



**Sutton** LSCP  
Local Safeguarding  
Children Partnership

# Sutton's Helping Early Strategy

2023 – 2027

**Because we don't have the same chances and support as one another. Because Helping Early can make the most significant difference.**



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# What is the helping early strategy?

This helping early strategy shows you what we, as a whole partnership of services working for children and families in Sutton, have agreed to prioritise and practice together to provide the most effective, earliest help possible over the next four years.

We know that having someone who you trust, when things become too much to cope with on your own, can make all the difference. We know that for too many people, asking for help and receiving the help needed is a complicated experience, often with complex referral processes and waiting times.

There is an increasing strain on daily living costs along with ongoing challenges for families where there has been trauma, big changes in moving Country or area, or emerging additional needs. We know that how services work together to provide the right support at the right time, really matters.

Our primary aim is to support children, young people and families to thrive in Sutton, even when facing difficult circumstances. We want to build an environment that is proactive, that helps people to know that it is OK to ask for help, that it is easy to access information and advice and that shows value and respect for each person and professional.



## What is helping early?

Helping early is about the experience of a family receiving help, by whoever is most appropriate, at the earliest and most helpful point. That means the responsibility of helping early is

across the whole community in Sutton, with particular attention to those with mandatory responsibility for vulnerable children and adults.

Helping early involves all of the below:



‘Early help means ‘providing support as soon as the problem emerges, at any point in the child’s life from the foundation years through to the teenage years.’

**Working Together (2018)**

Reference: Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Department for Education, [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1078299/Early\\_Help\\_System\\_Guide.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1078299/Early_Help_System_Guide.pdf)



## Understanding Helping Early in our Thresholds of Safeguarding

Helping Early is linked to the way we safeguard children too. Our Sutton Threshold Guidance helps to explain the support families receive depending on their level of need. Whilst helping early support will mostly take place at the earliest point when families are just starting to need help (Tier 1 and Tier 2), it can also take place when families stop having support from social care within Tier 3 and Tier 4.

### Our four tiers are:

**TIER  
1**

**Children with no additional needs;** all their health and developmental needs will be met by universal services.

**TIER  
2**

**Children with additional needs,** who may be vulnerable and showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect.

**TIER  
3**

**Children require specialist services** in order to achieve or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development or to prevent significant impairment of their health and development and/or who are disabled

**TIER  
4**

**Children are suffering** or are likely to suffer significant harm.

Full guidance to our Threshold is held on the [LSCP website](#).

## Helping early in Sutton

The situations where you might get Helping Early support could be...

### I am pregnant and need support

- GPs
- Perinatal mental health support through health visiting service
- Health visiting duty line and health visiting
- Hospital based and Community midwives



### I have a new baby

- Infant feeding support groups and 1:1s
- Maternity clinics
- Health visiting
- Parent Groups for the under 1's at 4 Children's Centres across the borough
- Home-Start Sutton 1:1 Volunteer mentoring support for families with children under 5
- Perinatal mental health support through health visiting service

### I am 18 - 25 and not in college, or I don't have a job

- Not in Employment, Education or Training support services at The Quad



### My child has developmental or health needs

- Health Visitor, Community Nursery Nurses and School Nurses
- Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Playwise (portage)
- Education and Childcare providers
- SIASS
- Early Years Advisors
- Children's continence/enuresis
- CAMHS and/or paediatrician
- Specialist school nursing service



### I have a child who doesn't always attend school

- School support
- Attendance Support Teams via Cognus
- Sutton home education support
- STARS
- School nurses

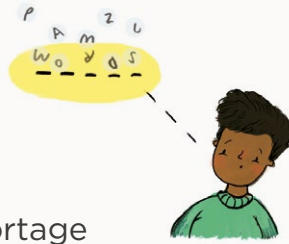
### I am worried my child is at risk of school exclusion

- School inhouse support
- MAPS Mentoring - Building Bridges
- Cognus inclusion team
- Turnaround and Turnaround Plus (Limes)
- School nurses / high impact lead nurse
- School pastoral teams



## My child has special educational needs or a disability and we need extra support

- [Local Offer](#)
- Sutton Parent Carer Forum
- Therapy services (speech and language, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, dietetics)
- Children's Centre services
- Paving the Way
- Short Breaks
- PlayWise and Portage
- Sutton Information Support and Advice Service (SIASS)
- Parenting programmes for autism



## I am worried about my child's mental health

- GP
- School nurse drop-ins for young people in school and family hubs
- Education Wellbeing Service, early intervention CAMHS in schools
- Off the Record
- Kooth
- Piece of Mind Programme-Jigsaw4U
- CAMHS
- School nurses
- Cognus Educational Psychology Service



