

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee
Date: January 2025
Report for: Information
Report of: Karen Samples, Director of Education

Report Title

Trafford's Family Help Strategy and Prevention Strategy

Summary

This report provides an update on Trafford's Family Help and Prevention approach which ensures that families receive the 'right help at the right time'.

Recommendation(s)

That the contents of the report are noted.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Zoe Sweeney, Head of Early Years and Family Help

Introduction

Our Ambition for Family Help

Our Family help approach in Trafford aims to make sure that services to support children, young people and their families are there when they need them. Family help is for the whole family, children, young people and adults. To make the ambition a reality our family help partnership will ensure:

THE RIGHT HELP is provided through friendly, reassuring, down to earth conversations empowering families to find their own solutions and helping families to help themselves. All our partners are willing to offer family help where children young people and families ordinarily go day to day.

AT THE RIGHT TIME through help at an early stage of the need for support being identified, or early in a child's life.

We have adopted a relational approach to working with children and their families which means:

- **We are strengths based** – we build on the positives and what is going well in a child and family's life whilst understanding the challenges and any risks

- **We involve the child and family** – we engage with all family members with the child at the centre. We don't leave anyone out. We work 'with' and not 'to'
- **We build trusting, authentic relationships** – we strive to understand the lived experience of children and listen and hear what is important to them. We adopt a 'nothing about me without me'

Trafford is also committed and signed up to the Greater Manchester Ambition to early family help which underpins our ethos of Family Hub development.

WOW



GM ambition for Early Family Help

Community-shaped and led support that is **flexible** and local.

Empowering families to **live well and thrive** locally, by creating connected and local support networks **on their doorstep**

Working with the whole, self-defined, family to create **enjoyable, creative and safe** environments to live well & thrive at any age, time & stage.

Early family help that is *everyone's* business, empowering families to live well and thrive, enabled by a **community-led, connected system** on their doorstep

1. Family Help National Context

There have been some key developments for family help which have included the:

- Stable Homes Built on Love (2023)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Breaking Down Barriers to Opportunity Nov 2024 – Keeping children safe, helping Families Thrive
- New Social Care Reforms (December 2024) will take in to account learning from a range of programmes including Supporting Families and the Families First for Children Pathfinders with an emphasis on 'whole family' working, prevention, development of multi-agency teams, a broader remit for family help from Family Hub approach to Children in Need, establishing Lead Professional role across the spectrum of family help including Child in Need with Social Worker and reforming the front door to support decision making and reducing stigma. These reforms will form an end-to-end system of support for families, building out of family hubs (where they exist) through to the edge of care recognising that families arrive at different parts of the system and their needs may increase or decrease over time.
- Children's Well- Being Bill (currently progressing)

Trafford Context

Over the past two years an extensive review of Trafford's approach to Family Help has been undertaken. This has included significant changes to how services are delivered, and how internal teams are configured in line with national and local drivers, for example the drive towards Family Hubs from the DfE and The Care Review of Children's Social Care and the Government Response, Stable Homes Built on Love.

To drive the work and ensure there is clear governance there is:

- a Family Help Strategy in place, though this is currently being refreshed for 2025-2028 <https://www.trafford.gov.uk/about-your-council/children-families-and-wellbeing/docs/Early-Help-Strategy.pdf>
- A 'Right Help Right Time' Ambition Plan owned by the Family Help Steering Group which reports into the Children and Young People's Partnership
- A 'Best Beginnings Ambition Plan' for children aged 0-5 and their families owned by the Best Beginnings Partnership Group which reports into the Children and Young People's Partnership
- A robust self-evaluation of our Family Help Partnership using the 'Early Help System Guide' which is submitted annually to the Department for Education.

Key Priorities and Governance:

Our 'Right Support, Right Time' Ambition Plan has identified the following priorities:

- Support child and parental mental health to improve well-being.
- Improve family relationships by reducing parental conflict.
- Increase educational attendance for vulnerable groups.
- Promote co-ordination of whole family working for children in receipt of Special Educational Needs Support where a whole family approach would be beneficial.
- Support for parent carers and their children who are affected by substance misuse.

