

The Stronger Families Hub

Our Engagement with Key Stakeholders -
Exploring Participation and Feedback to
Improve Service and Satisfaction



A review by the Children, Families and Education Select Committee

Councillors on the Committee:

Heena Makwana (Chairman)
Roy Chamdal (2022-23, Vice-Chairman)
Becky Haggar (2023-24, Vice-Chairman)
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Peter Smallwood
Jan Sweeting (Opposition Lead)

Mr Tony Little (Co-Opted Member)

2022-2023



HILLINGDON
LONDON

Chairman's Foreword



On behalf of the Children, Families and Education Select Committee, I am delighted to present the findings and recommendations of this review, which sought to investigate how the Stronger Families Hub is functioning in practice since its launch in August 2021.

This review gave the Committee the opportunity to undertake several witness sessions to engage with a range of key stakeholders including young people and their parents/carers, officers, health partners and education partners. These sessions helped the Committee to understand the context of the Stronger Families Hub and to understand the experiences of our young people and their families to ensure that they feel safe, protected and supported.

Recognising that the launch of the Stronger Families Hub has coincided with the backdrop of a global pandemic, the Committee were impressed with, and grateful for, the candour of the witnesses and with the evident commitment of officers to build and expand the first-of-its-kind 24/7 service.

The witness sessions highlighted some areas for development; therefore the Committee has prepared a series of recommendations to Cabinet. We believe these recommendations will help our young people and their families to feel empowered, regardless of their circumstances.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank officers and the witnesses who have given up their time to assist with this review; their contributions have been invaluable and have enabled the Committee to undertake a full and thorough review of this topic. I would also like to thank my colleagues on the Committee for their contributions.

We hope that this review can serve to improve the lives of young people and their families within the Borough.

Councillor Heena Makwana

Chairman of the Children, Families and Education Select Committee

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Terms of Reference of the review

The following Terms of Reference were agreed by the Committee from the outset of the review:

1. To understand the Council's current work with the Stronger Families Hub and what it entails.
2. To scrutinise a service that was launched a year ago and review its effectiveness.
3. To review the Stronger Families Hub's digital process (one number, one address) and how this works in practice.
4. To understand and explore the nature of partnership working.
5. To consider the allocation of information to children and families and access to community support functions.
6. To review the support in place for parents and children that were born during lockdown and the impacts of COVID-19.
7. To acknowledge that all families come in all shapes, sizes and circumstances and how better support can be provided to parents.
8. To explore the measures in place for child protection and safeguarding.
9. Subject to the Committee's findings, to make any conclusions, propose actions, service and policy recommendations to the decision-making Cabinet.

Background to the review

What is the Stronger Families Hub?

The Stronger Families Hub is a new 24/7 service available to families and professionals in Hillingdon, providing an integrated, single point-of-contact to a wide range of support services.

The Hub went live on 03 August 2021 and can be described as a locality-based early help and prevention service, supporting children and their families by working closely with partners across Hillingdon.

The model combines a social work-led service, adult mental health service and the Hillingdon Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub ([MASH](#)).

The Stronger Families Hub enables schools, post-16 and early years providers to request support in an educational establishment for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

It also enables health professionals to conform with the statutory requirement of completing a SEND Early Help Notification once they have identified a child who may have long-term SEND. The Hub allows better information sharing between professionals, which ensures a more coordinated and faster response to the needs of children and families in Hillingdon.

The Stronger Families Hub is a place where residents and professionals can access information, advice and assistance 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Areas of support include:

- Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- Adolescent Development Service
- Portage
- Stronger Families (Locality Key Working teams)
- Social Care
- Attendance issues
- Children Missing from Education

The Stronger Families Hub has one phone number, one email address and one referral form.

Get in touch by:

- **Emailing:** strongerfamilieshub@hillingdon.gov.uk
- **Calling:** **01895 55 6006**

“Our vision is to empower families to be and feel strong, safe and healthy through the provision of early and targeted support to reach their full potential. To achieve our vision, we need to respond to need when it arises and work together to ensure we have the right person for the child and family leading the right intervention.” See Appendix A/ B

What are the benefits?

The Stronger Families Hub is:

- A single point of contact where all information is accessible in one place;
- 24/7 – information and advice are readily accessible throughout the year;
- A place where professionals can coordinate a faster response to the needs of children and families

How do I make a referral?

You can complete the referral form through the online portal if you are:

- A professional wanting to request support for a family;
- An early year's provider or educational setting requesting SEND support for a child/ young person within your school/ setting;
- An early year's provider or educational setting requesting an Education and Health Care Needs Assessment for a child/ young person.

Make a referral here:

- <https://portal-ehm.hillingdon.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/home>
 - Guidance on making a referral can be found in **Appendix B** and **E**, and a template form in **Appendix F**

Further information is available on the Stronger Families Hub webpage:

- <https://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/stronger-families>
 - as shown in **Appendix D**

Scoping Report

Aim of Review

At its meeting on 20 July 2022, the Children, Families and Education Select Committee agreed that its major review would investigate how the Stronger Families Hub was functioning in practise since it had been launched in August 2021.

For the purpose of this review, it is important to distinguish between the Stronger Families initiative and Stronger Families Hub. These areas are distinct in their roles, although when rolled out and developed, the Stronger Family Hubs will strengthen the early and targeted intervention available for families in the Borough. This review will specifically focus on the service in place for children and young people.

It is intended that the review will support the work of Children's Services in helping to shape its ways of working; identifying areas that are working well; and how the service can be improved.

The Stronger Families Hub team

The Stronger Families Hub team was initially set up with two Team Managers, an Advanced Practitioner, 11 full-time and one part-time Social Workers (typically Senior Social Workers), and 10 Triage Officers. In light of the increased demand experienced since the Hub was launched, interim arrangements have been made for additional staffing, subject to the findings of the project review. The Stronger Families Hub staff structure can be found in **Appendix C**.

Relevant Legislation

The relevant legislation relating to the statutory duties of the Hub are below:

- The Children Act 1989
- The Children Act 2004
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017

Evidence and Witness Testimony

Witness Sessions

In agreeing the review's Terms of Reference, which are outlined on above, the Committee sought to gain an in-depth understanding of the service provided by the Stronger Families Hub. To do this, the Committee sought to structure its review with key themes. These themes allowed the Committee to hear testimonies from young people, parents and carers, staff, and partners. The evidence received through these witness sessions is outlined below.

Witness Session - date	Theme	Witnesses
Witness Session 1: 06 December 2022	Setting the scene	Head of First Response and Out-of-Hours
Witness Session 2: 18 January 2023	The voice of parents	Meeting with parents and carers
Witness Session 3: 18 January 2023	The voice of young people	Meeting with young people
Witness Session 4: 06 February 2023	The voice of providers	Triage Officer Interim MASH Manager Social Worker Out-of-Hours Team Manager Key Worker Team Manager Key Worker
Witness Session 5: 14 March 2023	Partnership working – health partners	Head of First Response and Out-of-Hours Assistant Director for Safeguarding Adults, Safeguarding Children and Children Looked After Named Nurse for Safeguarding Children (Hillingdon)/ CNWL Interim Head of Safeguarding Children Head of Children's Services, Hillingdon
Witness Session 6: (i) – 24 May 2023 (ii) – 26 June 2023	Partnership working – education partners	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead – Ruislip High School Lead Safeguarding Officer, The Rosedale Hewens Academy Trust Team 1 Manager – Stronger Families Key Working (South East)

Witness Session 1: Setting the Scene

Summary

The Committee heard that the Stronger Families Hub was launched on 03 August 2021 and provides a single point-of-contact for children, young people, families and professionals in Hillingdon to access a wide range of support services 24/7. It aims to offer the right help at the right time. The Hub includes a 24/7 Triage Service which replaced the previous out-of-hours model (which was known as the Emergency Duty team).

To support Early Help, Key Working services were aligned to create three locality-based Stronger Families Key Working teams, which are defined as North (Ruislip and Northwood), Southeast (Hayes) and Southwest (West Drayton). Redirected resources embedded the Key Working service across the three localities offering a rich skill set by integrating the workforce. The service has supported and strengthened each locality to encourage professionals to confidently manage Stronger Families Plans where appropriate and build community resilience. In addition to this, new pathways were implemented to help ensure that preventative intervention is fully utilised and statutory social work is retained for children with complex needs and children at risk. Further information on the Key Working service can be found in **Appendix G**.

The vision of the Stronger Families Hub is to transform the local family support system, providing timely help at the point of need, whilst reducing demand for acute statutory services. This model combines a social work-led service, adult mental health service and the Hillingdon Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). Hillingdon MASH ensures that professionals share information in a timely manner where there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare.

The Stronger Families Hub enables schools, post-16 and early years providers, via the referral template, to request support for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Furthermore, the early help model enables health professionals to conform with the statutory requirements of completing a SEND Early Help Notification, once they have identified a child who may have long-term SEND.

Recovery Planning

Members were informed that in July 2020, Children and Young Peoples' Services submitted a business case seeking approval to implement a revised operating model in order to create a single point-of-access and a robust early help offer. The proposal changed the ways of working for the Triage team, Emergency Duty team, Adult Mental Health Practitioner team, the Outreach Service, Key Working Service, Participation Service and the Adolescent Development Service.

The proposal was informed by the experience gained through managing the initial response to the COVID-19 pandemic, especially within the former Emergency Duty service, whose delivery model had become out-dated as a result of the change in demand for out-of-hours support. Furthermore, the development of a robust early help offer was required to support effective management of the increasing demand. The new model aimed to:

- Focus on 'prevention' from the very first point of contact;
- Transition from 'Emergency Duty' to 24/7 support;
- Deliver a robust Early Help Offer;
- Reduce the demand on statutory services

The new operating model aligned services, strengthened pathways and integrated the Early Help Offer to provide an effective alternative to statutory services. The new single point-of-contact was

the Stronger Families Hub, which improved the coordination of service delivery and promoted the Early Help structure in order to create a community-focused and joint-working service. The simplified coordination of services is one of the most significant aspects of the Stronger Families Hub model as it creates a fluid and flexible service from the point of contact through to the delivery of targeted intervention to help mitigate rising demand into statutory services.

Operating under a clearly defined pathway has helped to ensure that all advice and support to children and families is targeted, consistent, and the use of pre-statutory resources maximised. The Stronger Families Hub changed the 'front door' approach, as well as the capacity and capability to delivery strong preventative services via an Early Help Assessment and team around the family approach.

Progress made

Officers advised Members that the Stronger Families Hub has made it as easy as possible for families and professionals to access support including safeguarding services for children and young people. Since its creation, the Hub has been the single point-of-contact for requests for services for vulnerable children and young people in Hillingdon. This approach saves triage time, as all the required information is provided at the start, rather than having to go back and forth to enable an accurate assessment to be made. Importantly, this supports gaining the consent of the family and once the Early Help Assessment referral form is completed the Stronger Families Hub is then better placed to decide what form of support or intervention is most appropriate.

Going forward there would no longer be the requirement for the commissioned service Anchor to handle social care calls out-of-hours, thereby reducing the need for handovers and streamlining the service further. Cases are coordinated by Triage and allocated to teams depending on the nature of the call and specialism required. The demands of out-of-hours social work have changed significantly and detailed analysis has been undertaken on the nature of out-of-hours work in order to re-shape the service. Data collated demonstrated that children's contact outweighed adults at a ratio of 73%:27%, and although the adult's ratio was lower, the nature of work was more complex.

Since being launched the Stronger Families Hub has been very well received and utilised. Since the launch over 27,000 requests for assistance have been considered with over 12,000 of these made via the parent-friendly Early Help Assessment, which can be accessed and completed anywhere and at any time by professionals.

The service appreciates the workloads of its partners so the new process enables partners to save and add information before submitting the Early Help Assessment, promoting timely decision-making for children and young people. The Stronger Families Hub has also supported over 1,800 families to access support from the Stronger Families Key Working Locality Teams.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic the service has received an increasing number of contacts. Between 01 October 2021 and 30 September 2022, the average number of monthly contacts was 1,976. For the previous year (01 October 2020 to 30 September 2021) the figure was 1,526, representing an increase of 29%.

There had also been an increase in contacts each month between April 2022 (1,466 contacts) and September 2022 (1,860 contacts), with an average of 1,816 contacts. This peaked in May 2022 (2,125 contacts) and June 2022 (2,106 contacts).

Review, adapt and improve

Officers informed Members that to support the development of the Stronger Families model, after 12 months of operation, a review had been completed by the service focusing on three areas:

- Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) review – to include consideration of learning from Solihull JTAI (Joint Targeted Area Inspection);
- A multi-agency Stronger Families review – to consider the effectiveness of multi-agency support being delivered;
- Internal Audit review – to consider the quality of information received, recording and decision-making

MASH review

As part of the review of statutory support in the Stronger Families Hub, the Stronger Families sub-group completed a review of cases in the Hillingdon Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) using the Solihull JTAI (Joint targeted area inspection) recommendations as a framework. The audit considered quarter 1 of 2022-2023 and concluded that: "...the consensus of the review group was that the MASH is operating effectively to safeguard children. Partner agencies are working together effectively, and information sharing promotes positive outcomes for children." Moreover, MASH enquiries provide evidence of good practice in analysis including areas such as family history; discussions with parents/ carers/ professionals; strengths as well as risks; provides feedback; and ensures that information is analysed with a clear rationale of the decision-making process detailed on the child's case file records. Importantly, the practise taking place in MASH helps determine the next steps for the child, and 'makes meaning' of the information provided by the various contributing agencies. Whilst the recommendations were centred on individual and isolated examples, these were not seemingly fully representative of the practice taking place; nonetheless all pertinent and useful points were being addressed at this time with learning disseminated with the practitioners. An example of this was ensuring parents are fully aware of the range of agencies that may be contacted, and the types of information shared when consent is provided to further promote transparency and partnership working.

Multi-agency Stronger Families review

Alongside partners from education, adult social care, Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL), Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Hillingdon Hospital, Children's Centres, Portage, SEND and the SEND Advisory Service, the Stronger Families review detailed a number of key findings. Partners in SEND found that the Stronger Families Hub "worked more collaboratively"; partners in children's centres noted the Hub shared knowledge and so there was "less likely to be duplication"; colleagues in Portage highlighted the "detailed notes"; and health professionals commented that the Early Help Assessment questions were "easy to follow". In terms of working with the third sector and voluntary organisations, there were already good working relationships in place with organisations such as Brilliant Parents, and feedback was often used in considering how services could be improved.

Internal Audit review

To further ensure the service remains robust and responsive to the changing nature of children's needs, an internal audit was commissioned by the then Executive Director of Children and Young Peoples' Services. The audit considered a range of areas including the decision-making process within the Stronger Families Hub; information sent by professionals when requesting support for children and their families; contribution to Stronger Families Plans; and the response of partners to the Stronger Families initiative. Moreover, the report highlighted the increased demand and the need to continue to build the capacity of the Stronger Families Hub to ensure it is sufficiently staffed in order for children to access support from the right person at the right time.

It was noted that several of the recommendations that came out of these previous reviews were progressed. For example, the need for Hub staff to have a wide knowledge of relevant support services; the availability of Early Help Assessment data for partners; attendance by Primary Care at the monthly multi-disciplinary team meetings to further the collaborative approach taking place; and Stronger Families Champions in schools helping to support joint working and contributions to Early Help Assessments and Stronger Families Plans (a Stronger Families Plan review is as attached as **Appendix H**).

The Stronger Families Champions initiative was a response to a recommendation from a sub-group and consists of one Stronger Families Champion from each school. Discussions with colleagues in schools were being planned to promote the initiative further.

The Committee's review

Given that these three reviews took place in April and October 2022, it is important to note the wider context and purpose of the review being undertaken by the Select Committee. The Stronger Families Hub has increased in size since its introduction and there has been large investment in it by the Council. The current review would provide Councillors' scrutiny on how the service could be improved, strengthened, and whether it was delivering value for money. It is acknowledged that Councillors engage first-hand in the community, and it was hoped that the review would encourage a positive outlook of the Stronger Families Hub and help to breakdown any negative stereotypes. There was now a strong focus on Early Help and safeguarding and the review would raise further awareness of the initiative. Furthermore, the current review would hold additional witness sessions with other stakeholders, including young people and their parents/ carers, which would allow direct feedback from service users themselves.

Moving forward

Members were made aware that in order to ensure the service remains dynamic and responds to children's changing needs, a number of initiatives are taking place. These include:

- A review to consider the merits of an All Age Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub across Children and Adult Social Care. This is to further a family safeguarding model;
- A review of MASH and the Stronger Families Hub establishment to ensure adequate resourcing to meet the increase in demand and potential future demand;
- Furthering the automation agenda with a wider use of robots, enabling staff to remain focused on providing information, advice and support rather than administrative tasks

Performance Data

Officers advised that effective management of information is in place to sufficiently monitor contacts, referrals, assessments and case throughput to support decision making and escalation, and to identify demand and emerging risks. Data is sourced to provide required performance reports. These reports utilise a range of organisational and child-level data and benchmarking statistics which enable the leadership team to forecast areas to focus, emerging trends and to provide real-time comparisons with other Local Authorities. The Committee reviewed a significant amount of performance data which is summarised below:

Headline performance

Contacts in the last 6 months	11,541
Early Help Assessments completed	816
Referrals in the last 6 months	2,074
Statutory assessments completed in the last 6 months	2,083

Contacts (requests for assistance)

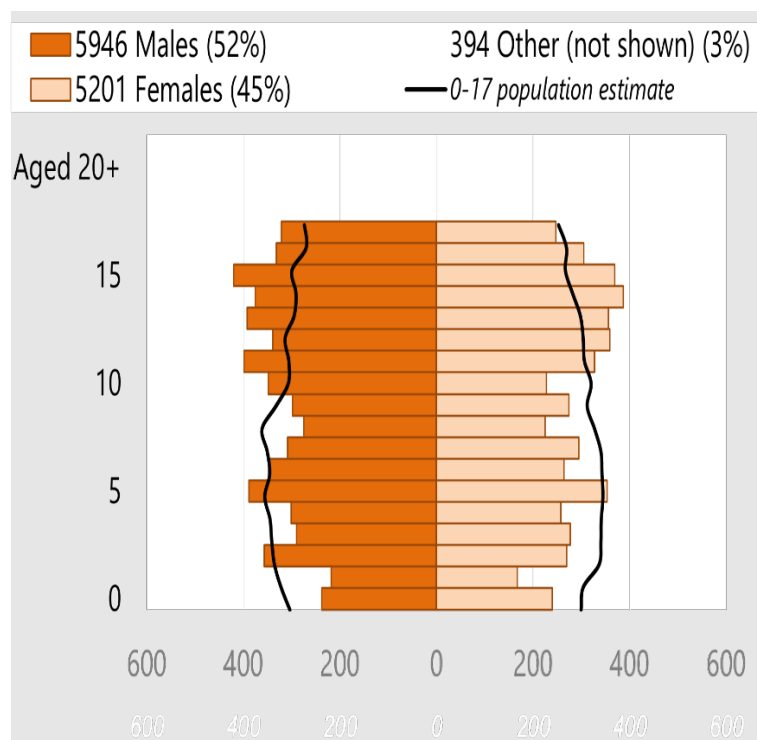
The Committee heard that the Stronger Families Hub has an objective to bring together key people in the workforce, including AXIS network crime practitioners, Triage Officers and MASH Senior Practitioners as well as co-located partners who have access to health, education and police databases. All contacts and referrals enter directly to the Stronger Families Hub where they are triaged by a team of trained Triage Officers, Social Workers, Senior Practitioners and Advanced Practitioners with oversight and support from two team managers. Requests are then signposted to the appropriate service in Children’s Social Care, Stronger Families Key Working, SEND, SEND Advisory Service (SAS), Portage, Participation and Children’s Centres. The AXIS team use the AXIS Database to identify new Early Help cases and enhance the information sharing of all referrals into the Hub.

The improved sharing of information at the earliest possible opportunity has better defined how contacts are progressed, including whether they should be converted into a formal referral, as well as offering advice, guidance and signposting. The categories below show the range of outcomes selected for contacts received by the Stronger Families Hub.

Information and Advice Only	Send to Children’s Centre Teams
Internal Redirection for Open Case (Early Help Module)	Send to MASH
Link to Existing Early Help Episode	Send to Statutory Social Care
Progress to Outside Local Authority EHCP Transfer	Signpost to Other Agency
Progress to SEND	Targeted Support Programmes
Refer to Stronger Families	

Contact outcome(s)

Age and gender of children requiring assistance



Officers informed Members that the Stronger Families Hub aims to provide support from pre-birth to age 18 in order to intervene early before difficulties become entrenched with children and their families.

Support in the formative years is particularly important to help reduce the likelihood of children requiring statutory support in later stages of their childhood. This is illustrated in the chart above showing young people, often male, requiring the highest level of support at this time.

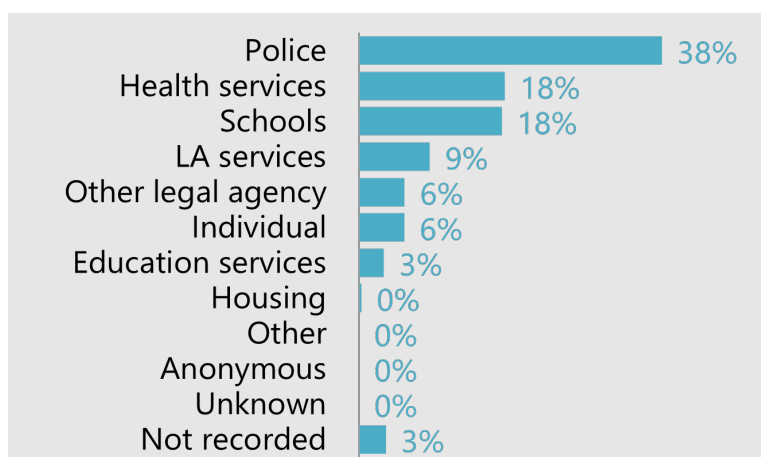
Adolescent Development Services including AXIS is now accessed via the Stronger Families Hub. Young people can also access targeted support services directly by self-referring.