## I or someone I care for has a problem with drugs or alcohol

- Inspire - Cranstoun



## My child has a problem with drugs or alcohol

- Here4YOUth (Cranstoun)
- Carers Centre
- Switch

## I am worried about my mental health

- GP
- Crisis cafe
- Perinatal mental health support through health visiting service
- Uplift

## I am a young carer

- Sutton Carers Centre work with Young Carers (age 8 and above)
- School Nurses
- Pastoral team at school



### I need help with parenting

- Parenting support team in Sutton running parenting programmes
- Parent coffee mornings/drop-ins
- Online parenting programmes (Solihull)
- Specific advice and guidance for dads at [daddilife.com](http://daddilife.com)
- Home-Start Sutton parenting services
- Education Wellbeing Service, early intervention CAMHS in schools

### I get into conflict with my partner

- Becoming a Parent Together-Reducing parental conflict programme
- Family Ties
- Family Therapy-Therapeutic Hub



### I have a child who is going missing

- Riverside Outreach
- Jigsaw4U
- Children's Services
- Designated Safeguarding Lead at school



### My child has experienced abuse

- Children's Services
- Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre
- Home-Start Sutton Child Protection Advocacy Service

### I have a child at risk of child exploitation

- Sexual health clinic (GUM)
- Riverside Outreach
- MAPS Mentoring - Building Bridges
- Children's services
- Gloves not Guns
- Rescue & Response (St Giles Trust, Abianda)
- PREVENT
- Your Choice Programme - IYS
- School nurses



### I would like advice and support about domestic abuse

- Independent Domestic Abuse Advisers (IDVAs)
- Sutton Women's Centre
- Children's Services
- Cranstoun/Transform

### My child has experienced domestic abuse

- Rae Project
- Children's Services
- Limes College
- Cranstoun/Transform services

### **My parent is involved in crime/ Anti-social behaviour**

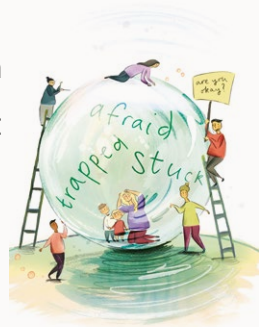
- Glasshouse Project - Jigsaw4U

### **I am worried that my child is getting involved in crime**

- Turnaround Programme
- Youth Justice Service
- MAPS Mentoring- Building Bridges

### **I am worried that my child is getting involved in anti social behaviour**

- Turnaround Programme
- Schools police officers
- People Arise Now
- Riverside Outreach
- Riverside Time Out Youth Project
- MAPS mentoring- Building Bridges
- Police cadets



### **I need help finding a job**

- JobCentre
- Christians Against Poverty - Jobclub



### **We have adopted, are fostering or have special guardianship**

- Sutton Virtual School team
- Adopt South London support
- Kinship Compass



### **I live in temporary accommodation**

- Parenting coffee drop-ins with support from housing and welfare support
- Specialist Health visitor for families in temporary accommodation
- The Pod - for families in temporary accommodation with children 0-5



### **I don't have suitable accommodation or I'm at risk of losing my accommodation**

- Encompass Early Intervention Homeless Prevention Service

### **My parents have told me to leave home**

- Children's Services

### **I am struggling financially**

- Sutton Citizens Advice
- Welfare support drop-ins
- Sutton Foodbank
- Food parcels via Children's Centres and libraries
- Holiday Activities Fund in school holidays
- Family Hub holiday eat & share sessions through London Mayors Fund
- Support with your childcare costs [childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://childcarechoices.gov.uk)





# Celebrating our progress over the last 3 years

- We have invested in Family Hub connector roles, to provide early, relational and ‘no wrong door’ support to families across the borough. Family Hub connectors go out to community groups, attend meetings with families and facilitate drop-ins for families.
- We have developed four family hub spaces in Sutton.
- Evidence based parenting programmes have been jointly funded and rolled out across Sutton. Watch the video to hear what parents say of the parenting programmes; [www.youtube.com/watch?v=12oG71ucbNs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12oG71ucbNs)
- The 0-19 service have been supporting family hub developments, with health visitors providing clinics in new hubs, infant feeding peer support groups and school nurse drop-ins.
- The Education Wellbeing Service, run by Southwest London and St George’s NHS Trust, and part of the wider CAMHS service in Sutton, is now supporting 19 primary schools and 13 secondary schools in Sutton. The service supports schools to adopt a ‘whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing’. The service includes workshops for children & parents, evidence-based early interventions for children with common mental health difficulties and training and advice for school staff and live parent webinars.
- 56% increase in sessions within Children Centre Services.
- Children centre registrations of families living in most 20% deprived areas has increased by 30% in 2022.
- We are offering the Turnaround and Engage diversionary programmes to offer support to Sutton children at the earliest opportunity, when they first come into contact with the Police.
- We have invested in support to keep children engaged and attending mainstream education, with key work support now available in all secondary schools for children identified as being at risk of permanent exclusion.
- We have invested in SENCO clusters - communities of practice aimed at developing our universal and targeted offer for pupils with SEND.
- There has been a 10% increase in take up of the free childcare entitlements for 2 year olds since last year. We now have 70% of our eligible population taking up the entitlement.
- Jointly run midwifery and Health Visiting antenatal clinic for young mums (under 21).
- Trauma informed training delivered to representatives from all Family Hub services and work taking place with schools and children’s social care around trauma informed approaches.