Our 'Best Beginnings' Ambition Plan has identified the following priorities for children aged 0-5 and their families:

- We have loving and nurturing relationships and have a safe home free from stress and adversity.
- We have the right help to develop good communication and language.
- We have our best possible physical health, enjoy good emotional mental health and feel supported in our communities.
- We have a love of learning through play and experiences to reach our potential.
- We have the best start in life (for children with SEND)

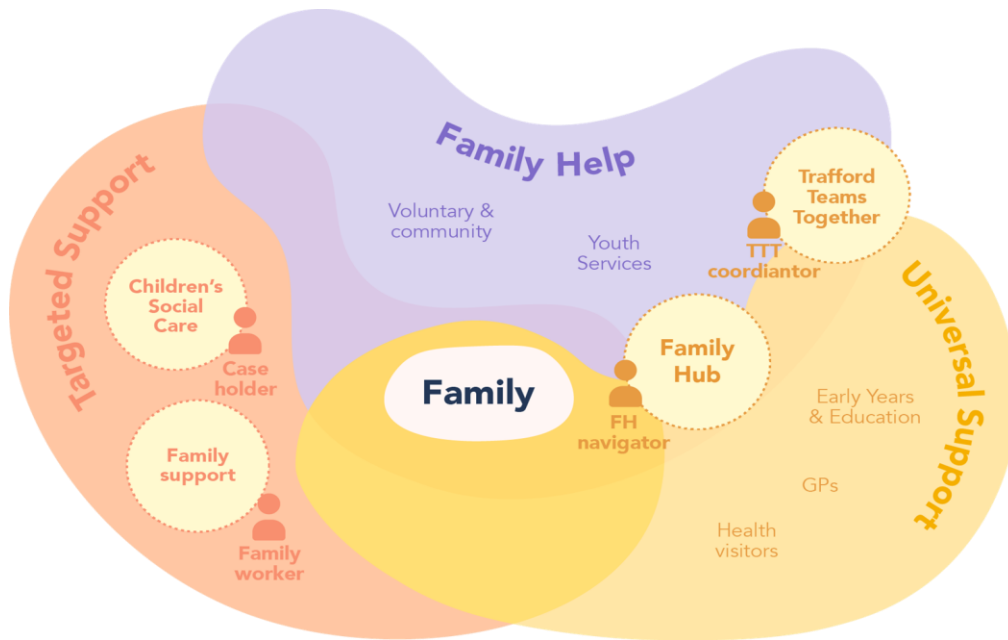
The national context will be a catalyst for further transformational change; however, Trafford is well positioned to respond to these changes due to the firm foundations that have now been set.

Progress made this year to date includes:

- The development of a Family Hub Model and approach that will be fully implemented in the coming months in each neighbourhood in Trafford.
- The establishment and full roll out of 'Trafford Team Together' which is a Team around the School model identifying and supporting children and their families at the earliest opportunity. All mainstream schools now have an assigned TTT Co-Ordinator.
- The expansion of the Family Support Service which offers a targeted support offer to families who require this.
- The development of an internal Trafford Families Service which houses four neighbourhood teams with a Trafford Families Lead in each neighbourhood.
- The development of a 'Start for Life Offer' to ensure that all prospective parents and families with a child up to the age of two know where to get help and support. This will also be accompanied by a paper 'Start for Life Published Offer' for families who may not be able to access digital information.
- The development of a 'Healthy Relationships Offer' which includes a newly commissioned evidence-based parent led parenting programme – 'Empowering Parents Empowering Communities' (EPEC) which has a greater success rate of engaging diverse communities.
- A strong VCFSE sector supported by the Community Collective which has a specific 'Children's Reference Group'.
- A robust Youth Offer to ensure that young people can access their own support and activities as well as wider support for families.
- A strong universal 0-19 offer ensuring that babies, children, young people and families have access to universal support via Midwifery, Health Visitors and the School Nursing Service.
- A breadth of commissions that provide support to babies, children, young people, and families ensuring they receive the right support at the right time.
- Embedding the approach in the Trafford Neighborhood Model with linkage to the Neighborhood Networks and Neighborhood Plans.

The Trafford's Family Help Model

The model below shows how families in Trafford can access support.



