe from abuse and exploitation

Criteria	Family need	Intended Outcome
6.1	Emotional, physical, sexual abuse or neglect, historic or current, within the household	No longer abuse or neglect in the household AND Child / family has been supported following abuse/neglect and has strategies to manage going forward AND Children are in an emotionally and physically safe environment.
6.2	Child going missing from home	Child no longer going missing AND Child/family has been supported following missing episodes.
6.3	Child identified as at risk of, or experiencing, sexual exploitation	Child not experiencing sexual exploitation AND Child has been supported following sexual exploitation. Partners worked alongside child/family to manage risk of sexual exploitation
6.4	Child identified as at risk of, or experiencing, criminal, or precriminal, exploitation (e.g., county lines)	Child not experiencing criminal or pre-criminal exploitation AND Child has been supported following criminal exploitation AND Partners worked alongside child/family to manage/reduce risk of criminal exploitation.
6.5	Child experiencing harm outside of the family (e.g., peer to peer abuse, bullying, online harassment, sexual harassment/offences)	Child no longer experiencing harm AND Child confident in reporting and being taken seriously. Partners worked alongside child/family to develop strategies and support them to cope with, and respond to, abuse / harm outside of the home and to keep themselves safe.
6.6	Child identified as at risk of, or being affected by, radicalisation	Child not affected by radicalisation AND Child has engaged with, and benefitted from, relevant support AND Partners worked alongside child/family to manage or reduce risk.

7. Crime prevention and tackling crime

Criteria	Family need	Intended Outcome
7.1	Adult (18+) involved in crime and/or ASB (at least one offence/arrest/named as a suspect/ASB incident) in the last 12 months	<p>7 or fewer incidents in 12 months - Adult no longer involved in crime OR 8 or more incidents in 12 months - Adult demonstrates at least a 50% reduction in incidents of crime.</p> <p>Consistent measure required, i.e. if identifying on arrests, arrests must be measured for outcome.</p>
7.2	Young person (u18) at risk of crime, including gangs, serious violence and weapons carrying, or involved in harmful risk-taking behaviour	<p>Young person not involved in crime or anti-social behaviour AND supported to better manage risks of becoming involved with crime, through accessing relevant services and fully engaging in this process.</p>
7.3	Young person (u18) involved in crime and/or ASB (at least one offence/arrest/named as a suspect/ASB incident) in the last 12 months	<p>4 or fewer incidents in 12 months) - Young person no longer involved in crime OR 5 or more incidents in 12 months - Young person demonstrates at least a 50% reduction in incidents of crime, provided none of these are a severe offence as defined by the list of severe offences AND Young person supported to better manage risks of becoming further involved with crime, through accessing relevant services and fully engaging in this process.</p> <p>Consistent measure required, i.e. if identifying on arrests, arrests must be measured for outcome.</p>

8. Safe from domestic abuse

Criteria	Family need	Intended Outcome
8.1	Family affected by domestic abuse or inter-personal violence and abuse - historic, recent, current or at risk (victim)	Domestic abuse has stopped AND Victim has a clear safety plan in place and knows how to seek help OR Victim has received (or is receiving) appropriate support.
8.2	Adult in the family is a perpetrator of domestic abuse	Domestic abuse has stopped AND Perpetrator understands crime, and impact on the victim(s) (including children), and is engaging with perpetrator support.
8.3	Child currently or historically affected by domestic abuse	Domestic abuse has stopped AND Perpetrator understands crime, and impact on the victim(s) (including children), and is engaging with perpetrator support.

9. Secure housing use

Criteria	Family need	Intended Outcome
9.1	Families who are in local authority temporary accommodation and are at risk of losing this	Family no longer at risk of losing temporary accommodation and have sustained temporary accommodation for 6 months or have moved into settled housing.
9.2	Families not in suitable, sustainable housing and/or threatened with eviction / at risk of homelessness	Family no longer at risk of eviction* and/or in suitable and sustainable housing for 6 months *Notice not served or withdrawn; or (for social housing tenants) have a suspended possession order and have sustained the accommodation for 6+ months.
9.3	Young people aged 16/17 at risk of, or who have been, excluded from the family home	Young person no longer at risk of homelessness – remains with or is returned to family or wider family network with support available for 6 months.

10. Financial stability

Criteria	Family need	Intended Outcome
10.1	Adult in the family is workless	Adult in work OR has made progress to work (e.g. gained a qualification, completed training, volunteering, attending job interviews).
10.2	Family require support with their finances and /or have unmanageable debt (e.g. rent arrears)	Family feels able to manage their finances AND/OR Debt is being managed or has been resolved.
10.3	Young person is NEET	Young person is in education, employment or training.



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Glossary of Terms

ACE	Adverse Childhood Experiences
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
AIM	Assessment, Intervention and Moving On, assessment framework for harmful sexual behaviour
ASD/ASC	Autism Spectrum Disorder/Condition
CAF	Common Assessment Framework, a template for early help assessment
CAFCASS	Child and Family Court Advisory and Support Service
CAG	Citizen's Advice Gateshead
CAWN	Child Abduction and Warning Notice
CGL	Change Grow Live, support service for young people misusing substances
CIN	Child In Need
CNTW	Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust
CP	Child Protection
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
CYPS	Children and Young People's Service, provider of 0-18 mental health services
DAT	Domestic Abuse Team
DFE	Department for Education
DHSC	Department for Health and Social Care
DLUHC	Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities, funder of Supporting Families programme
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead
DWP	Department of Work and Pensions
EBSA	Emotionally Based School Avoidance
EHA	Early Help Assessment
EHCP	Education Health Care Plan
EHE	Elective Home Education
EIF	Early Intervention Foundation
EDT	Emergency Duty Team (social work)
EOTAS	Educated Other Than At School
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
FDAC	Family Drug and Alcohol Court
FGC	Family Group Conference

FSM	Free School Meals
GSCP	Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership
HAF	Holiday Activities and Food programme, DFE funded initiative
HDFT	Harrogate and District Foundation Trust, provider of Growing Healthy Gateshead 0-19 services
HSB	Harmful Sexual Behaviour
IAG	Information, Advice and Guidance
ICB	Integrated Care Board, for Gateshead - NHS North East & North Cumbria
MAPPA	Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements, management of high-risk offenders
MARAC	Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference, management of victim safety (domestic abuse)
MSET	Missing Sexually Exploited and Trafficked
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training (young people aged 16-19 years)
OOCD	Out Of Court Disposal, resolution of low-level offence – includes youth caution
PBR	Payment By Results, financial return generated by achieving Supporting Families outcomes
RPC	Reducing Parental Conflict, initiatives to reduce frequent, intense relationship distress
RSQ	Referral Stage Questionnaire, screening tool used in RPC interventions
SALT	Speech and Language Therapist/Therapy
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SFEA	Supporting Families Employment Adviser, specialist DWP role seconded to Early Help Service
SUDI	Sudden Unexpected Death in Infants, applied where there is no apparent cause of death
SWIS	Social Workers In School, DFE funded initiative to co-locate social workers in educational settings
TAF	Team Around the Family, group of practitioners involved in a whole-family support plan
TAS	Team Around the School, co-location of Early Help staff in educational settings
UC	Universal Credit, payment to help those on low incomes or out of employment
VCS	Voluntary and Community Sector
YJS	Youth Justice Service

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Early Help in Gateshead

Everyone's business