# Our population and their needs



## Population

In the most recent 6 year period (from 2015 - 2020), Sutton experienced the second largest net inflow of children (aged up to 15 years old) of all London boroughs.

This growth has happened despite a decline in the birth rate and seems to have been largely driven by migration of children into the borough.

The 2021 Census identified that over 80 languages are spoken as a first language in Sutton. There are 17% (28,871) households who have members who do not speak English as their first language.

### The top five languages spoken are:

1. Tamil
2. Polish
3. Urdu
4. Bulgarian
5. Romanian

Ethnic inequalities exist in service access and activity across our NHS South West London region, with a range of impacts seen. For example, children and young people from Asian or Asian British groups are under-represented in mental health services and children and young people from minority ethnic groups have a longer length of stay when admitted.

A disproportionate number of applicants for temporary accommodation are from Black backgrounds, accounting for 15% of main applicants, compared to 6% of the population.



Seven neighbourhoods (6%) in Sutton are within the **most deprived 20%** in the country.

They are situated in the wards of:

- Belmont
- Hackbridge
- South Beddington and Roundshaw
- St Helier East
- St Helier West
- Sutton Central

At the end of the financial year 2021-22, it was estimated that

**25.3% of Sutton's children**

aged 0 - 15 were living in poverty in 2020-21.



This equates to **11,032 children and young people**.

**1,959** (4%) children and young people are below the threshold for severe low income and material deprivation.

**5,387** (11%) children and young people are below the threshold for relative low income and material deprivation.



**36.3%** of children aged 10 - 11 are overweight or obese in Sutton

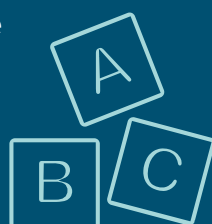


Hospital Admissions as a result of self-harm in 10-24 years is currently at a rate of **276.6 per 100,000**.

On 31st March 2023, there were **637 Sutton families** in temporary accommodation.

In these families there are **1,139 children**.

**34.7%** of children were aged 0 - 4 years.



The Department of Work & Pensions estimates that 12% of children are in couple-parent families where at least one parent has reported relationship distress.

In Sutton this equates to

**5,876 children**.



In 2022 the Mental Health of Children and Young People (MHCYP) survey (Wave 3) found that



**18.0% of children aged 7 to 16 years** had a probable mental disorder.

In Sutton, this equates to **2,450** young people.

The Children's Commissioner for England estimated that the rate of children living with a parent with problem alcohol or drug use in 2019-20 was 40 per 1,000. If this is then applied to Sutton's population it suggests that there are around

**1,959 children in Sutton living with a parent with problem alcohol or drug use.**



### Free School Meal Eligibility

The proportion of pupils eligible for Free Schools Meals (FSM) and permanently excluded has been increasing.



In 2019-20 **41%** of permanently excluded pupils were eligible for FSM. In 2020-21 this had risen to **50%**. In the Autumn term of 2021-22, this had risen again to 80% of permanent exclusions.

Hospital admissions due to substance misuse (15-24 years) have decreased since 2017/18 to **84.6 per 100,000** in 2018/19 - 20/21.



In Sutton, **53.8% of Children receiving Free School Meals achieved a good level of development** compared to 70.2% of children who are not receiving Free School Meals.



The number of offenders has shown a **steady decrease** from 2017-18 (n=74) onwards, with the exception of 2019-20 which saw a brief increase (n=53). In 2021-22, there were 38 offenders.

There were **2,000 children (3.6%)** in Sutton living in workless households in 2017. In 2022 there were **7,000 (an increase of 12.3%)**.

There has been a **34% increase** (2011/12 - 2020/21) in the number of domestic abuse - violence with injury offences reported in Sutton.



In the 2021 Census, there are **15,874** carers reported of which **623 (3.9%)** are aged 5 - 19 years.

