

Cabinet Member Consultation			
Report title:	Early Intervention model implementation		
Cabinet member(s) consulted	Consulting employee	Mode of consultation	Primary date of consultation
Cllr Val Gibson	Emma Bennett, Director of Children's Services	face to face	30.1.18
Key comments arising from consultation (if applicable): Include as applicable or explain why no consultation undertaken.			



Children, Young People & Families Scrutiny Panel

7 February 2018

Report title	Early Intervention model implementation	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Val Gibson Children & Young People	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable director	Emma Bennett, Children & Young People	
Originating service	Early Intervention	
Accountable employee(s)	Andrew Wolverson	Head of Service - People
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Report to be/has been considered by	Children & Young People Management Team	18 January 2018

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Panel is recommended to:

1. Support the next steps set out in section six of undertaking a route cause analysis to understand how we further achieve our aim of keeping children safely at home
2. Acknowledge the impact of the transformation programme on the 9710 children that Early Intervention have supported April 2016 to December 2017.
3. Endorse the ongoing work to maintain families at an early intervention level which has led to only 10% of cases requiring escalation to social care, achieving the aim of delivering the right services at the right level and right time.
4. Celebrate the recruitment of 37 parent champions and the positive impact this has had, particularly for eight who have moved into employment or are actively seeking jobs.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This report seeks to set out the impact Early Intervention is having on the system transformation within Children's Services and the overarching aim of keeping children safely at home. It will consider the progress made under the four key principles which underpinned the transformation work and sets out the next steps for continued improvement.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 A paper outlining plans for a whole system transformation within Children's Services was initially presented to Cabinet in November 2015 and subsequently approved in February 2016 following consultation with the public and stakeholders. The transformation was built against four key objectives:

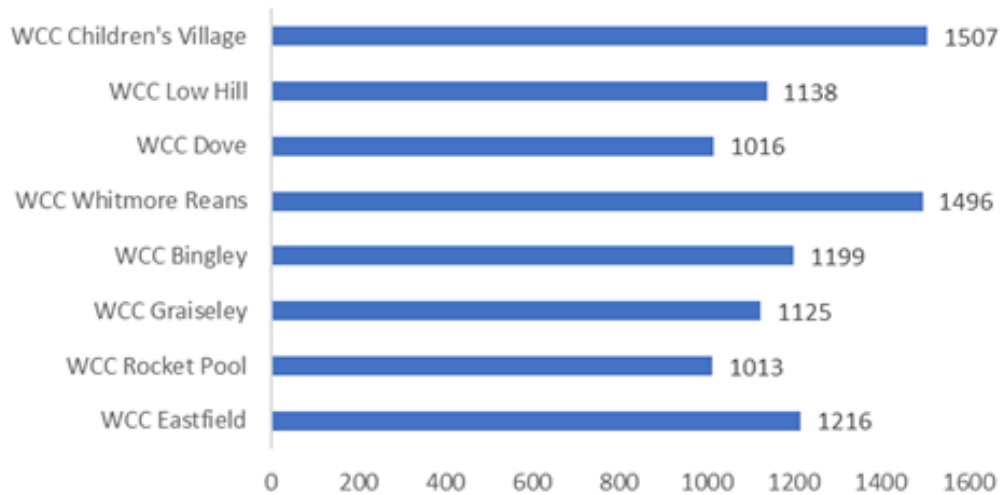
- Work with families to achieve positive and sustainable outcomes, safely preventing family breakdown.
- Be a whole system approach, enabling close working with partners with clarity on roles and responsibilities.
- Build employees' confidence and skills, and empower and support them to work creatively and innovatively with families.
- Provide affordability and enable the financial sustainability of children's services in the future.

- 2.2 The re-structuring and re-shaping of Early Intervention took effect from April 2016 and has continued to be embedded. This has seen the merging of two Early Help services into one 0-18 years service, delivered from eight Strengthening Families Hubs and the integration of an early intervention desk within the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). A universal aspect also continues to be delivered and developed through the Early Years team which supports the continued delivery of a children's centre offer.