Ethnic backgrounds of children for whom a contact has been received

Members were advised that the diversity of communities residing in the Borough is reflected in the ethnicities of those contacting the Hub as well as the Children's Social Care workforce, 30 of whom are based in the Stronger Families Hub and MASH.

White	30%
Mixed	5%
Asian or Asian British	16%
Black or Black British	10%
Other ethnic group	9%
Not stated	30%
Not recorded	NIL

Source of contact (non-statutory support)



Officers informed the Committee that Police Merlin reports are the main source of contacts and account for almost half of all contacts and referrals received by the Stronger Families Hub. MASH Police are co-located on site with Stronger Families Hub staff. The area is base for up to 13 members of the Metropolitan Police including a Police Sergeant and Detective Sergeant to promote collaboration and the rapid exchange of information.

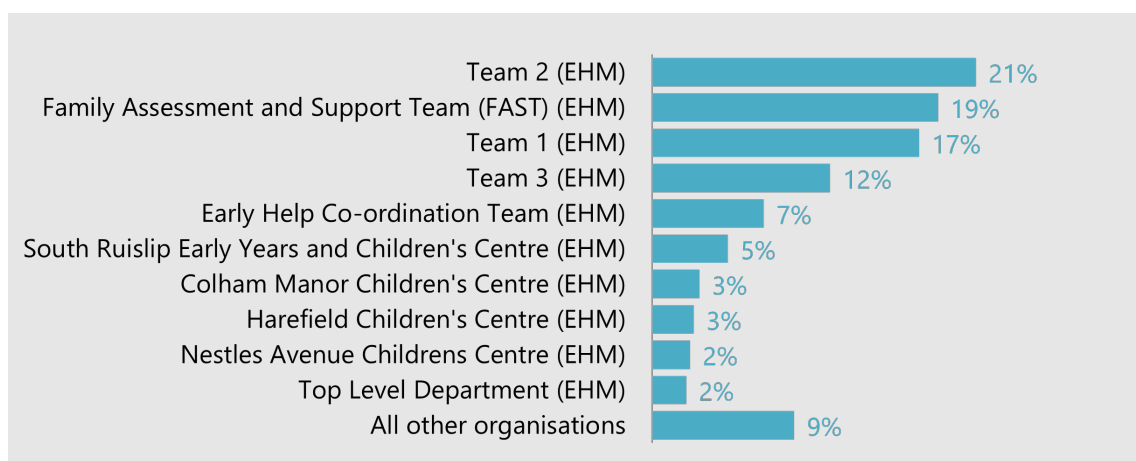
Category of contacts used to illustrate the primary need of the child/ren

Absent parent/ carer - UASC	Contact Issues	Parental Mental Health
Absent parent/ carer-unattended child	Domestic Incident	Post 18 - Ensuring Safety
Abuse by Professional	Domestic Incident Notification	Potential Victim of Trafficking
Access to records	Domestic Violence	Poverty/ low income
Adoption	Early Health Notification	Private Fostering Notification
Age Assessment	Education Health and Care Needs Assessment Request	Radicalisation
Checks - CAFCASS	Emotional Abuse	Remand in LA Care
Checks – EWO	FGM	Request for secure bed made by police under PACE
Checks - Health	Harmful Sexual Behaviour	Requesting Counselling
Checks - Housing	Housing/ homelessness issues	Requires registration of disability
Checks - MP	Injury Reported	Requires respite/ short breaks
Checks - Other LA	Missing Child	Section 37 Report Direction
Checks - Police	Neglect	Section 7 Report Direction
Checks - Probation	OLA CLA Notification - for Info only	SEND Advisory Service Request
Checks - SEN	OLA CP Notification - for Info only	Serious Youth Violence and Vulnerability
Checks - UK Border	OLA Referral	Sexual Abuse

Child Mental Health	OT – Assessment/ Adaptation/ Equipment	Socially unacceptable behaviour
Child Missing from Education	Other Agency Prospective Foster Carer	Step-Parent Adoption
Child Sexual Exploitation	Parent/ carer illness or disability	Substance misuse
Child Substance Misuse	Parent Substance Misuse	Transfer In Request
Court Order	Physical Abuse	Vulnerability
Dependent of an Asylum Claim	Poor School Attendance	Young Carer

The volume of children’s contacts indicated a higher requirement of time at the triage stage to ensure advice and information is provided and that case management systems are kept up to date, particularly for the volume of Looked After Child and Domestic Abuse notifications received. As a response to demand analysis of both data processing and direct intervention and support, the Stronger Families Hub has a clear focus on the triage of contacts and referrals. The above table details the contact categories used by staff in order to determine the primary need. More than one service and team can be accessed via the Stronger Families Hub.

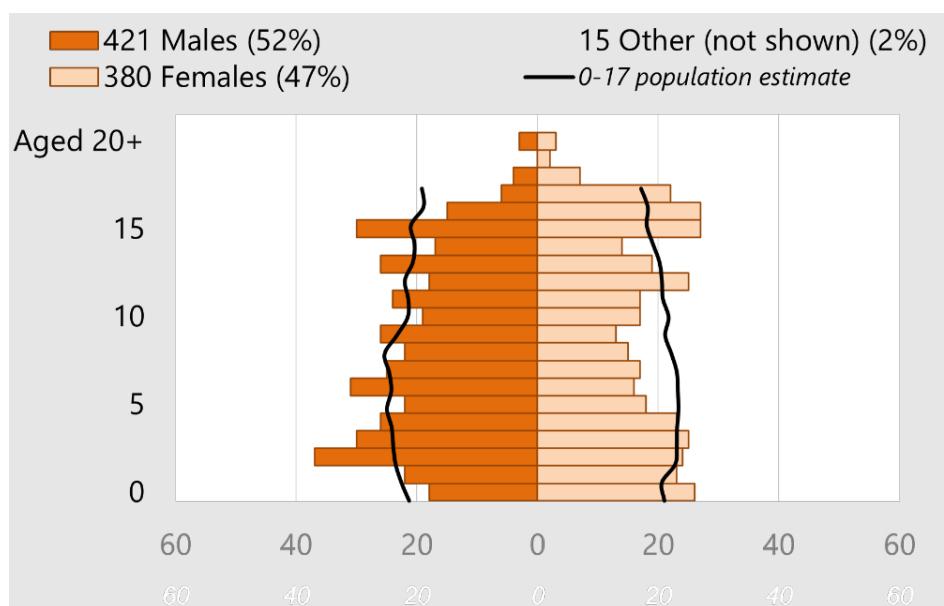
Source of completed Early Help Assessments



Members were notified that the Stronger Families Locality Key Worker teams have a clear intervention and form of support made available. This has created an enhanced skill set in the service. The three locality teams operate on a locality basis that was identified through data mapping. The capacity within the teams reflects the demand in each locality, although the overall service requires flexibility to assist with changes in future demand across the Borough.

For example, roughly 1,700 referrals (based on 2019 activity data) were managed by the Participation Service covering children missing from education and attendance issues. Now, children in these scenarios are referred directly into the Stronger Families Hub to access the Participation Service and locality teams. A whole-family support offer is made available using a Stronger Families Plan which is co-produced with parents, carers and young people – if age appropriate to do so.

Age and gender of children subject to Early Help Assessment



Ethnic backgrounds of children subject to an Early Help Assessment

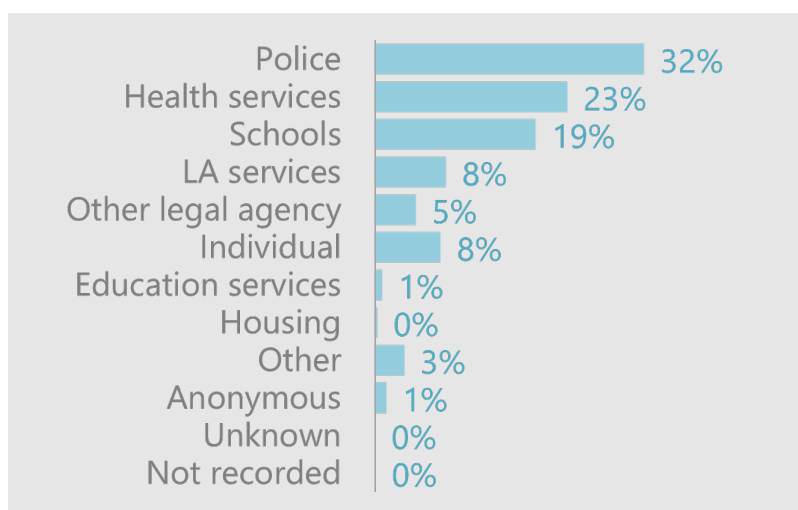
White	30%
Mixed	4%
Asian or Asian British	15%
Black or Black British	11%
Other ethnic group	10%
Not stated	30%
Not recorded	NIL

Officers advised that Early Help Assessments are the primary method of assessment and mechanism to access targeted support services. The main roles and responsibilities of the Stronger Families locality teams is to offer:

- Key worker intervention for children with additional needs requiring targeted support either as a lead professional with a view to handover or alongside the lead professional for a time-limited period;
- Support, advice and guidance to strengthen the role of partner agencies. Being a key point-of-contact and support within the locality will prevent the step up to statutory services when not required;
- Support and facilitate early and sustainable step down of cases by earlier co-working in cases such a Child in Need Plans, reunification, resettlement planning or special guardianship support plans;
- Focus on the early identification and planning for children with special education needs and disabilities;
- Focus on the early identification and prevention for children at risk of Child Criminal Exploitation as identified though the AXIS database;
- Using the team around the family approach for children missing from education and attendance issues;
- Work seamlessly with the Adolescent Development Service, Children’s Centres, Youth Service, and 0-19 Health Service

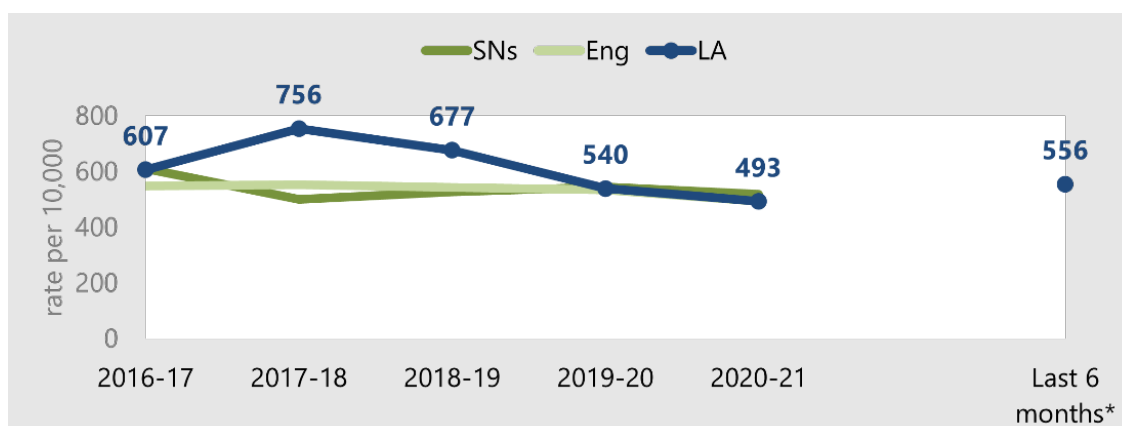
The Key Working service is led by the Head of Early Help, Prevention and Permanence.

Source of referrals (statutory support)



Police Merlin reports remain the main source of statutory referrals and can account for almost half of all contacts and referrals received by the Stronger Families Hub.

Rate of referrals per 10,000 children aged 0-17



The chart above illustrates a yearly reduction, since 2017-18, in the number of contacts that are progressed to a statutory referral. The Local Authority is now below the national average and statistical neighbours as a result of the level of non-statutory support provided to children and their families.

Portal Usage

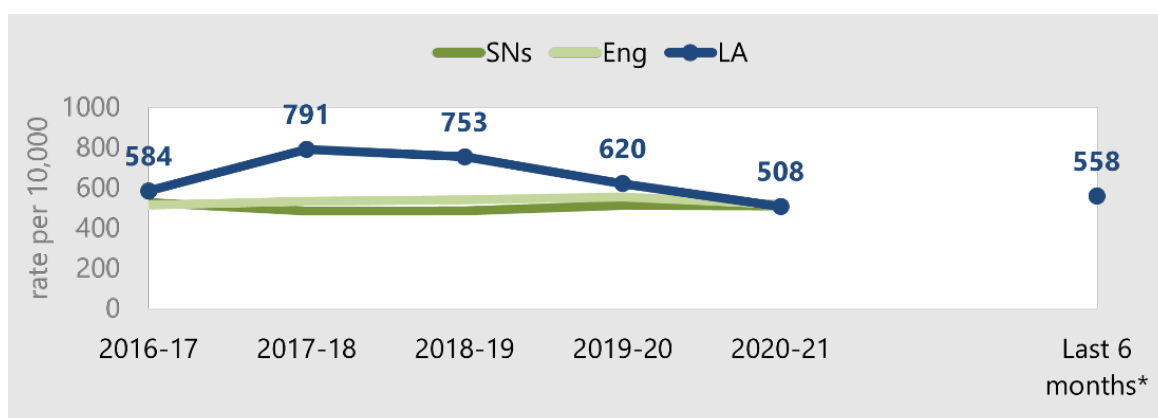
Email	12,591
Fax	13
Internal System notification	8
Portal	11,887
Post	2
Phone	2,168
Walk-in	7
Total	26,676

All contacts in the period from October 2021 to November 2022

Members were advised that previously, contacts were received via various pathways, emails and calls, and referral forms, either into Social Care directly, Triage, or directly to MASH. Triage was occurring more than once and was demanding on the services and resources at that time. A revised Early Help Assessment was designed to and has become the primary referral route for partner agencies, excluding the Police who use a dedicated secure email address to share information and merlin reports. The Early Help Assessment is accessed via an online portal (accessible on the Local Authority website here: <https://portal-ehm.hillingdon.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/home>) and is interfaced with the Children and Young Peoples' Services and Early Help case file management system.

The table above shows the increased use of the early help assessment portal and reflects a decrease in other forms of contacts being received. Child protection concerns continue to require to be referred by phone. A written referral is submitted through the portal the same day to ensure a written record is provided, and information is cross-referenced. This avoids any delay in the child receiving support and protection services.

Rate of completed statutory assessments per 10,000 children aged 0-17



Members were informed that the operating system prevents delay in children and families being offered help. As noted earlier, since the launch of the Stronger Families Hub, over 1,800 families have been referred to the Stronger Families locality teams for support. The impact on children and their families of the recent health pandemic and more recently the cost-of-living crisis has resulted in more families being in distress and consequently requiring support services.

Resident Benefit

The Committee heard that the Stronger Families ensures that children, young people and their families receive tailored support at the earliest point from the most appropriate service(s), to enable children and young people to achieve their full potential.

The Stronger Families Key Working service works together with families to prevent difficulties from escalating and becoming more complex. It is consent-based and time-limited. Families have the option to self-refer and access the service without any restrictions.

The service is designed to support families in their area of residence, therefore within local distance and easy access. Families are supported with complex and multiple difficulties which are preventing parents from adequately caring for their children, for example lack of knowledge of positive behaviour management, routines and boundaries, mental health, substance misuse,

disengagement with education and risk of homelessness.

The service works with families:

- Where there are early indicators of abuse and neglect of children and young people
- Where a family is struggling with complex issues related to ill health and/ or financial disadvantage/ unemployment to the extent that their parenting capacity is compromised
- Where a vulnerable expectant mother requires support to prevent an escalation of concerns requiring statutory intervention
- Where there is parental or family conflict which is escalating
- Families affected by domestic abuse
- Who have a child or children with emerging special educational needs or a disability or has additional needs related to health or behaviour
- On whole family issues where a child or young person is frequently missing from home or school
- On whole family issues where there are school attendance and participation issues
- Where there is early identification of criminal exploitation
- Where parents and/ or children and young people are involved in criminality
- Where there is a plan to reunify a child with their family following a period of being looked after
- Where a family needs support following a young person, who is returning from custody to prevent family breakdown
- Where a child or young person is involved in risk-taking behaviours

This is not an exhaustive list as the service is designed to be responsive to changing local need

Families benefit with interventions undertaken that address the concerns identified by and with the family, and which help develop the capacity, strengths and problem-solving abilities of the family. The Key Worker and other professionals deliver interventions directly to the whole family, or to individual members as appropriate. Sometimes it is necessary to broker and coordinate services as part of the plan, from partner agencies, voluntary or community groups. The Key Worker uses persistent and non-stigmatising engagement techniques and works in a way that suits the family in terms of time, location and individual learning styles. Using inter-personal tools helps the family to 'buy in' to the service. All help offered is sustainable in that families are offered tools and skills to develop their strengths.

Techniques utilised include:

- Delivering a tailored approach individual to each family's needs, helping to address areas of concern whilst promoting problem solving skills and strategies within the family.
- Using assertive and practical engagement strategies and tools such as an 'activity sheet', 'box of worries', and/ or consequential thinking skills to aid families who are resistant to support.
- Supporting families intensively in their own homes and community settings through modelling and coaching techniques, promoting practical skills such as budgeting and domestic management, and social skills such as listening and negotiating.
- Providing positive parenting techniques at different stages of child development and supporting families in managing difficult and challenging behaviour.
- Advocating for parents so that they are resilient and build confidence in accessing universal and targeted services if required.

The Stronger Families Hub is promoted through the Safeguarding Partnership, Council website and communications issued from the Corporate Communications team. There is

also work being done within religious settings and schools to increase education and consultation including with young people. An example of this was the DfE Build Back Better Fund initiative in regard to safeguarding women and children from harmful practices including Female Genital Mutilation. The initiative was based in the Stronger Families Hub and included four consultation events with residents.

Feedback from young people

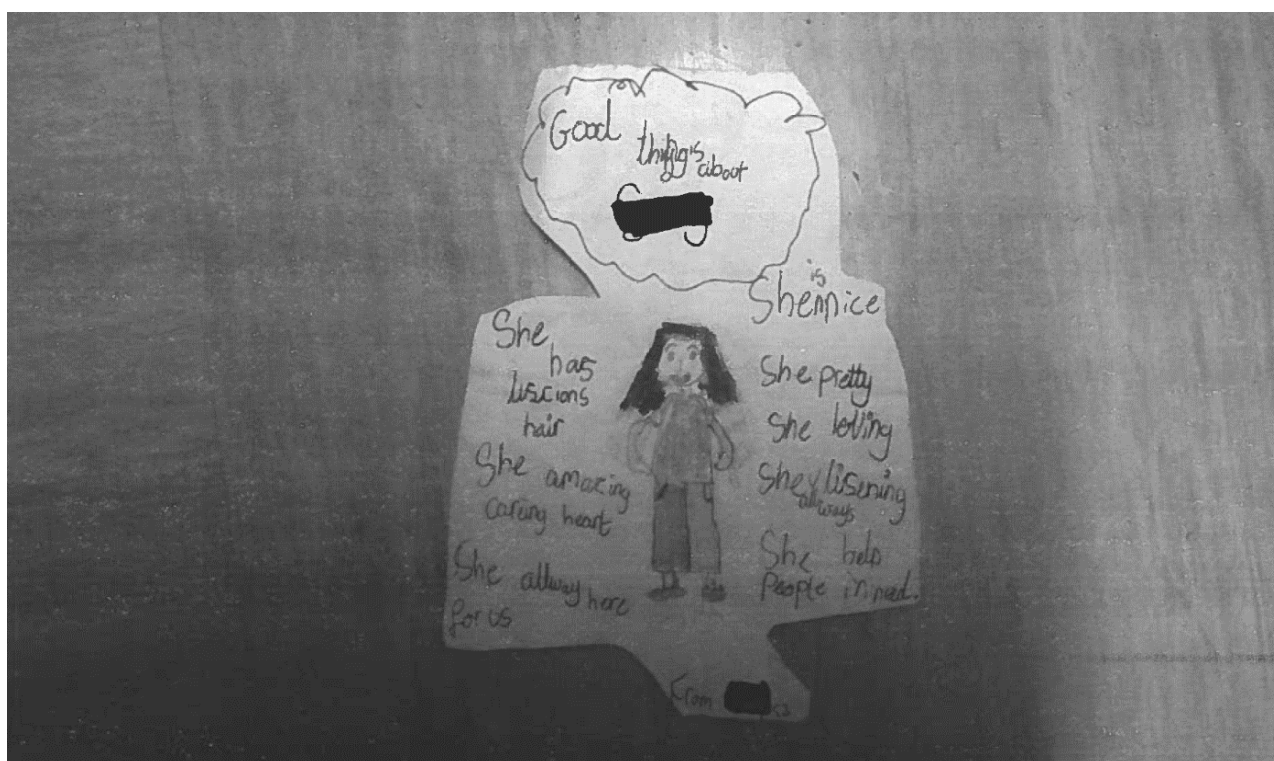
The Committee heard feedback from a number of young people, examples included:

"I have been really honest with my feedback. I have done the best I can do. I feel listened to."

"I felt like I could say anything. I felt quite comfortable. She gave us ideas on how to bring ourselves closer in the family. I have started having a closer relationship with my Mum and I am attempting to build one with my dad. My Key Worker was very understanding, and we connected fast"

"... is proud that his attendance has improved and is enjoying the support of Targeted Programmes."

