GOV.UK

⌄ **Topics**   ⌄ **Government activity**

Department
for Education

Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

Guidance

Chapter 2: Delivering Supporting Families

Published 2 April 2022

Applies to England

Contents

Supporting Families programme guidance 2022 to 2025

What does this document cover?

Guidance relating to the delivery of Supporting Families in 2022-25

Who is it for?

Intended for use by local authority Supporting Families teams and their partners, auditors and analysts.

🖶 Print this page

Local Authority sign up commitments

As part of the sign-up process for Supporting Families from April 2022, all upper-tier local authority Chief Executives will be asked to make several key commitments. The release of programme funding will be dependent upon agreement of these conditions and performance against these conditions will be considered before further funding is released.

Detailed Sign-Up Conditions

Performance requirements	To achieve successful outcomes with the minimum number of families allocated each year within the three-year programme by the end of March 2025. Those who meet the minimum number of successful outcomes early will be expected to continue to provide progress information (families worked with and outcomes) up to the end of March 2025. Submit quarterly progress information To adhere to the full Supporting Families programme guidance
Resourcing the programme	To provide sufficient coordination to successfully deliver the programme and achieve these sign-up commitments, all local authorities must nominate a Senior Responsible Officer of at least Assistant Director level. The SRO should: • Provide strategic oversight of the delivery of the programme in the local area, and be a champion of high-quality whole family working • Work closely with relevant agencies and partners to develop and maintain a robust system of family support, and rebalance the system towards prevention and early intervention, that offers value for money for local authorities • Be responsible for strategically aligning Supporting Families with all programmes and projects being developed/delivered in the Early Help space such as Family Hubs, Start for life, Reducing Parental Conflict, Violence Reduction Units and SAFE taskforces/Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforces • Lead the annual self-assessment process against the EHSG. Local authorities must also nominate a Supporting Families Co-ordinator. The SFC should: • Provide operational leadership for the programme across the partnership. This should include the promotion of whole family working and achieving successful family outcomes. • To consider user experience and feedback when developing and delivering services for families • Provide co-ordination across to other relevant national government programmes. • Ensure information on family needs and successful family outcomes achieved is reported to the partnership and data governance boards to inform commissioning decisions. • Leading the programme should be a substantive part of the SFCs role All local authorities should be assured that they have sufficient data resource aligned to the Supporting Families programme to continue

to progress against data maturity milestones as set out in the EHSG. Data teams could be integrated in strategic commissioning or business intelligence teams with oversight and/or management from a data lead. Data leads should report into the data governance board, coordinate the work of the team and facilitate data developments and sharing. The data lead should work closely and reports into the SFC/SRO. This ensures that a local authority is supported by a data team integrated in the wider analytics associated with Early Help and Statutory Childrens' Services and that their main focus remains on the delivery of strong performance data and analytics to continue to develop the Supporting Families approach.

Funding is intended to be used for the delivery of intensive family support and developing the maturity of your Early Help system. This should be driven by evidence and data and use of funding should be discussed and agreed with local partners.

Funding decisions should be driven by evidence and data with consideration given to the use of evidence-based services that are aligned with data on local need.

Service and data transformation	To work with partners, to complete a self-assessment against the refreshed EHSG and identify three descriptors you will work towards in the coming year. Areas should refer to the programme guidance to support identification of the descriptors. The assessment should be with the national team no later than 1 July 2022 and should be signed off by your partnership responsible for Early Help, LA Chief Executive, Directors of Children's Services and key partners involved in the assessment for example the police, representatives of the voluntary and community sector, schools and health visitors, in addition to the council's own services including housing, social care and wider children's services.

The EHSG will help you integrate and transform local public services to embed whole family working and re-balance the system across Early Help and Children's Social Care. Self-assessment should be an ongoing process and submission will be repeated each year.

To achieve key data milestones. In the programme sign up conditions for 2021/22 all local authorities committed to have sufficient development and analytical resource to improve systems to deliver milestones of data maturity. We would now expect that that all local authorities have:
• Data governance at a strategic level - overseeing data sharing and use across all partners to support families.
• access to internally available person level data feeds including youth offending services data and education attendance and expulsions.
• access to or are working towards data sharing for person level data on policing, domestic abuse, health, housing (rent arrears and antisocial behaviour) and homelessness.
• All individual indicators and outcomes (at indicator level) are embedded in the case management system from notification / assessment to closure.

Having delivered your 2021/22 data milestones all local authorities should be moving towards being able to participate in the 'All Early Help data collection' (the collection of data relating to all Early Help interventions that we have been piloting with Earned Autonomy

---

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities programme commitments

The Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities commits to offer local authorities the following:

Upfront funding to provide intensive family support services and increase the maturity of Early Help Systems. This funding is to improve provision for all families supported through the Early Help system and increase the maturity of Early Help Systems.

A payment of £800 per family achieving successful outcomes up to an agreed number of families.

Earned Autonomy areas will receive all funding upfront. They will continue to be expected to submit successful family outcomes numbers quarterly via Delta.

Opportunities to share good practice amongst local areas and receive peer support, for example through webinars and focus groups, to accelerate transformation across the country.

