

Westmorland & Furness Best Start Family Hubs – Purpose & Vision



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Purpose and Vision

Westmorland & Furness Best Start Family Hubs provide a welcoming, place-based network of support for families from pregnancy through to age 19 (or 25 for young people with SEND).

We aim for every child in Westmorland and Furness to have the best start in life, for every family to feel supported, connected, and empowered to thrive. Best Start Family Hubs are inclusive spaces that bring together services, communities, and opportunities—ensuring help is accessible when it's needed most and that no family is left behind.

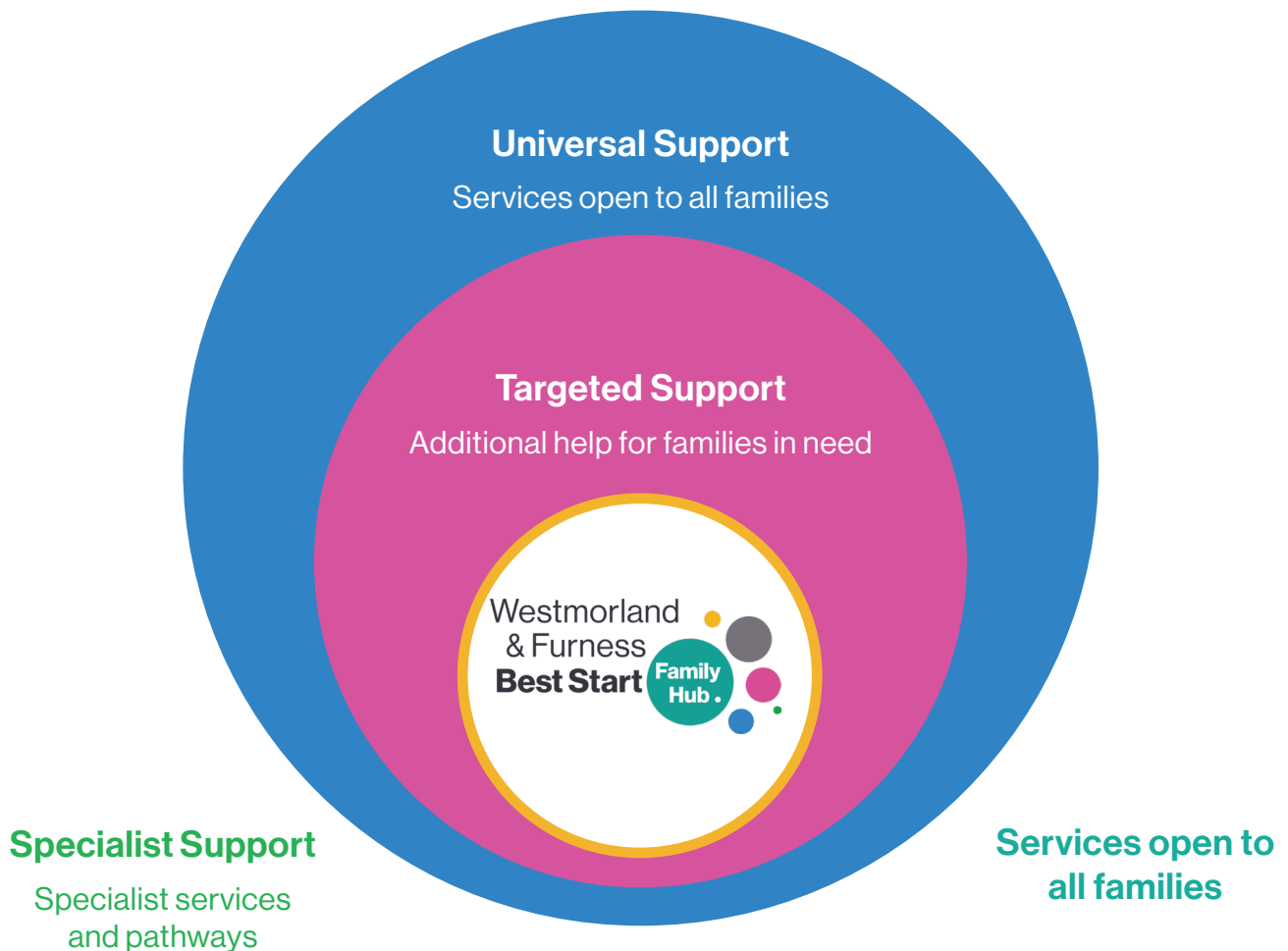
This local offer delivers the national Best Start in Life strategy through a mix of universal, targeted, and specialist support, offered in-person and online.

