

**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Improving Lives Select Commission – 28 January 2025

**Report Title**

Family Help Update

**Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?**

No

**Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Nicola Curley, Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services

**Report Author(s)**

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**Ward(s) Affected**

All wards

**Report Summary**

Update on the Family Help

**Recommendations**

To note content and progress of presentation

**List of Appendices Included**

Appendix 1 PowerPoint presentation

**Background Papers**

None

**Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

No

**Council Approval Required**

No

**Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

## **Family Help Update**

### **1. Background**

- 1.1 In 2023, the Government published a new vision to transform children's social care: 'Stable Homes, Built on Love: Implementation Strategy' in response to the Independent Review of Children's Social Care. This proposes significant changes to children's social care and early help, setting out a number of key ambitions including the need to provide 'Family Help' to help ensure all children and families can get the right help, at the right time, and in an easy way.
- 1.2 Further to this, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 focuses on strengthening multi-agency working across the whole system of support and protection for children and their families keeping a child centred approach while bringing a whole family focus embedding strong, effective and consistent multi-agency child protection practice. The Early Help Systems Guide provides a framework, which helps to focus early help systems on common goals and progress towards these. In addition, the National Supporting Families programme is about building resilience by providing effective, whole family support at the earliest opportunity.
- 1.3 In Rotherham we are committed to ensuring that all children, young people, and families are resilient, successful, and safe, building on our key ambitions. We recognise that all families benefit from and need help from time to time to enable babies, children, and young people to thrive. We also know that moving forward most families want the resilience to be able to support themselves in the longer term, with their wider network.
- 1.4 Our Family Help strategy 2024 - 2029 was approved at Cabinet in March 2024, and we are working through the design phase as part of Phase One. The presentation provides an update on progress prior to returning to Cabinet in March 2025.

### **2. Key Issues**

- 2.1 For most children, young people and families in Rotherham, they flourish with support from their own family and friendship network, as well as those services which are available to all families, for example GPs and Schools (universal services). Some families may need to access additional short-term support to address a specific issue, or may require more intensive, longer-term support, when experiencing more complex issues. We know that the needs of children, young people and families change over time and our established partnership approach to early help ensures that families can access the right level of support at the right time. We want families to be resilient and support them to problems solve for themselves where appropriate, acknowledging the impact of wider family and friends' network. It is anticipated that for many families this will prevent escalation of concerns, and reliance on statutory services.

- 2.2 Central to a healthy early help system is agencies working together to meet the needs of both the child and the family in order to achieve long term, sustainable outcomes. Rotherham already benefits from co-location arrangements between a range of agencies working with children and their families as part of the development of our Family Hubs in Children's Centres. Family Hubs help improve whole family support from 0 to 19, including Start for Life services, through a physical network of hubs including a digital and virtual offer, as well as outreach and engagement support. Utilising universal support from our partners is key to this work.
- 2.3 Family Help in Rotherham is not a single service, but a collaborative, whole system approach that works across the partnership. This means children, young people and their families receive support at the earliest opportunity from a range of different services, dependent on their needs. It is only once all avenues of help and support are exhausted, and positive change has not been achieved, with concerns remains for the children that any escalation should be considered to statutory services. This does not include situations where there is concern of immediate harm for children. There is an established pathway to ensure these children are progressed in a timely way.
- 2.4 It is important to recognise the transition into teenage years and the difficulties some young people experience in determining a sense of self; managing peer pressure; navigating family relationship as well as friendships. We recognise the impact this has on the family as a whole and have specifically considered teenagers.

### **3. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 3.1 Not applicable. Update only

### **4. Consultation on proposal**

- 4.1 The presentation provides an overview and update.

### **5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

- 5.1 Not applicable.

### **6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications**

- 6.1 Not applicable.

### **7. Legal Advice and Implications**

- 7.1 Not applicable.

### **8. Human Resources Advice and Implications**

- 8.1 Not applicable.

**9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

9.1 These are highlighted within the presentation.

**10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications**

10.1 There are no direct implications linked to this report.

**11. Implications for CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions and Climate Change**

11.1 There are no direct implications linked to this report.

**12. Implications for Partners**

12.1 Partners are part of the wider early help and integral to the support provided to children and their families.

**13. Risks and Mitigation**

13.1 Not applicable.

**14. Accountable Officer(s)**

Nicola Curley - Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services  
Approvals obtained on behalf of:

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>
The Strategic Director with responsibility for this report	Nicola Curley	11/12/24
Consultation undertaken with the relevant Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Children and Young People - Councillor Cusworth	09/01/25

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