

# Scrutiny Commission

## Early Intervention and Family Safeguarding

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November 2024



West Berkshire  
COUNCIL

# Early Response Hub

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# Early Response Hub (ERH)

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- Our ERH was launched in November 2019 and sits within the front door of Children's Services.
- ERH provides support and intervention to families at the point they need it, with the aim of preventing worries from escalating and preventing the need for statutory services.
- ERH ethos is on a strength-based approach and relationship-based practice, with parents and families to support change

***'The Right Service at the Right Time from the Right Person at the Right Place'***



# Early Response Hub (ERH)

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## ERH service delivery

The ERH has 8 different elements of responsibility:

- **ERH Triage** (responding to families within three days or five days with a home visit),
- **ERH Assessment** (completing Family First level2b assessments),
- **ERH Intervention for statutory child in need** (six weeks of intervention focused on a particular worry or issue),
- **Missing young people and those at risk of exploitation,**
- **Young Carers,**
- **Reducing Parental Conflict** (for co-parenting parent and training for professionals)
- **My Family Plan consultation service,**
- **Family Group Conferences** (and Restorative Conferences)

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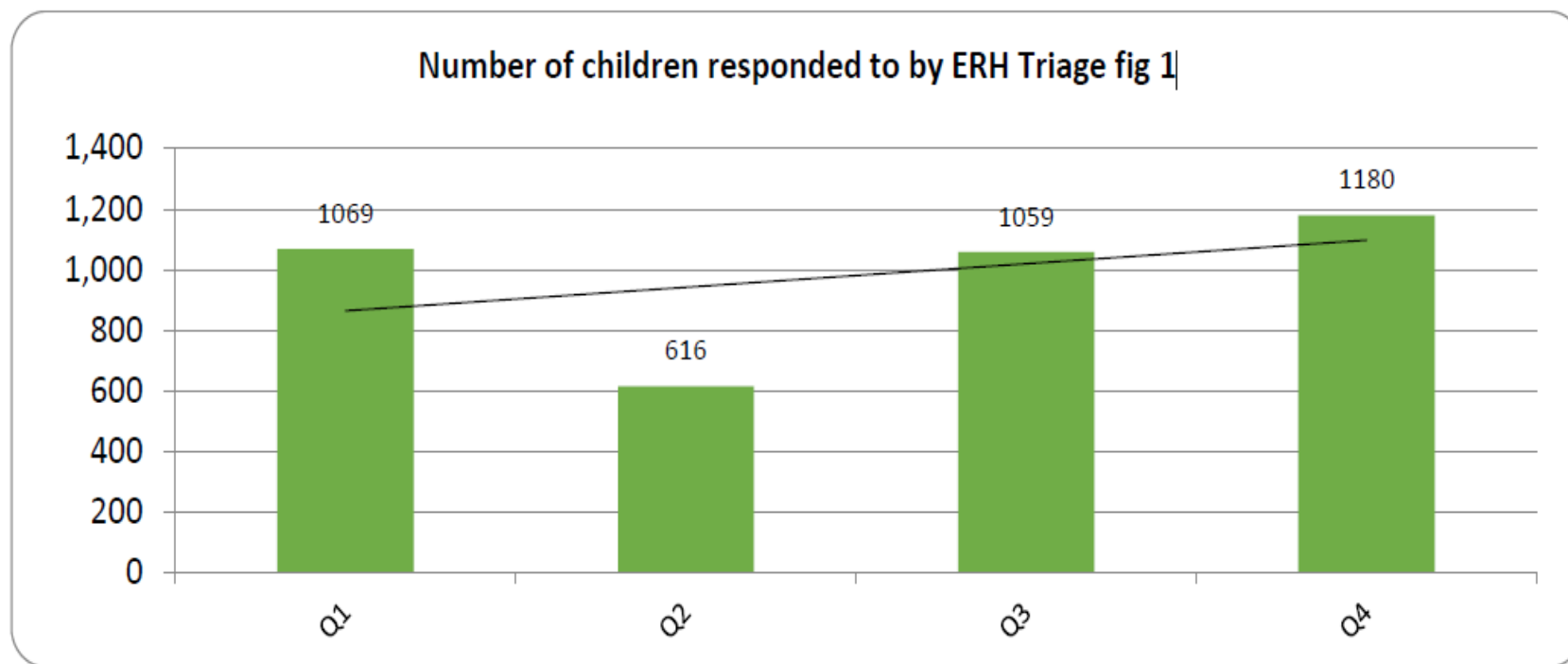
# Partnership Working