"I just feel that you've helped me since you've been here – I feel like I can manage my bills and my relationship with the school more confidently. My mum has noticed that I'm calmer with the whole situation. In the first few weeks being able to call you, it was a relief to be able to speak to someone about it. I feel like we've come miles from there – we're not even near there anymore."



Feedback from parents/ carers

The Committee also heard feedback from a number of parents and carers, examples included:

"I self-referred to social services when my son disappeared from home at night and was struggling with low mood and suicidal ideations. Once the social worker referred us to M things started moving quite quickly. M was the most courteous, human, kind and professional key worker we could have asked for. She was committed to our well-being and devoted to her role in supporting us often going above and beyond checking on us Out-of-Hours. She got my son onto the adolescent targeted programme which was a blessing during the summer holidays when we were homeless. This contributed for his mood improvement and over-all well-being. She struck such a lovely positive relationship with him and he appreciated her input and loving kindness as much as I did. I have never seen such devotion in council services. She would chase up housing for us and was always on the things.

She made us feel very comfortable, was non-judgemental and accepting of us and understanding/sensitive to our circumstances. Never once intrusive! So very respectful! She just knew how to strike the perfect balance. I could go on and on singing her praises. The service has now come an end and we will miss her dearly. We would like to let you know she had such a significant and positive impact on our lives and helping us get back to normality after so much adversity. This will never be forgotten."

"My total appreciation and gratitude for the services and support provided."

"I really benefited from going on the Domestic Abuse and Parenting programmes and feel more empowered and confident in parenting, which has also reduced stress."

"I had a look at that bag and the clothes and loved everything. There all so amazing so thank you so much. I'm very grateful for all of it and your help."

"I just wanted to thank you for working with me and all your help. I am ever so grateful. Thank you again"

At point of closure a parent fed back that she 'initially, had felt very down, stuck and exhausted [and] the changes in her son would not have happened without Key Worker's involvement.'

"The Key Worker was very supportive and always listened to me, non-judgemental, unlike other professionals I had in the past."

"I think it's helped that you don't pretend to be perfect, it makes you human and it's made it easier to talk to you. It's a work in progress and I feel like we're going in the right direction. I thank you for all your help and if I need it again then I would refer myself back to the Stronger Families Hub because I've found it really helpful."

Further examples are shown in **Appendix I**.

Witness Sessions 2 and 3: The Voice of Parents and The Voice of Young People

The Committee's second and third witness sessions ran concurrently, allowing Members to meet directly with young people and their parents and carers to discuss their experiences of the Stronger Families Hub informally, outside the normal meeting structure. Five meetings took place and the accounts given by those present have been anonymised to protect their identity:

Meeting 1

The first meeting saw Councillors Makwana and Sweeting meet with A (a parent) and her mother about their son B.

A's son, B, had raised suicidal thoughts at the age of 15, and A was advised by his teacher to take him to A&E. A&E advised that B should have been taken to his GP. B was assessed and referred to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and a private psychotherapist. Thereafter, a referral to the Stronger Families Hub was made.

The Stronger Families Hub helped A with a P3 course on positive parenting. This was beneficial as A was able to meet parents experiencing similar problems and to listen to their strategies. A was initially sceptical about starting the course but changed her mind as she knew she needed support. That same evening, A was able to put into practise what she had learned and also referred to the handbook to help her.

B was allocated a mentor and A reported that the school had been supportive with staggered timings, a therapist and support in attending three mock exams, for which B was predicted 7+ grades. Despite a real concern regarding education the Hub staff had been very helpful and signposted A to the right support places such as talking therapy.

Historically, B had displayed traits of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Support from the Hub staff had been "fantastic", and the support system had been good.

COVID-19 had had a devastating impact on B's mental health and catching things early was helpful. It was noted that although money was short, humanity was not and the service was encouraged to continue. Closing the services would mean that many parents may lose their children.

In terms of future plans, B was applying to an academy and had an interview for college. A continued with talking therapy (P3).

Areas performing well included: there was a "pretty quick service" for getting help and support; staff from the Stronger Families Hub were patient, "had a relaxed personality" and really wanted to help. Staff knew the context of the case which also helped, and they drew on relevant experiences; and having the knowledge and confidence that they can reach out whenever they needed to.

Some areas for improvement included: there needed to be more awareness of the

service, particularly with schools and knowing where to go; out-of-Borough schools knowing about the referral system and knowing where to go; and more open discussions around mental health.

Capturing issues earlier would make parents' experience better, as B had showed symptoms in nursery.

Meeting 2

The second meeting saw Councillors Makwana and Sweeting meet with C (a parent).

C is dyslexic and had a history of mental health conditions. She was having a difficult time with her son D, and D's headteacher had made a referral to the Stronger Families Hub.

Staff from the Stronger Families Hub have supported C making referrals to CAMHS for her child D, filling in forms, routine for her children and general life planning. They signposted C to parent classes which had helped her getting back on track. If C did not have this support, she "would be really behind". Suggestions made by the Stronger Families Hub had been really helpful, including creating a calming box. It was noted that help was still needed with CAMHS although D was in a better place in secondary school.

A referral to positive parenting had been helpful. Talking to other parents who have children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) was also helpful as they understand and have similar problems. C held an element of self-blame for not seeking a diagnosis earlier, and she recommended the Stronger Families Hub to her friend who also had similar issues. C had confidence in re-approaching the Stronger Families Hub if any issues re-appeared and also had confidence in being signposted to the relevant service.

Areas performing well included: the support strategies from the Stronger Families Hub were useful and it was helpful to have someone there to listen and provide advice; and having a named person was good for C's children as they had an outside provider supporting them and children engaged better.

Some areas for improvement included: the 18-week time period can be short, and it was questioned how timings were allocated; more flexibility was required if you miss sessions; and more general awareness of the processes and services and what steps to take next would be beneficial.

Meeting 3

The third meeting saw Councillor Makwana meet with E (a young person).

E was placed with CAMHS due to an incident which took place at home, and she felt scared. E did not have a choice in the matter and the incident was reported to

CAMHS via her old school. Following this, a referral was made to the Stronger Families Hub.

E had now been discharged from CAMHS – CAMHS was not working for her, and this may have been due to issues with the therapist.

When E was younger there was a social worker involved and they had one meeting which she did not find very helpful. When she was referred to the Stronger Families Hub, she was weary and did not have a choice, but she gave it a chance. E felt a change when she met her Hub social worker, who was very supportive and ‘made her feel at ease’. The Stronger Families Hub gave her advice on relationship building with her dad as well as more general advice. Even though E was now discharged she still felt supported by the Stronger Families Hub and received messages from her support worker. This made E feel like she was not a number, and that the door was always open for her.

Areas that performed well included: despite initial reluctance, the Stronger Families Hub were ‘so kind and bubbly’ and made E feel at ease – it was easier to speak to an outsider. Knowing that the service was still there for you once the allocated time period had concluded made E feel safe, and overall E was really happy with service.

Areas to improve included: a few meetings to identify what the actual process involves – during lockdown this was done via Zoom rather than in person.

E noted that she was happy with the Stronger Families Hub but reassurances for children and young people that they won’t be taken away from their families if referred to the Stronger Families Hub would have made the experience better. Moreover, easing into the process would have been beneficial, such as meeting in person, having chats here and there and fully explaining what the service offers and how it can be supportive. Ultimately giving the young person a choice to make their own decision would have made the experience better.

Meeting 4

The fourth meeting saw Councillors Makwana and Judge meet with F (a young person), his sister G, and their mother H.

H’s English was not her first language, and she had no family locally that could help with care and support. Through F’s school a referral was made to the Stronger Families Hub as H had raised concerns about not being able to do anything for herself and solely focusing on her children and their 11 Plus exams. H had spent £10k on tuition fees.

H was referred to a parenting programme, Brilliant Parents, and found this to be very helpful. The Stronger Families Hub had encouraged H to take time for herself and to incorporate social activities into daily life. H was allocated a time period of six to eight weeks of support. Since she has had the Stronger Families Hub’s support, H now takes her children for play dates and social activities every weekend, and F has now enrolled onto the Hillingdon Lifestyle Programme. Although H has been discharged from the Stronger Families Hub, they have said

to her that she can go back if she has any issues. G (F's sister) said that the Stronger Families Hub had helped her with controlling her anger issues by offering helpful suggestions such as breathing in and out and big exhales, which has helped her. F said that he now knew where he needed to turn to if he needed support. The support provided was not just for H but the whole family.

Areas that performed well included: the Stronger Families Hub explained everything to the family, gave examples on how to manage issues and recommended activities to support improvement such as colouring and painting. With the Stronger Families Hub's help, H learnt how to manage her children and herself. The Stronger Families Hub met all expectations.

Meeting 5

The fifth meeting saw Councillors Makwana and Judge meet with I (a young person) and his parents.

The family were having challenges at home which had resulted in I misbehaving in school with regular fights and arguments. The school made a referral to the Stronger Families Hub. The referral was made as I indicated he needed support and this was also raised by his parents. The family agreed that they needed to have a fresh pair of eyes to see what was going wrong. The Stronger Families Hub referred the family for counselling and this had 'transformed everything for us and provided us with so much'. It was 'fantastic'. I and his dad were not communicating well and from counselling it was identified that barriers needed to be broken down. This was an out-of-Borough referral. Once the Stronger Families Hub were involved, there were weekly meetings arranged with I's mentor at school. The support staff from the Stronger Families Hub tried to encourage activities such as boxing and his parents learnt about disciplined reasoning. The timing allocated to the family was six weeks, although additional visits were added as these were requested by the family.

Areas that performed well included: the family were really happy with the service and would recommend to other families. Although there were initially concerns of stigma and anxiety attached to the process, things had worked out well. The Stronger Families Hub staff were committed and encouraged I to get back on track in school and provided him with motivation to work hard in exams. There was a good level of support for parenting courses and vaping courses.

Areas to improve included: although there was some communication between Stronger Families Hub staff and I's school mentor, face to face visits would have been useful.

Witness Session 4: The Voice of Providers

The Committee's fourth witness session saw Members meet with staff from across the Stronger Families Hub. In attendance were a Triage Officer, Interim MASH Manager, Social Worker, Out-of-Hours Team Manager, Key Worker, and Key Worker Team Manager.

Members outlined how the review worked, and that the witnesses had been invited to inform the Committee of what was working well and what needed improvement from a staff point of view.

First to address the Committee was the Triage Officer, who made the following points:

Triage Officers were the first point-of-contact at the Stronger Families Hub. Referrals were made to the Hub for safeguarding, information and advice, and if there were any potential concerns, either statutory or early intervention. Calls were logged and then passed on as appropriate.

There were a high number of referrals, four had been made before 09:00 that morning (06 February 2023). Typically, there were five to six referrals per day from schools, generally from Designated Safeguarding Leads (or their deputies), and sometimes from class teachers. Referrals were generally not made by the police, but when they were, these tended to be out-of-hours.

It was clarified that while the Stronger Families Hub was a 24-hour phone service, there was currently no Triage Officer between midnight and 08:00 – this was due to start in March 2023.

Lots of calls were received out-of-hours, and there were cluster meetings in the Borough, both North and South, and the Hub was in liaison with Borough neighbours. Most calls were for a screening via a social worker, but some were as a first point-of-contact. The Hub acted as a 'one direction' for concerns.

A typical age profile of cases was around 13 years of age and above, although this was starting to get younger; there was a rise in mental health cases post-COVID; and liaison with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) was noted, although there was a high threshold for referrals to CAMHS.

Next to address the Committee was the Interim MASH Manager, who made the following points:

After the Triage Officers, the Interim MASH Manager could also screen contacts. There was a national threshold document that officers would use to determine the urgency of a case. The risk factors included being under 5 years of age; vulnerabilities/ additional needs; and signs of physical/ sexual/ high emotional abuse. When reviewing cases, protective factors were taken into account, and the Stronger Families Hub applied an 'anti-oppressive, strength based' approach.

There were roughly 100 referrals per day, which came from Key Workers, SEND Officers, and schools, though not all referrals were for social care. In terms of the time needed to process cases, a 'red referral' (the most serious type) could be done in 20-30 minutes, whereas an 'amber referral' could take between a couple of hours and a day.

Sometimes families were not keen on receiving help. In these instances, persistence was key to opening the door. A Triage Officer could speak with the family and lay out the options, highlighting available help rather than telling the family what to do. Families have an allocated Key Worker who reply to families within 24 hours at the request of the Stronger Families Hub. Professional judgement around the needs of the young people was always considered and could override parental consent if necessary. However, the Stronger Families Hub was a consent-based project, and schools were kept updated to give a

holistic approach. If consent was not given in a referral, Triage Officers would seek consent and/or ask why consent was not given.

Officers noted that the Stronger Families Hub could function better if there was a larger MASH team/ more senior managers as this would allow longer conversations to be held with families, which could in turn lead to more in-depth research into each case. More Key Workers would also allow the Hub to better act as a preventative service – Key Workers were essential to being a preventative service and families preferred working with Key Workers to social workers. It was noted that it was everyone's responsibility to create a plan for children.

A social worker also addressed the Committee and made the following key points:

There was a duty rota to process 'red', or more urgent, referrals and officers would contact schools to gather more information if necessary. Cases would be reviewed and could be progressed from amber to red, or amber to green where appropriate, screening for the level of risk.

There were links to other services such as the Probation Service for gaining further information before making or reviewing a threshold decision. Other agencies did not have full access to the Hub's files, and some internal teams had view-only access to some documents. The Stronger Families Hub worked with Uxbridge Family Hub in early help assessments. There was also contact with out-of-Borough schools, and some liaising with other Councils when asking for further information. There were monthly stakeholder meetings between all London Councils. It was suggested that more joint working with other authorities could be beneficial, and this could provide opportunities for learning; sharing responsibility; more time and more capacity.

While there had been a recent influx of social workers – the team had doubled to nine officers within the last six months, more capacity and/or another MASH Manager would be beneficial. The work itself and the environment in which it takes place were two separate but related elements, and there were often competing priorities. The nature of the work meant that it was always difficult, although Hillingdon was a more stable workplace than other locations. The team and environment in which the work takes place were important, and within the MASH team, it was important that cases were dealt with quickly so that they were not hanging over staff for long periods of time.

The Out-of-Hours Team Manager addressed the Committee and made the following key points:

Prior to the Stronger Families Hub, the 'Out-of-Hours Team' were the 'Emergency Duty Team', and this was their biggest change since the introduction of the Hub. This had presented its own challenges as the previous team, which held about 150 years' worth of experience between five team members, had been dissolved, with only one staff member remaining. Newer team members were not used to a 24-hour working system.

It was part of the Out-of-Hours Team Manager's role to manage the Triage Officers and to compile rotas for Triage Officers and social workers. The team was waiting to be fully staffed before going 24 hours from 06 March 2023. There were currently 10 staff members, and that this was not sufficient, partly as there was no buffer for, for example, staff illness. It was suggested that a team of 12-15 would be more appropriate. There were shifts of 08:00-16:00; 16:00-00:00; and 00:00-08:00. It was not easy to cover shifts for illness which then led to operational issues. During out-of-hours (17:00-08:00), Triage Officers also took

calls for adult services, mental health services, and disability services, not just children's services.

Officers dealt with cases of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) arriving via Heathrow, and two recent UASC referrals had taken seven to eight hours per day over several days to process, including discussions for Border Force. Members noted their concerns over the time and effort needed to process these cases, where children were put up in hotels. Some of these children were enrolled in Hillingdon schools but not attending. Charville Lane children's home was used to host UASC through an Ofsted-regulated placement. There was little help received from the Home Office, although there was some funding received from Heathrow. There was a lack of funding from central Government and a surge in cases more recently, partly with Ukrainian arrivals. Charity organisations were contacting Triage Officers with concerns, such as nutrition of children put up in hotels upon arrival at Heathrow. A delay in some funding from the Home Office was noted, with Councils being advised to supply alternative funds. Reference was made to the current proposed Council Budget, which refers to £150k savings 'expected to be delivered through the recently implemented Stronger Families Programme'.

The Key Worker also addressed the Committee and made the following key points:

More time and resources were needed and there were transport issues for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children getting to school. There was also a language barrier here.

Under a new structure, Triage Officers were taking calls. Triage Officers were better skilled at taking calls in comparison to the former system of a call centre located in Bradford. Part of the improvement here was that Triage Officers had more local knowledge.

There was currently only one out-of-hours Senior Practitioner for children which had limitations when schools and GPs were closed but police stations, hospitals and Border Force were open.

The out-of-hours service represented the whole Borough and often dealt with cases of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), County Lines, Modern Day Slavery as well as issues with the cost of living where families cannot buy essentials, and cases of people with no recourse to public funds. The team held Hillingdon bank cards to pay for Bed & Breakfasts where necessary and approved.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE): "a type of sexual abuse. When a child or young person is exploited they're given things, like gifts, drugs, money, status and affection in exchange for performing sexual activities." [NSPCC](#)

County Lines: "The 2018 Home Office Serious Crime Strategy states the NPCC definition of a County Line is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move [and store] the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons. A common feature in county lines drug supply is the exploitation of young and vulnerable people. The dealers will frequently target children and adults - often with mental health or addiction problems - to act as drug runners or move cash so they can stay under the radar of law enforcement." [National Crime Agency](#)

Modern Day Slavery: “when an individual is exploited by others, for personal or commercial gain. Whether tricked, coerced, or forced, they lose their freedom. This includes but is not limited to human trafficking, forced labour and debt bondage.”
[Anti-Slavery International](#)

The out-of-hours service was a comprehensive service. They provided a written handover at 08:00-09:00 every morning to highlight anything that had come in overnight such as children in custody; requests for secure accommodation; or children being police protected. There was a lack of residential/ foster placements, and there was a suggestion to make foster carers available out-of-hours. There were currently no out-of-hours foster carers, but officers were looking into incentives for this. There was a Head of Service on call for oversight and placements had to be authorised by Senior Management. There was close working with mental health teams during out-of-hours.

Further discussions around capacity noted that with the introduction of the Stronger Families Hub, there was now a child and adult social worker, and a backup social worker. The Stronger Families Hub was better than the previous arrangement, but more resources were necessary – there was only one out-of-hours manager, with an advanced practitioner to assist.

The number of formal complaints made was reducing, and complaints during out-of-hours were very rare. All calls during out-of-hours get a call-back and callers felt like there is always someone to talk to. This is beneficial for them as people who call out-of-hours are often desperate and so the out-of-hours team can provide advice as soon as it is needed. Referrals came from schools, GPs, parents, social care, and there were good working relationships with the Stronger Families Hub. For example, Key Workers and the Stronger Families Hub kept each other up to date on who was working with each family to minimise duplication.

Key Workers provided a universal and non-statutory service within the family setting, with a focus also on parents and helping them to help their children, reinforcing good parenting. These officers have good local knowledge, which was good for signposting, and were good at networking. For example, Key Workers work with schools, if a child has Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or mental health issues post-COVID and could give guidance or signpost to local charities or foodbanks where appropriate. Furthermore, Key Workers worked with internal teams such as the SEND and Housing teams.

There was an Early Help Module to log meetings with families in liaison with the Stronger Families Hub. If a notification came in, the Triage Officer would alert the Key Worker. For example, if the Stronger Families Hub received a call about an open case, the Key Worker would then be informed.

A question of the gender split of officers was raised by Members. There was currently only one male Key Worker (formerly two).

Key Workers provided early help generally for a maximum of 18 weeks, following six-week reviews. This was to stop over-reliance on the Key Workers and to help the families progress. After the initial six weeks, a review would determine if a further six weeks was needed, or if the case could be handed over to, for example, a school. The case can be extended beyond 18 weeks, but this was done on a case-by-case basis. One Key Worker may be working with 12 to 15 families at a time, but one family may be very large in number,

and each member with different needs. The Key Worker works with everyone in the household, and often work to co-parent with the parents. Key Workers often represented the voice of the child. After 18 weeks, the case could be referred back to the Triage Officer and the support starts again. Families often needed acknowledgement that they are progressing, and they won't want to go back to the start.

There were issues around the cost of living – Triage Officers were starting to receive calls on this – and also around transport costs where some families have no recourse to public funds.

Further witness evidence

Officers noted issues around staffing, retention, resources and funding. There would be an issue in meeting need if resources were not available. On staff retention, it was stated that there was a lack of career progression. There were Key Workers, and then a Team Manager, so not much room for progression. Also, it was stated that Hillingdon's pay structure was lower than some other Boroughs. On resources, it was mentioned there used to be Family Support Workers and having the ability for a Senior Triage Officer and Senior Practitioner would be beneficial. It was important to note that Key Workers were not social workers – Key Workers provide early intervention, not a statutory intervention. Key Workers were also acting as parent practitioners and often met parents out-of-hours. Staff wellbeing was very important given the nature of the work, and so the duty officer would check in with staff to protect their wellbeing.

When a call was closed, further signposting took place to ensure that the family knew that help was still available to them, whether through schools or the Stronger Families Hub itself. Notification was always given to the family via a closing letter. There is also a Stronger Families sub-group which collated good news stories to further highlight the service. Feedback forms were available to parents and young people, and sometimes feedback was received through phone calls and emails. This feedback could be used as their own resource, and the Hillingdon website had a lot of resources.

