



Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership

Families First Partnership (FFP) – Multi-Agency Update

February 2025

Summary of the Programme & Local Workstreams

The Families First Partnership (FFP) is a national programme supporting local areas to deliver a more joined-up, family-focused system of help, support and protection. The objective is to bring together early help and statutory services into a seamless model, strengthen multi-agency safeguarding, and promote family-led decision-making.

At its core, the programme aims to ensure every child receives **the right support at the right time**, through integrated pathways, multidisciplinary practice, and shared accountability across agencies. Many of the aspirations of this national agenda resonate with our local objectives and we have been able to accelerate some of the principles around multi-agency and multi-disciplinary working.

Governance is provided by a multi-agency board which reports directly to the NSCP which includes members from across Children's Services, Public Health, Norfolk and Waveney ICB, Education and Norfolk Constabulary.

Why This Matters for Partners

- **Improved access:** Clearer routes into support for families and professionals.
- **Greater consistency:** Shared planning and assessment frameworks across agencies.
- **Earlier intervention:** Multi-agency teams around families from the start.
- **Better outcomes:** Reduced duplication, improved information flow, and coordinated support.
- **Shared ownership:** Strengthened partner visibility and accountability.

The FFP reforms emphasise multi-agency collaboration, co-production with families, and early, relational support as the foundation for keeping children safe and strengthening families.



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Our Local Focus

Locally, partners are progressing three operational workstreams that align with the national FFP expectations. These workstreams are designed to strengthen integration across agencies, support earlier intervention, and modernise pathways into and through children's services.

Alongside this is a significant programme of activity to update Local Authority systems in order to be able to undertake the statutory reporting required by the programme as well as enable the changes, information sharing and partnership approach to supporting children and families.

Below is a summary of each workstream, its purpose, and the partners involved.

Integrated Front Door

To move towards a **single integrated front door** where all contacts and referrals are triaged consistently, enabling earlier and proportionate help for families.

- Key areas of Work:
 - Development of a Single access route for accessing family services
 - Integrated Multi-Agency Roles at the Front Door
 - Clear referral pathways and improved transitions from Early Help to Family Help
 - Embedding a culture of Continuum of Need
- **Membership:** Norfolk County Council Children's Services (Early Help, Social Care and Education), Norfolk and Waveney ICB, Cambridgeshire Community Services, Norfolk Constabulary



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Family Group Decision Making

To embed a **'family first'** culture in which family networks are engaged at the earliest point of support and throughout the children's social care system, empowering families and prioritising family-led solutions.

- Key areas of Work:
 - Increased use of **Family Group Decision Making (FGDM)** at pre-proceedings and across the whole system.
 - Modelling and strengthening excellent Family Networking practice by FNAs.
 - Improving consistency and quality of practice, supported by QA.
 - Improving data and monitoring of FHDM / FGC activity.
- **Membership:** Norfolk County Council Children's Services (Early Help, Social Care, Court Work Service and Education), Norfolk and Waveney ICB, NSCP - Cambridgeshire Community Services will join the group from March 26

Multi-Agency Child Protection Teams

To establish **multi-agency child protection teams** providing clear, coordinated responses when children face significant harm, ensuring timely decision-making and proportionate action

- Key areas of Work:
 - Establishing dedicated multi-agency child protection teams for both familial harm and risk outside the home.
 - Embedding the **Lead Child Protection Practitioner (LCPP)** role.
 - Clear pathways for plan review and oversight.
 - Improving information sharing and joint planning
- **Membership:** Norfolk County Council Children's Services (Social Care, Court Work Service, Education), Norfolk and Waveney ICB and Cambridgeshire Community Services



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Family's Plan

To design and embed a **unified family plan template** and associated digital, training and system changes that support consistency, shared decision-making and multi-agency working.

- **Key areas of Work:**
 - Unified family plan used across all relevant services
 - Digital tools to support creation, updating and sharing of plans.
 - Strengthening responses to local needs and harms.
 - System enablers such as data sharing, single assessments for CIN and targeted early help, workforce feedback and continuous improvement.
- **Membership:** Work is currently underway with DfE and systems providers nationally to understand the scope and scale of this work and how it will interface with LA systems. Once this is understood the working group will expand to engage with partners.

Alongside the activities in the workstreams above there is also likely to be activities to strengthen the work of our Family Help Teams. Establishing these multi-disciplinary teams is another key strand of the Families First Partnership Programme nationally. These teams were piloted in Norfolk in 2023 and rolled out countywide from September 2024. With support from the NSCP we want to continue to embed and strengthen the reach of these teams to interact with all of the workstreams set out above and ensure the right support is available at the right time.