Constructive support and challenge for those who fall short of family targets and lack progress against system transformation against the programme sign up conditions

Regular risk-based assurance reviews informed by national learning and experience from local authorities and their partners.

Programme commitments: additional information

Payment terms

A results-based payment of £800 will be offered for each family for whom the local authority claims a successful family outcome. The opportunity to claim results is offered on a regular basis through a rolling claims window that is open for most of the year. Claims must be submitted through the Delta system and we strongly recommend claim submissions are made monthly. The local authority's internal audit service should check and verify at least a representative sample of results for each claim submission before it is made. All claims made must be valid on the date that they are submitted and must be certified by a Section 151 officer or an officer with designated responsibility.

Claims made may be subject to additional checks by DLUHC as part of assurance process. Should invalid claims be found as a result of these checks any corresponding results payments made may be recouped by DLUHC.

Performance requirements

All areas delivering Supporting Families are required to achieve measurable outcomes with the minimum number of families. Where progress towards this minimum is not considered satisfactory DLUHC may decide to review future payments which can be delayed or withheld.

Progress information

Areas are required to submit quarterly progress information including but not limited to:

- The number of claims for successful family outcomes made during the year
- The forecast number of successful family outcomes to be made during the year
- The number of families supported and worked with during the year, where a whole family approach has been demonstrated
- The forecast number of families to be supported and worked with during the year

Transformation of local public services to embed whole family working

Upfront funding is to provide intensive family support services and increase the maturity of Early Help Systems. This funding is to improve provision for all families supported through the Early Help system and increase the maturity of Early Help Systems.

Areas are required to:

- Work in partnership with local public services to agree how funding should be used to integrate and transform local public services to embed whole family working.
- Continue to employ a Supporting Families Coordinator to work with partners to deliver Supporting Families and drive system transformation.
- Use the DLUHC Early Help System Guide (including the data maturity model) to inform the development, refinement and implementation of the early help system across their local public service partnership.

Early Help System guide

The Early Help System guide (The Guide) outlines a national vision and descriptors for a mature Early Help System. The vision, shared by DLUHC and DfE, has been widely consulted upon across other government departments and local areas and is based on what is working around the country. The Guide provides a self-assessment tool to support discussion, reflection and action planning against key descriptors of a good Early Help System.

All areas funded through Supporting Families are required to use the Early Help System guide to assess the current position of their Early Help System and use this to support prioritisation of system transformation activity in the coming year.

Completing the Early Help System guide

Action 1: Self-assessment to be carried out between April and June 2022 and the results submitted in Delta by 1 July 2022.

Self-assessment is an opportunity to genuinely reflect with partners, challenge one another and accurately capture the current position. We encourage areas to carry out an honest assessment and use this to provide a basis for prioritisation.

Action 2: Chosen priority descriptors should be submitted to Delta by 1 July 2022.

All areas are also required through the Supporting Families programme to choose 3 specific descriptors they want to work on and progress during the coming year. Areas should use the following methodology to choose the three descriptors:

- If the area is data model 2 or below, choose ONLY descriptors from the data section;
- If the area is data model 3, choose one descriptor from the data section and two from the service descriptors (family voice and experience, workforce, communities, leaders).
- If the area is data model 4 or above, choose ONLY service descriptors.

After applying this methodology, areas are free to choose any descriptor across the 5 sections (family voice and experience, workforce, communities, leaders and data). You can select more than one from individual sections of interest if preferred.

Action 3: Permission to share submitted on Delta by 1 July 2022.

To enable and encourage peer support and joint planning of development activity, we would like to share the scoring (not narrative) for each descriptor and the chosen priority descriptors from each area with all SF Co-ordinators during July 2022.

To facilitate joint working across government, we would like to share the scoring (not narrative) for each descriptor and the chosen priority descriptors from each area with other government departments.

As a result of our partnership working with specifically DfE on the programme, we will share the full results including narrative with DfE.

- Indicate on Delta to confirm you are happy for your area's scoring and chosen priority descriptors to be shared with SF co-ordinators to enable networking, joint planning of development activity and peer support.
- Indicate on Delta to confirm you are happy for your area's scoring and chosen priority descriptors to be shared with other government departments.
- You will also be asked to note that you understand that all content of your self-assessment and chosen descriptors will automatically be shared with DfE.

How DLUHC will use the EHSG self-assessment submissions.

The central team will use the EHSG self-assessments and chosen priority descriptors in the following ways:

1. Areas who have scored highly on individual descriptors may be approached for information around the practice in place, for this to be shared with other local areas. This could be developed into national good practice material to be linked to the individual descriptors.

2. Areas who have chosen the same priority descriptors will be supported to come together in action learning sets to support one another with the development of their work. The beginning of these action learning sets will be facilitated by the national team but handed over to local areas to support continued networking and learning.

3. The narrative text that areas submit in their EHSG self-assessments will be analysed by the national team to inform support and challenge conversations with local areas.

4. The analysis of the narrative will also be used to understand common areas for development and inform national policy making.