Witness Session 5: Partnership Working – health partners

The Committee's fifth witness session saw Members reach out to local health partners alongside relevant Council officers. In attendance were the Head of Service, First Response, MASH and Out-of-Hours Social Work, and from the Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust: the Assistant Director for Safeguarding Adults, Safeguarding Children and Children Looked After; the Named Nurse for Safeguarding Children (Hillingdon)/ CNWL Interim Head of Safeguarding Children; and the Head of Children's Services. The Committee sought to understand the roles and responsibilities of the Council's partner organisations in respect of the Stronger Families Hub

It was noted that health partners worked with families who were under pressure, and also dealt with impacts of COVID-19 and the cost of living. Despite the challenges, the partners remained committed to providing support, and there was close collaboration between health partners and the Stronger Families Hub. The main source of referrals had come via the Police, with up to 11 officers on site within the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH*) to enable the quick exchange of information. The second most referrals had come via health partners. It was clearly explained to the Committee what MASH was:

MASH was the Stronger Families Hub's safeguarding element where professionals shared information quickly about police referrals of domestic abuse (Merlins) and referrals where there were concerns about a child's safety or welfare.

The Head of Children's Services (CNWL)'s portfolio included children aged 0-19, health visiting, school nursing, child development centres, community paediatricians, children's integrated therapy, occupational therapy, paediatric occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech and language, children's community nursing team and working with those with life-limiting conditions. Health representatives were a large partner of the Stronger Families Hub and had a strong relationship with the Local Authority. The above noted services had been asked about their experiences with the Stronger Families Hub prior to this witness session and the feedback was positive, despite some teething problems. A benefit of the Stronger Families Hub was it being one forum for a range of issues, and this was linked to the early identification of needs.

The Named Nurse for Safeguarding Children (Hillingdon)/ CNWL Interim Head of Safeguarding Children noted that they worked with all children's services when they had safeguarding concerns and delivered training to staff. They line managed the MASH Health Practitioner within Hillingdon. There was lots of interaction with MASH and these services used the Stronger Families Hub a lot. Despite the initial teething problems, the partners were pleased with the work of the Stronger Families Hub.

The Assistant Director for Safeguarding Adults, Safeguarding Children and Children Looked After worked in close collaboration with all health services including Primary Care, Primary Medical Care, Acute Trusts and Community Trusts. Part of their role was to ensure that health partners were discharging their safeguarding responsibilities appropriately, and the Stronger Families Hub came under this remit. There had been issues for the Acute Trust with the online portal when initially launched but the Local Authority was commended for its response to this. A sub-group had been established which had discussions around the initial operational issues with the online portal, which had helped to resolve some of these issues and to reduce anxieties. However, there was still some work to do with Primary Medical Care via support for GPs in terms of accessing and using the portal. A positive aspect was the useful guidance document that had come out alongside the launch of the portal – this had been well received by Primary Care.

In relation to receiving feedback from or on behalf of non-verbal children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), training was ongoing with Key Workers and social workers which included training on communication tools such as parent-child observations for non-verbal children. Continuous improvement was reviewed on a four-weekly basis through one-to-one supervision, while there was also peer supervision and group supervision. There were also workshops taking place with partners. There was a reliance on universal services for information sharing, but once information had been shared, the process was more streamlined than it was prior to the establishment of the Stronger Families Hub due to its one number, one email, one online portal that children, parents, carers and professionals can access. Training was assertive in knowing that children with SEND were at higher risk of safeguarding concerns.

In relation to receiving feedback from young people after a safeguarding breach, there was a focus on getting better at obtaining feedback and the Care Quality Commission had asked for evidence of this feedback. Improvements were needed and so partners gave a partial assurance to the Committee on obtaining feedback from young people.

Voluntary groups such as scouts, girl-guides and sports teams were noted as alternative avenues for feedback or for direction to the Stronger Families Hub, as were Young Health Watch, the Children in Care Council, and the Child's Voice Panel. Feedback was also received during the statutory SEND process. However, it was recognised that sometimes feedback was sought from groups that were easier to reach, as opposed to all groups. A possible future group for children with epilepsy was referenced as a potential new route for engagement as part of the plan for

2023.

For children with disabilities, when a referral was made, partners had close relationships to know which professional knew their child well, for example a Speech Therapist or Occupational Therapist, who could identify their communication needs and identify which tools to use to get the child's voice heard. Speech and Language Therapists within the Youth Offending Service were key in the communication process and were often linked to undiagnosed cases of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

In terms of the challenges faced and areas for improvement, quality assurance of referrals being made was one area to look at, as well as mental health services. On quality assurance, this was tracked and there was practitioner-to-practitioner tracking where possible. This had led to less escalation to managers, and there had been an increase in quality in Early Help Assessments. The form on the online portal had been amended to be more concise, and now consisted of drop-down boxes. It was important that staff were supported in quality assurance. Quality assurance was also a high priority for the Stronger Families Hub sub-group.

In relation to capacity, some staff were on lean contracts and there were some vacancy issues around Paediatric Occupational Therapy, although this reflected a national issue. Funds were tight, however a Paediatric Occupational Therapist would be beneficial. There were concerns around new arrivals of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children staying in hotels, and so an Asylum-Seeking Health Visitor would be beneficial in terms of early identification of needs. There was a struggle with the increase in the number of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), and the number of referrals to the Child Development Centre for concerns regarding Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) was increasing. Creative and innovative ideas were often pursued as a way around capacity issues.

Health partners also had concerns over the number of vacancies within their services. Investment into children's integrated therapy services was recommended, as was more focus on children with ASD. ASD navigators or pathways was suggested as a new approach to ASD. Stronger integration was also needed between children's services and adult services, as well as the transition when young people move from children's services to adult services. The new Transition nurse was highlighted as a recent benefit. More focus on mental health provision and on neurodiversity support was recommended.

On information sharing between agencies, GDPR should not be a barrier to keeping children safe. The Stronger Families Hub was a consent-based service and it had been recommended through a previous review that parents and carers be better informed that giving consent meant to more than one agency. This was known as universal consent. Partners confirmed that communication with other agencies required some improvement.

There was also a named nurse for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) who was trained in information-sharing. Data was provided through the Safeguarding Children Partnership for CAMHS. Partners advised that a CAMHS post within MASH would be beneficial.

The service being 24-hours was impressive, as not having to use emergency teams outside of core hours kept the quality of service high. Also, having the one front door was beneficial. The voice of the child ran through all sub-groups, and this was something that Hillingdon did well.

Health partners worked with a designated officer for SEND and the multi-agency work around SEND was strong. There was also good signposting to, for example, resources available in alternative languages.

Members of the Committee welcomed the feedback from partners and thanked them for their time and important input into the review.

Witness Session 6: Partnership Working – education partners

Throughout the review process, the Committee noted the importance of obtaining feedback from schools as key stakeholders in the service. To achieve this, the Committee held witness meetings with education partners outside the formal meeting structure. The meetings took place in two parts.

The first meeting below saw Councillors Makwana, Haggar, Smallwood and Sweeting meet with the Deputy Designated Safeguarding lead at Ruislip High School, and the Team 1 Manager – Stronger Families Key Working (South East). Members outlined the review process and the purpose of the meeting:

Meeting 1

The Safeguarding Lead at Ruislip High noted that the school had become aware of the Stronger Families Hub through sessions delivered by officers from the Children’s Services Partnership and Quality Assurance Service. There were also cluster group meetings between schools. Furthermore, there was a Stronger Families Champions group which consisted of one Stronger Families Champion from each school. There were currently 58 Stronger Families Champions for education. In addition, there had been some direct contact between Ruislip High School and the Stronger Families Hub, for example to make a referral. When the school phoned the Hub, they often received a quick call back on how to proceed, whether this was through making a referral, or holding discussions with the parent/ carer.

They had been impressed with the service. Prior to the establishment of the Stronger Families Hub, the school would make referrals to the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) team, and this would often involve being put on hold. Following the introduction of the Stronger Families Hub, callers were no longer being put on hold. The Stronger Families Hub was also very helpful for early help assessments and for signposting. There had been initial frustrations around logging in to the system for the first time, but overall, the partner was happy with the service of the Stronger Families Hub.

Relating to the Hub’s current capacity, it was noted that they felt the threshold for making a referral was too high, and that there had been instances where, when calling the Hub, the school was advised to implement mentoring within the school. This had been experienced as a push-back from the Hub. However, it was recognised that all services were dealing with difficult times, and more families than ever before were struggling. This could be frustrating for the school, and there was also an impression that cases were sometimes closed down too quickly, which may, in part, be due to key workers having their own high caseloads. The partner noted that their impression would be that other schools felt the same way, although no direct conversations had been had on this, although Ruislip High hosted the cluster meetings. It was noted that the very high workloads of school staff likely contributed to the inability to obtain more witnesses for the session.

There has been a mix of feedback from young people directly to the school. There were some doubts amongst young people as to what the safeguarding role would entail. However, when support was given, for example through a Children in Need Plan, the support received from social workers was appreciated. Despite this, there was a feeling of invasiveness when contact took place outside of school, and that there were individual differences between social workers. It was re-iterated that there often a feeling that cases were closed down too quickly. There was also a feeling of stigma attached to using the Stronger Families Hub and a reluctance to engage as young people often did not want to be seen to be using the Hub. Furthermore, some families did not want to be seen to have a social worker and so some parents were also reluctant. Meetings now often took place virtually, whereas face to face meetings were often preferred.

When the school phoned the Hub, they knew they were speaking to a qualified social worker, and they knew they had to trust any advice received, however they would escalate if they felt the need, but this was very rare. It was acknowledged that Looked After Children had additional needs and resources for this, which had to be applied for, were lacking. Overall, the school had no major concerns, aside from the feeling of having to wait a long time to get help.

The Team 1 Manager (Stronger Families Key Working South East) noted that from a key working perspective, there may be a gap in the service around mental health. The service tried to link in with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) where possible, however CAMHS waiting lists were very long.

The Safeguarding Lead from Ruislip High noted that the service was probably not promoted enough to parents.

The role of Brilliant Parents was noted during the meeting, which set out to offer parental support. More information on the role of Brilliant Parents was made available to Members and is set out in **Appendix J**.

It was welcomed that parenting classes were held at the school every Wednesday, and these sessions could be useful in sharing ideas. Overall, it was felt that there was some promotion but not enough. More promotion could help in removing the stigma, as people often do not want to ask for help. Stronger Families Plans may also help in removing some of this stigma.

Within key working, contact with schools via coffee mornings were taking place. This was a slow process currently but was expanding. These events could be utilised to discuss key working; how to self-refer; and for being visible in the school community.

Young people were very reluctant to come forward. There was a safeguarding page on the school's website but students' use of this was low. Within the school's Google classroom, students could report concerns, and that these would not be anonymous. However, this had been used for a wide range of issues, from worries about repercussions for forgetting pencil cases to other, potentially more serious issues at home. Focus groups were run every half term with students and Ruislip High School had robust safeguarding processes. There were frequent meetings with parents, and meetings with key workers were also helpful. Lots of early help

had been used recently.

The second part of the witness session saw Councillors Makwana, Sweeting and Kaur meet with the Lead Safeguarding Officer from The Rosedale Hewens Academy Trust. This Trust includes seven schools: Brookside Primary School; Hewens Primary School; Rosedale Primary School; Hewens College; Rosedale College; Parkside Studio College; and De Salis Studio College.

Meeting 2

The Trust was made aware of the Stronger Families Hub through training and advice given prior to its introduction. There were termly cluster meetings for Designated Safeguarding Leads. Officers from the Children's Services Partnership and Quality Assurance Service had given a lot of information to the schools.

There had been teething issues initially and it took time to get used to the new system, such as there being one account for each user, rather than one school account. The Stronger Families Hub was more of a 'one pathway' for all services than the previous system and it took time to get used to having the same pathway for both early help referrals and safeguarding concerns.

There had been issues around parental consent where this could not be obtained – the Stronger Families Hub is a consent-based service but not having parental consent would not stop the schools from seeking assistance when necessary. Furthermore, not having consent could slow the process down, and there were always reasons for not being able to get consent. In cases where there were safeguarding concerns but no parental consent, the schools would make referrals to raise concerns, and include email trails for further information, follow-up and use the police for support where necessary. There were time frame issues with this. Different Stronger Families Hub officers would have different knowledge, views and expectations, so there was a fluctuation in consistency.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic there was a higher need and there were more cases of deprivation and more challenges, and the profile of referrals was wider now – there had been a huge increase in the number of referrals made to the Stronger Families Hub. The response times had been faster prior to COVID, and there was now more streamlining and referring back to schools themselves where appropriate. Schools were in a good position to build relationships with young people and had more time to work with them. In terms of capacity, all stakeholders were stretched in terms of resources.

Parents often do not want to self-refer to the Stronger Families Hub and that schools often helped with this. There was not enough promotion of the Stronger Families Hub, and not just in schools but in general. The 'Stronger Families Hub' was a good name for the service as it helped families to engage more than a social work name would have done.

Clearer guidance would be helpful and there were grey areas around Key Workers. Requesting help from a key worker should have a separate pathway, and having separate forms for early help and for safeguarding would help professionals. Also, a method for explaining why parental consent had not been given would be beneficial – there had been cases where the schools had informed a family that

they would be making a referral, and then ticked 'yes' to having obtained consent. Furthermore, there were currently no alternative languages available on the forms, and schools were using their own staff to bridge this gap. Offering alternative languages would be an 'amazing' improvement and would help to engage with local communities. There was a need to engage more across different communities, while there are some cultural barriers to seeking and/ or accepting help. For example, in cases where a parent had smacked their child, schools sometimes bypass the Hub and use their own processes, unless extreme harm had been caused. Moreover, a booklet outlining 'dos and don'ts' of UK child protection would be very beneficial.

The length of time spent on cases differed case-by-case and also depended on the assigned professional. The partner had left Key Working themselves due to feeling the times frames were too short – they needed to be more flexible. Social work time frames were more appropriate, and they were more flexible – there is more monitoring and following-up. This was beneficial for families with repeating referrals and for sustaining change.

The cluster meetings for Designated Safeguarding Leads were across-Borough and the Child Safeguarding Partnership and AXIS groups were helpful. The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and Deputy LADO were excellent professionals and there was great expertise within Hillingdon, but that continuous improvement was needed.

In terms of blind spots in the system, the Rosedale Hewens Trust had a high proportion of students with English as an additional language (EAL) and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC). A national statutory inclusion package for these children would be ideal as there was currently not enough transition support and guidance for them. Sometimes these students may be placed into different classes due to their behaviour where they would then pick up further negative behaviours. The Virtual School was very good, although there was a grey area around children not in education, employment or training (NEET) - there had been an increase in the number of children being home-schooled over the last few years, in part due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There is a lack of statutory guidance around this and it is a potential safeguarding issue as there are no methods of tracking them. A home-schooling register was suggested but this may fall outside of the remit of the current review.

Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

Findings and Conclusions

The Committee concluded that the Stronger Families Hub was providing a good service to children and families in Hillingdon and that service users were, in general, happy with the support and advice they received.

As a new model of service delivery, the Committee were struck by the continued enthusiasm of all involved to make the Hub work, in particular its operation on a 24/7 basis.

The Committee also found that decision-making Hub staff were all qualified social workers who had all received a high level of training.

Recommendations

The Committee also found, through the witness sessions, that there were some areas for continued review. These included maintaining awareness of the service and any changes to it with all stakeholders; maintaining the resilience of the 24/7 nature of service delivery; and dealing with increases in demand. With this in mind, the Children, Families and Education Select Committee came up with seven recommendations.

Members believed it was important to ensure that stakeholders remain aware of the Stronger Families Hub, and so recommended that Cabinet:

1

To continue to raise the profile of the Stronger Families Hub with all Hillingdon stakeholders, including schools (both in and out of the Borough), community organisations, third sector organisations and elected Members, with a view to improving resident awareness of the Hub and the support available to them

Members also considered it important to ensure that the Hub had sufficient resourcing, and so recommended that Cabinet:

2

Seeks to maintain the resilience of the 24/7 Hub model by monitoring the staff and triage resourcing covering the out-of-hours service, in light of comments made by witnesses

As a port authority, the Committee acknowledged the significance of supporting unaccompanied asylum-seeking children arriving at Heathrow, as identified in the review, and recommended that Cabinet asks officers to:

3

Review the capacity within the Hub to support increased demand, in light of comments made by witnesses, in particular from unaccompanied asylum-seeking children arriving at Heathrow Airport

The Committee also recognised the feedback given regarding mental health links between the Stronger Families Hub and Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), and therefore recommended to Cabinet:

4	To note the Health and Social Care Select Committee's review into the effectiveness of the CAMHS referral pathway, and to review ways to enhance signposting around mental health services via the Hub and to voluntary and private sector services
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As well as raising the profile of the Hub with partners, the Committee wished to ensure that residents are and continue to be aware of the Hub. Members, therefore, recommended to Cabinet to ask officers to:

5	To continue to raise awareness of the Stronger Families Hub regularly with partners to keep abreast of changes or new developments. This is to include an annual renewal of the membership of the Stronger Families sub-group to ensure it reflects all stakeholders
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Through feedback received during witness sessions, given the direct person to person nature of the service provided, Members noted there was a diverse range of communities who have, and may require in the future, the Hub's services. Therefore, the Committee recommended to Cabinet that officers:

6	Ensure the Stronger Families Hub is accessible to a diverse range of communities by investigating advertising and promoting the Stronger Families Hub in additional languages, where feasible.
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As the Committee were aware that the Stronger Families Hub was a consent-based service, it was acknowledged that there may be occasions where parental consent cannot be achieved. Therefore, Members recommended to Cabinet that officers:

7	Investigate adding into the referral form process to explain why consent had not been obtained, where appropriate.
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Appendices

Appendix A – Stronger Families Flyer

Appendix B – Stronger Families Webinar Slides

Appendix C – Stronger Families Hub Staff Structure

Appendix D – Stronger Families Hub web page

Appendix E – Guidance on making a referral through the online portal

Appendix F – Early Help Assessment template

Appendix G – Stronger Families Key Working

Appendix H – Stronger Families Plan review

Appendix I – Feedback from parents on the intervention from Stronger Families

Appendix J – Role of Brilliant Parents

Appendix K – Glossary

Appendix A

Our Vision

Our vision is to empower families to be and feel strong, safe and healthy through the provision of early and targeted support to reach their full potential.

Our Journey

To achieve our vision, we respond to the needs of the families as early as they are identified by working together to ensure the right person for the child and family is providing the right support. The service consists of the Stronger Families Hub, three locality based Key Working Teams and holistic partnership working across Hillingdon.

Stronger Families Hub

Is a single point of contact for all safeguarding referrals and an online route to refer a child to Social Care.

- Professionals contacting the Hub will be asked to complete an Early Help Assessment to determine the right support for each family. This support can include:
 - Special educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
 - Adolescent Development Services
 - Portage
 - Stronger Families (Locality Key Working teams)
 - Social Care
 - School attendance
 - Children Missing from Education
- All referrals will be received into the same place and *The Stronger Families Hub will respond 24/7*

Stronger Families



“The right service,
the right person,
the right time”



What happens to your referral?

The referral is electronically sent to the Stronger Families Hub where there are dedicated team members working around the clock.

The Triage Officers and Senior Social Workers will read all referrals and, based on your information along with further checks and enquiries, a decision will be made on what is the right service for each family and who is the right professional to lead the delivery.

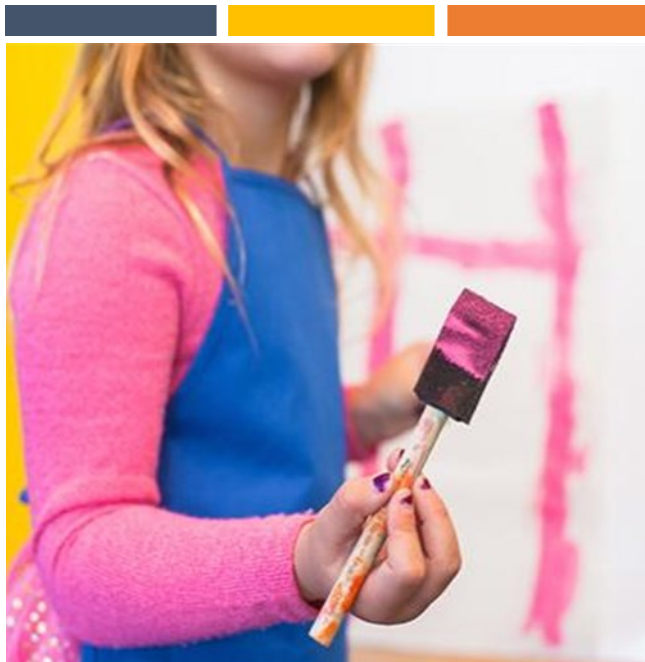
How to refer?

If you are a professional and wish to make a referral for a family, you can access the referral process through the Council's website and select "Make a referral". This will take you through to the Stronger Families Hub page where you will be able to fill out the Early Help Assessment.

This link <https://Portal-EHM.hillingdon.gov.uk> can also be used.

If you are advising families to refer themselves, they can contact the Stronger Families Hub by calling 01895 556 006 or e-mailing:

strongerfamilieshub@hillington.gov.uk



What is a Stronger Families Plan?

A Stronger Families Plan details the support for a child or young person and their family. It is single or multi-agency plan completed in partnership with the family to build on their strengths and reduce areas of concern.

Locality Model

The three locality-based Key Working Teams are:

South East Manager - Anne-Marie McCarthy covering Hayes & Harlington – Charville, Barnhill, Yeading, Botwell, Townfield, Pinkwell, Heathrow Villages.

South West Manager - Lea Perez Uxbridge & West Drayton – West Drayton, Yiewsley, Brunel, Uxbridge South, Uxbridge North, Hillingdon East, Ickenham.