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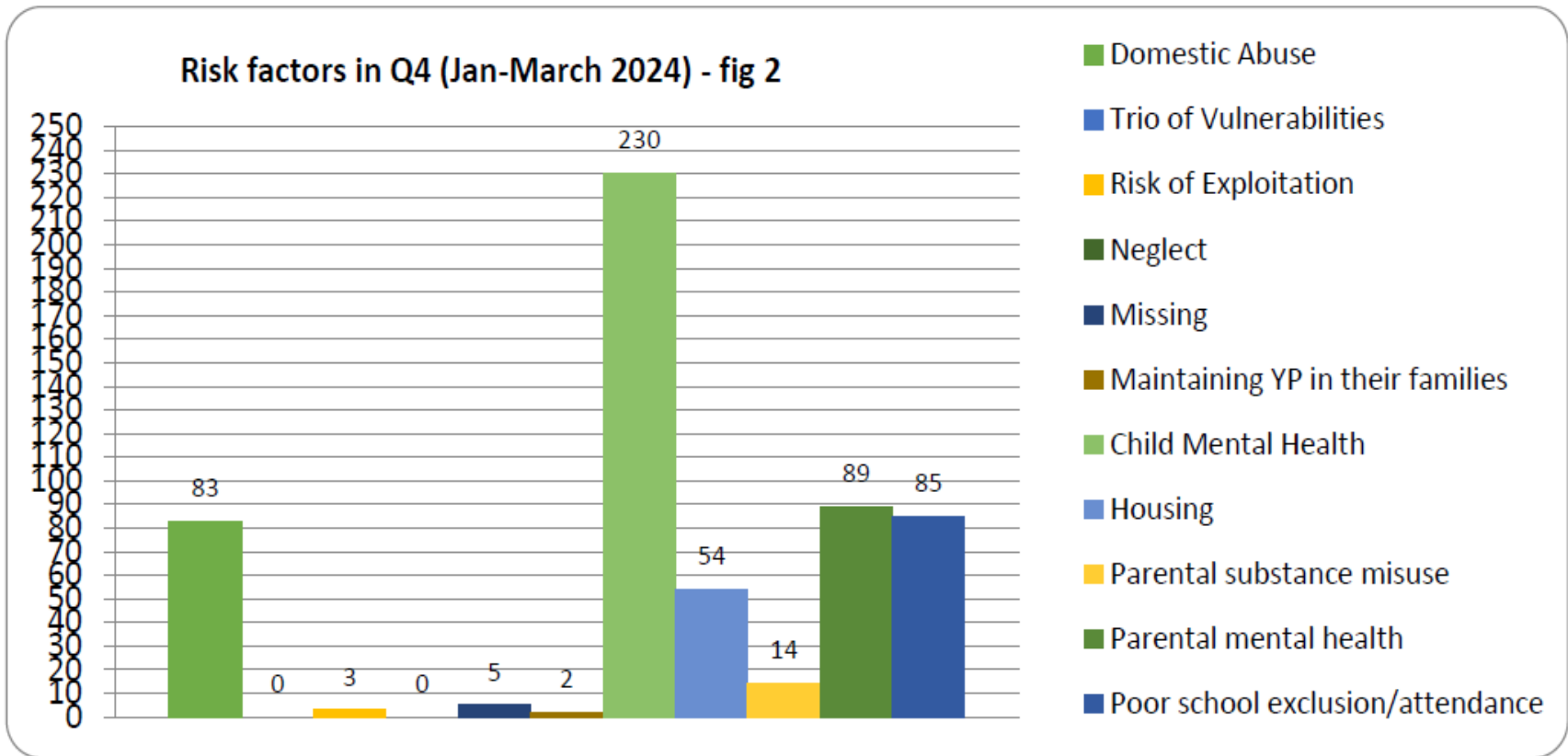
# What our Data Tells Us

ERH Triage responds to families who require a community support plan to respond to their presenting worries/concerns.