Further information can be found on our needs assessment:  
<https://data.sutton.gov.uk/strategic-needs-assessment/>

## The impact of the Coronavirus pandemic

Nationally we are starting to see the longer term impact of the coronavirus pandemic and the environment in which we were living in during the height of the pandemic.

### We now know that:

- Lockdown created a negative impact on speech, language and communication development in children and young people nationally, which we will expect to see in the Early Years Foundation Stage measures.
- There is a higher prevalence of emotional and mental health needs in parents and children with longer referral waiting times, longer lengths of stay and delayed discharges seen nationally and within our South West London area.
- Anxiety and school exclusions for persistent behavioural issues, has increased in primary and secondary age pupils.
- Levels of loneliness and mental health issues have worsened in older young people.



## The cost of living crisis

We have an active multi-agency working group, led by Community Action Sutton looking at the needs of residents and a joined-up response to families struggling as a result of the cost of living crisis.

Sutton Community Works run a foodshop in the St Nicholas Centre, Sutton, to help families and individuals struggling on low income and finding it difficult to make ends meet. Family hub connectors attend the foodshop to provide additional information and support for families.

Children centres are providing free uniform shops and Riverside Community Centre provides a free food cupboard near the St Helier Estate.

However, the needs of families are increasing with the strain of energy bills, food prices, mental health needs;



↑ 45%

Residents contacting Citizens Advice with a debt issue has risen by 45% from June 2022 - June 2023.

↑ 79%

We have seen a significant increase (79%) in food bank referrals, with St Helier and Sutton Central wards recording the highest number of referrals in June 2023.

↑ 18%

There are also increased visits to the Community Food Shop (up 18%) as well as an overall rise in the number of households registering to use the service.

As a result of increased basic needs, Family Hubs have been designed in Sutton to incorporate the support needed for families in accessing what they need. For example, Family Hub Connectors can source free food vouchers and welfare support workers attend Family Hub drop-in groups to provide practical support and advice and information related to debt, budgets and entitlements.

**The helping early priorities are shaped by what we know of the needs of families as a result of the coronavirus pandemic and cost of living crisis.**



## National evidence for helping early

The **first 1001 days** have a profound impact on longer term outcomes for children.

Early intervention has a responsibility in responding to growing income **inequality** and health inequalities in the UK.

Long-term robust evidence of positive outcomes for families through **parenting programmes**.

Early intervention meets **basic needs and growing social support network**.

**Whole Population (universal)** work can shift the whole distribution of risk at a population level.

**Targeted work** addresses inequality and provides additional support to thrive.

# Vision and approach in Sutton

## Vision

Our vision is for every child to be able to grow up in a loving and supportive community and to thrive.

## Our relational approach

‘Early intervention and supporting people to solve the problems they face is all about human relationships. It is relationships which change people, not systems or processes or anything else.’

## Early Intervention Foundation

## A critical part of our strategy is the approach; the way we work.

In Sutton, we want each family to experience a respecting, valuing, listening professional, whichever person they may turn to when asking for help.

### That means we:

#### Create spaces

for drop-ins, tea and coffee.

#### Create flexible ways

for people to be heard, even if they are on waiting lists for support.

#### Prioritise conversation

first over completing referrals. Seek ways that families can lead, working ‘with’ and not ‘to’.

#### Seek to understand

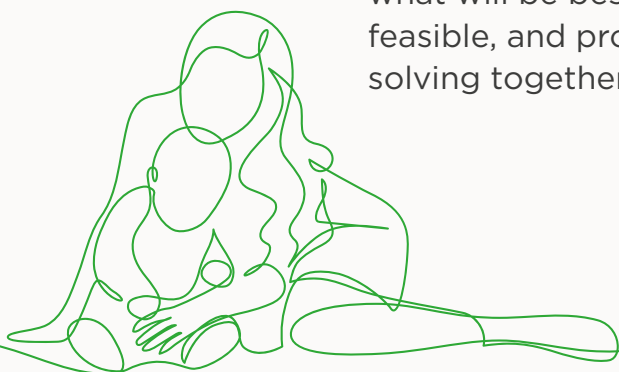
what will be best and feasible, and problem solving together.

