

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD: 29 FEBRUARY 2024

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

PROGRESS UPDATE ON THE JOINT HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY PRIORITIES: BEST START FOR LIFE

Purpose of the report

1. The purpose of this report is to present to the Health and Wellbeing Board a progress update on the delivery of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategic (JHWS) priorities.

Recommendation

2. The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to note the progress in delivery of the JHWS priorities

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

3. Leicestershire Children and Families Partnership was established in 2018 to champion effective partnership working on shared outcomes and priorities that make a real difference to the lives of children and young people. The Partnership is a sub-group of Leicestershire's Health and Wellbeing Board and is also responsible for the delivery of the Best Start for Life chapter of Leicestershire's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
4. In May 2018, the Health and Wellbeing Board approved the first Children and Families Partnership Plan for 2018 – 21.
5. A separate report is on the agenda for this meeting to seek approval of the refreshed Partnership Plan for 2024 – 2026.

Background

6. The Children and Families Partnership Plan is a strategic document which sets out the shared vision for children, young people and their families and the priority outcomes that need to be improved. The Plan is not a detailed description of the individual work of each partner against the identified priority areas, but rather a summary of key areas of work that are best delivered together to have the biggest impact on the lives of children and young people.
7. The Partnership Plan was refreshed by the Children and Families Partnership in 2023 and, based on an understanding of the data and the needs of Leicestershire's children and families, it was agreed that the existing five priority areas remained relevant and well-aligned to the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy Best Start for Life priorities, therefore the focus of the refreshed Partnership Plan should remain on

identifying and delivering actions under these priorities, where improved partnership working would add value. The five priorities of the Partnership Plan 2024 to 2026 are:

- i. Ensure the best start for life (early years)
 - ii. Keep children safe and free from harm
 - iii. Support children and families to be resilient (early help)
 - iv. Ensure vulnerable families receive personalised, integrated care and support
 - v. Enable children to have good physical, emotional and mental health
8. The work of the Integrated Care System Children’s Design Group, Leicestershire Education Excellence Partnership, SEND and Inclusion Board, Youth and Justice Partnership Board and Early Help Partnership is all aligned with and provides regular reports to the Children and Families Partnership.

Progress update

9. Priority leads have continued to work with partners and other key stakeholders to deliver against the five priority action plans of the Children and Families Partnership Plan. For the purposes of this report, updates will focus on the progress that has been made against two the spotlight areas of the First 1001 Critical Days/School Readiness and Family Hubs since the last update provided in October 2023.
10. The work being undertaken on First 1001 Critical Days/School Readiness sits within the “Best Start for Life – Early Years” priority action plan of the current Children and Families Partnership Plan and aligns to the First 1001 Critical Days and School Readiness sub-themes of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategic Delivery Plan.
11. Work to embed support for families throughout the First 1001 Critical Days continues to focus on workforce development. Raising awareness of the importance of the first 1001 days, in relation to child development, across the entire Children and Families’ workforce is one of the key priorities within the JHWS and includes a communications plan to share key messages and practical support with families.

Some of the work to deliver this include:

- Social media aimed at parents - sharing key messages and modelling the behaviours that support early brain development, are shared every other month by Children and Family Service (CFS), University Hospital Leicester (UHL) and Leicestershire Partnership Trust (LPT).
 - Workshops continue to be delivered for midwifery students at De Montfort University and Health and Social Care students at further education colleges.
12. Work to support the delivery of the School Readiness priority remains focussed on the early identification of children at risk of delay, for example those children who have not met their milestones for speaking and listening, physical development or personal, social development.
13. The County council’s Early Years Inclusion and Childcare Service has continued to embed an integrated Early Years Pathway, deliver support and training to early years professionals with a particular focus on language and communication, the promotion and sharing of key messages with families on the importance of accessing early

years provision and practical ideas to support children's learning and development. Activity undertaken has included:

- Identification of children at risk of delay has significantly improved through the sharing of two-year health review data. In the last quarter 229 children were identified as requiring further support:
- 21 children have been identified as being at risk of delay in all 5 domains and 25 children have been identified as at risk of delay in 4 domains. It is highly likely that these children will need involvement from the Early Years SEND service.
- 147 children have been identified as requiring further support with Communication
- 90 children have been identified as requiring further support with personal and social development only
- 45 children have been identified as requiring further support in both communication and personal and social development
- 146 children have been identified as requiring further support with physical development (fine or gross motor control) An integrated Early Years Pathway of support from LPT Health Visitors, Family Help and Early Years SEND services is now well established to offer further support to families from one of these services
- LPT Health Visitors and Early Years Providers piloting an online survey for the two-year integrated health review. The first pilot ran between May 2023-June 2023, but this has been extended due to the small response until February 2024. Providers complete a survey for a child if they have concerns. This goes directly to LPT Health Visitors alongside the information from the progress two-year check. On completion of the survey providers receive links and advice to share with parents in any areas flagged as a concern. This supports parents and settings in the interim before the health check. The survey information is added to the child's record by the LPT Health Visitor and can be viewed by the practitioner completing the two-year-old health check and supports conversations with parents if any further support plan is required. It is hoped that the pilot will be rolled out and used as an integrated health review by all providers if they have a concern about a child, so that they can receive an initial care plan from LPT Health Visitors.
- Working with the council's communication officer, a robust communications campaign is now embedded as business as usual, so parents understand the Free Early Education Entitlement. However, with the expansion of childcare agenda, a new campaign for parents and providers is being developed for September 2024 to promote the funded childcare offer for working parents of two-year-olds from April 2024 and working parents with children under two.
- Significant work has taken place with early years providers to ensure there are sufficient childcare places for children who are two and under to enable

parents to return to work or training. A review at the end of 2024 should identify whether this has made a positive impact.

- The Early Years Inclusion and Childcare Service share resources for families with hints and tips to support learning in the home learning environment, with a particular focus on language.
- The government provided funding for workforce training, qualifications and support and guidance for the early years sector to help address the impact of the pandemic on the youngest and most disadvantaged children. The effects of the Covid 19 pandemic included delays in children's development of social skills, communication and literacy and had an impact on children accessing provision. The Early Years Inclusion and Childcare Service have supported 106 providers to access Phase 3 professional development programme, 54 providers to access level 3 SENco training and a further 64 providers to access the Experts and Mentors programme to help improve outcomes for children and improve the quality of provision.
- 95% of providers in Leicestershire are rated by Ofsted as good or better. 97% of two-three and four-year olds access a good or outstanding setting. 73.1% percentage of Leicestershire children are reaching their age-appropriate milestones and achieving a good level of development at the 2-year health review.

14. The work being undertaken on Family Hubs supports the First 1001 Critical Days, School Readiness and Preparing for Life sub-themes of the JHWS.

Family Hubs are a national programme of the Department for Education. Leicestershire was one of twelve local authorities to be successful in applying for Transformation Funding, a time limited grant funded programme (due to end September 2024) to support the transformation of partnerships and service delivery. Family Hubs are 'one-stop shops' for all families 0-19 (or to 25 for young people with SEND), providing access to information, advice, resources, and support.

Family Hubs are very much about partnership arrangements and, working across the Early Help System to ensure that as far as possible there are integrated services being delivered in local communities. This could include co-location, delivering services from Family Hubs, or working together as a Team around the Family or Community. In the county this is being developed through buildings based activity:

- The Service remains on track to re-brand and re-launch 20 Centres as Family Hubs; places where all families can go for help.
- Public access I.T. facilities are being made available for families to use in the reception areas of each of the buildings.
- The service continues to work closely with county libraries (including providing training to Library staff on Making Every Contract County) to create 'Hubs in Libraries' offering access to information and advice through a Family Hubs website.
- Work continues with key services such as Midwifery and Health Visiting to encourage delivery of clinics from Family Hubs.