North Manager - Louise Hemming Ruislip & Northwood – South Ruislip, West Ruislip, Manor, Cavendish, Eastcote & East Ruislip, Northwood Hills, Northwood, Harefield.

Webinar

An Introduction to Stronger Families in Hillingdon



HILLINGDON
LONDON

Building Stronger Families



The Vision

Deanna Neilson – Head of Early Help and Prevention

Our vision is to empower families to be and feel strong, safe and healthy through the provision of early and targeted support to reach their full potential.

To achieve our vision, we need to respond to need when it arises and work together to ensure we have the right person for the child and family leading the right intervention.



What is Stronger Families?

Antony Madden – Head of First Response

A 24/7 front door to ensure that local families have fast access to a wide range of support services around the clock.

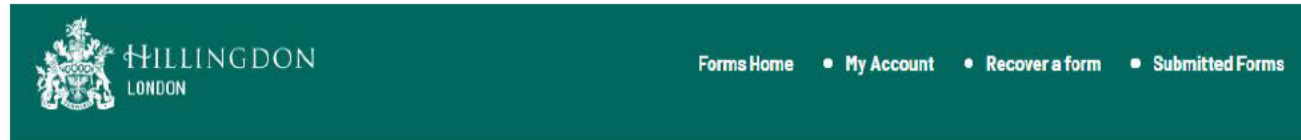
A locality based Early Help and Prevention Service supporting children at the earliest possible stage by working closely with partners across Hillingdon.



How to refer?

Antony Madden – Head of First Response

Go to the Council website and click make a referral. This will take you through to the new Stronger Families Hub page.



[Home](#) > [Stronger Families](#) > [Forms Home](#) >

Welcome to the Stronger Families Hub

Referral pathways for Professionals

Please choose an option below to complete a referral form.

Refer a family for Early Help or Social Care Support

Refer for Special Education Needs and Disabilities Support (SEND)

Report Poor Attendance / Child Missing from Education

School holiday penalty fines (via LEAP)



Building Stronger Families



What stays the same?

- Single point of contact for all safeguarding referral.
 - An online route to refer a child to Social Care.
 - Education Statutory Fines will continue to be referred via LEAP
-

What New?

- It is now one form to fill in for support with:
- SEND
- Adolescent Development Services
- Portage
- Stronger Families (Locality Key working teams)
- Social Care
- Attendance issues
- Children Missing from Education
- All referrals will be received into the same place. *The Stronger Families Hub* who will respond 24/7



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Demonstration of the Portal

Matt Watkins – Liquid Logic Consultant



Building Stronger Families



What does the new Referral form look like?

Antony Madden – Head of First Response

1 Early Help Referral and Assessment

- 2 Your Details
- 3 Request for Support
- 4 Consent
- 5 Additional Details
- 6 Services
- 7 The Child and their Family's Assessment
- 8 Upload Documents
- 9 Submit Referral

EARLY HELP REFERRAL AND ASSESSMENT

Who is this about?

In the section below please add the name of all persons that this form is about. You will need to details for at least 1 individual. If you need to add more people, use the **+** icon to add a new row. Using the **-** icon will remove a person from the form.

Once completed use **Confirm** to save your changes. You will not be able to progress through the form until changes have been confirmed.

Please add details of all persons to be included in this form to be submitted to the Local Authority

Forename	Surname	
<input type="text" value="Amber"/>	<input type="text" value="Red"/>	+
Confirm		

Changes can be made at any point whilst completing the form by returning to this section and amending the person/s.

You will be asked for more details of the person/s later in the form.



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Building Stronger Families



What does the new Referral form look like?

Antony Madden – Head of First Response

- 1 Early Help Referral and Assessment
- 2 Your Details
- 3 Request for Support
- 4 Consent
- 5 Additional Details
- 6 SEND Information
- 7 Participation Team
- 8 Services
- 9 **The Child and their Family's Assessment**
- 10 Upload Documents
- 11 Submit Referral

THE CHILD AND THEIR FAMILY'S ASSESSMENT

What is happening for this family?

Consider all family members including strengths, protective factors and what is going well in addition to the child's developmental needs such as physical and emotional health, education and learning, ability to form a positive sense of self and identity, social, emotional and behavioural development and self care skills.

If referring into the SEND Service from a Education setting, please give details of assess. plan. do. review (APDR) in place

please upload any supporting evidence (E.G My support Plan) to the Upload Documents section at the end of this form

Assessment information...

What in the family's circumstances is currently impacting on them?

Consider areas such as the family history, education, housing, income, employment, community resources currently available, social integration and the role of the wider family.

Assessment information...

The parent or carers current capacity to meet the needs of the child and or children's needs.

Consider the capacity to provide basic care, ensure safety, emotional warmth, stimulation, guidance and boundaries as well as stability.

Assessment information...



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LONDON

Building Stronger Families



What happens to my referral after I press submit?

Antony Madden– Head of First Response

- The referral is electronically sent to the Stronger Families Hub
- There are dedicated team members working around the clock.
- The Triage officers and Senior Social Workers will look at the referral and based on your information along with further checks and enquiries a decision will be made on what is the right service to meet the needs and who is the best professional to deliver this service.

All	Empty	▼	🔍	📌	▲
👤 Matt Watkins	151				
👤 Stronger Families Hub (EHM)	13				

Group By: Date Task Priority Person Address Locality Episode	Order By: Start Date	
Group		
🕒 No Due Date (13)	Person	Task Description
No Due Date	Amber Red	New EHA received



HILLINGDON
LONDON

Building Stronger Families



About our Locality Based Key-working Service

Deanna Neilson – Head of Early Help & Prevention

We have 3 teams in The North, South West and South East respectively with up to 8 keyworkers and a Team Manager leading each.

- Work is ongoing in each locality to identify partnership networks and resources across a range of statutory and community based agencies to provide the right person/ service at the right time to help and empower families.



HILLINGDON
LONDON

Building Stronger Families



What is a Stronger Families Plan?

Deanna Neilson— Head of Early Help & Prevention

A stronger Families Plan is a plan of support for a child or young person and their family. It is a multi agency targeted plan of intervention to build resilience within the family and reduce areas of concern.

A Stronger Families Plan is built around the family should be led by the right person and delivered at the right time and in the right way for the child or young person.



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Building Stronger Families





Demonstration of the Stronger Families Plan

Matt Watkins – Liquid Logic Consultant



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Building Stronger Families



Next Steps

Deanna Neilson– Head of Early Help & Prevention

- Go Live is the 3rd August 2021
- We are working to support integrated delivery and recoding of Stronger Families Plans
- ***Together we will achieve our vision of building strong families in the London Borough of Hillingdon***



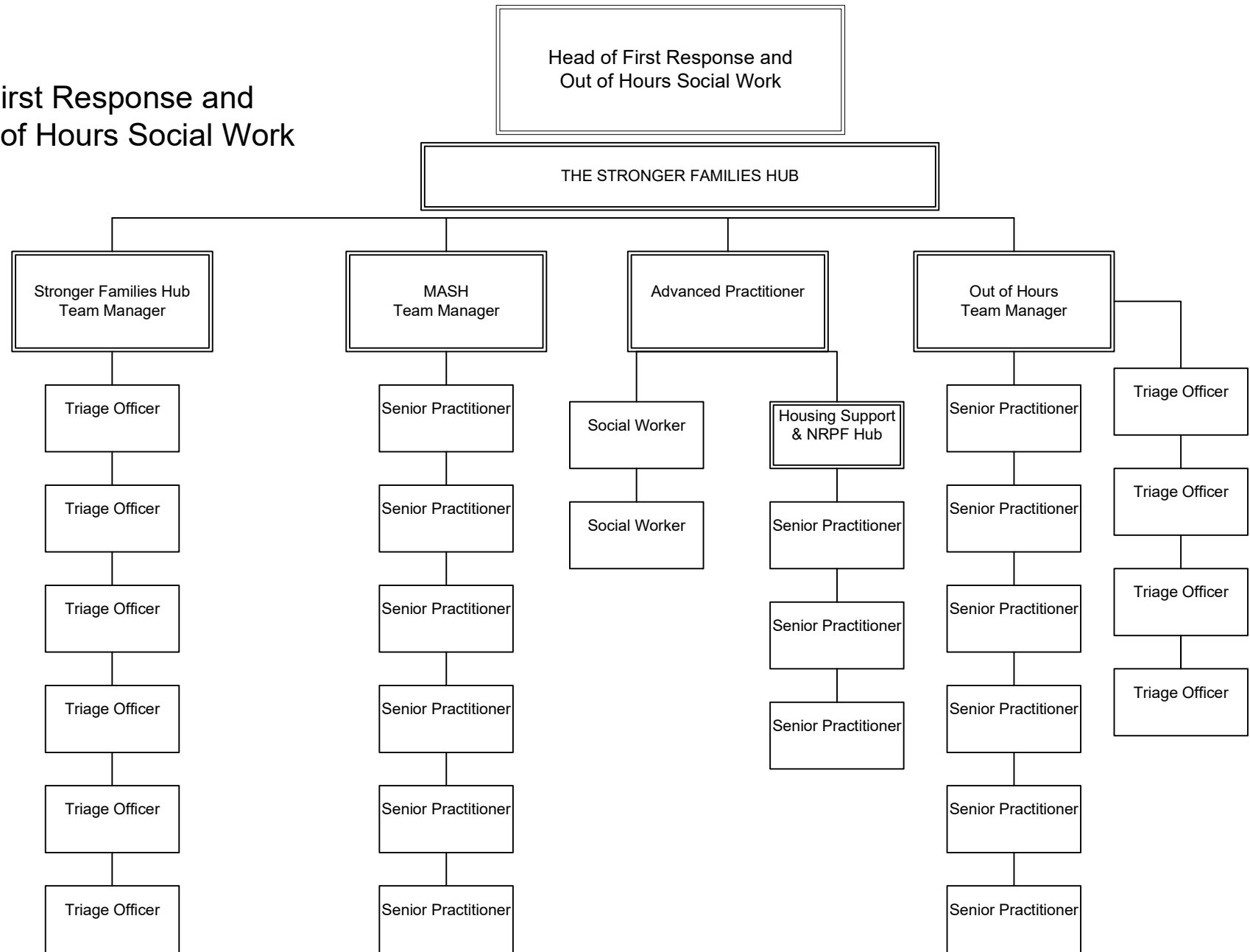
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Appendix C

First Response and Out of Hours Social Work



Stronger Families

Working together to support families with the help they need, when they need it most, and protecting children and young people from abuse and neglect. Select one of the boxes below to find information and support.

If you think a child is in immediate harm or needs medical attention, call 999.



I need help and support for my family

Our Stronger Families Hub is here to help and support you with information, advice and support any time of the day or night.



I'm a professional working with families

Referral forms and information about the hub for professionals working with families in Hillingdon.



I'm concerned about a child's safety

If you're concerned that a child or young person is being (or is at risk of being) abused or neglected, report it appropriately.



London Borough of Hillingdon

Stronger Families Portal

Submitting Early Help Assessments

Building Stronger Families



Version No	Revision Date	Portal Version	Created By	Version Information
2.0	30/09/2021	Portal V4.0	M. Watkins	Early Health Notification Integration
1.0	19/07/2021	Portal V4.0	M. Watkins	Stronger Families Hub GO LIVE

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1. An Introduction to Stronger Families & the Children's Portal

Stronger Families is a 24/7 front door to ensure that local families have fast access to a wide range of support services around the clock.

Stronger Families is a locality based Early Help and Prevention Service supporting children at the earliest possible stage by working closely with partners across Hillingdon.

Hillingdon's vision is to empower families to be and feel strong, safe and healthy through the provision of early and targeted support to reach their full potential.

To achieve our vision, we need to respond to need when it arises and work together to ensure we have the right person for the child and family leading the right intervention.

To support this the **Children's Portal**, has been developed. The **Children's Portal** allows agencies referring into Hillingdon to complete an **Early Help Assessment online** and submit it directly to the **Stronger Families Hub**.

There is one form to complete for the following types of referrals:

- SEND
- Portage
- Early Health Notifications (Health Professionals Only)
- Stronger Families (Early Help & Prevention)
- Social Care
- Attendance issues
- Children Missing from Education
- Targeted Programmes (Adolescent Development Services)

Referrals for Education Statutory Fines will continue to be referred via **The Hillingdon LEAP** (<https://leap.hillingdon.gov.uk/>)

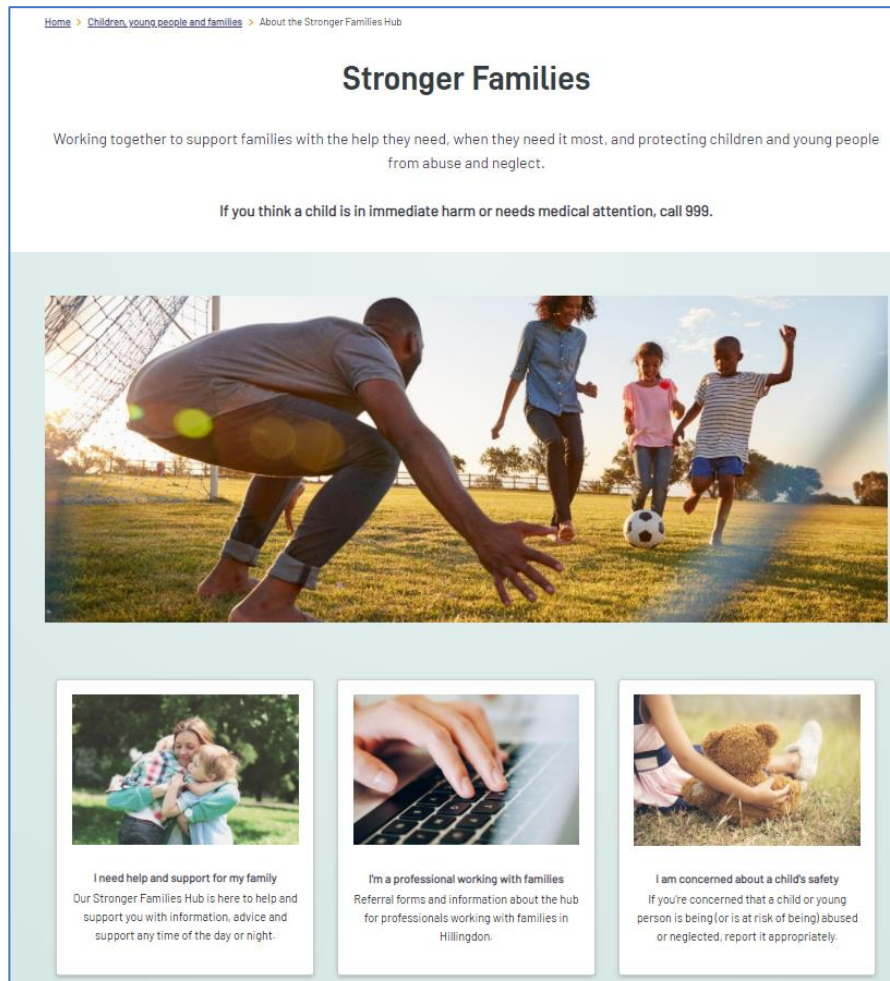
2. Purpose of this Help Guide

This Help Guide has been designed as a guide for Key Agencies to:

- Access the **Hillingdon Stronger Families** web page
- Create a new **Personalised Portal Account**
- Create and submit an **Early Help Assessment** to the Hillingdon Stronger Families Hub via the Children's Portal.
- Maintain their **Portal Accounts**.

3. Start the Referral Process

The **Hillingdon Stronger Families web page** is the first point of access for Stronger Families online services. The web page can be accessed via the following web address: <https://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/stronger-families>



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Hillingdon Stronger Families website. At the top, there is a breadcrumb trail: Home > Children, young people and families > About the Stronger Families Hub. The main heading is "Stronger Families" in a large, bold font. Below this, a sub-heading reads: "Working together to support families with the help they need, when they need it most, and protecting children and young people from abuse and neglect." A prominent message states: "If you think a child is in immediate harm or needs medical attention, call 999." The central image is a large photograph of a man in a grey t-shirt and dark trousers crouching on a grassy field, reaching out towards a group of children who are playing soccer. The children are in the background, some running and one with a soccer ball. Below the main image, there are three white boxes, each with a small image and a text block. The first box shows a woman holding a baby and a young child, with the text: "I need help and support for my family. Our Stronger Families Hub is here to help and support you with information, advice and support any time of the day or night." The second box shows a close-up of hands typing on a laptop keyboard, with the text: "I'm a professional working with families. Referral forms and information about the hub for professionals working with families in Hillingdon." The third box shows a child's hands holding a teddy bear, with the text: "I am concerned about a child's safety. If you're concerned that a child or young person is being (or is at risk of being) abused or neglected, report it appropriately."

The centre tile on the web page contains instructions and links to create and submit an Early Help Assessment to the Stronger Families hub.


Click on the **centre tile** to access the professionals page.



The **Professionals** page contains lots of useful information about the Stronger Families Hub and MASH services. To begin the process of completing an online Early Help Assessment, click on the yellow **Make a referral** button.

About the Stronger Families Hub and making referrals - Information for professionals

Working with our partners, we have built on our existing service to create a new single point of contact for children, young people and families in Hillingdon to access a wide range of support services 24/7 and offer a helping hand to become a stronger family.



What is the Stronger Families Hub?

- The hub is a new easily-accessible and integrated single point of contact for families and professionals in Hillingdon.
- The model combines a social work led service, adult mental health service and the [Hillingdon MASH](#).
- It has 1 telephone number, 1 email address and 1 referral form.
- It's a place where residents and professionals can access information, advice and assistance 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

What are the benefits?

- The Stronger Families Hub provides a single point of contact, so that everything is accessible in the same place and uses the same process.
- It ensures timely information and advice is readily accessible for families 24 hours of the day, throughout the calendar year.
- The hub allows better information sharing between professionals, which ensures a more co-ordinated and faster response to the needs of children and families in Hillingdon.

How do I make a referral?

If you are a professional wanting to request support for a family, please complete the relevant referral form through our online portal.

[Make a referral](#) →

You will be navigated to the Hillingdon Children’s Portal. Several referral options are presented on the Portal screen.

<p>Refer a Family for Early Help or Social Care Support</p> <p>Report Poor Attendance / Child Missing from Education</p> <p>Refer for Special Education Needs and Disabilities Support (SEND)</p>	<p>Selecting one of these options will start a new Early Help Assessment form</p>
<p>Early Health Notifications</p>	<p>Selecting this option provides guidance to the referring Health Professionals regarding Early Health Notifications and a further option to start a new referral via the Early Help Assessment.</p>
<p>School Holiday penalty fines (via LEAP)</p>	<p>Clicking on this option will redirect the referrer to the LEAP site. An Early Help Assessment will not be presented for completion.</p>

Click on the relevant **tile** to start the process.

HILLINGDON
LONDON

[Forms Home](#) • [Help & guidance](#) • [My Account](#) • [Recover a form](#) • [Submitted Forms](#)

[Home](#) > [Stronger Families](#) > [Forms Home](#) >

Welcome to the Stronger Families Hub

Referral pathways for Professionals

Please choose an option below to complete a referral form.

- Refer a family for Early Help or Social Care Support
- Education Health Care Needs Assessment or Special Education Needs and Disabilities Support
- Notify us that a child may have long-term SEND (Early Health Notification - Health Professionals)
- Report Poor Attendance / Child Missing from Education
- School holiday penalty fines (via LEAP)

On the first page of the Early Help Assessment you will be prompted to record the **names** of the child to whom the referral is about. If you are referring a sibling group / family, record the **forename** and **surname** of the youngest child within the fields below and then click **Confirm**.

EARLY HELP ASSESSMENT

1 Early Help Assessment

2 Your Details

3 Request for Support

4 Consent

5 Additional Details

6 Services

7 The Child and their Family's Assessment

8 Upload Documents

9 Submit Referral

Who is this about?

In the section below please add the name of all persons that this form is about. You will need to details for at least 1 individual. If you need to add more people, use the + icon to add a new row. Using the - icon will remove a person from the form.

Once completed use **Confirm** to save your changes. You will not be able to progress through the form until changes have been confirmed.

Please add details of all persons to be included in this form to be submitted to the Local Authority

Forename	Surname
Honour	Track

Confirm

The remaining family members details can be recorded within later sections of the form.

The first page “**How does this tool work**” provides guidance on how to complete the form. It contains information such as:

- Navigating through sections of the form
- Mandatory questions
- Saving the form to complete at a later date

Once you have recorded the child’s names and reviewed the guidance, click **Next**.

Changes can be made at any point whilst completing the form by returning to this section and amending the person/s.

You will be asked for more details of the person/s later in the form.

How does this tool work?

Click on the **numbered sections** on the left hand side of the window
or
use the **Next →** and **← Previous** options to move through the pages.

Don't use the Browser 'Back' button

Questions

You **DO NOT** need to answer every question, you need only complete what is relevant.

Select the option(s) that best suit your response

This symbol ***** indicates that the question is mandatory and must be answered in order to continue.

Save the Form

Use the option to **Save** the form to return to at any time.

Print the Form

Use the option to **Print** a copy of the form if required.

Next →

4. Create a New Children’s Portal Account

Before completing an **Early Help Assessment** form for the first time you must create your own **Children’s Portal account**.

If you have already created an account and have logged in before completing this step, [click here](#) to jump to the next section of this Help Guide.

To begin, click on the **Login or Register** button.

[Home >](#) [Stronger Families >](#) [Forms Home >](#)

LOGIN OR REGISTER

1 Early Help Assessment

2 **Your Details**

3 Request for Support

4 Consent

5 Additional Details

6 Services

7 The Child and their Family's Assessment

8 Upload Documents

9 Submit Referral

In order to progress with this form you must either log in or complete a simple registration for a new account. You can then continue to complete this form. This will enable you to track the form at a later date.

