

Family Safeguarding

Questions collated by the Early Years & Education Sub Group answered by Emma Martin & Darren Knibbs

Schools will want to be included from the outset if cases move to be supported in the process. We will want to understand how that involvement will happen.

Q. Do you anticipate changing the threshold and the general windscreen with in this process?

We will develop a continuum of need document with partners. The Threshold doc remains as is currently. There is a need to recognise that CYP move across the windscreen of need and services are therefore in place to meet need appropriately. The windscreen as you currently know it will remain – there may be some changes to language to focus on harm, impairment and the impact of this on the child rather than risk.

Q – SW have confirmed that the threshold will be changing within the LA, or at least the interpretation of it. Can you clarify what changes will be made and how it will now be implemented?

The referral process into Family Connect will remain as it currently is. The model is about focussing on the duties and responsibilities as set out in The CA 1989 with a greater focus on the services we will provide under Section 17.

Q. Are there likely to be changes in how information comes in to the front door and is processed or is that likely to stay as is?

No, this will stay as it currently is, there will continue to be the need for consent for referrals unless significant harm is identified.

Q - Will you still use the children and families assessment tool or will you move to the electronic work book? If so how will you ensure such information is shared with education as we don't have access to protocol and other systems used. (Schools) This may have even greater impact for Early Years settings.

The child and family assessment will still be used as our assessment tool – this is the statutory assessment. Family Safeguarding uses a workbook aligned to the current protocol system which captures information around visits to the family, work undertaken by the Social Worker and Adult Practitioners through their workbook summaries which are completed monthly ahead of groups case supervision. Within the workbook is also an 8 model parenting programme – this is a more in-depth assessment but does not replace the C&F assessment, the outcomes of which determine next steps for the CYP/F and trigger the formal plan for the child.

Q - Group supervision is part of the model. Will this include education? As we're often a key agency completing work with parents and children?

No – group supervision is focussed on the Child's Social Worker and adult practitioners supporting the parents with the family directly related to the identified needs of mental health, substance misuse, and domestic abuse.

Q - Will training be offered to partnership agencies? If so when will this be rolled out?

Training will be available for the adult practitioners who will sit within the co-located Family Safeguarding Teams.

Following the work to develop the continuum of need, there will be training available across the partnership to embed the continuum of need. Moving forward this will be co-facilitated between the Local Authority and Partners.

Frequent newsletters will be sent out to update partners as the model embeds.

Q - Will there be someone from Bee U in the team? If so will this give direct access for children / families engaging in the Hertfordshire model?

No – the specialist practitioners are in the teams to focus on supporting the adults in the family. The Social Worker will be able to undertake more direct with the child and can access consultation from mental health practitioners to support onward referrals to Bee U where needed using a shared language.

Q- Most families on CIN or CP already have vast support from multi agencies children and adults services but are unable to sustain change independently. How is this model going to ensure change is sustained?

The model is underpinned by Motivational Interviewing, central this is working with families to understand the changes that need to be made. We then support them to make these changes using the cycle of change focussing on the cause of behaviours rather than symptoms.

Q- A CIN plan is voluntary how are you going to ensure parents engage?

Using MI techniques, working to engage families with the support that is on offer. The CIN support offer is very different under the Family Safeguarding model due to the adult practitioners that will provide direct support to the adults with a clear focus on improving life for the child. This is strengthened via group supervision and colocation of practitioners.

Q – Why were schools not consulted regarding the process? Unfortunately we had to hear third hand.

The process commenced in 2019 with briefings of senior officers across the partnership. A newsletter will be coming out to Education colleagues shortly. We have been working with partners that support the model by providing adult practitioners.

Q – Will the LA Escalation process remain the same?

The escalation process will remain the same in terms of the Safeguarding Partnership. Usual escalation would be a discussion with Team Managers, Service Managers and then escalate further if not satisfied via the Partnership.

Q – What are the processes for withdrawing support when success criteria have been met? If all agencies pull out at the same time the change is unlikely to be sustained.

Based on need and impact of the support provided there will be gradual reduction of support. There are significant processes in place to focus on the impact of the support being provided. Monthly groups case supervision will focus on the progress children are making. The current process of core group meetings and CIN meetings where step-down is discussed remain part of children's safeguarding processes.