#### Consider and value

**the relationships** people have within their family and trusted people in their lives.

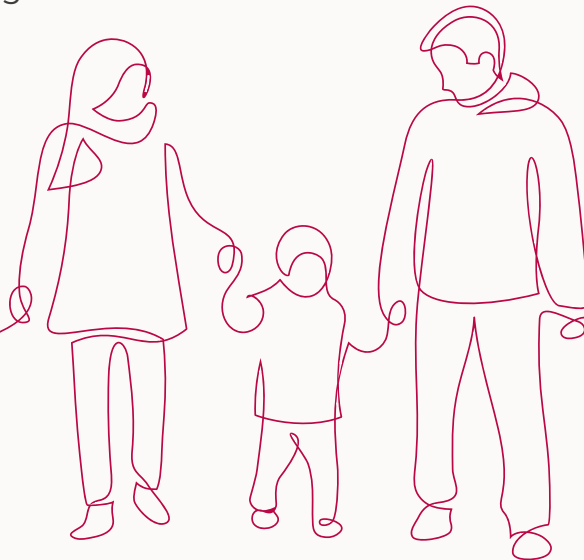
#### Adopt a trauma-informed approach

in our practice, across all early intervention services.



## Examples of what that means in practice;

- We hold coffee sessions in schools for parents to meet Helping Early staff
- Cognus Educational Psychology Service offer phone surgeries where you can seek advice
- New project to improve school readiness for children between 2 years and school entry, allows for early identification of any emerging needs
- We have multiple drop-in points across the borough to come and have tea and speak to parents and family hub staff
- Maternity have been running 'breastfeeding circles' across the borough that provide peer support groups with midwives, for new parents



## Our approach is founded on the following principles:

- Everyone is responsible for helping early
- We listen to what children and families tell us
- We create the time and space to develop trusted relationships to support our approach
- We view children in the context of their families, peer and support networks
- We focus on strengths and communities to bring about and sustain change
- We value the significance of the child's first 1001 days in improving life chances
- Everything we choose to do is based on evidence of both what is needed and of what works
- We are brave enough to stop things that aren't working.

## Strategic priorities for children and families in Sutton

Helping early is embedded in all of the upcoming strategies for children and families in Sutton. This includes:

### 1. Attendance

With increasing numbers of children and young people being absent or severely absent from school in Sutton, we now have an attendance strategy in place, which is a shared responsibility across all of our services for children in Sutton. It includes a focus on whole family working, a focus on early support for mental health and wellbeing and joined up multi-agency working, with improved panels in place to support families.



### 2. Special Educational Needs and Disability

Sutton and Barnardos have embarked on an innovative strategic partnership. The Partnership's overarching goal is to co-design and implement a more consistent and inclusive multidisciplinary model of support for children and young people with SEND and additional needs to improve their outcomes and experiences. The work includes a focus on early identification and intervention through the development of a skilled workforce and excellent leadership.

### 3. Mental Health

The [South West London Mental Health Strategy \(2023\)](#) is focussed on prevention, with specific priorities to provide early support for children and young people, to increase equity of access and to improve timely access to support.

### 4. Youth Justice

Sutton's Youth Justice Service Plan and Strategic Priorities (2023-2025) includes enhancing the preventative offer available to children at risk of coming to Police attention; improving educational/vocational outcomes and health and wellbeing outcomes for children in the youth justice cohort; promoting greater equity and fairness of outcomes; and incorporating the voice and influence of service users in service delivery and governance.

### 5. Early Years

Early intervention is a priority in our [Sutton Health & Care Plan](#), particularly linked to school readiness, family hubs and reach of families living in poverty. The strategic multi-agency group for early years will now sit within the helping early governance structure, and will lead on developing joined up pathways of support, to provide more effective early intervention in a child's first 1001 days.



### Spotlight on attendance:

Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are broad and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families.

As we became aware of the increase in need for children around attendance, we have been working hard to bring about positive change as a partnership. So far we have:

- Developed a multi-agency advisory group, The Strategic Attendance Steering Group (SASG), to help shape our attendance offer and strategy in Sutton.
- Consulted with over 2,000 children, parents, and professionals to understand the needs of our community and barriers to good attendance and have developed an attendance video which was youth led video, for educational purposes.
- Worked with young people to develop the attendance campaign name and strapline.
- We have raised the profile of attendance being 'everyone's business', and have developed an environment where we are all working together
- Every school has been allocated a named Education Welfare Officer
- We have implemented a multi-agency panel to support improved attendance at a systemic and case level.
- Partnered with our police colleagues to implement truancy sweeps.
- Introduced termly attendance network meetings.
- Introduced Early Help Targeted Youth workers into secondary school settings.

# Helping Early Strategy in a page

## Intended outcomes

Below is the change we want to see for families in Sutton, through our helping early work together:

1

### A reduction in escalation of need across tiers

Over time, we expect to see a shift in the level of need for families in Sutton; be that a reduction in families at Tier 3 (complex needs) or Tier 2 (additional needs).

