


Family Network Support Packages Wirral

Reforming Children's Social Care Families First for
Children Pathfinders – Wave 2



Establishing the Pathfinder Programme

The reviews and strategies that made it
happen

Families First for Children Pathfinder



1. What is it?

- In February 2023 the government published the Stable Homes: Built on Love strategy. Six pillars of reform were set out in the strategy including: ensuring family help provides the right support at the right time; there is a decisive child protection system; we unlock the potential of family networks; love and stability are at the heart of the care system; a skilled workforce supports children; local systems continuously learn and improve
- Publication of Working Together 2023 required local areas to begin shaping their local model to help deliver the strategy, supported by a number of **Pathfinder areas** who would test out ways of working. Wirral is one of only seven Families First for Children Pathfinders in the country.
- **This means....** We have an opportunity to develop, test and learn new ways of working and build upon our current good practice to inform and help shape how family help, children's social care and support for family networks will be delivered to children, young people and families across the country

2. Family Help

- Local areas must ensure that families can always easily access the right help at the right time. The earlier this can happen, the quicker issues can be addressed, and the family can be supported to stay together before issues escalate
- To support this local areas are required to establish a targeted multi-agency Family Help service which includes support for families under Child in Need (S.17).
- **This means....** through the Pathfinder we will build on our family hub and locality model to integrate Child in Need and develop the role of Family Help Lead Practitioner who will stay with the family through all levels of intervention.
- We will also design a single assessment, develop a befriending service, and design ways to support young people into employment.

3. Child Protection

- A decisive and effective child protection system is a crucial part of ensuring children at risk of, or suffering from significant harm are swiftly protected
- The best child protection systems are multi-agency in nature, understood by all and provided by skilled and responsive practitioners. The best safeguarding systems, wherever possible safely prevent cases from requiring child protection intervention.
- **This means....** through the Pathfinder we can design and deliver new expert led multi-agency child protection teams (MACPTs), led by a Child Protection Lead Practitioner. We are also able to increase our Family Group Conferencing offer, and to test how we engage with and improve our communication with, and advocacy for families involved in the CP process.

4. Family Networks

- Local areas should create a culture where family networks are actively involved from the point a child gets a social worker. Children and families should be supported to identify who in their family network could be a source of support and these networks should be empowered to help and support parents and children when they are struggling.
- **This means....** through the Pathfinder we can design and introduce new Family Network Support Packages (FNSP's) to provide practical and financial support to enable family networks to help children stay safe and thrive at home.
- We will design and develop a family group decision-making offer to all eligible families, and work with families and partners to develop family friendly and family led plans.

5. Multi-agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASAs)

- Local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements on Wirral are overseen by the Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP), led by the three statutory safeguarding partners of the Local Authority, Police and Health Economy
- Working Together 2023 sets out revisions to multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, including the introduction of a partnership chair, the development and sharing of a multi-agency vision and determining how we measure impact and undertake scrutiny. The guidance also stresses the importance of the Education sector being central to safeguarding arrangements. We have locally begun to strengthen this with the establishment of an Education Committee. The Pathfinder allows us to test out a greater role for Education as the potential 4th statutory partner, encompassing childcare, early years, all schools and further and education in the arrangements
- **This means....** we can build on our current arrangements and test out what Education as the 4th Statutory Partner would 'look like', how we ensure education and SEND is central to our arrangements, how we can support the sector through the Pathfinder, and how we can develop an innovative model of scrutiny that includes children, young people, families and practitioners in testing and shaping arrangements.

The Essential 7 Min Briefing

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/families-first-for-children-pathfinder/>

Background to the Pathfinder

Three reviews published last year provided a catalyst and vision to transform children's social care.



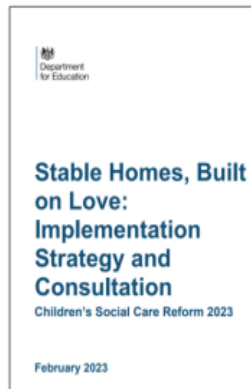
The Independent Review of Children's Social Care



National Review into the murders of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson



The Competition and Markets Authority study into Children's Social Care Placements



In February 2023, the DfE published Stable Homes, Built on Love strategy and consultation, backed by £200m. The strategy sets out a vision to rebalance children's social care away from costly crisis intervention to more meaningful and effective early support.

It included a **£45m commitment** for DfE to establish a pathfinder programme which will **design and test major reforms to children's services** from family help to the edge of care. The pathfinder will be used to work through key questions with multi-agency partners and establish how reforms could work best on the ground.

The DfE are concurrently running a **family network pilot** in 7 local authorities. This will test providing flexible funding for family networks to help keep families together and children out of care where appropriate.



Family Network Support Packages

Guidance for practitioners

What are FNSP's

- Bespoke packages of practical or financial support.
- Tailored to fit each different family's needs.
- The aim is to support children to stay safely at home with the support of family networks.
- It could also be used as an alternative to children living in care.
- Funding can be used for reunification if there are practical or financial barriers in the way.

FNSP's are not

- Not financial support for parents.
- Not designed to replace support or funding which is accessible through a different source, i.e. S17, household fund or charities
- The package of support must be sustainable and not be used for ongoing debts or rent payments.