Mission

To create a joined-up system of support for families from conception to age 19 (or 25 for young people with SEND), integrating health, education, social care, and community services through Best Start Family Hubs and Best Start pathways. We will deliver early help, reduce inequalities, and strengthen family resilience.



Best Start Family Hub Model



Strategic Goals

For each strategic goal, we will set measurable expectations

- **Universal Access** - Every family knows where to go for help and can access support within their local community or digitally.
- **Early Intervention** - Needs are identified early, reducing escalation and supporting children to thrive.
- **Integrated Services** - Building strong partnerships across health, education, social care, community and voluntary sectors for seamless delivery. This will help to ensure families experience a single, joined up system and not multiple handoffs.
- **Community Engagement** - Co-design services with families and communities to reflect local needs and lived experience. We will build on this and strengthen our co-design model.
- **Digital Inclusion and Outreach** - Develop a robust digital offer alongside physical hubs to reach rural and isolated families. We will invest in making sure all families, including those in rural communities and those who face digital barriers, can use our online tools confidently. Digital delivery will complement, never replace, in-person relational support. Families in rural areas or without transport can access the same offer online or brought into their physical community.

How We Deliver (Model and Principles)

- **No wrong door:** Any Family Hub can help you access the full network.
- **Place-based and relational:** Services planned and delivered with communities, putting relationships at the heart of family support.
- **Integrated and evidence-informed:** Joint working across education, health, voluntary and charity sector partners and council teams, aligned to national Best Start in Life reforms.
- **Inclusive and strengths-based:** Adjustments for SEND; culturally competent, accessible practice underpinned by trauma informed staff. We are strengthening early identification pathways for SEND needs, ensuring families receive early, joined up advice and support within universal settings before escalation. Families will experience a seamless connection between Family Hubs and the SEND Local Offer, with clear navigation and co-produced improvements led by parent voices.
- **Family-Centred:** Services designed around family needs, not organisational boundaries.
- **Inclusive and Equitable:** Accessible to all, with targeted support for those facing disadvantage in its' many forms: We recognise the diverse strengths of families across Westmorland & Furness, including kinship carers, young parents, fathers, rural families who may be isolated, families from minority communities and those impacted most heavily by poverty. Our Family Hub services are designed to meet a wide range of needs and reduce barriers to access.
- **Strengths-Based:** Building on family and community strengths to foster resilience.
- **Evidence-Informed:** Using data and best practice to drive continuous improvement. Delivering evidence based programmes with efficacy.

What we do: Best Start Family Hubs serve as comprehensive, integrated support centres, based in local areas delivering:

- Universal and targeted early years support
- Parenting and wellbeing interventions
- Practical advice (financial, housing)
- Multi-agency family help and early intervention services from conception to 19 (25 with SEND)
- SEND-specific support and navigation
- Outreach
- Health services



Who We Support

- Pregnant women and ante-natal and post-natal parents, carers, and wider family members
- Fathers and male caregivers
- Young parents
- Parents and carers of children 0–19 (up to 25 where a young person has SEND)
- Children and young people seeking support with health, wellbeing, learning, or relationships
- Professionals working with families (advice, consultation, co-working and training)

Who we are

Family Hub Manager

Maintain running of several buildings in a district footprint. Manage the team of ISAOs, Practitioners, and volunteer co-ordinators. Build outreach offer, develop strong links with partners and ensure data is accurately collected and recorded.