2

### Increased number of families that experience sustained improvements to their identified needs

We will use the Supporting Families outcomes framework to help measure this. (You can find out more about this through this link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-families-programme-guidance-2022-to-2025>)

3

### Increased reach of services to families in need of helping early support, who are ethnically diverse or live in areas of deprivation in Sutton

This will be both in response to the growth in diversity in the borough, and in response to disparities and disproportionality for families who are ethnically diverse in accessing helping early support.

## Helping Early priorities for 2023 - 2027

We have 3 priorities for 2023 - 2027 that work towards our intended outcomes:

### Embed

#### joined up practice

To improve the experience for families when seeking help and to prevent needs from escalating

### Grow

#### the voice and influence of families

To improve our practice, reach and to build social support networks, community resilience

### Improve

#### data maturity

To make our helping early response more effective

# Delivering our strategy

## Priority 1: Embed joined up practice

Over the next 3 years we aim to embed what we have started, so that joined-up practice when seeking help becomes a consistent experience for families across the borough.

The work outlined below will predominantly be seen in the ongoing development of our family hubs, based in our areas of highest deprivation. Over the next three years we expect to see strengthened relationships and collaboration between maternity, health visiting, targeted early help and children centre services in particular; responding to staffing needs, service gaps and the evidence of early support for families in the first 1001 days.

Highlighted below, is the action to practice whole family working and one plan for the family. This is currently practiced in some services but needs to be a consistent practice and plan across the helping early system.

Where we will embed joined-up practice	Objectives
First 1001 days	Develop and deliver a joined-up support offer for the first 1,001 days.
Antenatal support	Review and develop a clear antenatal support pathway.
Attendance and exclusion	Deliver the multi-disciplinary Attendance and Inclusion Strategies.
Trauma-informed practice	Embed the use of trauma-informed practice across universal and targeted helping early services.
Whole family working	Develop and embed into practice the One Family Plan, across universal and targeted helping early services.
Practical support for families living in poverty	Embed early practical support within family hubs for families living in poverty.
Youth work	Expand the provision of universal and targeted youth work.
Emerging additional needs	Expand the joined-up early support for families who have children with emerging additional needs.
Parenting	Expand the parenting support service across Sutton, including programmes for autism and reducing parental conflict.

## Spotlight On Family Hubs

A Family Hub is a 'one-stop shop' for families to access help and support at the earliest opportunity, in their local area. They are for any family with a pre-birth to 19 years old, and up to 25 with a special educational need or disability, with a focus on providing services for families who live in areas of deprivation.

Sutton do not have external funding to support the development of family hubs, but through the Helping Early Board has secured joint- investment through Public Health, Children's Social Care, Education and Integrated Care System to support the ongoing delivery of parenting support, some early years services and family hub transformation.

In Sutton we have four Family Hubs that we are currently developing:

- Wallington Family Hub in Phoenix Leisure Centre, Roundshaw
- Carshalton Family Hub in Tweeddale Children's Centre, St Helier
- Cheam & South Sutton Family Hub in Belmont GP Practice, Shanklin
- Central Sutton Family Hub in Sutton Library, Central Sutton

"My family hub is a safe space to be vulnerable without judgement and it improves my confidence and self-esteem when I'm feeling as though the world is on my shoulders. I need this service and I believe the other parents do too." **Parent**



Family hubs provide integrated support such as:

- A Ukrainian psychotherapy peer support group, with additional housing and family hub connector links
- Teen pregnancy peer support with maternity and health visiting
- Children centre baby groups with family hub connectors
- Conversation groups for families run by Leo Academy, for families new to the borough with parent support links
- Holiday cooking clubs with children centre staff, health visiting and charities supporting
- School nurse drop-ins
- Infant feeding support groups linked with children centre services

Each hub will develop to be tailored to the needs of its local population.

“I’m meeting amazing people and hearing about different experiences. It’s great to be able to give something back to other parents in my community. I feel that I’ve come a long way from where I started 15 months ago. I never thought that I would be leading and volunteering at a parent coffee session.” **Parent**

Through a partnership of local service leads, we have developed the foundations for what family hubs will look like in Sutton, using the Department for Education and Department of Health and Social Care’s [guidance](#).

Please see the theory of change in the Appendices, to understand Sutton’s approach to Family Hubs.

Family hubs form a large part of our helping early strategy; they are the way in which we will become more joined-up and reduce waiting times for children and improve the experience for families in receiving early help.



# Delivering our strategy

## Priority 2: Grow voice and influence of families

We will move from service-specific methods of feedback and participation to a joined-up approach, that allows us to understand family feedback across the system. Alongside this, we will provide multiple ways for families to participate in helping early services.

We will keep increasing the number of parents who are trained to lead our evidence-based parenting programmes, as well as the opportunities for parents to volunteer and work with us.