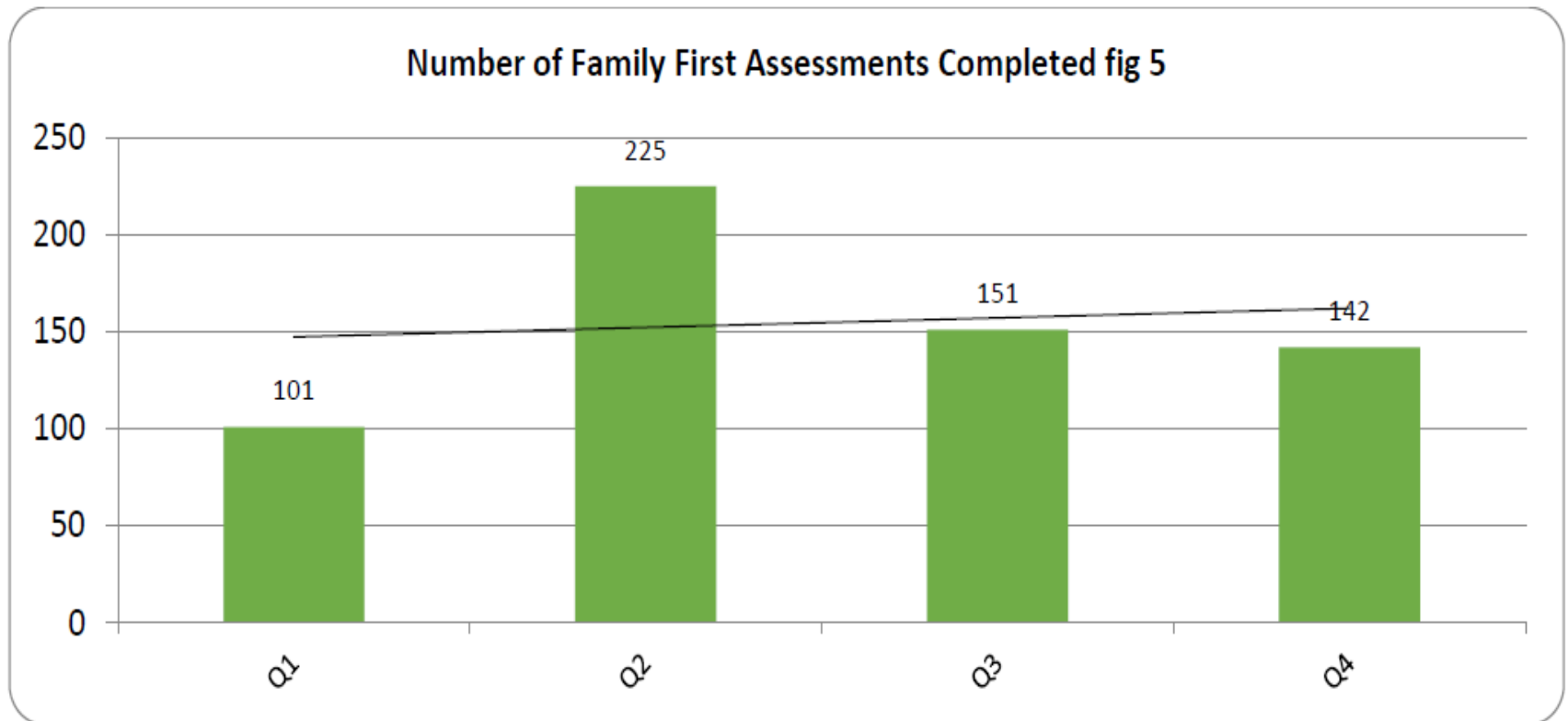
# Risk Factors

## Risk factors identified for families referred in ERH



# Family First Assessments

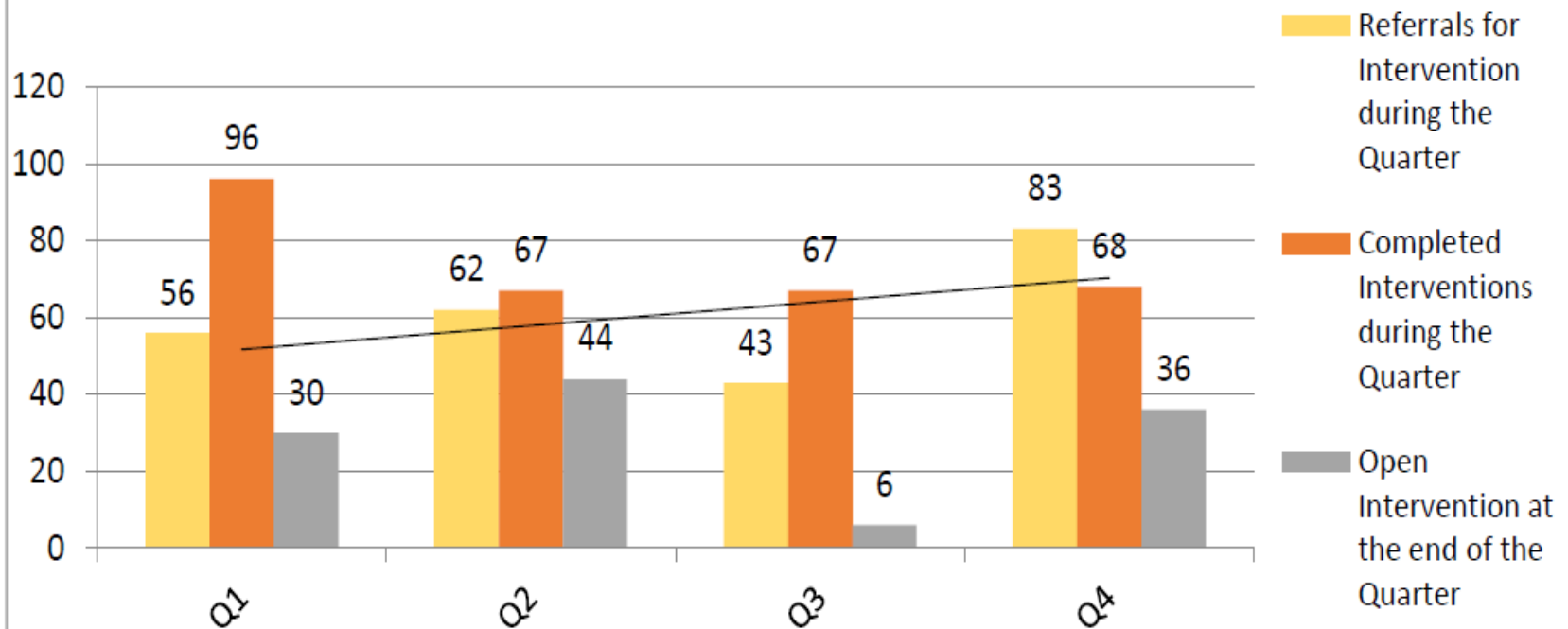
