

# Strengthening Families, Protecting Children

JUNE 2022  
LEARNING EVENT

## Pre-reading material- Programme Overview

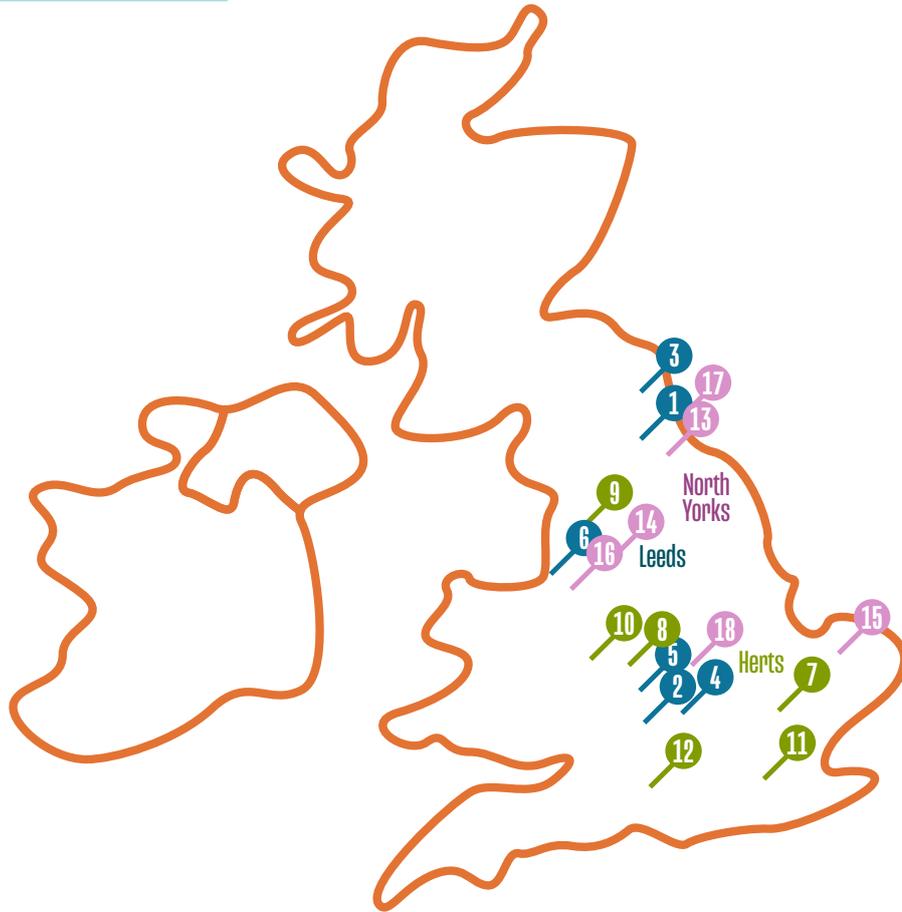
### Strengthening Families, Protecting Children (SFPC)

is a five-year Department for Education programme supporting local authorities to improve their work with families and safely reduce the number of children entering care by implementing successful sector-designed whole-system change models.

Three local authorities have designed and implemented successful new approaches in children's social care and provide on-the-ground support to local authorities implementing their respective models.



# Who is involved?



## The 'innovators'

**LEEDS CITY COUNCIL: FAMILY VALUED**

**HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL: FAMILY SAFEGUARDING**

**NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL: NO WRONG DOOR**

## The 'adopters'

### FAMILY VALUED

1 Darlington Borough Council

2 Warwickshire County Council

3 Newcastle City Council

4 Coventry County Council

5 Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

6 Sefton Council

### FAMILY SAFEGUARDING

7 Cambridgeshire County Council

8 Walsall Council

9 Lancashire County Council

10 Telford & Wrekin Council

11 Wandsworth Borough Council

12 Swindon Borough Council

### NO WRONG DOOR

13 Middlesbrough Council

14 Rochdale Borough Council

15 Norfolk County Council

16 Warrington Borough Council

17 Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council

## THEIR ROLE:

**The 'innovators'** - The innovators are three local authorities who have designed and implemented successful and innovative children's social care models within their own areas. The innovators provide on-the-ground support to local authorities who are implementing their respective models (the adopters). Putting the innovators at the heart of spreading and scaling innovation in this way is in itself an innovative approach.

**The 'adopters'** - The adopters are seventeen local authorities who are adopting the innovations into their local areas. They receive direct support from the innovators to facilitate the successful implementation of the models into their local areas.

# Let's take a closer look at the Strengthening Families, Protecting Children models:

## Family Valued: Leeds City Council

Family Valued (FV) is an approach that seeks to promote relational (restorative) practice. It is underpinned by fostering a clear set of shared values and practice principles which emphasise the strengths and importance of family and is centred on productive working relationships between workers and families, and beyond that with partner agencies and the wider community.