Login or Register

← Previous Next →

On the next page, click on the **Register for a new account** button.

Secure login - step 1

New to Adult, Children, Young People and Families Online Services? Register for an account on the right.

Already using Adult, Children, Young People and Families Online Services? Sign in below.

Existing users

Email

Password

For additional security, we will confirm your account by sending an authentication code to your email address.

[Forgotten password?](#)

New users

If you're new to Adult, Children, Young People and Families Online Services, sign up for an account [here](#)

Register for new account



At this time **generic accounts** that your service may intend to use and share login information across several team members **are not permitted**. This is to ensure that:

- Accounts and your personal information remain secure
- Referring officers can be contacted quickly and directly should further information be urgently needed
- Your organisation's Data Protection Act / GDPR obligations are adhered to
- Personal information about children and their families are kept secure

You must create your own **personal account**, using your **own work email address**.

Step 1: Enter your **Forename** and **Surname**, then click Next.

Register a new account - step 1

Forename
Comfort

Surname
Warren

Next Cancel

Step 2: Enter:

- Your work email address
- A password
- Confirm the password

Register a new account - step 2

Email address
[Redacted]

Password
.....

confirm password
.....

Back Next Cancel

Password policy

Your password must meet the following requirements:

- It must be at least 12 characters long
- It must contain at least one letter
- It must contain only letters, digits, and special characters
- It must contain at least one upper-case letter
- It must contain at least one numerical digit
- It must contain at least one special character.
- It must be different to your current password
- It must be different to your previous password

[Click to see list of special characters](#)

The Password must meet the following requirements:

- It must be at least 12 characters long
- It must contain at least one letter
- It must contain only letters, digits, and special characters (such as ?,!,%)
- It must contain at least one upper-case letter
- It must contain at least one numerical digit
- It must contain at least one special character.
- It must be different to your current password
- It must be different to your previous password

Once complete, click **Next**.

Register a new account - step 2

Email address
[Redacted]

Password
[Masked]

Confirm password
[Masked]

[Back](#) [Next](#) [Cancel](#)

Password policy

Your password must meet the following requirements:

- It must be at least 12 characters long
- It must contain at least one letter
- It must contain only letters, digits, and special characters
- It must contain at least one upper-case letter
- It must contain at least one numerical digit
- It must contain at least one special character.
- It must be different to your current password
- It must be different to your previous password

[Click to see list of special characters](#)

A **code** will be generated and sent to the **email address** used to register your account. Access your email account to access the code.

Register a new account - step 3

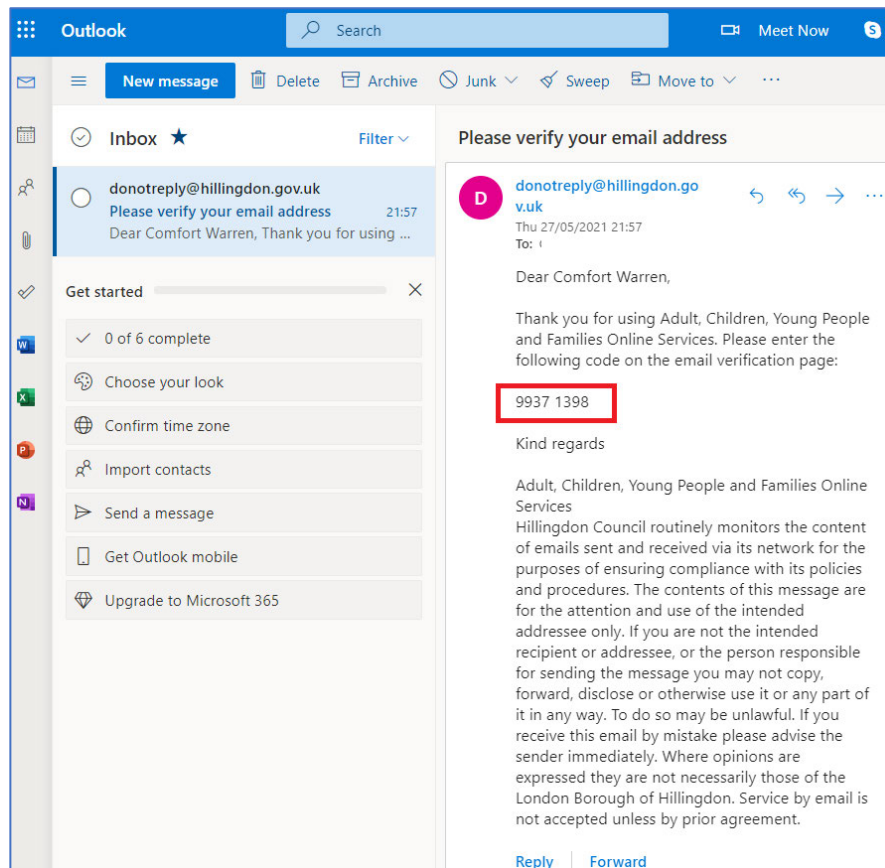
We have just sent you an email to confirm your email address. Please enter the code this contains below. Hit **back** if you would like to change your email address and try again or **Please send me a new code** if you need another one.

If you can't find this email, it may be in your spam/junk email folder.

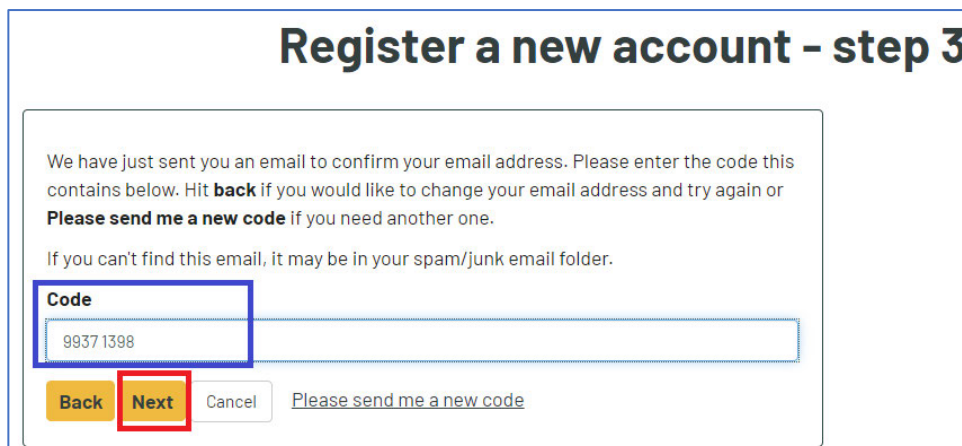
Code
[Input field]

[Back](#) [Next](#) [Cancel](#) [Please send me a new code](#)

Make a note of the code provided in your email, then navigate back to the **Portal** page.



Enter the **code** in the box provided, then click **Next**.



If successful, a confirmation message will be displayed. Click **Continue** to complete the process.

Registration completed

Your registration has been completed successfully. Click **Continue** to carry on with your session.

Continue

When registering and logging in, you may see a message advising you that you **do not have an active account yet**. This message **does not apply for Professionals** and your account **will** be active once the registration process is completed. This message will be corrected in a future update of the Portal.

Select an Account to Manage

Welcome

You don't seem to have an active account yet. If you have already made an application, you don't need to do anything - your account will be activated as soon as we have made the necessary checks.

If you haven't made an application yet, or you would like to make a new application, please select the option below.

Go back

If you had started the process of completing an Early Help Assessment, you will be navigated back to the form on the Portal.

- 1 Early Help Assessment
- 2 Your Details**
- 3 Relationships and the Wider Family Details
- 4 Request for Support
- 5 Consent
- 6 Additional Details

LOGIN OR REGISTER

Your Details (Portal User)

First Name *

Last Name *

Email *

Telephone

5. Complete and Submit an Early Help Assessment

5.1 Referrer and Child Details

Upon logging in and starting the Assessment, you will be navigated to the **Your Details** page. You will be prompted to record your details as the **person making contact**.

Your **name** and **email address** will be automatically populated from your account. Enter a **telephone number** which you can be contacted on to enable the Stronger Families Hub to contact you if required.

The screenshot shows a web interface for an 'Early Help Assessment'. On the left is a navigation menu with seven steps: 1 Early Help Assessment, 2 Your Details (highlighted in yellow), 3 Relationships and the Wider Family Details, 4 Request for Support, 5 Consent, 6 Additional Details, and 7 Services. The main content area is titled 'Your Details (Portal User)' and contains a form with four input fields: 'First Name *', 'Last Name *', 'Email *', and 'Telephone'. The 'Telephone' field is highlighted with a red box and a red arrow pointing to it. The other fields are also highlighted with a red box. The 'Telephone' field contains a redacted number. The 'Email' field contains a redacted email address. The 'First Name' and 'Last Name' fields contain redacted names. The form is titled 'LOGIN OR REGISTER'.

The child's name that was recorded at the beginning of the process will **automatically copy through to the form**.

Next, record the following information:

- You are completing the form for someone else in a **professional capacity**
- Your **relationship** to the person
- Date of birth (click **Estimated DOB** if the date of birth is estimated)
- Child's **gender**
- Child's **ethnicity**
- Child's **email address (if known)**
- Child's **telephone number (if known)**
- Child's **NHS number (if known)**

LOGIN OR REGISTER

- 1 Early Help Assessment
- 2 Your Details**
- 3 Relationships and the Wider Family Details
- 4 Request for Support
- 5 Consent
- 6 Additional Details
- 7 Services
- 8 The Child and their Family's Assessment
- 9 Upload Documents
- 10 Submit Referral

Your Details (Portal User)

First Name *	<input type="text" value="████████"/>
Last Name *	<input type="text" value="████████"/>
Email *	<input type="text" value="████████████████████"/>
Telephone	<input type="text" value="████████"/>

Who is this form for?

I am completing this form on behalf of: *

Your relationship to person *

First Name *

Last Name *

Date of Birth *

Estimated DOB?

Gender *

Ethnicity *

Email

Telephone

NHS Number

Next, record the person's **home address**. This can be recorded in the following ways:

- Enter the **house number** and **post code**, then click **Find Address**.

Address

House Number or Name	<input type="text" value="9"/>
Postcode *	<input type="text" value="UB9 4BA"/>

If listed, the address will be displayed.

Address

████████████████████

████████

████████

████████

If the address is not listed, click **Enter Address** to enter in manually.

The screenshot shows a form titled "Address" with a red error message box at the top: "We couldn't find a matching address. Please check that you entered the correct information and try again. Otherwise use the Enter Address button to enter the address details manually." Below the message are two input fields: "House Number or Name" with the value "9" and "Postcode *" with the value "UB9 4BA". At the bottom, there are two buttons: "Find Address" and "Enter Address", with the latter highlighted by a red box.

Enter the address details.

The screenshot shows the "Address" form with several fields: "Property Name" (empty), "House No" (9), "Street *" (redacted), "Area" (empty), "Town/City *" (Uxbridge), "County" (empty), and "Postcode *" (redacted). At the bottom, there are two buttons: "Search Again" and "Enter Address".

Click **Next** to proceed to the next section of the form.

This screenshot is identical to the previous one, but it includes a "Previous" button on the bottom left and a "Next" button on the bottom right, with the "Next" button highlighted by a red box.

5.2 Relationships and the Wider Family Details

Relationships for the family should be recorded within this section. New columns can be added to the table by clicking on the **+** at the bottom of the page.

1	Early Help Assessment	RELATIONSHIPS AND THE WIDER FAMILY DETAILS	
2	Your Details	Details of the wider family and people who are significant to the child or young person (E.G Mother, Father). Please indicate who has parental responsibility. This must include all children and young people in the household up to the age of 18, as well as adults.	
3	Relationships and the Wider Family Details	Forename	<input type="text" value=""/>
4	Request for Support	Surname	<input type="text" value=""/>
5	Consent	Relationship to child	<input type="text" value=""/>
6	Additional Details	PR?	<input type="text" value="No"/> <input type="text" value="Yes"/>
7	Services	DOB	<input type="text" value="30-01-2000"/> <input type="text" value="dd-mm-yyyy"/>
8	The Child and their Family's Assessment	Address	<input type="text" value=""/>
9	Upload Documents	Telephone Number	<input type="text" value=""/>
10	Submit Referral	Email Address	<input type="text" value=""/>
		<input type="button" value="+"/> <input type="button" value="-"/>	

5.3 Request for Support

Within the Request for Support section, various options will be presented. If you know specifically which Team you would like to refer to from the list, select the services required and then click **Next**. If you do not require these specific services or you are not sure, move on to the next page by clicking **Next**.

REQUEST FOR SUPPORT

- 1 Early Help Assessment
- 2 Your Details
- 3 Relationships and the Wider Family Details
- 4 Request for Support
- 5 Consent
- 6 Additional Details
- 7 Participation Team
- 8 SEND Information
- 9 Services
- 10 The Child and their Family's Assessment
- 11 Upload Documents
- 12 Submit Referral

Does this referral relate to any of the following services?
If yes, please select them below
If no, please move onto the next question

Adolescent Development Service
 Children's Centres - including Family Information Service (FIS)
 Participation Team (school attendance / child missing from education)
 Portage Team
 Safeguarding / MASH
 Special Educational Needs or Disabilities Services (SEND) / SEND Advisory Service (SAS)
or
 Notify us that a child may have long-term SEND, using the Statutory Early Health Notification (Health Professionals only)

Which Service do you require? *

Early Health Notification (Health Professionals Only)
 Early Years SEND Advisory Team
 New-born Hearing Screening Notification
 Request for Education Health and Care Needs Assessment
 Schools SEND Advisory Team (Including Post-16)
 Sensory Team
 SEND Key Work Team
 I am not sure

5.4 Consent

Consent **must be sought** from the parents or carers before the referral is made. Where possible, you **must obtain written consent** from the family and [upload](#) this onto the Portal Assessment, however verbal consent can be accepted for a limited time.



Scenarios where it may not possible / required to provide consent are where:

- informing the parents would place the child or family at risk of significant harm.
- a referral is being made for a child missing from education or has poor attendance at school

Complete the Consent questions and then click **Next** to proceed.

CONSENT

1 Early Help Assessment
 2 Your Details
 3 Relationships and the Wider Family Details
 4 Request for Support
 5 **Consent**
 6 Additional Details
 7 Participation Team
 8 SEND Information
 9 Services
 10 The Child and their Family's Assessment
 11 Upload Documents
 12 Submit Referral

Before completion please note that this assessment will not be accepted and will be returned without parental consent being obtained. Consent is mandatory.

The exceptions to this requirement are where:

- informing the parents would place the child or family at risk of significant harm.
- a referral is being made for a child missing from education or has poor attendance at school

Have the Parent(s) / Carer(s) consented to the assessment and referral record being completed and sent to Stronger Families? *

Yes

Parent / child's consent for information storage and information sharing

Does the parent agree to the information recorded on this assessment being shared with other practitioners and /or services in order to support you? Please tick as appropriate *

Yes

Does the parent agree that the information on this form can be securely stored centrally by Stronger Families? *

Yes

← Previous Next →

5.5 Additional Details

Within the Additional Details section, record:

- The child's education **Unique Pupil Number (UPN)** if known
- **Current Education Setting** (where appropriate)
- **School Start Date** (where appropriate)
- **Disabilities or special needs**
- **Special Education Needs**

ADDITIONAL DETAILS

1 Early Help Assessment
 2 Your Details
 3 Relationships and the Wider Family Details
 4 Request for Support
 5 Consent
 6 **Additional Details**
 7 Participation Team
 8 SEND Information
 9 Services
 10 The Child and their Family's Assessment
 11 Upload Documents
 12 Submit Referral

Unique Pupil Number (UPN)

Current School / Education setting

If N/A please move to the question below

School Start Date 01-09-2015

Does the child or anyone in the immediate family have special needs or a disability? *

No

Does the child / young person have Special Education Needs? *

No

← Previous Next →

5.6 Participation Team

If you selected **Participation Team** within the [Request for Support](#) section of the form, the Participation Team section will be presented.

Select the **type of support** required from the list.

If support is required regarding a **child's attendance at school**, select the option from the list.

Complete the questions as shown below. Where the attendance letters have been sent to the family, these should be attached at the **end** of the Early Help Assessment.

1 Early Help Assessment

2 Your Details

3 Relationships and the Wider Family Details

4 Request for Support

5 Consent

6 Additional Details

7 **Participation Team**

8 SEND Information

9 Services

10 The Child and their Family's Assessment

11 Upload Documents

12 Submit Referral

PARTICIPATION TEAM

Referrer's Name *

Referrer's Email *

Referrer's Telephone Number *

Type of support required *

Support regarding a child / young person's attendance at school

Support regarding a child that is missing from Education

Attendance

Please provide average attendance rate in % and outline any reduced time timetables in place (e.g. attending 1 hour per day, 5 days per week) *

Have attendance letters 1,2 and 3 all been sent to the parents / carers? *

Date last attendance meeting was held

Is the young person at risk of permanent exclusion? *

Will supporting documents be upload as part of this referral and assessment? *

Please upload all relevant documentation at the end of this form

If support is required for a **child that is missing from education**, select the option from the list. Record the required information and **upload** any relevant documents. Once complete, click **Next**.

PARTICIPATION TEAM

1 Early Help Assessment

2 Your Details

3 Relationships and the Wider Family Details

4 Request for Support

5 Consent

6 Additional Details

7 **Participation Team**

8 SEND Information

9 Services

10 The Child and their Family's Assessment

11 Upload Documents

12 Submit Referral

Referrer's Name * Ed Teacher

Referrer's Email * Ed.Teacher@School.net

Referrer's Telephone Number * 01222333444

Type of support required *

Support regarding a child / young person's attendance at school

Support regarding a child that is missing from Education

Child Missing from Education

Last date the child was at school dd-mm-yyyy

Has the child been removed from the School Roll? *

Will supporting documents be upload as part of this referral and assessment? * Yes

Please upload all relevant documentation at the end of this form

← Previous Next →

5.7 SEND Information

If you selected *Special Educational Needs or Disabilities Services (SEND) / SEND Advisory Service (SAS) or Notify us that a child may have long-term SEND, using the Statutory Early Health Notification (Health Professionals only)* within the [Request for Support](#) section of the form, questions relating to **Special Education Needs** will be presented for completion.

Not all questions in the section are mandatory.

Once complete, click **Next** to move to the next section.

SEND INFORMATION

- 1 Early Help Assessment
- 2 Your Details
- 3 Relationships and the Wider Family Details
- 4 Request for Support
- 5 Consent
- 6 Additional Details
- 7 Participation Team
- 8 SEND Information**
- 9 Services
- 10 The Child and their Family's Assessment
- 11 Upload Documents
- 12 Submit Referral

SEN Category of Need:

SEN Primary Need:

SEN Secondary Need:

School Year Group:

Please provide average attendance rate in % and outline any reduced time timetables in place (e.g. attending 1 hour per day, 5 days per week):

Is an Education, Health and Care Plan Needs Assessment (EHCPNA) currently in progress?:

Does the child / young person have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP):

Is Early Support Funding in Place?:

Is Early Years SEND Inclusion Funding in Place?:

Is Exceptional Funding in Place?:

Does the child have a Pupil Premium?:

5.8 Services

Within the Services section, record the following information:

- Services that you are aware are **currently involved with the family**
- Any services that were **previously involved with the family**

To record Services **currently involved** with the family, please record the details in the vertical table as shown below. You can add more columns by clicking on the



SERVICES

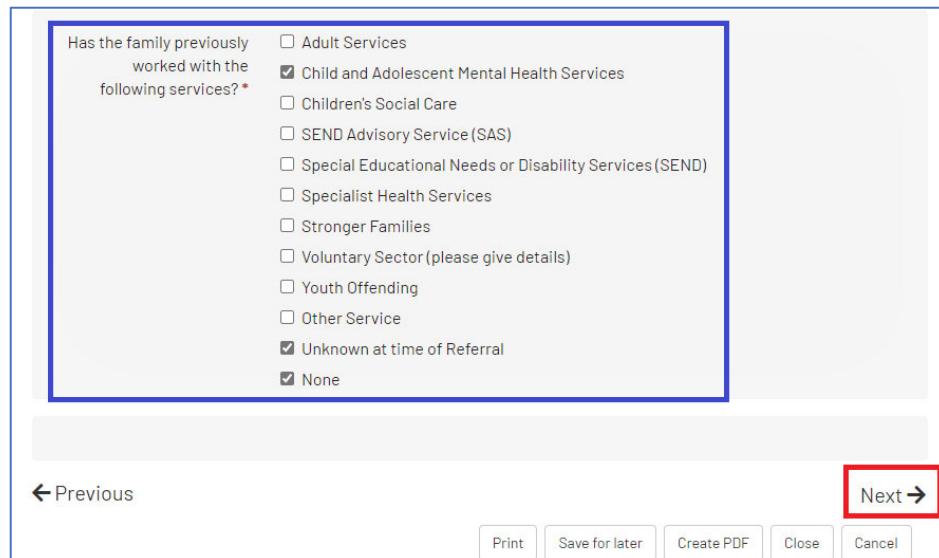
What services are presently involved with the family?

In addition please detail the support provided by your agency with the family to date and whether you have referred the family to any other service before completing this assessment.