Data and Performance

- 181 families with 382 children were supported in the 2023-24 academic year via our Trafford Team Together approach (Team around the School). 81% of families were supported via universal community family help and have not needed further services, 12% were identified as requiring targeted family help and 7% required support from social care.
- Over half (52%) of children supported via a TTT approach identified as having a special educational need/disability. This demonstrates how whole family approaches are supporting families with children with either diagnosed or emerging SEND.
- A weekly multi-agency Family Help Panel is in place which offers support, advice and guidance and a route for 'requests for support' for partners/ any practitioner who may feel 'stuck - this has included GP's, mental health practitioners, early years etc. 140 families have been supported via this route over the last 12 months.
- HomeStart, our commissioned VCFSE provider supported 107 families in the last 12 months.
- Sustainable progress can be evidenced for 78% (446 families) of families supported within family help to case closure, from November 2023- October 2024, with 11% of families moved on to Childrens Social Care involvement due to escalation in worries.
- Most families in Trafford think the Trafford Family Hub Network model in their neighbourhood will make life easier for their family – 66% of 759 families confirmed

this, demonstrating there is local support for the approach. Mental health support, support for children with SEND and more activities were identified by parent/carers as key priorities. The THRIVE work to support mental health and well-being and Neurodiversity support which are being developed at Greater Manchester and locality level will be aligned to the Family Hub Network approach to ensure there is a joined-up approach.

- 175 practitioners are actively using the Reducing Parental Conflict Toolkit across Trafford and case studies from across the partnership are demonstrating positive impacts for children and families with improved family relationships and improved social and emotional well-being.

Family Hub Model and Approach

Trafford is committed to delivering a Family Hub model and this approach is the cornerstone of our new Family Help strategy despite receiving no specific investment from the Government. Trafford is one of four local areas within Greater Manchester (along with Wigan, Bury, Stockport) to develop this approach from within existing resources due to not qualifying for resource due to the demographic. This reflects the ambition to rebalance the system by committing resource to preventative services and providing support at the earliest opportunity to prevent escalation and crisis.

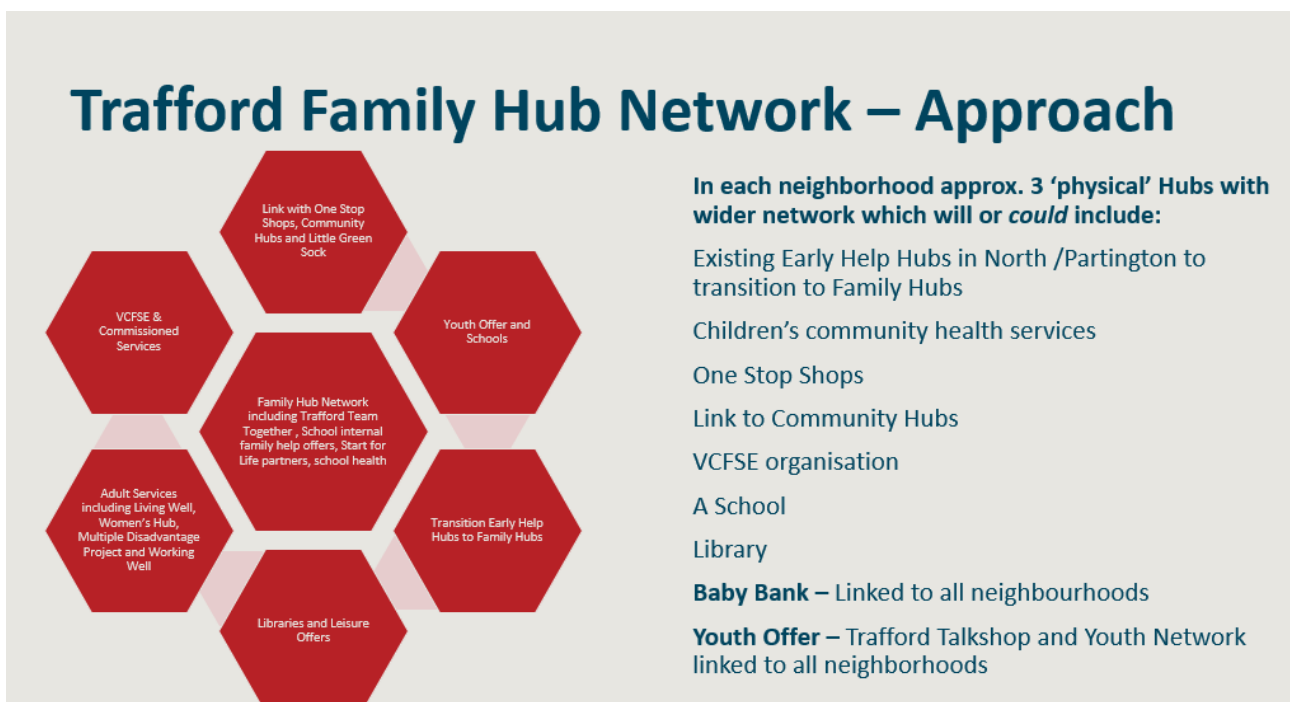
The purpose of Family Hubs is to ensure families of children aged 0- 19 (25 with SEND) have a single access point to support with social, emotional, physical and financial needs. Each family hub will be bespoke to its local community while incorporating three key delivery principles: Access, Connection, Relationships (Anna Freud, National Centre for Family Hubs).