- The range of services available across the county continues to expand, for example in one of the Loughborough Hubs a regular clinic is now held by Community Paediatricians, improving access for local families attending the ADHD clinic; in Melton families can receive housing advice from The Bridge, and in Lutterworth a new Community Fridge is due to open at the Family Hub in April.

Other developments include:

- A website for Parents and Carers, Young People, Professionals, and Volunteers. As well as having appropriate and useful content, linking to relevant partner sites, the website will focus on self-help resources on key topics such as parenting and behaviour, health and wellbeing. Resources will also be available to support workforce development and induction, for example, developing brief videos which help to explain the multitude of different roles and organisations providing services to children and families. The Parent & Carer section is now live and can be found at <https://www.familyhubsleicestershire.org.uk/>
- Community Engagement workers continue to make links with families and with services across the county. Targeted engagement work in Charnwood continues through the Maternity Champions project with community volunteers being recruited and trained to support women to engage with maternity and early years services. Work is underway with GATE, the Leicestershire Gypsy and Travellers Equality organisation to identify and work with barriers to accessing family services.
- A pilot project is underway between Family Help (targeted family services) and Adult Social Care, running up to end of October 2024, to look at how services might work together to better support families where adult mental health is having an impact on parenting and family function. An Intensive Family Keyworker from Children and Family Services is working alongside colleagues in Adult Social Care Services to look at ways a more streamlined service can be offered to families.

Future Developments

15. Projects to deliver against the JHWS priorities will include a focus on:

Expansion of childcare

- In the Spring Budget 2023, the Chancellor announced the expansion of childcare and by September 2025, most working families with children under the age of 5 will be entitled to 30 hours of childcare support. Leicestershire has seen a significant loss of childcare places due to the pandemic, cost of living crisis and retention and recruitment issues within the sector.
- The Early Years Inclusion and Childcare Service are developing a retention and recruitment strategy, promoting childminding as a career in childcare and continue to work with providers to look at capacity and opportunity to offer increased places within the sector.
- This work aligns to the First 1001 Critical Days and School Readiness sub-themes of the JHWS.

Early Help Strategy

- The Early Help Partnership developed an Early Help Strategy for Leicestershire and is working with partners and Coram-Hempsalls, the evaluation partner for Leicestershire's Family Hubs programme, to develop a theory of change for Family Hubs.
- A series of workshops is providing an opportunity for both strategic leads and practitioners to work on their shared vision for integrated working and transforming how the Early Help System across Leicestershire can be delivered collectively.
- This work aligns to the First 1001 Critical Days, School Readiness and Preparing for Life sub-themes of the JHWS.

The Early Help Strategy is closely aligned to a new Maternity and Early Years Strategy developed by the Priority One Best Start in Life multi-agency group. This work also aligns to the First 1001 Critical Days, School Readiness and Preparing for Life sub-themes of the JHWS.

Competency Framework

- An Early Help Competency Framework and partnership Learning and Development Plan is being explored across the Sub Region. The service is working with both Leicester City Council and Rutland Council to explore and develop the framework alongside a shared approach to the concept of 'early help assessment' and a partnership workshop is planned for 24th April 2024 to progress this.
- This work aligns to the First 1001 Critical Days, School Readiness and Preparing for Life sub-themes of the JHWS.

Background papers

Children and Families Partnership Plan – Progress Update to the Health and Wellbeing Board, 31 October 2023 -

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1038&MId=7553&Ver=4>

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Relevant Impact Assessments

Equality Implications

16. There are no equality implications arising from the recommendations in this report. The Plan would seek to have a positive impact overall and would not have an adverse effect on any section of the community.

Human Rights Implications

17. There are no human rights implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Partnership Working and associated issues

18. Delivery of the Plan will require on-going, effective working relationships with a range of partners including but not limited to Leicestershire County Council, district councils, Health, Police, Leicester City and Rutland Councils and the voluntary and community sector.

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