

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** (Section 149 of the Equality Act) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people carrying out their activities.

The Equality Duty supports good decision making – it encourages public bodies to be more efficient and effective by understanding how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people’s needs. The Council’s Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) includes an assessment of the community safety impact assessment to comply with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act and will enable the Council to better understand the potential impact of proposals and consider mitigating action.

Name or Brief Description of Proposal	Start for Life/Family Hubs
Brief Service Profile (including number of customers)	
<p>Start for life is a commitment to delivering support to families from conception to the age of two to ensure that all children have the best start to life possible. Focus on support with breastfeeding, perinatal mental health and parent-infant relationships are essential elements to a sound start for life offer. Family Hubs are a place-based way of joining up locally in the planning and delivery of support to families. Family hubs offer support to families of children with all ages, 0-19 or up to 25 for families with children with special educational needs and disabilities. Family hubs incorporate the start for life offer.</p> <p>The programme will run until March 2025 and is supported by funding form central government.</p>	
Summary of Impact and Issues	
<p>The service development requirements are broken into six streams. They consist of minimum requirements which must be met, and ‘go further’ options of which we must achieve ‘some’ – to be determined in agreement with the DLUC at the point of signing up to the programme.</p> <p>Streams:</p> <p>1) Parenting Support</p> <p>The parenting support package should consist of provision for new and expectant parents which helps make the transition to parenthood as smooth as possible, and which stresses the importance of sensitive, responsive caregiving. This should include both universal provision and some more targeted programmes available for parents/carers with further needs.</p>	

2) Parent-Infant Relationships and Perinatal mental Health Support

The funding for parent–infant relationships and perinatal mental health support is for parents / carers with mild-moderate mental health needs or who would benefit from universal parent-infant support. Parents should be seamlessly connected to all services in the expectations via their family hub. In practice, there may be some overlap in support for parenting, perinatal mental health, and parent–infant relationships within a family hub. See Annex I for further guidance on the perinatal mental health and parent–infant relationship support.

3) Early Language and Home Learning Environment

The funding for the early language and the HLE service strand will be used to implement targeted, evidence-based interventions that train practitioners to support parents with the HLE. This will support educational recovery and the school readiness of children who were babies during the pandemic.

4) Infant Feeding Support

The funding for infant feeding support will be used to promote breastfeeding and support parents to meet their infant feeding goals. There is limited evidence of the impacts and effectiveness of specific infant feeding services and interventions; nevertheless, it is clear that multicomponent strategies are the most effective way to increase breastfeeding levels. The minimum expectations and ‘go further’ options have been developed on that basis and there will be flexibility to tailor services according to local need.

5) Parent Carer panels

The funding for parent/carer panels will be used to establish parent/carer group(s) to support co-production and co-design of family hub services.

6) Publish Start for Life Offer

To create and publish a start for life offer including digital and hard copy versions.

Potential Positive Impacts

All families need support from time to time to help their babies and children thrive, whether that’s from friends, family, volunteers, or practitioners. Our ambition is for every family to receive the support they need, when they need it. All families should have access to the information and tools they need to care for and interact positively with their babies and children, and to look after their own wellbeing.

Families have told us that they sometimes experience difficulty interacting with the complex service landscape and have to ‘re-tell their story’ to different services and professionals. This is often particularly the case for disadvantaged and vulnerable families. However, there is often no single, non-stigmatising point of access for family services that helps families to navigate and receive the wide-ranging support they need. This gap is reflected in the findings of the Independent Review of Children’s Social Care, published on 23 May 2022, and Ofsted’s thematic inspection of early help services. The Independent Review acknowledged the challenges that can arise when services are delivered in a fragmented way, or when stigma is associated with asking for help. It concluded that this had resulted in a system skewed towards crisis

intervention, resulting in unacceptably poor outcomes for children.

Local services, working together and in partnership with the voluntary, community and faith sectors, all have a vital role to play in supporting families. Professionals often face practical and organisational barriers to working together. Improving join-up between state and non-state services and taking a whole family approach better supports families to access the help they need.

Evidence is clear that identifying risks early and preventing problems from escalating leads to better long-term outcomes. Universal services which are available to all local families who need them can help to spot and respond to issues before they develop into more complex problems. Some families with babies, children and young people will need additional, targeted help. Whatever the need, early identification, support which is easily accessible, and strengthened relationships help to address problems before they get worse. Investing in supporting families to care for their babies, children and young people has an important role to play in reducing health and education disparities right from the start, and improving physical, emotional, cognitive and social outcomes longer term.

Responsible Service Manager	Lesley Weeks
Date	02/09/22
Approved by Senior Manager	Dan Buckle
Date	02/09/2022

Potential Impact

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
Age	This offer is to families of children aged 0-19 or up to 25 for young people with SEND.	N/A
Disability	Centres and services are inclusive and will be available to all people.	N/A
Gender Reassignment	The Family Hub network will be available to all families regardless of gender specification.	N/A
Marriage and Civil Partnership	The Family Hub network will be available to all families regardless of the legal status of their relationships.	N/A
Pregnancy and Maternity	Family Hubs will support parents through pregnancy and delivery of maternity services through close partnership working with	N/A

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
	maternity services.	
Race	The Family Hub network will be available to all families regardless of race.	N/A
Religion or Belief	The Family Hub network will be available to all families regardless of their religion or belief systems.	N/A
Sex	The Family Hub network will be available to all families regardless of sex or gender identity.	N/A
Sexual Orientation	The Family Hub network will be available to all families regardless of individuals sexual orientation.	N/A
Community Safety	We will work with partner agencies as needed to consider any community safety issues.	N/A
Poverty	This is a way of supporting more families who are may face challenges with poverty and associated issues in the City.	N/A
Health & Wellbeing	The Family Hub network will aim to support and improve well-being of parents and families with their interventions.	N/A
Other Significant Impacts	N/A	N/A