3.0 Working with families to achieve positive and sustainable outcomes, safely preventing family breakdown

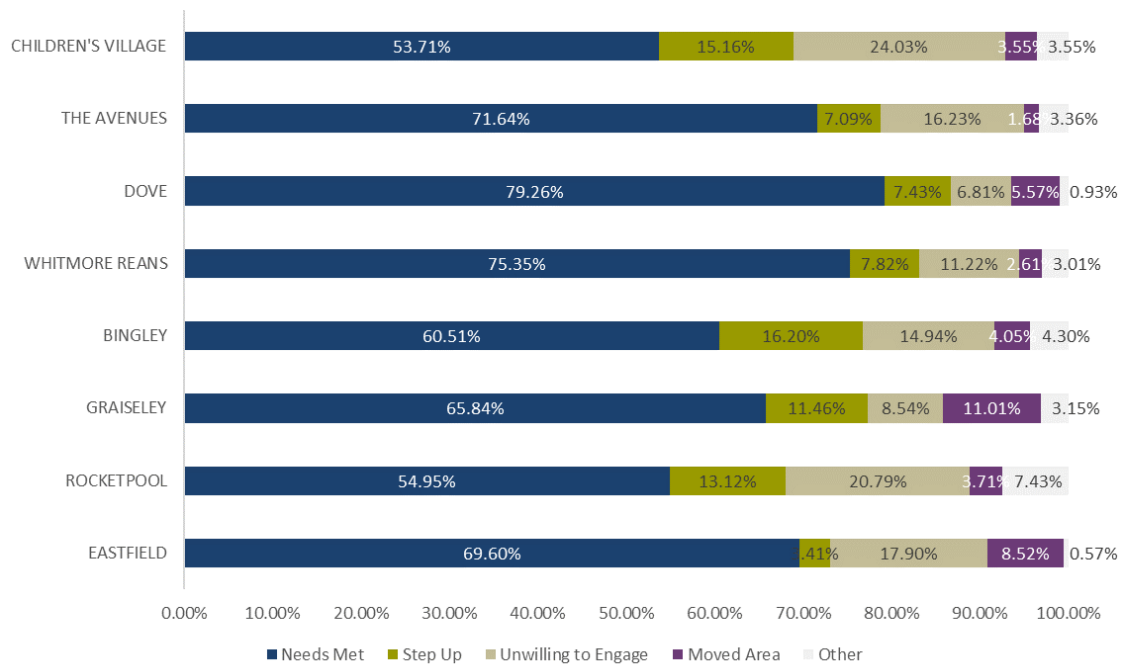
- 3.1 This aspect of the transformation has been a significant focus of development since April 2016 as it is critical to the success of safely keeping children at home.
- 3.2 The following paragraphs will outline some of the areas that have been subject to development or improvement and the impact this is having.
- 3.3 Having developed a more targeted approach to the work carried out by strengthening families' workers, there has been a shift towards whole family working. Between September 2016 and December 2017, the service has worked with 9,710 individual children under 18. As demonstrated in the graph below the two highest areas of demand are Children's Village (Wednesfield) and Whitmore Reans. All other areas have broadly equal demand. The chart below shows the demand for each area:

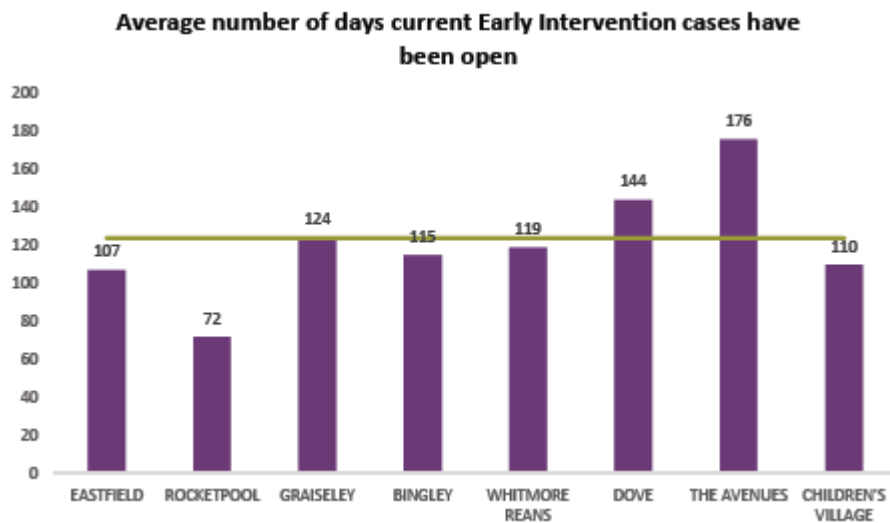
Early Intervention Starts from September 2016



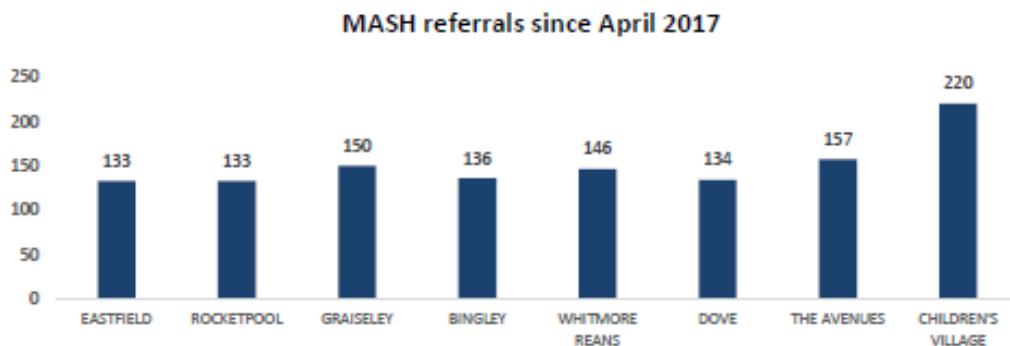
- 3.4 Between April and December 2017, 375 Children have 'Stepped Up' from Early Intervention to Children's Social Care. A positive trend from the data between April 2017 to December 2017, shows that of the cases worked at early intervention level, 65% close with only 10% requiring escalation to social care. This indicates that support is being offered in the majority of cases at the right level and the right time, to prevent families bouncing into more acute services. Bingley, Children's Village, Graiseley and Rocketpool all have above average as seen in the charts below:

Closure outcomes by Locality 17/18





- 3.5 One explanation for the above average step-ups within the areas highlighted could be due to the fact the same areas seem to keep their cases open for the shortest period of time. This could stem from a number of factors including that families are not referred in for early enough support and therefore needs escalate quicker.
- 3.6 A key source of referral for support from early intervention is through the early help desk within the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). In the period April to December 2017, 6038 children were referred from MASH to Early Intervention resulting in 3,236 referrals. It is almost certain that a large majority of these referrals would have previously not received a response through the social care duty and assessment team. In line with caseloads, Children's Village is the highest receiver of referrals with all other areas receiving similar levels. Whilst Graiseley has a slightly higher number of referrals than Whitmore Reans, as in 3.3 Whitmore Reans has a higher long term demand this can be attributed to the needs and complexity of work in this locality. This can be seen in the chart below:



- 3.7 As part of the transformation, an upgraded system for managing and producing early help assessments, Eclipse, was introduced. The Eclipse system is accessible by all agencies responsible for supporting children and families. Since its introduction in October 2017, 4467 Early Help Assessments (DHA's) have been initiated. The table below sets out the number of assessments undertaken by different agencies.