It is widely understood that the Family Hub needs to be an 'approach' not just a single building which is why, in Trafford, we are looking to develop a partnership approach across each neighbourhood with a small number of 'physical' hubs ensuring accessibility and building on the already existing assets within communities.

The model below highlights this approach. Our 'physical buildings' are currently being considered with partners along with the repurposing of our two already existing Early Help Hubs (now Family Hubs) in both Stretford and Partington. This means that we already have a physical hub in two neighbourhoods in Trafford for both the West and North. These have been soft- launched but will be officially launched in March. The Hubs are already delivering a range of services by a range of partners that includes:

- Smoking cessation in pregnancy
- Play and stays, including a specific SEND session,
- Baby Clinics and Baby Massage
- Infant Feeding and First Foods
- Perinatal Family Therapy

- Parenting support and programmes including Riding the Rapids for parents of neurodiverse children, Youth Connect 5 (delivered by Calm Connections)
- Speech and Language appointments and groups (by the Speech and Language Therapy Service)
- Mental Health and well-being counselling sessions
- Parent/child Soft Play and Sensory Room (drop in – continuous access)
- Coffee Drop in for Neurodiverse Parents (just being established)
- DWP (Department of Work and Pensions) support.
- Family Information Service Drop Ins
- Connexions
- In addition, a support offer is in place at the Britannia Ashley Hotel to ensure new arrivals receive the support they need.
- BookStart/Vitamins and Toothbrush Offer.



Start for Life Offer – Conception to aged 2

Start for Life is a core offer of the Family Hub approach as outlined in the Department for Education Family Hub Guidance, ensuring that early support is provided at the earliest opportunity from pregnancy until aged two recognising that the first 1001 days of a child's life are critical in setting future foundations. The core offer covers:

Universal Support

- Midwifery
- Health Visiting
- Infant Feeding
- Safeguarding
- Services relating to SEND.