Name	<input type="text" value="[Redacted]"/>	<input type="text" value="[Redacted]"/>	
Agency	<input type="text" value="[Redacted]"/>	<input type="text" value="[Redacted]"/>	
Start Date (if known)	<input type="text" value="dd-mm-yyyy"/>	<input type="text" value="dd-mm-yyyy"/>	
Address	<input type="text" value="[Redacted]"/>	<input type="text" value="[Redacted]"/>	
Telephone	<input type="text" value="[Redacted]"/>	<input type="text" value="[Redacted]"/>	

+ -
+ -

Next, scroll down the page and record any Services that were **previously involved** with the family. If there are **none** or this is **unknown**, these options can be recorded respectively. Once complete. Click **Next**.



The screenshot shows a web form with the following content:

Has the family previously worked with the following services? *

- Adult Services
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- Children's Social Care
- SEND Advisory Service (SAS)
- Special Educational Needs or Disability Services (SEND)
- Specialist Health Services
- Stronger Families
- Voluntary Sector (please give details)
- Youth Offending
- Other Service
- Unknown at time of Referral
- None

Navigation and utility buttons:

- ← Previous
- Next → (highlighted with a red box)
- Print
- Save for later
- Create PDF
- Close
- Cancel

5.9 The Child and their Family's Assessment

The Child and Family's Assessment section is the main part of the assessment where the family's situation and the support required is recorded.

The following sections should be completed in full:

- *What is happening for this family*
- *What in the family's circumstances is currently impacting on them?*
- *The parent or carers current capacity to meet the needs of the child and or children's needs*
- *What help and support is required at this time?*
- *Please comment on any specific risks to be considered*
- *The wishes and feeling of the child, young person and their siblings*
- *The views of parent(s) or carer including what should happen next*
- *How will we know when the family and universal services are able to meet the needs of the child? In other words, what positive change would you like to achieve?*

Once complete, click **Next**.

How will we know when the family and universal services are able to meet the needs of the child? In other words, what positive change would you like to achieve?

Assessment information is recorded here...

Date Form Completed * 05-07-2021

← Previous Next →

Print Save for later Create PDF Close Cancel

5.10 Upload Documents

Any relevant documentation regarding the referral and assessment can be **attached to the Portal form** within this section.

UPLOAD DOCUMENTS

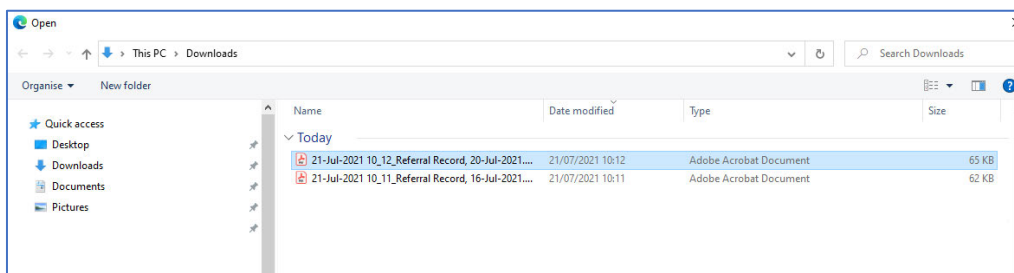
Please upload all relevant documentation using the link below

Upload Document

← Previous Next →

- 1 Early Help Assessment
- 2 Your Details
- 3 Request for Support
- 4 Consent
- 5 Additional Details
- 6 SEND Information
- 7 Participation Team
- 8 Services
- 9 The Child and their Family's Assessment
- 10 Upload Documents**
- 11 Submit Referral

Clicking on the **Upload Document** button will open up a documents window on your device. **Double clicking** on the desired document will attach it to the Assessment.



You can add further documents by repeating the process.



Note: The appearance of the document window on your device may differ to what is shown above, depending on which browser or device you are using.



When attaching documents that contain sensitive and / or third-party information, **you are advised to ensure that this is in compliance with your Organisation's data sharing agreements, Data Protection Policies and GDPR.**

The London Borough of Hillingdon cannot be held responsible for items that are attached to the Portal via a third-party in error.

If you attach a document in error and submit the Assessment, **you must contact the Stronger Families Hub immediately** to ensure steps are taken to remove such documents from the Portal.

Once complete, click **Next**.

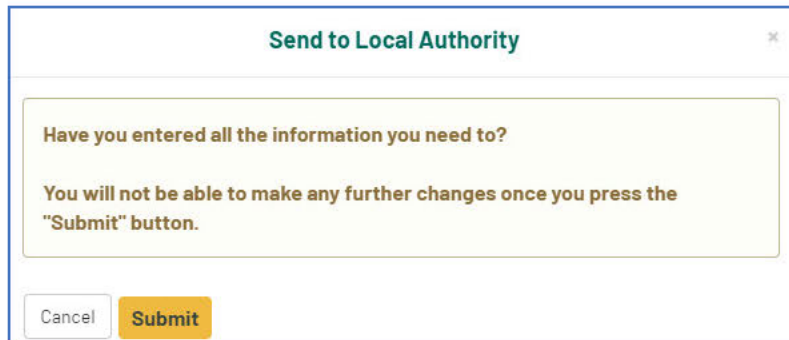
The screenshot shows the 'UPLOAD DOCUMENTS' step of an assessment process. On the left is a vertical list of steps: 1 Early Help Assessment, 2 Your Details, 3 Request for Support, 4 Consent, 5 Additional Details, 6 SEND Information, and 7 Participation Team. The current step, '3 Request for Support', is highlighted. In the center, there is a text prompt: 'Please upload all relevant documentation using the link below'. Below this, a document titled '21-Jul-2021 10_12_Referral Record_ 20-Jul-2021.pdf' is listed with a 'Remove' button next to it. Below the document list is an 'Upload Document' button. At the bottom left, there is a '← Previous' button, and at the bottom right, there is a 'Next →' button highlighted with a red box.

5.11 Submit Referral

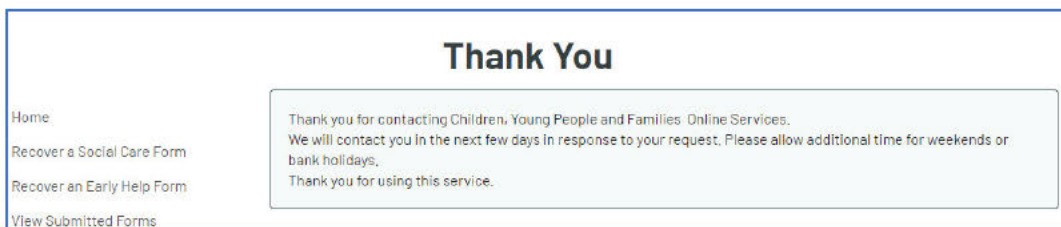
Once all of the information has been recorded in the Assessment and you wish to send the Assessment to the Stronger Families Hub, click on the **Send to Local Authority** button.

The screenshot shows the 'SUBMIT REFERRAL' step of the assessment process. On the left is a vertical list of steps: 1 Early Help Assessment, 2 Your Details, 3 Request for Support, and 4 Consent. The current step, '3 Request for Support', is highlighted. In the center, there is a large yellow button labeled 'Send to Local Authority' highlighted with a red box. Below the button list is a '← Previous' button.

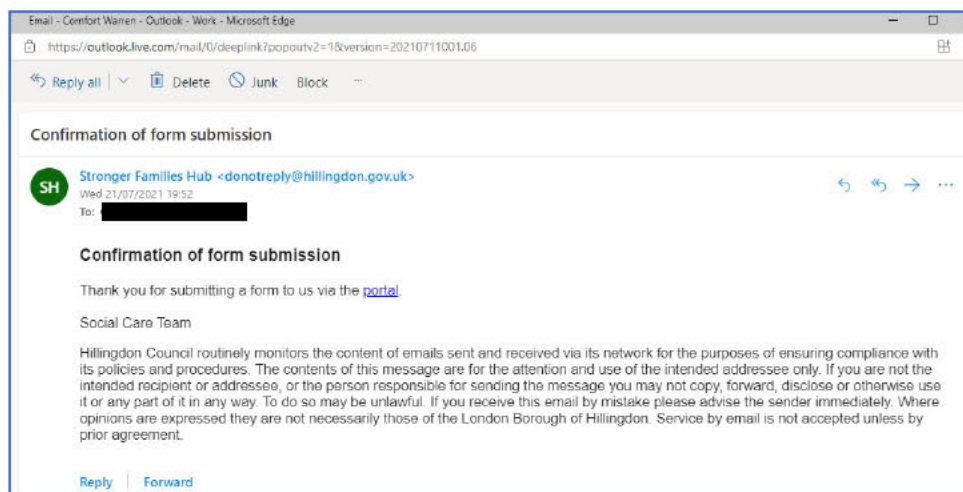
A **pop-up window** will be displayed. If you wish to add further information to the Assessment at this point, click **Cancel**. If you wish to submit the Assessment, click **Submit**.



The process is now complete. A confirmation message will be displayed.



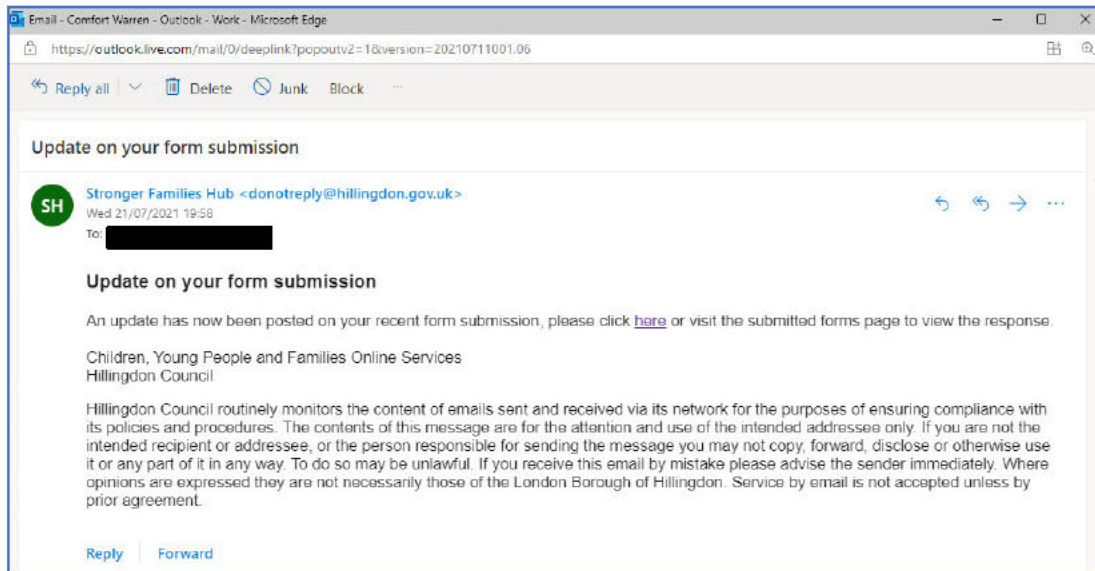
You will receive an email to confirm that the form has been submitted.



6. Portal Response Notifications

The Stronger Families Hub will **send a message back to you via the Portal** to advise on the status of the Referral once it has been processed.

Where a message is sent back, you will receive an email to advise of this.



To view the message, **log into your Portal Account** and click **Submitted Forms** under you name on the top right of the page.



Navigate to the **View Submitted Forms Tab** to view the message.

Submitted Forms

Home

Recover a Social Care Form

Recover an Early Help Form

View Submitted Forms

Submitted Forms

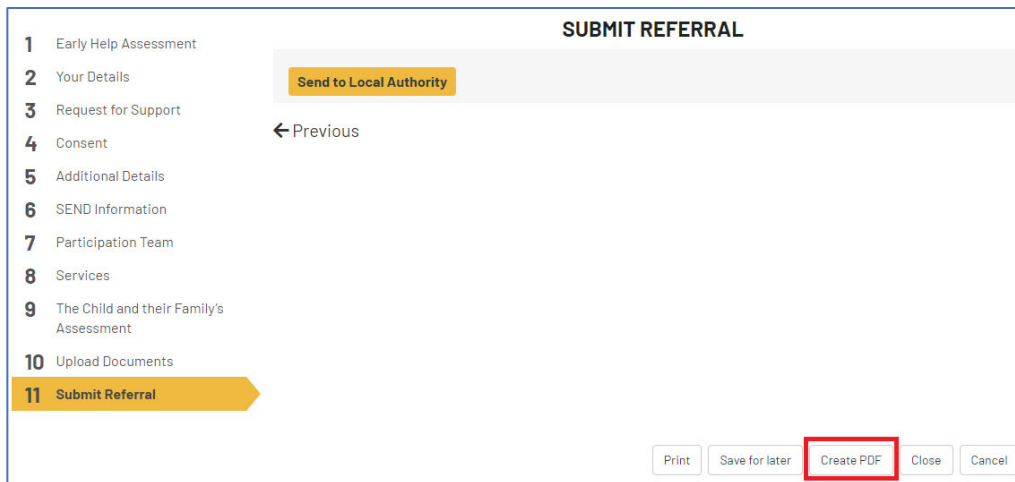
Recently Submitted Forms (Last 90 Days)

Details	Name	Date
Portal Early Help Referral and Assessment <i>Response:</i> Referral Received <i>Comments:</i> I confirm that this has been received and referred onto the Stronger Families Keywork Team. Regards SF Workers	Honour Track	21 Jul 2021
Portal Early Help Referral and Assessment <i>Response:</i> Pending...	Heather Storm	20 Jul 2021

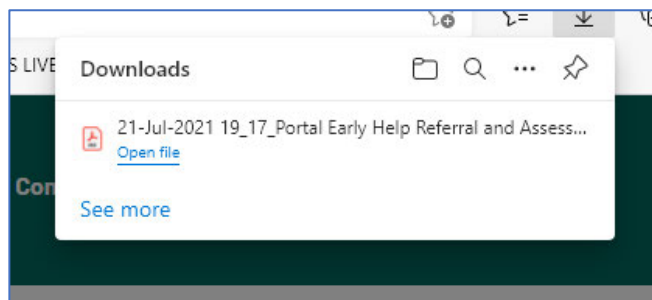
7. Save a PDF Copy of the Submitted Form

You can generate and save a PDF version of the Assessment **at any time**. The best time to do this may be at the point that you are submitting the Assessment to the Stronger Families Hub. You also have **up to 30 days to retrieve the Assessment** on the Portal and generate the PDF if you wish.

To generate the PDF, click on the **Create PDF** button on any section of the Assessment.



The PDF output will normally be saved in your **downloads** folder. You are advised to move this to a more secure area on your network where applicable.



Note: The appearance of the download process may differ depending on your device and browser.

8. Change Password

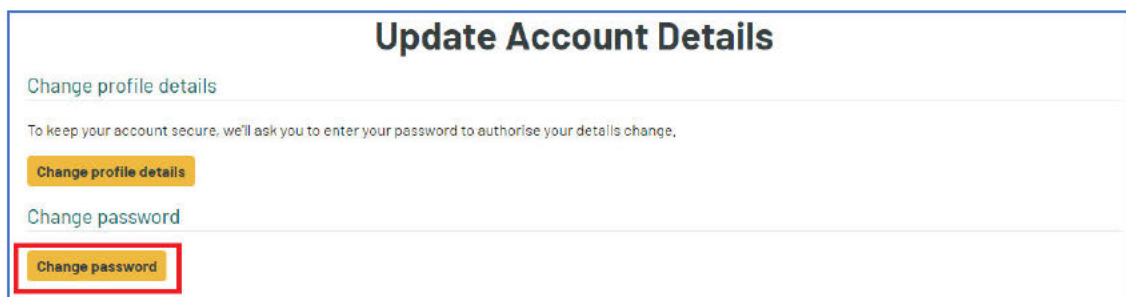
You can change the password on your Portal Account **at any time**.



To change your password, click on your name at the top of the screen, then click on **My Account**.



On the next screen, click **Change Password**.



Review the Password Policy to the right of the screen, then:

- Enter your current password
- Enter your new password
- Confirm the password
- Click Finish

Change Password

Please enter your new password

Your current password

Password Policy

Your password must meet the following requirements:

- It must be at least 12 characters long
- It must contain at least one letter
- It must contain only letters, digits, and special characters
- It must contain at least one upper-case letter
- It must contain at least one numerical digit
- It must contain at least one special character.
- It must be different to your current password
- It must be different to your previous password

Your new password

Confirm password

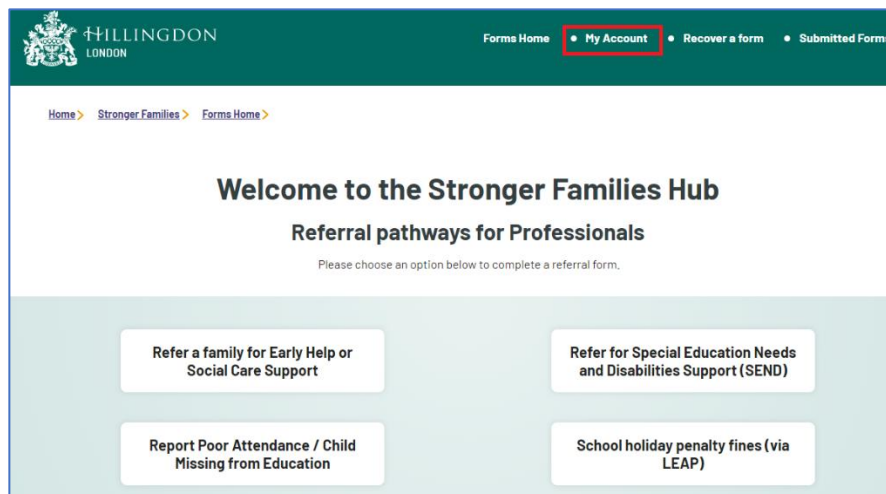
Finish

Cancel

9. Forgotten Password

If you forget your password, this can be easily **reset** via the Portal.

Navigate to the **Portal Home Page** and click on **My Account**.



On the login page click **Forgotten Password**.

Secure login - step 1

New to Adult, Children, Young People and Families Online Services? Register for an account on the right.
Already using Adult, Children, Young People and Families Online Services? Sign in below.

Existing users

Email

New users

If you're new to Adult, Children, Young People and Families Online Services, sign up for an account here

Register for new account

Password

For additional security, we will confirm your account by sending an authentication code to your email address.

Forgotten password?

Sign in

Cancel

Enter your email address, then click **Next**.

Reset password - step 1

Email

Next Cancel

Please enter your email address and we will email you a code to allow you to reset your password.

A message will be displayed advising you that a **code** has been sent to your **email address**.

Reset password - step 2

We have just sent you an email to confirm your email address. Please enter the code this contains below.

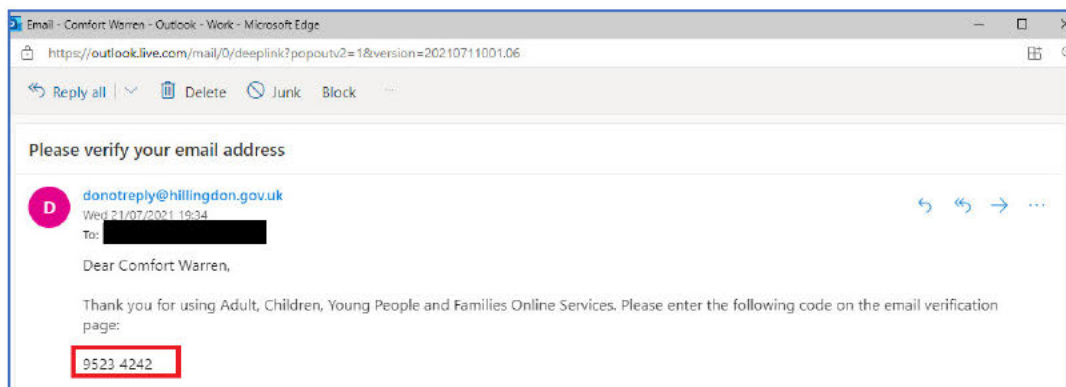
If you can't find this email, it may be in your Spam/Junk Email Folder.

Code

Next Cancel

Please enter the verification code that we emailed to you

Open your emails and **make a note of the code**.



Navigate back to the **Portal** page, **enter the code** and then click **Next**.

Reset password - step 2

We have just sent you an email to confirm your email address. Please enter the code this contains below.

If you can't find this email, it may be in your Spam/Junk Email Folder.

Code

Next Cancel

Please enter the verification code that we emailed to you

Review the password policy on the right of the screen, then:

- Enter your new password
- Confirm the password
- Click Finish

Reset password - step 3

Please enter your new password

Your new password

.....

Confirm password

.....

Finish Cancel

Password Policy

Your password must meet the following requirements:

- It must be at least 12 characters long
- It must contain at least one letter
- It must contain only letters, digits, and special characters
- It must contain at least one upper-case letter
- It must contain at least one numerical digit
- It must contain at least one special character.
- It must be different to your current password
- It must be different to your previous password

Your password has now been changed.

Password Reset Confirmation

Your password has been changed. Press OK to return to the login page.

OK

10. Retrieve a saved form

To retrieve a saved form, **log into your Portal Account** and click **Recover a form** under your name on the top right of the page.

HILLINGDON LONDON

Forms Home

Comfort Warren

- My Account
- Recover a form**
- Submitted Forms
- Update Details
- Logout

Home > Stronger Families > Forms Home > My Account >

Forms that are in process are displayed in the Recover an Early Help Form Tab. Draft forms are kept for **up to 30** days before they are deleted from the Portal.

Click on the form to open it.

Recover a Saved Form

Home | Recover a Social Care Form | Recover an Early Help Form | View Submitted Forms

Saved Forms

Start Date	Description	Days Left
20 Jul 2021 3:38 PM	Portal Early Help Referral and Assessment	29

Cancel

11. View Submitted Forms

You can access **submitted forms** within your account by clicking on your name on the top right of the screen and selecting **Submitted Forms**.