## Family First Assessments



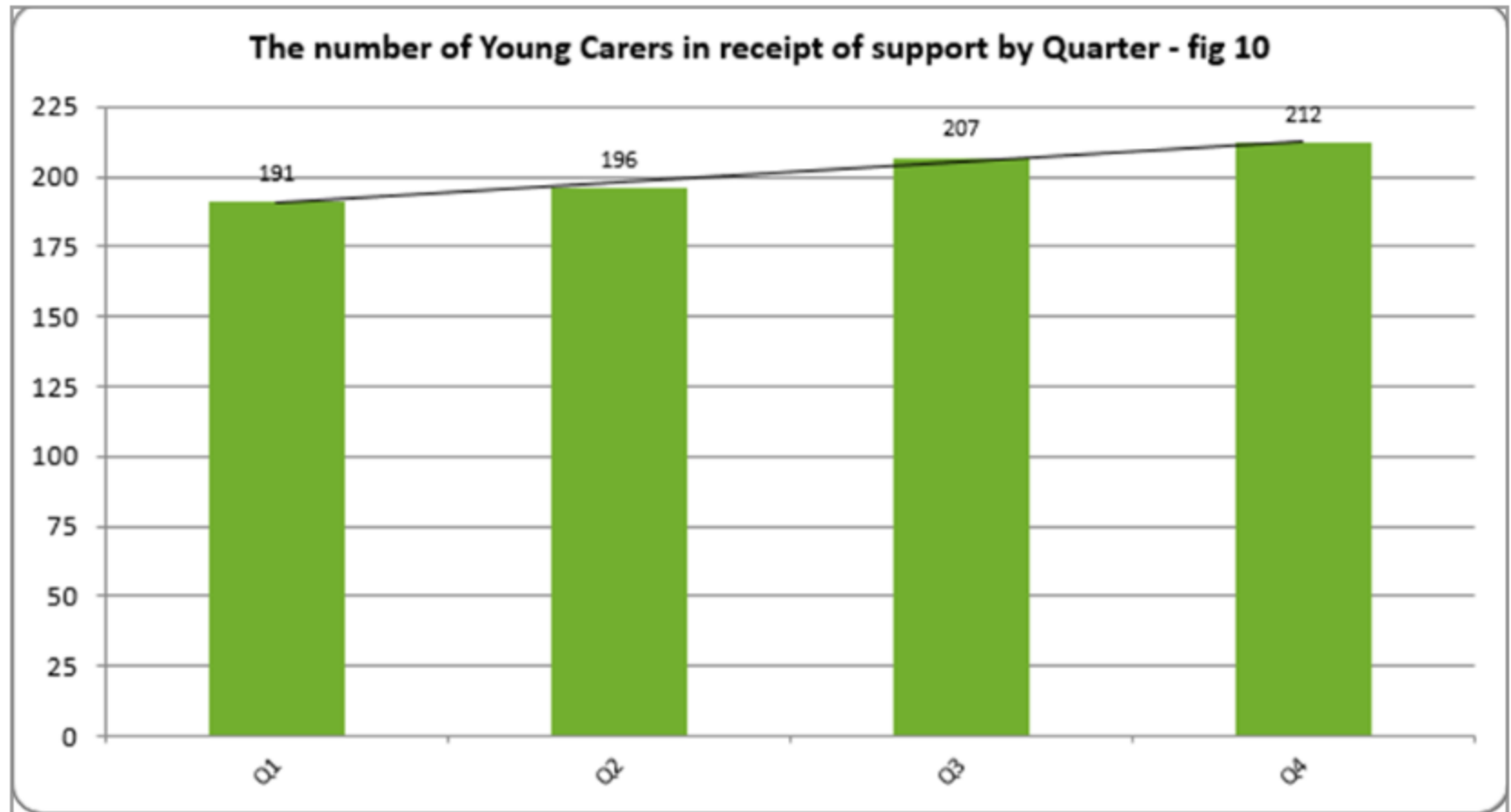


# Intervention

Referrals for Intervention, Completed Interventions and Interventions Currently Underway by quarter - fig 6