- Mental Health support

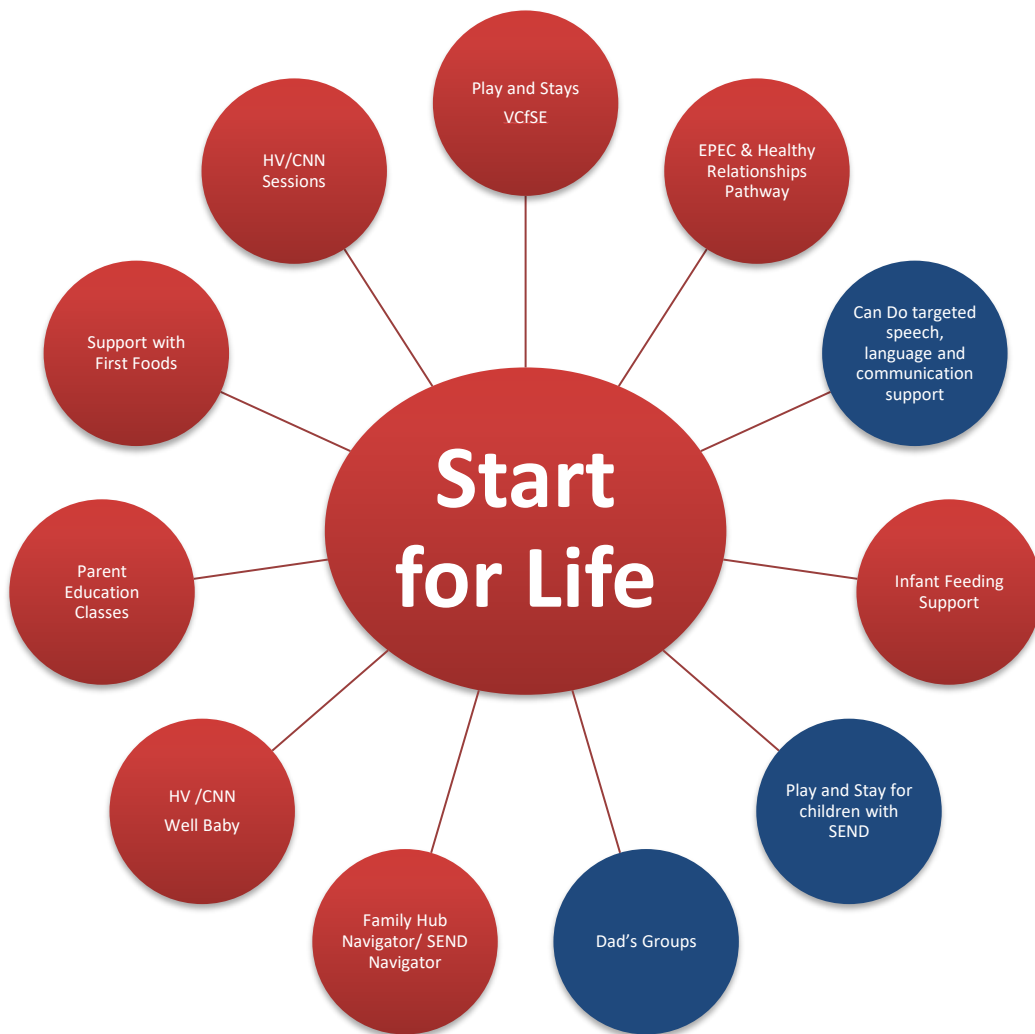
Targeted support

- Domestic Abuse
- Help with drug and alcohol use or smoking cessation.
- Debt advice
- Help with language barriers.

The Start for Life minimum offer and Published Offer have been co-designed with the Best Beginnings Partnership Board and most importantly, families, based on DfE minimum standards, informed by data and through our 'Start for Life – Parents and Babies Voice' ethnographic project, which is Trafford's approach to a Parent Panel. This project has been commissioned over a two-year period with HomeStart, a VCFSE provider with an early year's specialism. The purpose of the work is to engage and involve parent/ carers and babies across each of the four neighbourhoods to share their experiences to shape the Trafford Start for Life Offer.

This has resulted in some key priorities such as more play and stays for fathers/ significant males, for families with SEND, and drop-in support for parents who are neurodivergent, this has been shared with the Children's Commissioning Board and will be included in the refreshed needs assessment to inform future priorities.

The diagram below illustrates the core offer that we are working to in every neighbourhood in addition to the universal support already provided to all parents as part of the Healthy Child Programme delivered by midwives and Health Visitors. The red circles are already available or are nearly ready for delivery. Those in blue are areas that are developments or need expanding across the borough.



This will be underpinned targeted support offers that are already in place such as cost of living support, family help, social care support, the early attachment service, support for new arrivals, Trafford Domestic Abuse Service, Trafford Early Development Service and targeted/ specialist health visiting and midwifery services.

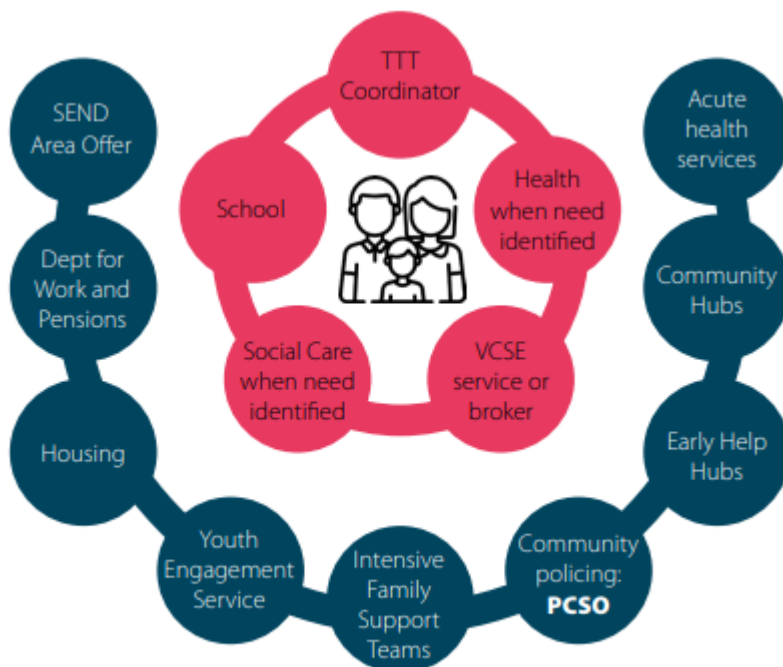
A Start for Life Published Offer has been developed, will be launched in March and will be given to every prospective parent in Trafford. This will also be available in paper copy for families who are unable to access digital resources.