FV is centred on a clear focus on the child and how reform and day-to-day work will improve their outcomes. FV is underpinned by the relational principle of working with children and families, rather than doing things to or for them. It is designed to function as a whole system change across children's services, whereby practitioners, teams and wider partnerships' practice is shaped and informed by shared restorative language, culture, behaviours and ways of working. There are four core strands within the FV approach:

1. A foundation of restorative practice training for all staff and managers to develop and embed shared relational and restorative language, values, principles and practices.
2. An intensive programme of leadership, culture and practice development. This begins with working with all levels of leadership and managers to promote their role in driving culture change, organisational reform and practice leadership. This is then supplemented by a wider programme of practice development for practitioners, aiming to provide practical tools to apply relational theory to daily practice and promoting restorative high support and challenge in reflection and supervision.
3. Creation or expansion of the Family Group Conference (FGC) service, in order to assert the right of families to develop their own solutions, to provide practical support for them to do so wherever it is possible and safe for the child; and to act as a catalyst within the local system in promoting changing practice. The aim is that, over time, all families should be offered an FGC before the local authority undertakes any statutory intervention (unless this would potentially place a child at significant risk). This scaling of FGC had not been previously seen in the UK, and builds on work already undertaken and evidence of what works to take restorative practice to a much wider scale across, and beyond, children's services.
4. Work with local leaders to critically review local systems and structures and identify where reform or investment is needed in order to help reduce pressures and create the time and space for relational working. This is tailored to the needs of each local authority and might include such areas as the Front Door; restorative approaches to domestic violence or the functioning of the Independent Reviewing Officer role.

You can read more about this model [here](#)

## Family Safeguarding: Hertfordshire County Council

Family Safeguarding is a whole family, strengths-based approach to child protection. Our child safeguarding work is undertaken by children's social workers, adult mental health practitioners, substance misuse and probation officers, working together as one team. Together, we combine our knowledge and expertise to assess the needs of the whole family, providing services to meet those needs and supporting parents to achieve sustained change for themselves and their children. By meeting the needs of parents and developing their confidence, we can successfully reduce risk to children and reduce the need for children to come into care.

The teams use Motivational Interviewing (MI) as a shared model of practice. MI is a strengths-based conversational approach to counselling that encourages families to improve their child's welfare by enhancing their readiness for change. The key elements of MI are developing a partnership between the worker and the parent; drawing out the parent's thoughts and ideas about change and emphasising their autonomy, whilst recognising that the true power and responsibility of change, sits with them. We provide perpetrator, recovery and cognitive behavioural therapy programmes from within our teams, rather than referring parents/carers elsewhere and we make it as easy as we can for them to access help. Recording has been transformed by developing the Family Safeguarding Workbook that guides the social work practice with families and makes it more purposeful as well as providing space for all practitioners involved with the family to contribute to analysis, planning and sharing the decision making. We have reduced bureaucracy to a minimum to free up time for practitioners to spend more time in direct work with children and families.

You can read more about this model [here](#)

## No Wrong Door: North Yorkshire County Council

No Wrong Door® (NWD) is an integrated service and approach to supporting adolescents in or on the edge of care. The model combines a defined culture and practice with a range of services, support and accommodation options and a team of specialists working together through a shared practice framework. At the heart of the model is a residential Hub, which provides short-term placements and outreach (Edge of Care) support.

Adopting the approach requires a focus on creating the outcomes we want for young people in the future. The North Yorkshire NWD team has developed a set of commitments that underpin and inform the model, as a starting point for all looking to adopt or adapt the approach.



## These are:

- Ten Distinguishers™ - the practical elements that define the operating model and set it apart from traditional services, ensuring that No Wrong Door stays true to its vision and aims.
- Eight Non-Negotiables™ - the essential values, principles and ways of working without which a model ceases to be faithful to the No Wrong Door approach.
- Four Provocations™ - to guide every day discussions about individual young people in relation to what we call the 'drum beat' of the culture change required.

In North Yorkshire, NWD supports adolescents aged 12-25. The goal is to reduce the number of young people coming into care, and to support those in care to find permanence in a family setting through long-term foster care, reunification with their families or independence. Operating from two Hubs, NWD in North Yorkshire brings together a variety of accommodation options, a range of services and outreach support under one management umbrella, addressing young people's needs within a single team.

Each Hub works with around 40 young people at any one time. At the heart of the approach is the key worker's relationship with the young person. First and foremost the key worker gets to know the young person and works with them to develop and deliver a plan of support. This is based on the young person's needs and aspirations, whilst also allowing for areas they may need to develop. With the support of the multidisciplinary team, the worker draws on a range of accommodation options, services and outreach support to meet the young person's needs and support them to achieve their goals. 50% of young people with a NWD worker said they would go to them first in a time of crisis.

You can read more about this model [here](#)

This two day national online learning event is a key opportunity to learn more about the three Strengthening Families, Protecting Children models and their effectiveness. Over the two days you will have a chance to choose which sessions you would like to attend to learn from the Innovator authorities behind each of the models, as well as from some of the authorities who are successfully adopting them. There will also be opportunities to hear and discuss insights about effective support for families from across the SFPC programme.

This event will be of interest to any local authority interested in adopting or learning more about the models, as well as those working in relevant policy areas.