DWP Work coach to offer tailored support in the community

Information, Support and Advice Officer

Customer service support, administrative duties for the Family Hubs and being the first point of contact. Offer support and advice to families and young people to help them access local services.

Family Hub Practitioner

Develop and deliver high quality universal and targeted activities and deliver group and 1-1 interventions including Portage, parenting with children and their families from pre-birth to 19(25 SEND) in settings and the family home.

Volunteer Coordinator

To work with the community, families, stakeholders and partners to recruit and support a diverse, skilled and experienced volunteer workforce. Work within the wider Family Help and Family Hub teams and partners to develop, promote and support volunteer opportunities to fit the needs of the Family Hubs.

Family Hub Outreach & Lead Outreach Worker

Deliver outreach support & activities, working with partner organisations, stakeholders, families, young people and communities to ensure the Family Hub service is built on the needs of the community. Gaining the voice of families in service delivery.

Family Hub Practitioner Early Years

Develop and deliver high quality universal and targeted activities & deliver group interventions to improve Early Years Foundation Stage Good Level of Development. Focus on toileting, weaning, speech, language & communication. Working from a wide range of settings and venues.



*New roles building on a pilot

How to Access the Westmorland and Furness Best Start Family Hubs

- Self-referral: Walk-in during opening hours or contact your local Hub directly (locations and hours listed online).
- Online booking system to make services accessible to all
- Digital access: Local Family Hubs webpages [Best Start Family Hubs | Westmorland and Furness Council](#)
- and the national Best Start in Life parent hub for trusted guidance and signposting. [Best Start in Life - Best Start in Life](#)

Our Core Offer (Universal Services)

Core offer and Together Towards School:

- Evidence based interventions: Parenting programmes; Solihull (Togetherness) & Invest in Play
- Evidence based interventions PEEP- promote the home learning environment
- Decider Skills
- Baby Massage
- Portage
- Reducing Family Conflict
- Baby Friendly Initiative accreditation
- Benefits advice and welfare support
- Infant feeding advice and support
- SEND advice and support
- Communication pathway
- Potty and toilet training advice



Open to all families; drop-in or book as advertised on website, through the Family Hub or social media pages.

1. Pregnancy and the First 1,001 Days

- Antenatal information, postnatal support, and infant feeding advice, bonding and attachment guidance; safe sleep; early child development.
- Signposting to maternity, health visiting, vaccinations, oral health, and perinatal mental health support.
- HDFT Healthy Child App

2. Child Health and Development

- Stay & Play sessions and early learning activities to promote speech, language, communication, and social development.
- Home learning environment tips and school readiness support.



3. Parenting and Relationships

- Practical parenting advice (routines, boundaries, behaviour).
- Free online learning modules for parents and carers (relationships, mental health, communication).

4. Practical Life Support

- Benefits, money and housing information; childcare choices and eligibility.
- Family Information Service: Family Information Service | Westmorland and Furness Council for advice on childcare options, parent-and-toddler groups, activities.

5. Inclusion and SEND

- Front-door guidance on SEND pathways and navigation to specialist support; adjustments ensure inclusive access to Hub activities. SEND Local Offer Westmorland and Furness Council

6. Community Connection

- Local events, volunteering, youth, and peer networks hosted at Hubs
- Outreach

7. Digital Offer

- Local: Westmorland & Furness [Family Help website](#) [Family Help | Westmorland and Furness Council](#)
- Find a Hub with opening times, booking activities, information, resources and newsletters. Find a [Best Start Family Hub | Westmorland and Furness Council](#)
- National: Best Start in Life parent hub (health advice, early learning tips, eligibility checker for funded childcare, and local service search). [Best Start in Life - Best Start in Life](#)
- Family Information Service [Family Information Service | Westmorland and Furness Council](#)
- HDFT app [Anya - 24/7 Tailored Healthcare Support. Growing Healthy 0-19 Westmorland & Furness | HDFT Childrens Health Service](#)
- Health Padlets [Health and Wellbeing in Schools](#)



Best Start Family Hub Services

Pregnancy and Early Years

Health & Development Advice: Access to antenatal guidance, postnatal care, infant feeding support, bonding and parenting guidance.