Trafford Team Together

Trafford Team Together is a system enabling approach to meet the needs of any child and their family living in Trafford and /or attending Trafford educational setting. Trafford Team Together (TTT) co-ordinates support for children and school to prevent small worries turning into bigger problems. Every mainstream school now has an assigned TTT Co-ordinator to work with the named TTT Lead in the school.

Our non-case-holding partnership “team around” the child, family and school approach put positive relationships and honest engagement at the heart. A holistic understanding of the children and families’ position is secured, empowering them to navigate through life’s challenges. Timely and tailored support is individual to each child and family’s situation, delivered through activities or services in local communities.

TTT Model



Youth Offer

Trafford's Youth Offer will form part of the Family Hub approach recognising that most young people have cited a preference for specific young people's service and spaces. The Youth Offer comprises of

- Talkshop, Sale – Multi agency one stop shop including – one to one case work. Counselling (MFT/42nd Street); Rainbow Reflections LGBT+; Youth Forum (young person voice group); Sexual Health Clinics (MFT); Young Parents and Young bumps groups; Substance misuse service (Early Break); Trafford Youth Justice etc. Borough wide service
- Street Talk – Locality based detached weekly youth work sessions in communities based on Young People and community's needs.
- Connexions – Careers guidance and intensive support programmes for young people Not in Education Employment Training (NEET) or those at risk of being NEET up to age 19 or up to 24 (SEND / Care Experienced). This is boroughwide and delivered in communities including to people's homes. Careers Guidance service in 17 schools in all localities.
- In addition, there are over 20 providers in the Youth Network who deliver centre based or detached based Youth Work in Trafford. (Chaired by YES Service manager)

- There are two dedicated Youth Facilities delivered by VCS in community settings at Gorse Hill Studios and Partington Youth Centre (GM Youth Federation)
- The Network is consulting with YP across the borough as part of the needs assessment which is underway to meet the Sept Stat guidance on the Youth offer [Statutory guidance for local authorities on services and activities to improve young people's well-being \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/100000/statutory-guidance-for-local-authorities-on-services-and-activities-to-improve-young-peoples-well-being)
- A needs assessment is underway (Feb 2025) which will be used alongside BeeWell to inform the youth offer and family hub developments. <https://forms.office.com/e/1AvpdKi693>

Virtual/ Digital Offer for Family Hub and how families know where to go to get help

There are several ways that families will know how and where to get help which will include:


The Start for Life Published Offer

Trafford's Start for life resource

The start for life guidance advises all local authorities to publicise their start for life offer in a format that is accessible and appropriate for local needs.

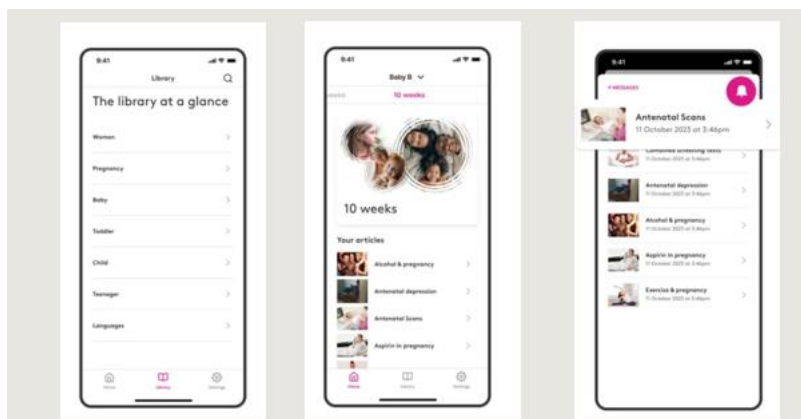
Trafford have designed a printable booklet that will be available online as well as in locations that parents/carers are likely to visit.