Data transformation

Mature data systems are a key part of the infrastructure supporting families and practice, providing a strong evidence base to help support families and commission appropriate services. Upfront funding should also be used to ensure sufficient development and analytical support to improve systems to deliver as a minimum the following milestones of data maturity:

- Data governance at a strategic level is established overseeing data sharing and use across all partners to support families. This could be the use of a current, appropriate board, the expansion of a current board or the creation of a board. All key local public service partners should be included on the board to work together to drive local public service data transformation. We would also recommend information governance representation to expediate data sharing issues.
- Access regular person level data feeds. At a minimum areas should:

a. Through discussions with police colleagues, work towards sharing datasets (including, where possible, offending data relating to different age ranges, and domestic abuse data) to enable joint analytics to support families. Partners will work together to identify any barriers to data sharing and overcome these barriers, through sharing good practice.

b. work with the youth offending service to receive youth offending data,

c. work with the relevant LA department and schools to receive education data (attendance, expulsions, free school meals and, where possible, attainment)

d. work with the relevant LA department and settings to receive Early Years data

Accessing these as full population, rather than cohort level feeds would help enable local use of these data to conduct needs analysis and allow for the immediate identification of issues at the point of referral for family support.

- Work towards or establish data sharing agreements for person level data on health, council tax exemptions, housing (rent arrears and antisocial behaviour) and homelessness.
- Embed all issues and outcomes into your case management system. This should be flexible to allow for changes in outcomes and enable the measurement of all issues (at indicator level not headline level), so it might not be limited to your Supporting Families Outcome Plan. You should be able to measure all issues faced by all families referred to Early Help, through to all outcomes achieved by families at the point of closure.

Having achieved the above minimum data maturity markers local authorities should be moving towards being able to participate in the 'All Early Help data collection' in the forthcoming years.

Payment by Results

Payment by Results for family outcomes is a mechanism that helps encourage and maintain a focus on the following:

- The outcomes families are achieving – knowing more about how families' lives have been changed
- Data maturity – embedding outcomes in case management systems, sourcing, matching and analysing multiple partner data sets to gain insight into outcomes
- Engaging partners in delivering whole family working – broadening the range of partner organisations who are part of working with families in a whole family way

These elements are at the core of an effective Early Help System.

Earned Autonomy

The Supporting Families programme has, since its inception Troubled Families, funded and advocated for transformation in the Early Help system.

There are currently 14 areas who operate under Earned Autonomy (EA) where all funding is provided upfront, rather than a proportion of the funding as a payment by results for family outcomes. These 14 areas were granted EA status following a bidding exercise in which they evidenced that having the funding upfront would accelerate transformation.

In our policy narrative 'Supporting Families 2021-22 and beyond' we outlined commitments that would help mature and modernise the programme and do more to encourage transformation.

We want to learn from the achievements of the most ambitious areas, partnering with them to continue to drive innovation and to shape local services for families into the future.

Following a consultation process during 2021, we have now published a prospectus which outlines a new process for areas to apply for EA. This sees EA as a progression from Payment by Results (PbR) for areas who have reached a defined standard of maturity with their Early Help System.

The application process for areas to move to the EA model will take place during 2022/23 with further details of the process set out in the published prospectus.

Local authority submission timetable

Supporting Families data requirements and output timetable 2022/23		(P) = PROVISIONAL							
	Who does this apply to?	Apr-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Mar-23
Outcome submission to DELTA	Payment by Results (PbR) and Earned Autonomy (EA) areas	Rolling submission window Open: 21st April - 29th June 2022		Rolling submission window Open: 21st July - 28th September 2022		Rolling submission window Open: 21st October 2022 - 4th January 2023		Rolling submission window Open: 27th January - 28th March 2023	
						1st October 2022 (P) Go live of new outcomes framework			
Engaged with figures and forward look projections submitted to DELTA (PI - Progress Information)	Payment by Results (PbR) and Earned Autonomy (EA) areas	PI to Supporting Families team 7th April 2022		PI to Supporting Families team 7th July 2022		PI to Supporting Families team 6th October 2022		PI to Supporting Families team 5th January 2023	
Data survey submitted to DELTA	Payment by Results (PbR) and Earned Autonomy (EA) areas					21st October 2022 (P)			
Early Help System Guide (EHSG) submitted to DELTA	Payment by Results (PbR) and Earned Autonomy (EA) areas			EHSG self assessment to Supporting Families team 1st July 2022					
Earned Autonomy applications	Local authorities who are invited to apply			Supporting Families team to send invitations to areas eligible to apply for Earned Autonomy	Earned Autonomy applications to Supporting Families team 30th September 2022				

Topics

Benefits

Births, death, marriages and care

Business and self-employed

Childcare and parenting

Citizenship and living in the UK

Crime, justice and the law

Disabled people

Driving and transport

Education and learning

Employing people

Environment and countryside

Housing and local services

Money and tax

Passports, travel and living abroad

Visas and immigration

Working, jobs and pensions

Government activity

Departments

News

Guidance and regulation

Research and statistics

Policy papers and consultations

Transparency

How government works

Get involved