



HM Government

Family Hubs and Start for Life programme: methodology for allocating funding to local authorities

Introduction

In October 2021, as part of the Autumn budget, the government announced £301.75m to transform Start for Life and Family Hub services in 75 upper-tier local authorities across England. An additional £28.7m has also been made available to improve young children's home learning environments (HLE), taking the programme's total spend to £330.45m.

This programme will fund a network of family hubs, alongside Start for Life and family help services. It includes:

- £100m to enable 75 local authorities to establish and improve perinatal mental health and parent-infant relationship services
- £81.75m to enable 75 local authorities to transform their services into a family hub model
- £50m to enable 75 local authorities to establish and expand evidence-based parenting support
- £50m to enable 75 local authorities to deliver multi-component infant feeding support
- £28.7m to enable 75 local authorities to establish home learning environment services, to tackle the pandemic's impact on children's education
- £10m to enable 75 local authorities to establish parent carer panels and publish their Start for Life offers
- £10m to enable a smaller number of local authorities to participate in innovative trials of different Start for Life workforce models

This note sets out the methodology used to allocate funding to the 75 eligible local authorities for the first six bullets above. Funding allocations for individual local authorities delivering the programme will be published once the programme's sign-up process has been completed.

Methodology

In allocating funding to each local authority, we have balanced the variable costs that local authorities face due to different population sizes (e.g. greater service demand resulting from a bigger population) against the fact that some costs will be similar regardless of these differences (e.g. the costs of establishing a parent carer panel).

Each local authority's total funding allocation therefore consist of two elements. The first is a fixed amount for each of the programme's strands (see Table 1). Drawing from engagement with stakeholders and local authorities on the costs of the different interventions, we set the

fixed amounts so that each local authority’s total funding allocation supports their delivery of the programme’s expectations.

Table 1: Fixed amounts allocated to each local authority for each programme strand

Programme strand	Fixed amount per local authority	Total fixed amount allocated to all 75 local authorities
Family hubs transformation	£500,000	£37,500,000
Perinatal mental health and parent-infant relationships	£655,000	£49,125,000
Parenting support	£250,000	£18,750,000
Infant feeding support	£435,000	£32,625,000
Home learning environment services	£108,000	£8,100,000
Publishing start for Life offers and establishing parent carer panels	£115,000	£8,625,000
Total	£2,063,000	£154,725,000

The second element is a variable amount for each strand based on each local authority’s relative population size. As outlined in the Family Hubs and Start for Life programme guide, each element of the programme focuses on a specific age range. The variable amounts were, therefore, based on the most relevant population age-ranges for the objectives of each programme strand (see Table 2).

For example, if a local authority accounts for 4% of the total 0–19-year-old population across the 75 selected local authorities, then it will receive 4% of the family hubs transformation funding available for local authorities’ variable amounts. This is in addition to the fixed amount that all 75 local authorities will receive for family hubs transformation.

Table 2: Age ranges used when calculating each local authority’s relative population size

Programme strand	Age range used¹
Family hubs transformation	0 to 19
Home learning environment services	3 and 4
Perinatal mental health and parent-infant relationships	0 and 1
Parenting support	0 and 1
Infant feeding support	0 and 1
Publishing Start for Life Offers and establishing parent carer panels	0 and 1

¹ [Estimates of the population for the UK, England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk)