Through feedback, outreach, and adjusting the way we promote and provide support, we aim to improve our reach to families who are ethnically diverse, and living in areas of deprivation.

Where we will grow the voice and influence of families	Objectives
Feedback	Create a mechanism for collating feedback from families who access helping early services that allow the wider helping early system to hear their experiences, review and respond together.
Youth groups	Increase opportunities for young people to participate in early intervention and shape our response in Sutton.
Parent Volunteers	Provide additional support, training and opportunities for parents to volunteer within universal and targeted early help services, for example, family hubs, children's centre services and the voluntary sector.
Outreach	Provide additional outreach support for families who have traditionally had less access and input into services e.g. families living in areas of deprivation, or who are from minority communities.

## Case study - parenting support programmes

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“I first met Theresa (Parenting support worker) outside Wallington Primary where my children had just started. Initially I thought the lady (Theresa) was asking me to join her, was my new social worker. My environment was new. I was like a fish out of water and very much a deer caught in the headlights.

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I hesitated and asked her if she was indeed my social worker “no love... I’m here to offer help anyway I can for families that need it or maybe don’t even know they need it.

Hesitantly I agreed, not really knowing what or if there was going to be any expectation from me. What ensued was a couple of mums, Theresa and myself, lots of tea and biscuits and general chit chat.

As I sat and heard these ladies who really didn’t know each other from Adam sit back, relax and offload their worries or any questions they may have, not only did I realise I was in safe hands but also how similar some of our stories were.

I hadn’t yet put a voice to what was going on in my life and what my children and I had been through, whether that was through fear of judgement or it becoming real I don’t know, but in those moments I spent with these ladies, I realised we were all just as vulnerable each with our own scenarios going on.

Quite fluently the words spilled out about me leaving a domestically violent relationship and the hurdles I was hitting were laid out bare and my cry for help had finally been heard.

Within the next few days, weeks and months Theresa not only helped me with schooling, housing, and my children’s mental health, she gave me a focus and confidence to know I had a handle on things.

I’ve since been able to take part in parenting courses and expand my knowledge, with a large family I can’t afford to be ignorant because let’s face it nobody knows everything and we can always learn something from someone.

Next year I'm enrolling in a Parent Group Leader course to facilitate the same course I myself took part in and to this day use so many of the strategies and coping mechanisms to enhance my understanding of my boy's emotional needs and to a point my own.

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What I'm trying to say is these coffee sessions and parenting courses are a lifeline for someone. It's a shoulder to cry on.

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I'm now in temporary accommodation, my children are now in school and they've started or had counselling. I've been able to access things I didn't even know existed and am really looking forward to where my new chapter will take me."