Agency	Numbers Initiated	%
City of Wolverhampton Council	3817	85.45%
School / Education	561	12.56%
Independent / Voluntary	82	1.84%
Health	7	0.16%

- 3.8 Whilst it is recognised that there is further work to do in improving the number of assessments led by the other agencies, the numbers do not reflect that in the main there is good multi-agency collaboration and that other agencies are part of the team around the family.
- 3.9 Despite some positive outcomes each of the localities continues to face challenges specific to their area. These are discussed and action plans put in place to address them through the multi-agency Strengthening Families Partnership groups. The table below sets out the top three issues currently being faced in each locality.

Locality	Top three challenges
Eastfield	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial exclusion and worklessness leading to poor physical or mental health problems.• Neglect, linked to substance misuse/parental mental health.• Lower level domestic abuse accounts for half of all referrals.
Bilston	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial exclusion and worklessness.• Neglect and poor home conditions particularly in families with a child under five.• Emotional health and wellbeing in Young People.
Graiseley	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Domestic Abuse is very prevalent within the area• Supporting No Recourse families due to the high number within the area.• Achieving a good level of development for children 0-5 years
Bingley	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Domestic Abuse• Youth issues (inc young parents; youth violence)• Parental mental health impacting on the ability to adequately meet the needs of the child

Locality	Top three challenges
Whitmore Reans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing the number of Early Help Assessments initiated by Universal partner agencies. Improving the take up of targeted programmes particularly focussed on young people at risk of emerging youth crime issues. Private sector housing impacting on environmental neglect.
Dove	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing the number of Early Help Assessments initiated by Universal partner agencies. Improving the take up of targeted programmes including parenting and Freedom to support case work and better evidence outcomes. The negative impact of poor emotional health and well-being.
Low Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were a number of youth violence incidents over the summer period requiring a co-ordinated response to engaging young people in the locality Ensuring that all children are accessing their free nursery entitlement to address the GLD scores across the locality. There is a growing concern for all local partners with many referrals see DV as the presenting issue.
Children's Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor mental health both for adults and children is having more of an impact on their lives and their ability to achieve. There is a large quantity of temporary housing within the locality and the locality is faced on a weekly basis with ref to address either possible or immediate eviction. Many referrals see DV as a presenting issue. There is also a growing number of unreported incidents within the locality.

- 3.10 As outlined within paragraph 2.2, an ongoing aspect of the early intervention service is the ability to support families in accessing services which will support the best outcomes for the family at the earliest opportunity. The re-structuring created a central team of universal service practitioners who deliver interventions at both group level and on a one-to-one basis.
- 3.11 One of the key targets for the Universal Service practitioners is increasing take-up of the two-year-old nursery offer. Take up of 2 year offer is now consistently between 75 – 80% which is in excess of the Department for Education target of 70%.
- 3.12 Another successful aspect of the transformation has been the creation of parent champions, managed through the Early Years Team. To date 37 have been recruited

and undertaken induction training delivered in partnership with Wolverhampton Adult Education Service.

- 3.13 Some of the real success for individuals has seen eight parent champions move into permanent employment and three actively seeking employment, something they have all stated would have been difficult or not a priority if they have not become parent champions.
- 3.14 The parent champions have engaged with 276 individuals providing signposting for parents to early intervention services such as the two year offer and groups within the community. They also act as advocates for early intervention. In addition to this, they actively recruit additional parent champions across the city.
- 4.0 Being a whole system approach, enabling close working with partners with clarity on roles and responsibilities.**
- 4.1 Work has taken place over the last six months to turn our attention to ensuring the transformation delivers a whole system approach and not just internal re-structuring. This is crucial to ensuring that the council can direct its resources at the families needing targeted support, whilst partners play their part in supporting families through early intervention.
- 4.2 One of the key engagements with partners has been through a series of locality conferences with eight delivered across the localities during October, with 276 partners attending the events. The purpose of the conferences was to inform stakeholders and partners of the offer within the hubs. This consistent message ensured they were aware of processes, protocols and operational delivery available to professionals and families. The introduction of monthly locality surgeries has further strengthened relationships and provides an opportunity to share information and good practice. The locality surgeries also provide an opportunity to ensure cases are kept at the right level with the right support.
- 4.3 Early Intervention has been a key stakeholder in developing the new domestic violence pathway. As part of this, eight strengthening families' workers have been identified as champions, with the key aim of being a single point of contact within the locality for domestic violence reporting from Barnardos screening; ensuring every family has a safety plan in place, including sharing information with schools, collating data to monitor impact and outcomes, and to identify gaps in support to inform future commissioning. In a six month period there have been in excess of 1,200 notifications of Domestic Abuse that have received support from Early Intervention and data shared with schools to.
- 4.4 An exciting development within the strengthening family hubs has been the integration of a dedicated police officer serving two locality areas which will extend to four from February 2018. This has been developed in line with the Police 2020 vision, and a move towards early intervention as opposed to prosecution.