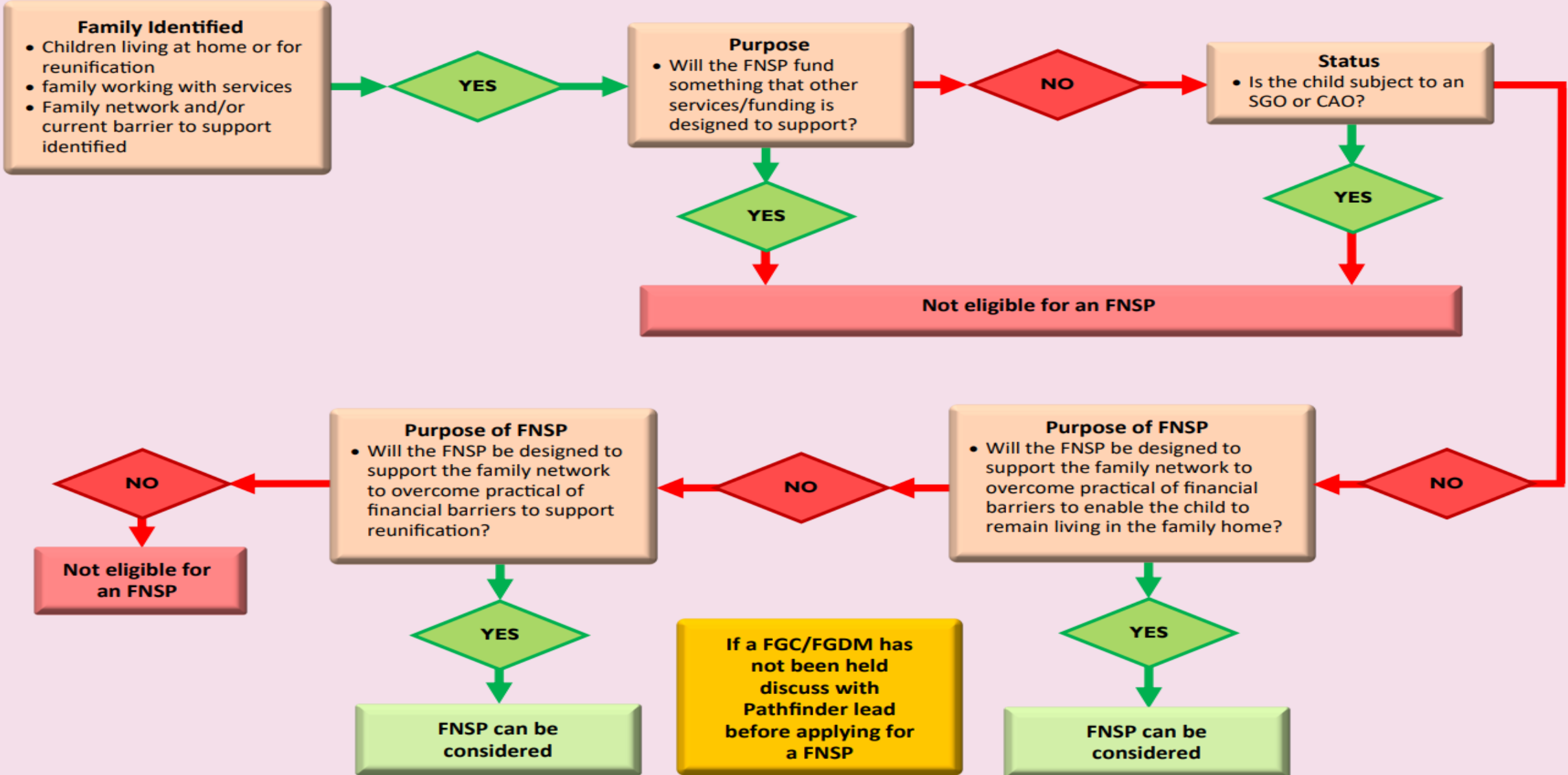
FNSP Team

- Rebecca Hardy-Programme Manager
- Helen Hayes – Commissioning Manager
- Beth Dring – Specialist Business Support Officer
- Liz Adams – Family Network Support Package Officer
- Diane Mulligan – Family Network Support Package Officer

Eligibility

- At least one of the children in the family must be open to Family Help services, e.g. Team around the Family, Child in Need plan, or Child Protection plan.
- There must be a Lead Practitioner Involved.
- The child must normally reside with the birth parent/s.
- If the children are already living with extended family, funding maybe available to maintain this arrangement. This can practical or financial support.
- A package of support can be requested for reunification if it will enable a child to return to their birth family. This can be practical or financial support
- An FGC meeting must have been held and have identified the required support
- Where no family network can be identified please consult with the Pathfinder Programme Lead for Practice, Becks

Family Network Support Packages Eligibility Flowchart



How To Apply

- To apply the Lead Practitioner should complete the application form available on LiquidLogic (Family Network Support Packages Application Form).
- If an FGC meeting has not been held at the time of the application this will be required before the application can be taken forward.
- Completed forms should be assigned to FNSP tray on Liquid Logic

What Happens Next

- The completed application will be considered by the appropriate head of service and the FNSP team.
- Once approved the FNSP team will work with the Lead Professional to finalise and commission the package.
- We may contact you for more information
- The Team are available for consultation if needed.
- You will be contacted in the future to supply a case study to establish the impact and outcomes for the family.

**For further information
please contact:**

The FNSP team on
FNSP@wirral.gov.uk

or visit

www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/fnsp



Any Questions?