Local midwifery and health visiting teams will also provide families with a physical copy to families who are expecting or have a baby who is under 2 years old



A Trafford Family Hub App

[EP INTRO VIDEO - FINAL on Vimeo](#)



- App containing a wide range of expert-led, evidence-based written and video content. The content starts with advice on getting pregnant and continues up to post-menopausal women's health.
- Each Essential Parent article and video is produced by a team formerly of the BBC Science department, and/or is guided by relevant medical experts in that subject.
- In app translations into 75 languages.
- Timely information – For example, during your pregnancy, you will receive content relevant to your stage of pregnancy. After your baby's birth, you will continue to receive age-relevant content during your baby's first year. As your baby grows to become a toddler, child and teenager, or for women's health information, you can also browse through the Essential Parent library to find topics that might be of particular interest.

Padlets

Padlets are for professionals, parents, and young people. They help you find the information you may need in one accessible space.

Padlets are like a themed noticeboard online. Each padlet brings a wealth of resources together in one place around a particular theme. Each padlet has a QR code that families can easily access.

Trafford Padlets for Families

- [Start for Life Padlet](#)
- [5-11 years \(New\)](#)
- [11-25 years \(New\)](#)
- [Children's Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Padlet](#)
- [Family Help Padlet](#)
- [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Padlet](#)
- [Barriers to Education & Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance \(EBSNA\) Padlet \(New\)](#)

What's On Guide

- The Family Information Service are creating a 'What's On' guide for each neighbourhood area which will include information from libraries, leisure, play and stays, the existing Council 'Hubs' and other activities for children and families as part of the wider community offer. It will link to the Trafford Directory to ensure that there is connectivity for children and families. Libraries will also hold this information so that it is accessible to any family without digital access.
- The guides are set up in google calendar so families can view dates, locations, and times of activities in their local neighbourhood.

Branding

Branding has been developed with families involved in their preferences. This logo is our branding so that families are aware that a service, commission or activity is linked to our Family Hub offer.



