

## Appendix 1

### FPZ Design Principles

#### Overview

“Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child’s life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. Early help can also prevent further problems arising, for example, if it is provided as part of a support plan where a child has returned home to their family from care.”

Working Together To Safeguard Children, March 2015

Family partnership zones deliver early help to identified children, young people and families where a provision of appropriate help can improve outcomes and sustain change. In the longer term, this will reduce dependence on public sector organisations and associated costs of dependence.

This requires system change across key partner agencies and within the county council.

Key to the success of family partnership zone delivery will be establishing a proactive approach to the early identification of families and encouraging conversations that identify the most appropriate agency or professional to deliver an early help offer. The Dorset Families Matter programme is now mainstreamed through family partnership zones.

Our vision for family partnership zones is based on:

- Proactive, intelligence led early intervention
- Restorative practice
- Accountable alliances based on place

#### Key outcomes

We have identified the following key outcomes for children and young people who require early help.

The overarching obsessions for Children Services we wish to demonstrate impact on are:

- Reduction in the number of children subject to child protection plans
- Reduction in the number of children in care
- Reduction in referrals to Children’s Social Care
- Reduction in school exclusions

We want all children to:

- Have capable, confident parents
- Have positive attachments to their parents / carers
- Have families with good emotional and physical health

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- Be ready for transition to school, primary school, middle school, upper school or secondary school
- Have good attendance and engagement in learning and school
- Be prepared for living independently
- Be ready for parenthood
- Be ready for work
- Be able to assess and manage risk
- Become capable and confident adults

Staff in the county council are committed to whole family working and will adopt this approach, building on the approach that Dorset Families Matters have developed.

### **Approach**

Each family partnership zone has, as a central resource, early action teams formed with county council staff. However, the zone workforce is made up of the whole multi-agency partnership within each zone. The delivery of early help adopts a family-centred, whole family approach and supports the development of a strong partnership approach as well as the sharing and pooling of resources.

The zone workforce engages with families and other professionals on the basis of co-production and restorative practice. This may include direct work with the family, supporting other professionals to deliver work, or working with a provider to meet the child's needs. This is achieved by:

- Using the values of restorative practice and a whole family approach to engage with and meeting the needs of vulnerable children and other family members
- Working proactively based on the early identification of vulnerability for children and young people
- Modelling a partnership approach based on agencies being able to have the right conversations at the right time about children and how everyone can pull together to help – instead of conversations about thresholds and escalation

Zones are based on existing patterns of school pyramid co-operation, but it is important to understand that they are fractal and that information can be based on individual schools or neighbourhoods. The zones will enable the accountable alliances to have some economy of scale, but multi-agency groupings and interventions can be planned at a local level.

Our impact is measured through an outcome based accountability model and the aggregation of family outcomes stars. Measures also include cost benefit analysis of services and data on demand for services.

We are developing longitudinal methodology to be able to measure sustainable change.

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### Background

The approach was first developed in Harlem in the USA, and has been the subject of research by Save The Children. The approach was based on simple principles:

- It is hard to raise healthy children in a severely deprived community
- Local agencies and institutions can reverse the impact of deprivation by drawing community members together around common interests and activities

In addition, each child has numerous points in her journey to adulthood, where agencies assess and check on her progress. In most cases, this is confined to a single agency approach, and opportunities for early help around a range of issues are missed.

We want to move from:

- Focussing on a single point in childhood to creating a continuous pipeline of support
- Disconnected approaches led by individual agencies to a strategy uniting partners in the interests of an area's children
- Targeting groups out of context to exploring how to create a "tipping point" for the whole community

Some of this work can grow out of existing initiatives such as children's centres, extended services, and Dorset Families Matter, but more can be done if a zone approach ensures:

- There is a connective role which ensures that everyone is committed to the zone strategy
- Existing resources can be directed to the area focus, and new funds attracted by some partners
- Accountability exists to all the relevant governance bodies within and outside of the zone

This process will challenge all organisations and force them to rethink the leadership and delivery of services, but it does provide a unique opportunity to shift the balance of investment to early help, and the focus of services to real improved outcomes for children and families.

In practical terms, this means both being more intelligence led, and freeing up practitioners to easily get the support in place around families. Existing progress measures such as the age 2 assessment (Ages and Stages Questionnaire), and Key Stage 1 and 2 assessments give an opportunity to cross reference information with other agencies, using a model derived from troubled families, to identify those most in need of extra help. We also need to get agencies working better horizontally so that workers can call in support from their partners without having to escalate issues.

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### Deliverables

We want to create a thriving early help ecosystem. We think it will look like this:

- Business intelligence – a tool is available to multi-agency groups within zones which identifies children and young people who may benefit from an early help offer, and which enables conversations to take place about who is best placed to deliver this offer. It will provide continuous tracking of progress so that children and young people are not trapped within an intervene/withdraw cycle by professionals
- Accountable, local alliances – arrangements will be made to include all local leaders and stakeholders in a group which can mobilise early help, enable positive conversations between agencies, and track progress
- Zone profiles – we will combine data from the BI tool and other sources in order to build a picture of strengths and needs within each zone enabling each accountable alliance to identify priorities for work, and opportunities for local co-production.
- Cross-sector workforce development – a confident and competent workforce will be able to deliver restorative early help to children and families and will adopt a whole family approach
- Single assessment – a single tool will be available to staff inside and outside the county council which will provide a simple and effective way of capturing concerns about vulnerable children and young people, and enabling an effective plan of action to be put in place. They will tell their story once, and this information will be able to be shared with other professionals
- Cost benefit – we will measure cost avoidance and savings at county council and whole system level. we will develop a method for harvesting late intervention savings to reinvest in an expanded early help offer