# Young Carers



# Early Response

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- ❑ ERH continues to explore ways of working which will best meet the needs of families earlier
- ❑ There are financial challenges which prevents this area developing further, but we also explore and learn all options to support development
- ❑ Some posts are grant funded which will bring further challenges for 2025/26
- ❑ This year we have started a Family Help Model based on new guidance



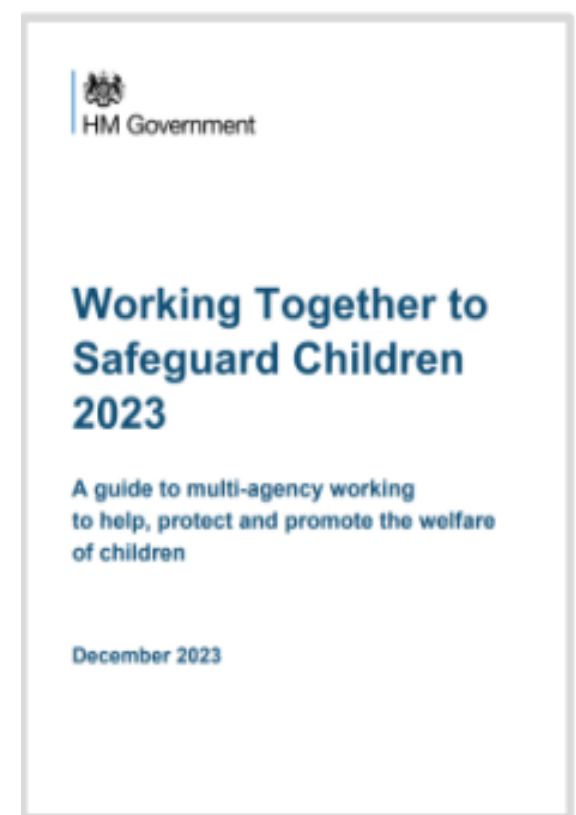
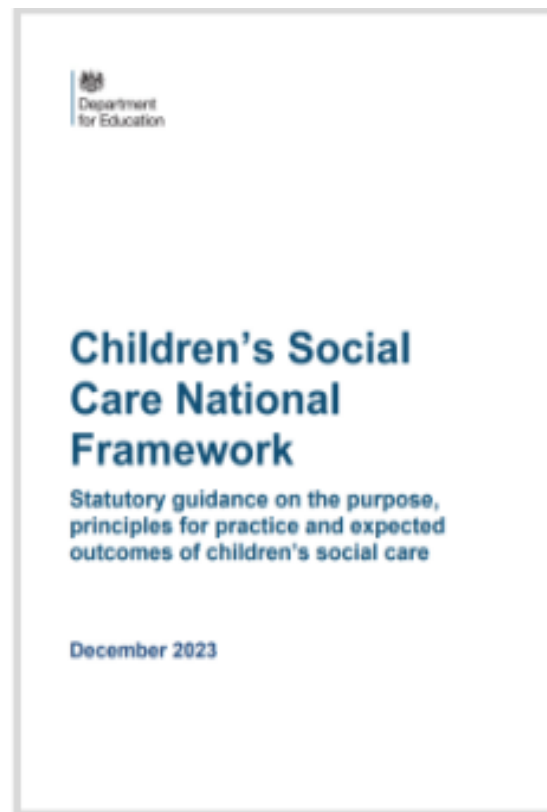
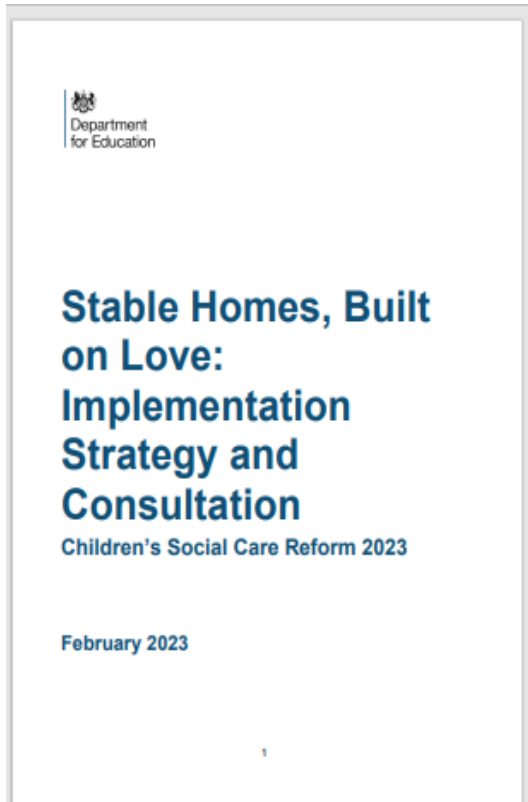
# West Berkshire Children's Services introduction to The Family Help & Achievement Model of Practice

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**Right Service  
Right Time  
Right Person  
Right Place**

# National Drivers for change

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# Our Response

## Introducing .... Family Help and Achievement

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### Relationship-based approach

Focus on building upon strengths and achievements.