# Delivering our strategy

## Priority 3: Improve data maturity

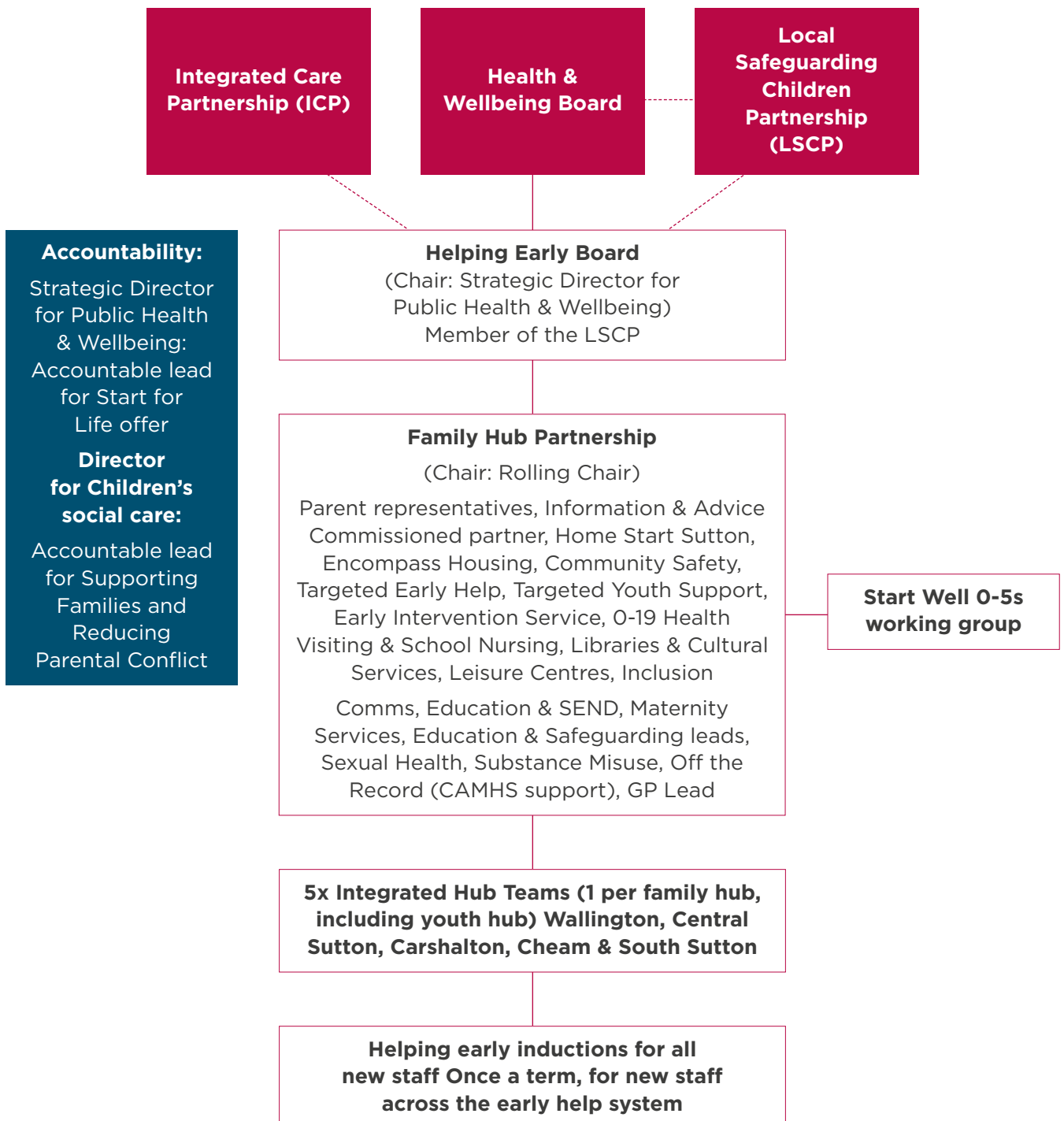
We recognise that we need to move from a place of being able to understand the need of families from within each service, to understanding need as an early help system. We have begun this work by learning from other areas, such as Somerset, and investing in public health analyst time to develop the mechanisms we need as a wider system. The Helping Early Board will oversee the progress of our data maturity.

Where we will improve data maturity	Objectives
<b>The Supporting Families Outcomes Framework</b>	Develop and embed the Supporting Families outcomes framework across universal and targeted early help services, including; health visiting, housing, children centre services and the voluntary sector.
<b>Information sharing</b>	Improve information sharing and develop a shared approach to using data, to monitor and improve services across universal and targeted early help.
<b>Quality assurance</b>	Development of a quality assurance framework across our helping early services.
<b>Online directory</b> <a href="https://suttoninformationhub.org.uk">suttoninformationhub.org.uk</a>	Develop the reach and maintenance of publicly available data on helping early services in Sutton.

## How we'll be accountable

There is a statutory accountability to the LSCP under Working Together and the Local Arrangements. Over the last year, Sutton has developed the following governance framework to enable early intervention to be held as a system. Through the Helping Early Board, there will be system-wide governance, learning and problem solving, to improve our data maturity, voice and influence of children and young people and our joined-up practice.

New integrated hub teams will develop for each Family Hub to ensure that each hub responds to local need and opportunity. Helping early inductions have been running for two years and will continue with facilitation and support from leaders across the family hub partnership.



# Appendices

## Overarching Theory of Change for family hubs:

### The basis for family hubs in Sutton

#### Problems

- Demand for targeted early help services is rising
- Parental mental and physical health needs has increased
- Multiple pathways & processes, linked to not being whole family and lack of joined up working
- Process has been prioritised over trust and relationship
- Not all spaces are accessible

#### Our input

- Joint investment into Family Hubs Transformation
- Physical spaces that can be adapted
- Parent & young people engagement
- Strong governance structure, including parents
- Information sharing development
- Universal parenting offer

#### Assumptions

- Integrated working will simplify pathways, build relationships and provide help earlier for children & families
- Adjusted navigator roles will provide relational support for families and professionals in seeking help early on.
- Agencies will be able to adjust to a 'whole family' model

#### Outputs

- 4 x universal family hub spaces
- 1 x children with disabilities hub
- 1 x Youth hub
- Digital offer through Sutton Information Hub
- Shared inductions for staff
- Shared outcomes framework
- Trauma informed Sutton practice model

#### Outcomes

- Families experience improved pathways to support, compared with pathways to date
- Tested hypothesis that investment in relational, integrated support for children and families, reduces economic costs to communities & financial costs to public services

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