- Baby Showers
- Baby Massage
- Infant feeding & breast feeding support
- Healthy Child Sessions – with partners from health services
- Portage

“Stay & Play” Sessions: Facilitated inclusive activities for parents/carers and babies/toddlers to support social interaction and early learning. Promoting home learning, child development and peer support networks.

Communication, Speech and Language:

- Evidence based programmes including PEEP and Wellcomm

Parenting & Emotional Well-Being:

- Family Matters drop in

Parenting Courses & Workshops: In-person and online sessions to build confidence, develop communication skills, and manage behaviour.

- Togetherness (Solihull)
- Invest in Play

Specialist Guidance: Focused support on parental mental health, single parenting, conflict resolution, emotional wellbeing, domestic abuse awareness and divorce/separation.

- Reducing Family Conflict
- Health Visitor support

Family fun days open to all

Health and Well-Being

Health Visitor Advice: Support with child health, developmental milestones, oral health and vaccinations.

Emotional & Mental Support: Referrals to partners who can offer one-on-one guidance for parental and child emotional wellbeing.

- Group support targeted at defined cohorts when required
- Family Matters sessions

Early Learning and Education

Early Years Learning Opportunities: Support to strengthen home as a learning environment, speech and language development, and funded childcare information.

School Readiness Advice: Practical support to help children transition smoothly into primary education.

- Transition sessions
- Together Towards School
- Portage

Practical and Family Life Support

Benefits, Finance & Housing Information: Advice and signposting for families needing financial support or housing assistance.

General Information Service: Helpline, publications, provider brokerage, parent-and-toddler groups, and family activities.

Targeted group support for families through Best Start Family Hub services

1. Targeted Interventions available

- Antenatal information, postnatal support, and infant feeding advice, bonding and attachment guidance; safe sleep; early child development.

2. Specialist Pathways & Liaison - Delivered with partners; access is by referral and assessed need

- Antenatal information, postnatal support, and infant feeding advice, bonding and attachment guidance; safe sleep; early child development.

Targeted Support (Family Help)

Targeted Support (Family Help) for families needing more than universal services additional support can be accessed via self- or professional referral and triaged through the Family Help services.

Through linked Partnership Support team

- Family Assessment (FA) and solution-focused Your Family Plans.
- TAF/TAS (Team Around the Family/Setting) coordination, reviews, and step-up/step-down with statutory services.
- Training and consultation for schools/settings and partners.
- DSL supervision
- MACH-linked Family Help triage for families not requiring a social worker but needing coordinated Family Help multi-agency support.



Outcomes and Measures

We track outcomes in line with national and local priorities:

Success Measures

- Uptake of Family Hub services across all demographics.
- Reduction in referrals to high-cost statutory services.
- Positive feedback from families and partners.
- Increased digital engagement and accessibility.
- Increased proportion of children reaching a Good Level of Development at age 5.
- Improved early communication and language
- Improved parental confidence and mental wellbeing (pre/post measures on parenting and relationship programmes).
- Reduced parental conflict indicators; increased engagement in peer support.
- Increased uptake of immunisations, oral health interventions, and funded childcare offers.
- Improved access and satisfaction for families of children with SEND.
- Family Help effectiveness (step ups/ closures/ re-referrals)

Safeguarding, Information Sharing and Consent

We follow Westmorland & Furness safeguarding policies and the MACH protocol for threshold decisions.

Information is shared with consent unless there is a safeguarding risk; families receive clear privacy notices at the point of engagement.