5.0 Build employees' confidence and skills, and empower and support them to work creatively and innovatively with families

- 5.1 A key aspect of the transformation work was to ensure we have employees with the right skills and the right tools to provide the right support to families. A significant amount of input has taken place in this area and at all levels.
- 5.2 The re-structuring has seen the bringing together of a number of employees from different service areas and differing professional skills. Therefore, a number of training sessions have been developed to provide a base knowledge around key areas work within the early intervention service.
- 5.3 The introduction of Restorative Practice as a consistent approach across the children's services has been a major element of this work. Restorative Practice is a high challenge, high support, strength's based approach. All front line practitioners and managers have received three days training with employees who perform support functions receiving one day training.

6.0 Next Steps

- 6.1 Good progress has been made towards the objectives initially established for the transformation programme, however, there is still improvement required to fully realise the overarching aim of keeping children safely at home. Numbers of children who become looked after have plateaued in the last 12 months between 630 and 645. A review of this has taken place and whilst numbers of children becoming looked after hasn't increased compared to last year, numbers leaving the system has reduced.
- 6.2 It is proposed to undertake a route cause analysis exercise before the end of March which will look at the cohorts of children who are requiring support through social care at all levels including child in need, child protection and looked after. The analysis will then review whether resources are sufficiently targeted and what further work needs to be undertaken to achieve the next level reduction in families requiring acute services and the structures required to achieve this.
- 6.3 In addition to this, work will also be undertaken to understand if there are any specific localities that have elevated levels of re-referrals to ensure that cases are not being closed too early and before sustained change is embedded. This will also seek to provide reassurance that agreed step-up/down procedures are being followed.

7.0 Financial implications

- 7.1 The total approved budget for 2017-2018 for Early Intervention and Prevention is £4.8 million. The transformation work sought savings of £2.0 million which were achieved.
- 7.2 In addition to this for the financial year 2017-2018 one off savings of £300,000 are projected predominantly due to vacancies within the structure.

8.0 Legal implications

8.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report. TC/30012018/M

9.0 Equalities implications

- 9.1 The early intervention service has developed an Equalities Plan in line with corporate guidelines and to ensure that the service is identifying and targeting Priority and Excluded groups. The Plan identifies seven key objectives; gathering and analysing data in each Locality to ensure effective targeting of groups; oversight of this by the Locality Partnership Board; Offering Maternity services in each hub; ensuring new community groups are accessing health & education services; ongoing training for staff; capturing the voice of the parent and child and evaluation of service delivery to those with the nine protected characteristics and increasing the uptake of the Two Year Offer to the most hard to reach groups.
- 9.2 These objectives build on some of the current good practices within the Service for example, annual data packs have been used within the 0-5 Service for some time but moving forward the priority and excluded groups list will be reviewed. The Early Years team identified that the take up of the two-year offer was lower than expected amongst BME groups in high deprivation area's and set up an equalities task and finish group. As a result of this an outreach and marketing plan was put into place including having materials translated into other languages, this resulted in an increased take up within the targeted communities from 58% to 71%.

10.0 Environmental implications

10.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

11.0 Human resources implications

11.1 There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

12.0 Corporate landlord implications

12.1 There are no corporate landlord implications arising from this report.