Strengthening partnerships.

Complex needs – safely managing and reducing risk.

Collaborative Planning



**WBC** celebrate the introduction of the FHA and its Child and Family Achievements Plans and meetings that align, complement and enhance our responses to children in need. This innovative and transformational model, reflects our commitment to growth and positive development.



In addition, we celebrate the introduction of the 'Spectrum of Children in Need' that reflects our enhanced understanding of this wide and varied cohort of children who require the right level of support at the right time supported by the right people. People include the child, family, wider family, professionals, friends, neighbours, communities, and embraces the opportunity to ensure children have stable, supportive relationships and lifelong links (SHBOL 2023). Our overarching aim is to keep more families safely together



# Spectrum of Need

The Spectrum of need incorporates and is an extension to West Berkshire Children and Families threshold document.

We recognise within the spectrum, 'Children in Need' as one cohort who may require different levels of support at different times.

The development of the Spectrum, is a vital element of the Family Help and Achievement (FHA) model. By streamlining practice and resource we assist fluidity of movement across the threshold in response to the changing needs of families.

Connectedly, we have structured the Contact Advice and Assessment Service and the Early Response Hub to ensure children, young people and their families keep a consistent relationship from people with different expertise whatever their level of need.

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# The Spectrum of Need

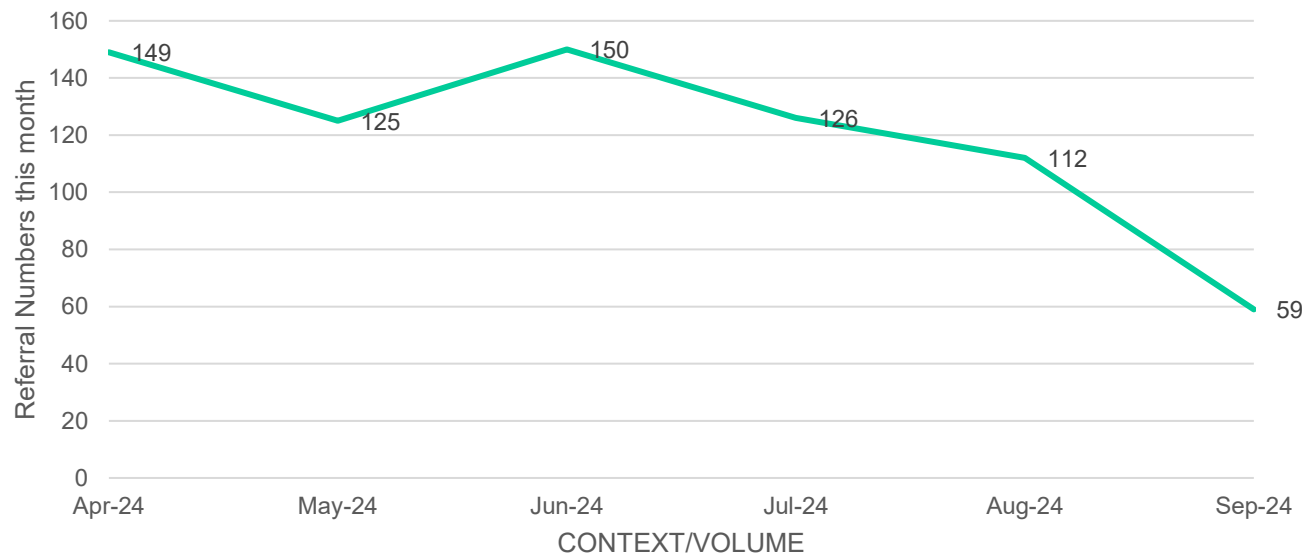
Level 2a – ADDITIONAL NEEDS			Level 2b – MULTIPLE NEEDS			LEVEL 3 – COMPLEX & MULTIPLE NEEDS			LEVEL 4 - ACUTE/SEVERE NEEDS			
Key Areas	5-7	8-10	Key Areas	10-12	13-15	Key Areas	15-16	17-18	19-20	Key Areas	20-22	23-25
Development of baby, child or young person Health	Standard healthcare access	Minor health concerns	Development of baby, child or young person Health	Fewer healthcare engagements	Ongoing health concerns	Development of Baby, Child or Young Person: Health	Appropriate use of health services, engagement with universal services	Child has some chronic/recurring health problems, limited diet/access to food	Serious delay in achieving milestones, unexplained accidents, missed health appointments, unexplained weight gain/loss	Development of baby, child or young person Health	Appropriate use of health services, Engaged with universal services	Disclosure of abuse, severe/chronic health problems, failure to thrive, lack of food, non-accidental injury, FGM
Education and Learning	Regular school attendance	Some learning difficulties	Education and Learning	Some school engagement	Continued learning difficulties	Education and Learning	Good liaison between family and school, engages well in after-school activities	Risk of exclusion, not in education, employment or training post 16	Chronic non-attendance, regular underachievement, permanent exclusion	Education and Learning	Good liaison with family and school, Positive school attendance, Engages in after-school/community activities	Physical/learning disability, out of school/no school, complex learning needs
Emotional and Behavioural Development	Emotional stability	Minor behavioural concerns	Emotional and Behavioural Development	Some emotional challenges	Increasing behavioural concerns	Emotional and Behavioural Development	Appropriate use of emotional health services, engagement with EMRAC	Difficulty coping with emotions, low self-esteem, moderate risk of substance misuse	Mental health issues, self-harming, discrimination, high risk of substance misuse	Emotional and Behavioural Development	Appropriate emotional health services, Referred to Prevent/Channel, known to EMRAC	Acute mental health problems, dangerous behavior, severe challenges
Relationships	Healthy relationships	Early signs of relationship strain	Relationships	Strained relationships	Continued relationship issues	Relationships	Knowledge of/access to sexual health information, engagement with substance misuse services	Difficulty sustaining relationships, experiences persistent bullying, known association with gangs	Poor peer relationships, at risk of exploitation/radicalisation, inconsistent relationships with carers	Relationships	Knowledge/access to sexual health, Engagement with Youth Offending Team	Being exploited, attachment problems, forced marriage, abusive relationship
Parents and Carers	Supportive parenting	Minor parenting difficulties	Parents and Carers	Less supportive parenting	Ongoing parenting difficulties	Parents and Carers: Basic Care, Safety and Protection	Appropriate access to social care support, good attachment between parent/carer and child	Difficulty caring for previous children, inappropriate care arrangements, false/non-compliance with services	Chronic or acute neglect, history of child protection concerns, multiple carers	Parents and Carers	Appropriate access to support, Engagement with voluntary services, Evidence of good attachment with parent/carer	Disclosure of abuse, serious injury, neglect, parents unable to provide good parenting, severe crime
Family History and Functioning	Supportive family	Early signs of family dysfunction	Family History and Functioning	Less supportive family	Continued family dysfunction	Family and Environment Factors: Family History and Functioning	Regular supportive help from extended family, engagement with domestic abuse support services	Family socially isolated, pre-birth assessment where a history of child protection concerns	Domestic abuse, serious physical and mental health difficulties, risk of relationship breakdown leading to need for child to be looked after outside of family network	Family History and Functioning	Regular supportive help, Alternative caring adult, Engagement with domestic abuse services	Persistent domestic abuse, destructive involvement, family criminal activity, chronic substance misuse
Housing and Finance	Stable housing	Early signs of financial strain	Housing and Finance	Less stable housing	Continued financial difficulties					Housing and Finance	Extended family housing support, Accessing welfare rights advice	Unsafe home environment, extreme poverty/debt