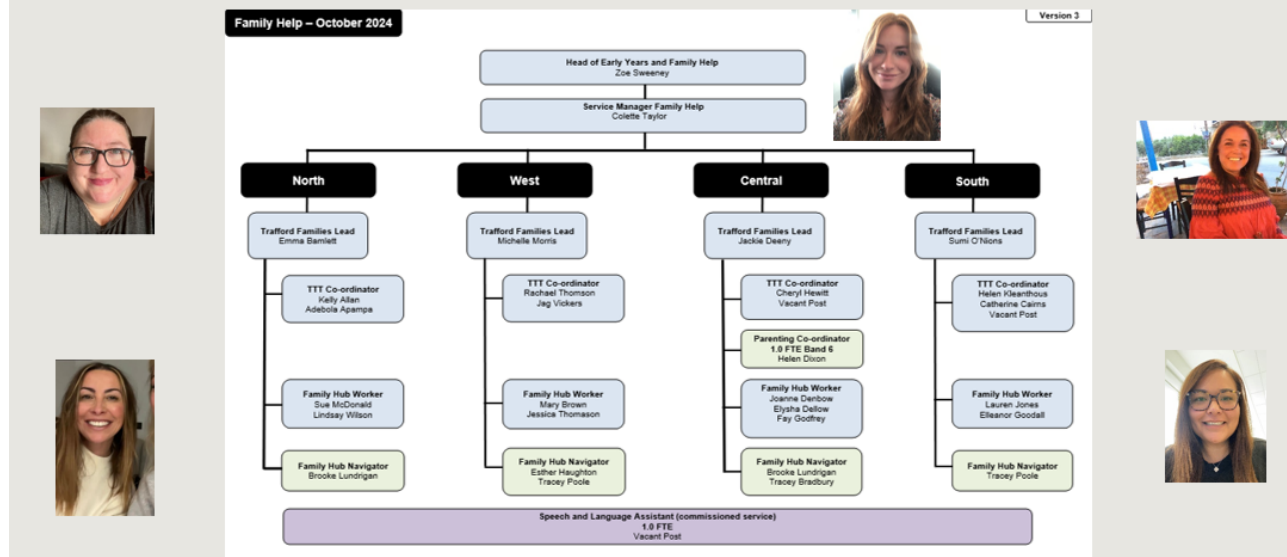
Internal Redesign

Trafford Families

The internal family help redesign is now fully complete and fully resourced with the creation of 'Trafford Families' reflecting the wishes of Trafford parents and partners who did not want the word 'help' in the service name to destigmatise the need for 'help' and increase accessibility. The service (and Family Hub Model) is part funded by the Integrated Commissioning Board reflecting the strategic partnership and endorsement of the adopted approach to address health inequalities. A decision was made to complete our internal restructure prior to launching the Family Hub Network which has meant there has been a significant focus on 'enablers and maturation of the system linked to Early Help System Guide 'next steps,' prior to launch with a stable workforce in place on which to build on and deliver.

The team is comprised of a Service Manager, Trafford Families Lead in each neighbourhood, a Family Hub Navigator (point of contact and access for families) Trafford Team Together Co-ordinators, Family Hub Workers, A Parenting Co-ordinator and Speech and Language Support Offer (in development).

Trafford Families internal team



Family Support Service (Targeted Support)

The redesign of Family Help within Trafford has afforded the opportunity to enhance the offer from the Family Support Service which offers targeted support. The Family Support Service works alongside families on the cusp of Social Care involvement. They provide assessment, intervention and a multi-agency approach to supporting families and building upon families existing strengths and networks of support. It was recognised that the demand for Family Support Service was significant, as such staffing establishment for Family Support workers was increased by four additional team members.

The Family Group Conference Service was integrated within the Family Support Service to provide Family Group Conference in the Family Help Space. This is an approach that involves the family's wider network, building on the strengths of the family and other significant people in a family's wider network to facilitate solutions of support together, based on the wants and needs of the family. This is an empowering, family-led approach. The Family Group conference service was also increased in capacity, with an additional Family Group Conference coordinator being brought to post. Family Group conference training has been rolled out across multiple service areas, providing additional training and expertise in this field, inclusive of Family Support Service, Kindle Outreach team and First Response Service.

To enhance the skillset of the Family Support Service, a focus on recruiting additional family support workers with adult skill sets, in line with a Whole Family approach was taken. As such additional team members were recruited with previous skills and experience in; Adoption and family breakdown, SEND, harmful substance uses and child criminal exploitation. Further recruitment will focus on enhancing skillsets within Domestic Abuse and Mental Health.

VCFSE Sector and the Community Collective

The Community Collective and VCFSE are key partners in the delivery of family help partnership. The Community Collective CEO sits on the Family Help Partnership and is a

key link for developments. Some posts and key projects that support family help or support a thriving community. These include, amongst others:

- Reducing Parental Conflict Co-ordination
- A community led approach to Violence Reduction
- Mental Health Project
- Beat the Streets
- Volunteer Network Co-Ordinator

In addition, connectivity with adult services and our Community Hubs is being strengthened with a Children and Family Worker being included in Trafford's 'Multiple Disadvantage' funded project with a link to the Family Hub Network.

System enablers

The transformational change has been underpinned with the following:

- A multi-agency workforce development programme delivered to over 70 practitioners with a Family Help Workbook available to support continuous development
- New Family Help Practice Standards have been developed.
- Family Help training delivered through the Trafford Strategic Safeguarding Partnership has been refreshed to upskill all multiagency partners.
- Family Help Leads now sit within Trafford First Response to embed family help at the front door to ensure to embed the family help support offer for families who wish to access this support if appropriate.
- A mapping of the Faith Sector and the delivery of Family Hub activity is also planned soon. This is part funded and supported by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority
- Joining up and refreshing the understanding of needs and commissioning. A new interim Director of Children's Commissioning brings together the Children's Clinical Commissioning Team and the Family Help Commissioning Team under the DCS. Those teams are working closely other commissioners in the local authority and beyond to support Family Help and Prevention to enable the vision and services through a family hub offer. A refreshed joint strategic needs assessment will be undertaken to inform these developments.