# Impact

Decreases in numbers of children progressing for short term statutory assessment

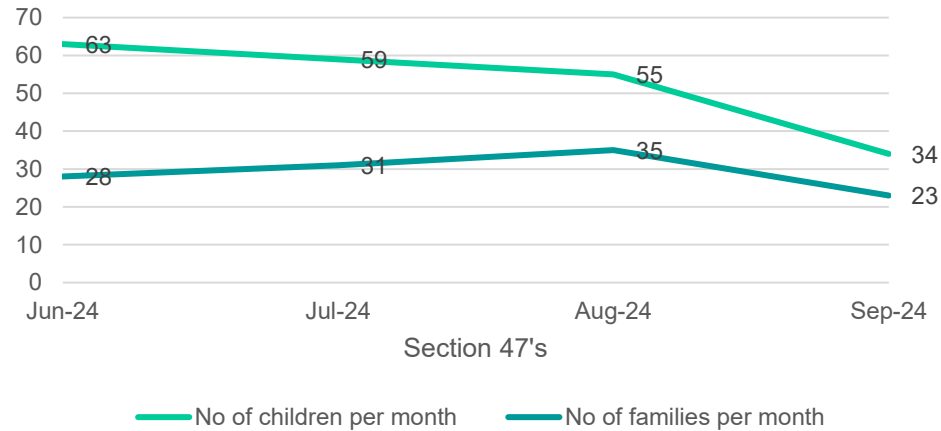


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# Impact

'Reduction in No of children per month', 'No of families per month' by 'Section 47's'



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## Contacts into Children's Services that progress for long term statutory input

Number of contacts received				
	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24
	865	1129	845	966

Number of children progressing for longer term statutory input				
	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24
	11	33	16	10



# What families have told us

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Being part of the solution rather than the problem helped us as a family to move forward

The W family told us- 'how much they appreciated the positivity of their family help and achievement meetings which helped them realise how far they had come and not just focused on the negatives'

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# Next Steps – Family Hubs – what can they bring to the table?



# Family Hubs

- ❑ West Berkshire has 3 Family Hub areas (East, West, Central) providing community access to universal family activities, targeted group and one to one support and a diverse range of offer which recognises the importance of strong resilient families.
  - **Central Family Hub (Thatcham)** which is a Council Hub
  - **East Family Hub (Calcot)** which is a Council Hub
  - **West Family Hub (Newbury)** which is delivered by Victoria Park Nursery School (commissioned)
    - **Hungerford Family Hub** which is a satellite of West Family Hub providing additional support to Hungerford and the West areas such as Lambourn
- ❑ The focus on support for the adults - who are at the heart of stable family life - prevents escalation for many families to statutory services.
- ❑ Partnership work, good knowledge of local resources and excellent relationships all underpin the family hub ethos.
- ❑ There is a focused commitment to “Start for Life” principles acknowledging in our offer the importance of the First 1001 Days.
- ❑ Resourceful income generation and grant applications have secured impactful and diverse opportunities for families. Financial resources are well managed, offer value for money and prudent expenditure on what works and makes the biggest difference and impact for families at this crucial time.
- ❑ West Berkshire Supporting Families Project and Early Response Hub (ERH) work in partnership with Family Hubs to create more seamless early intervention and prevention opportunities for families in need.
- ❑ Link Family Support Worker is based across ERH and Family Hubs 2.5 days per week to further facilitate this.



# Family Hub Offer

- ❑ Targeted 1-2-1 support for families – in the home, community and Family Hubs.
- ❑ Regular open access early intervention sessions for families – e.g. child development, ante-natal and post-natal support, sleep, feeding, play.
- ❑ Regular targeted intervention sessions for families – e.g. SEND drop ins, First Aid, Twins/Multiples, Breastfeeding support, Speech and language.
- ❑ Delivery of Community Learning/Adult education parenting courses – e.g. Self-esteem and assertiveness, Time Out for parents/carers (anger management), Cooking and Nutrition, Transition to School.
- ❑ Partner organisation facilitated sessions – e.g. Health Visitor baby clinic, Midwifery clinic, Time to Talk therapy for children and young people.



# Partner Engagement

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## **Breastfeeding Support Service**

Funded by Public Health and delivered by FSW in collaboration with NHS infant feeding team.

## **NHS provider Services**

Midwifery and Health visiting service operating from Thatcham Hub. Ante natal courses run in collaboration. Health Bus visits Hungerford and Hub FSW work alongside in outreach capacity. Calcot Health Visiting Services operate from Village Hall due to space in Hub.

## **Community Learning**

All parenting courses run by Family Hubs are accredited adult education courses and funded by Community Learning

## **Thatcham Relief in Need**

Charity providing support to families in need to be based at Thatcham Hub from September- positive opportunity to create partnership work arrangement and trial this approach in our Hubs.

## **Young Carers Service**

Scoping activity underway to explore introduction of Young Carers Groups in Thatcham and Calcot Family Hubs. For both younger and older cohorts.

## **Emotional Health Academy**

EHA will now contribute to all Hub run sessions and courses .





# Targeted work and impact



- ❑ There are currently 137 open families being supported by Family Support workers in the Family Hubs. (Oct 2024)
- ❑ Family Hubs work collaboratively with the Early Response Hub (ERH)
  - ❑ Family Hubs are working with 38 families on plans for child protection and children in need who live in their reach area.
  - ❑ Family Hubs attend key professional's meetings such as Initial and Review Child Protection Conferences, Core Group meetings, Looked After Children Reviews, Team Around the Child and Professionals meetings.
- ❑ All children and families referred directly to the Family Hubs are contacted and an offer of support made.
- ❑ The Family Hubs use “My Family Plan”. Currently there are 25 families with an active MFP being led by Family Hub staff.
- ❑ Evidence suggests that Hubs are positively influencing West Berkshire breastfeeding rates, childcare entitlement take up amongst disadvantaged 2 year olds, engagement with fathers.



# Family Hub User Voice

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**Feedback from users of Family Hubs is overwhelmingly positive. Parenting courses, SEND drop ins, Dads groups, targeted intervention sessions are well attended by families in need who then go on to access Hub support on a regular basis.**

- ❑ *I have had lots of 1-1 support over the years and know I can come in at any time when I have issues or am in trouble. Great place to come and get support, also had lots of phone support and home visits, helped with housing, finances, employment, 2yr funding, nursery places, debt, relationships, cooking – weaning, behaviour.*
- ❑ *Made me build as an individual and as a mum. Help my son have the best mum he can and the right way to development as a family... Made me feel wanted and seen.*
- ❑ *It has allowed me a better understanding around parenting, as I have been accessing the Time Out For Parents courses with my family support worker, and I am keen to learn more where possible. Because of the knowledge I have now, that will have an impact on my family life for a more positive result*
  - ❑ *We now live in a secure home. My confidence is growing. My debts are getting sorted.*
    - ❑ *Now I help myself and family to a calm & happier family life.*

# Thank you

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Any Questions



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