HILLINGDON LONDON | Forms Home | **Comfort Warren**

Home > Stronger Families > Forms Home > Submitted Forms

- My Account
- Recover a form
- Submitted Forms**
- Update Details
- Logout

All forms submitted within the **last 90 days** will be displayed. Click on the **form link** to open the form.

Submitted Forms

Home | Recover a Social Care Form | Recover an Early Help Form | **View Submitted Forms**

Submitted Forms

Recently Submitted Forms (Last 90 Days)

Details	Name	Date
Portal Early Help Referral and Assessment	[REDACTED]	20 Jul 2021

Response: Pending...

- End of Document

Early Help Assessment and Referral Record



HILLINGDON

Date Started	Click or tap to enter a date.
Name of initiator	
Role	
Telephone	
Organisation	
Email address	

Consent

Before completing this form please note that this assessment will not be accepted and will be returned without parental consent being obtained. The **sole exception** to this requirement is where informing the parents would place the child or family at risk of significant harm.

Have the parent(s) consented to the assessment and referral record being completed and sent to Stronger Families?	Choose an item.
If no is the child or family at significant risk?	Choose an item.

Does this referral relate to any of the following services?

If yes, please select them below

If no, please move onto the next question

<input type="checkbox"/>	Adolescent Development Service
<input type="checkbox"/>	Children's Centres, including Family Information Service (FIS)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Participation Team (school attendance / child missing from education)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Portage Team
<input type="checkbox"/>	Safeguarding / MASH
<input type="checkbox"/>	Special Educational Needs or Disabilities Services (SEND) / SEND Advisory Service (SAS) or Notify us that a child may have long-term SEND, using the Statutory Early Health Notification (Health Professionals only)

Which Service do you require?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Early Health Notification (Health Professionals Only)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Early Years SEND Advisory Team (Including Early Years Funding Support)
<input type="checkbox"/>	New-born Hearing Screening Notification
<input type="checkbox"/>	Schools SEND Advisory Team (Including Post-16)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sensory Team
<input type="checkbox"/>	SEND Key Work Team
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am not sure

The family's details and contact information

Child/Young Person's details

Full Name	<input type="text"/>	Gender	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>	Aliases?	<input type="text"/>
Telephone	<input type="text"/>	DOB	<input type="text"/>
		Mobile	<input type="text"/>

Nationality, Ethnicity and Languages

Nationality	<input type="text"/>	Language Spoken	<input type="text"/>
Religion	<input type="text"/>	Interpreter Required?	<input type="text" value="Choose an item."/>
Ethnicity	<input type="text"/>		

NHS and UPN

NHS No.	<input type="text"/>	UPN No.	<input type="text"/>
---------	----------------------	---------	----------------------

Details of the wider family and people who are significant to the child or young person. Please indicate who has parental responsibility. This must include all children and young people in the household up to the age of 18, as well as adults.

Forename	Surname	Relationship to child	PR?	DOB	Address	Telephone Number	Email

Additional Details

Unique Pupil Number (UPN)	<input type="text" value="Choose an item."/>	Current School Start Date	<input type="text" value="Choose an item."/>
Current School / Education setting	<input type="text"/>		

Disabilities

Does the child / young anyone in the immediate family have special needs or a disability?	<input type="text" value="Choose an item."/>	Does the child/ young person have Special Educational Needs?	<input type="text" value="Choose an item."/>
Disability Information	<input type="text"/>		

Participation Referral

Support Required

- Support regarding a child / young person's attendance at school
- Support regarding a child that is missing from Education

Attendance

Please provide average attendance rate in % and outline any reduced time timetables in place (e.g. attending 1 hour per day, 5 days per week)

Choose an item.

Have attendance letters 1,2 and 3 all been sent to the parent's / carer's?

Choose an item.

If no, please provide further information

Date last attendance meeting was held

Click or tap to enter a date.

Child Missing from Education

Last date the child was at school

Click or tap to enter a date.

Has the child been removed from the School Roll?

Choose an item.

SEND Information

SEN Category of Need

- Cognition and learning Needs
- Sensory and / or physical needs
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- Speech, language and communication needs

SEN Primary Need

- Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- Hearing Impairment
- Moderate Learning Disability
- Multi-Sensory Impairment
- Other Difficulty/Disability
- Physical Disability
- Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulty
- SEN support but no specialist assessment of type of need
- Severe Learning Difficulty
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs
- Visual Impairment

SEN Secondary Need	<input type="checkbox"/> Autistic Spectrum Disorder <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing Impairment <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate Learning Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-Sensory Impairment <input type="checkbox"/> Other Difficulty/Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulty <input type="checkbox"/> SEN support but no specialist assessment of type of need <input type="checkbox"/> Severe Learning Difficulty <input type="checkbox"/> Social, Emotional and Mental Health <input type="checkbox"/> Speech, Language and Communication Needs <input type="checkbox"/> Visual Impairment
---------------------------	---

Is an Education, Health and Care Plan Needs Assessment (EHCNA) currently in progress?	Choose an item.	Does the child / young person have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)?	Click or tap to enter a date.
EHCP Start Date (if known)	Click or tap to enter a date.	Is Early Support Funding in Place?	Choose an item.
Is Early Years SEND Inclusion Funding in Place?	Click or tap to enter a date.	Is Exceptional Funding in Place?	Choose an item.
School Year Group			
Child's Attendance at school (%) Please provide average attendance rate in % and outline any reduced time timetables in place (e.g. attending 1 hour per day, 5 days per week)		Child's Attendance at school (%)	Choose an item.
Does the child have a Pupil Premium?	Choose an item.		

Services presently involved with the family

Please ensure all agencies known to be involved with the family are included in the list below. This should include the child's school, GP.

Agency	Name	Address	Telephone	Email

Please detail your / your agency's involvement with the family and any services that are currently in place.

Has the family previously worked with the following services?

- Adult Services
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Children's Centres
- Children's Social Care
- SEND Advisory Service (SAS)
- Special Educational Needs or Disability Services (SEND)
- Specialist Health Services
- Stronger Families
- Voluntary Sector (please give details)
- Youth Offending
- Unknown at time of referral
- Other
- None

Voluntary Sector – please provide details

Other Services - Please provide name of organisation/practitioner with contact details for this agency

The child and their family's assessment

What is happening for this family?

Consider all family members including strengths, protective factors and what is going well in addition to the child's developmental needs such as physical and emotional health, education and learning, ability to form a positive sense of self and identity, social, emotional and behavioural development and self-care skills. In addition, whether the child has an Education Health Care Plan or My support plan.

What in the family's circumstances is currently impacting on them?

Consider areas such as the family history, Education, housing, income, employment, community resources currently available, social integration and the role of the wider family.

The parent or carers current capacity to meet the needs of the child and or children's needs.

Consider areas such as the family history, Education, housing, income, employment, community resources currently available, social integration and the role of the wider family.

What help and support is required at this time?

Consider the role of the wider family, resources in the local community, the role of the current professionals working with the family as well as other appropriate support services that may be made available.

Please comment on any specific risks to be considered.

For example, is the child vulnerable as a result of exploitation, grooming, negative peer pressure, offending behaviour, school exclusion, or may pose a risk to others.

The wishes and feeling of the child, young person and their siblings

The views of parent(s) or carer including what should happen next.

--

How will we know when the family and universal services are able to meet the needs of the child? In other words, what positive change would you like to achieve?

--

Parent / child's consent for information storage and information sharing

Do you agree for the information recorded on this assessment being shared with other practitioners and / or services in order to support you? Please tick as appropriate.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Some	
If no or some, what information can/cannot be shared and with whom?			
I agree that the information on this form can be securely stored centrally by the London Borough of Hillingdon			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Parent / Carer's Name:			
Signature		Date:	

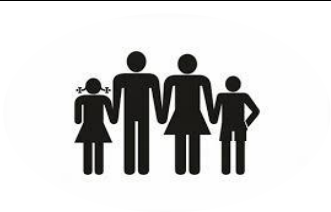
Pleas be aware we will contact Social Services if at any time during the Early Help Assessment process the child / young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm or abuse.

Verbal consent to initiate an Early Help Assessment may be given by the young person (aged 12-16) and / or their parent / carer. However, written consent must then be obtained at the very first opportunity and BEFORE any information can be shared or stored electronically. For children under the aged pf 12, parental consent must be obtained before initiating an Early Help Assessment.



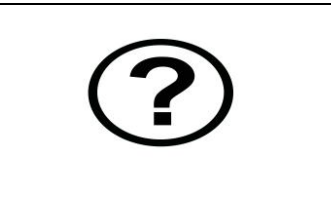
Data and Processing Notice Consent

Information for the Public



How are we using your information?

If your family is assessed as eligible to receive support from Stronger Families we will share your date of birth with The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government for research purposes.



How will it affect me?

It will not affect your benefits, services or treatments that you get.

Your information will be anonymous and handled with care in accordance with the law.



Why is my information being shared?

We are sharing your information to ensure that correct services are made available to you. This is a consent-based service and you can withdraw consent at any time. Your records will be made available on request.

For more information, go to website www.hillingdon.gov.uk or send email to strongerfamilieshub@hillingsdon.gov.uk

I HAVE READ AND ACCEPT THE TERMS OF THIS AGREEMENT. I HAVE GIVEN CONSENT FOR THIS INFORMATION TO BE SHARED WITH THE RELEVANT PRACTITIONERS AND PARTNER AGENCIES.

Signed:

Name:

Date:

Stronger Families Key Working



HILLINGDON
LONDON

Our Vision

“Hillingdon families are empowered to be and feel strong, safe and healthy through the provision of early and targeted support to reach their full potential.



HILLINGDON
LONDON

Consent Based Service

- We need parents/carers consent for us to be able to contact you and offer our support
- Consent can be withdrawn at any time during the support
- If any safeguarding concerns are identified and the child is at risk of harm we all have a duty of care to refer to children's social care for further support



HILLINGDON
LONDON

What is the Role of a Stronger Families Key Worker

- Key workers work with families in their own home and in the community with their consent
- Create a stronger families plan of support in partnership with family and appropriate professionals to achieve positive change
- Conduct weekly face to face support
- Complete 1:1 support with children/young people where appropriate
- Support family to access appropriate services



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What is Stronger Families Key Working

The Key working model has two component parts:

- Delivering practical bespoke parenting interventions with parents and their dependent children using methodologies such as coaching, modelling, problem solving and solution focussed interventions.
- Supporting families to access universal and targeted services which will support them in the longer term or negotiate with those that they may already be involved with for different services/support or interventions.

We are part of Hillingdon's early help offer, we do not currently work with families who are open to children's social care.



HILLINGDON
LONDON

What can a Stronger Families Key Worker help with

- Review and model of parenting, domestic rules
- House rules, morning/bedtime routines and boundaries
- Supporting parents to engage and liaise with education, health and other partners
- Healthy eating/cooking
- How to play, read and interact
- Community based work to model behaviour management for parents with their children
- Clear objectives embedded by regular challenge and encouragement, consistently applied over an agreed period of time
- Work on understanding safe and healthy relationships (to reduce domestic abuse, child sexual exploitation)



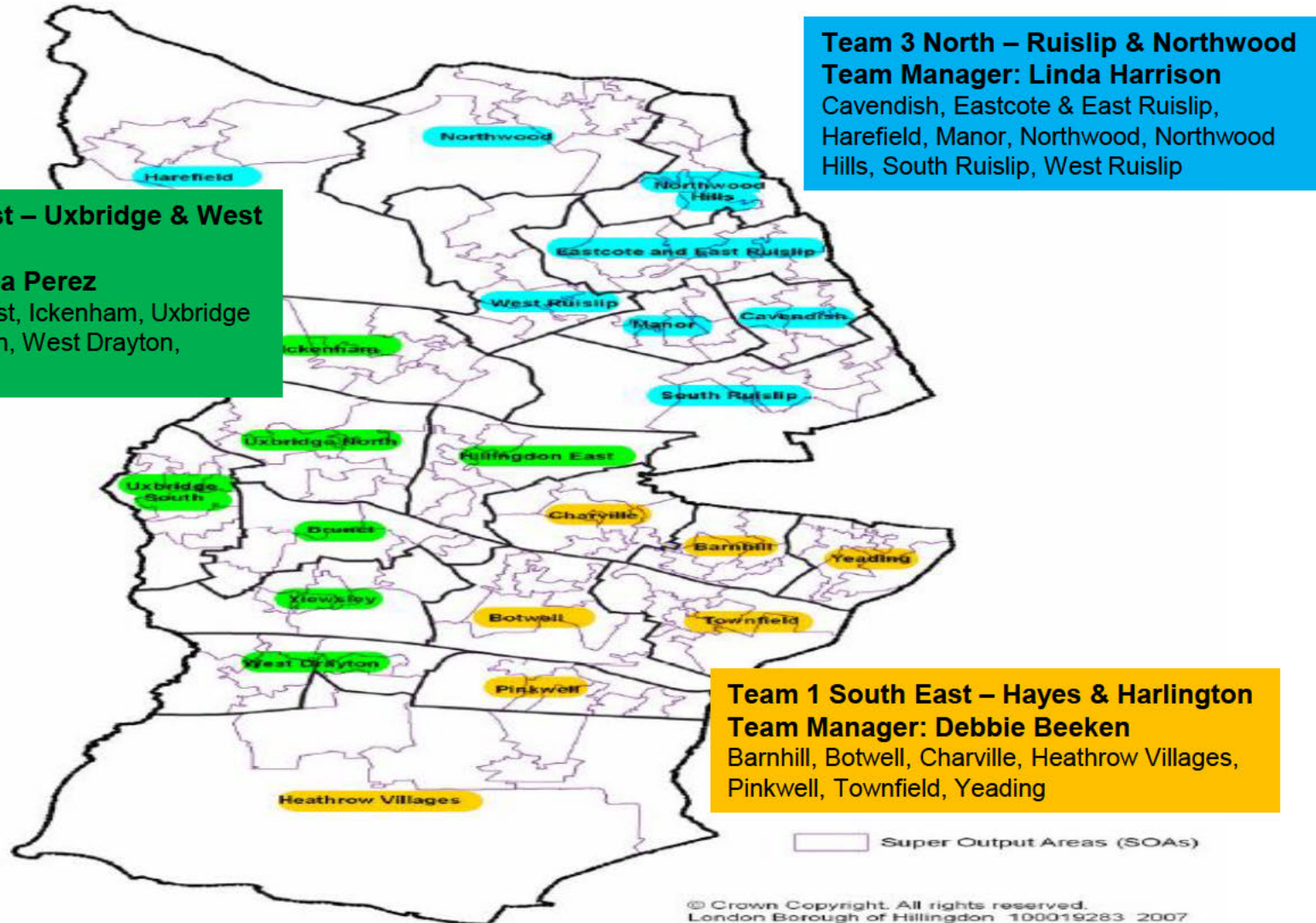
Some areas that Stronger Families Key Workers have experience in

- Poor lifestyle eg: unhealthy diets
- Missed developmental milestones
- Poor hygiene – self care
- Poor home conditions
- Poor school attendance
- Lack of parental warmth and encouragement
- Use of physical chastisement
- Families who have experienced domestic abuse which is no longer present
- Parents needing support to understand and manage the risks of child sexual exploitation
- Families with limited social interaction and community involvement
- Families at risk of eviction
- Families in rent arrears
- Families at risk of financial exclusion
- Parent or child/young person drug or alcohol misuse
- Parent or child/young person suffering loss or bereavement
- Teenage parents
- Child/young person low self-esteem, low motivation, well-being concerns
- Family being reunified after a child in care episode
- Children with caring responsibilities for adults or siblings
- Parents needing support to understand and manage the effects of sexual abuse suffered by their children



Localities and Contacts

London Borough of Hillingdon



Team 2 South West – Uxbridge & West Drayton
Team Manager: Lea Perez
Brunel, Hillingdon East, Ickenham, Uxbridge North, Uxbridge South, West Drayton, Yiewsley

Team 3 North – Ruislip & Northwood
Team Manager: Linda Harrison
Cavendish, Eastcote & East Ruislip, Harefield, Manor, Northwood, Northwood Hills, South Ruislip, West Ruislip

Team 1 South East – Hayes & Harlington
Team Manager: Debbie Beeken
Barnhill, Botwell, Charville, Heathrow Villages, Pinkwell, Townfield, Yeadon

How to access support

- Parents & Professionals can access the Stronger Families Hub through www.hillingdon.gov.uk
- You are asked to answer 8 questions on an Early Help Assessment form (EHA) to enable us to link you in with the most appropriate support.



Range of support services also available

- Health Visitors - 0 - 5 years
- Children's Centres under 5's but offer a range of partner services
- School Nurses - health & well-being
- Brilliant Parents - courses for parents
- Participation Team - attendance & exclusion
- Targeted Programmes - 8 - 25 years - various groups
- HACS - support for autistic children & their parents
- ARCH - substance misuse
- Homeless Prevention Team
- P3 - housing and finance advice
- Hestia - domestic abuse support
- Hillingdon Law Centre - legal advice



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Stronger Families Key Working - Recap

- Consent based
- Parent focussed
- Co-produce SF KW support plans
- Weekly face to face contacts
- 6 weekly progress reviews
- Case recording on EHM



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Finally

- Any questions?



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Appendix H



Stronger Families Plan Review

Review Date: date-month-year

Details of Child:			
Family Name		Names	
Date of Birth	date-month-year	Gender	
Ethnicity		Primary Language	

Meeting Attendees

Review Chair:

Attendee	Present?	Was a report provided?

Summary of Review Discussion

Family Plan

Priority	Desired Outcome	Action	Who will do this	Date of Review	Progress

Child / Young Person's views about the plan

Family's Views about the Plan

Review Decisions

- Continue to progress plan - schedule further Stronger Families plan review
- Change Lead Professional Responsibility
- Transfer Stronger Families Plan to another Key Agency
- Stronger Families Plan complete - transfer to Universal Services
- Stronger Families Plan complete - close Episode

Signatures

Lead Professional's Name	
Signature	
Parent / Carer's Name	
Parent / Carer's Signature	

Appendix I

Feedback from Parents on the intervention from Stronger Families.

Since xxxx started work with our son, we have noticed a big change in his ability to manage his anger. He looks forward to his sessions so much and is using the strategies in between sessions too!

She has been very supportive to all of us especially with passport applications, helping me fight depression and encouraging me to stand back on my feet again to do new things. Everything was perfect. I would like more support from xxxx in future because she was good.

To be able to have constant support from xxxx and being able to contact her when needed. Xxxx was very supportive, always listened to anything I had to say and never judged me like other professionals I have in the past.

Having xxxx supporting my child, I have found that xxxx is very good in her job role and has helped and been supportive, understanding, kind and caring being a great help to my child who I find she can now confide in xxxx in situations my child finds difficult to deal with. Referring me to a course and holding both parents accountable.

Xxxx you're doing great and I feel so indebted to you. I reached out to you/ your team for the reasons as I needed help and want the best for my/ our wonderful children.

She really helped with routines and my son's behaviour and things that happened at school.

She encouraged positive communication between me and my son. I have now started to build a better relationship with my son. I enjoyed the whole process, I felt like I had a real positive outcome from the sessions. I have really appreciated all your help. Thank you!

Our Key Worker supported our family by facilitating, encouraging communication, reflecting in our parenting, providing a safe place to share and my son opened up more with xxxx's help.

She is very easy to approach, made herself available, never rushed us no matter how late it was.

Increase the duration of support available. We had a very positive experience, and I would like to know that if my child wants to reach out again, that there would be a way for that to happen. Thank you.

Mother expressed her gratitude and shared - *"Initially, she had felt very down, stuck and exhausted." However added, "That the changes in her son would not have happened without Key Worker's involvement."*

"Hi xxx, just to say Thank Goodness for the down-to-earth approach and professional, genuine support I've received from yourself because it's given me hope in the grand scheme of things realistically. Thank you! keep up the good work and know that you are very much appreciated."

My feedback is in regards to xxxx and the help and guidance that she has given and shown in regards to my son xxxxx, I am so very grateful for everything she has done

for us, even though xxxx still has some issues, but we are waiting for the CDC to come back to us for a further appointment. xxxx has been brilliant and given us so much to work on, for example, xxx loves his reward chart and his traffic light system, through his calming cards he has managed to help himself by taking up drawing and music, whether he plays his keyboard he has now got or dancing and singing and this helps him massively. She has been massively supportive of him and his school, and she knew some of the stuff that had happened, and we have managed to get a good outcome with the school as well. I just want to say my massive thank you to xxxx herself and wish her all the best in the future.

This service in the whole has helped me and my family enormously and I appreciate everything that has been provided and given to us, this is an excellent service and is definitely needed in the whole and in the community.

As you might be aware the last week has been a very challenging week with xxxx however after intervention with social services last week I am pleased to say things have settled down significantly and with 12 hours left of Sunday I hesitate in saying this but it's very close to being an incident free weekend where xxxx's behaviour has been very good.

I am writing to you to thank you for all you did for both xxxx and myself whilst being our key worker, your involvement was welcomed by both xxxx and myself at a very challenging time.

Being able to text you when things were very volatile and speak with you and share my concerns and listen to your expert advice.

I will miss not having this with you anymore but would like to Thank you sincerely for the wonderful job your dedication your advice and kind approach to xxxx as well as other ways you contributed in trying to help with emotions xxxx is going through.

I wish you all the luck in the future and once again may I thank you so much for all that you did.

"It was a pleasure to welcome Key Worker into my home. xxxx was pleasant and very friendly. xxx my son felt comfortable enough to play and interact with xxxx as she was engaging with him. The Key Worker was present and just what someone who is going through turmoil needs. The Key Worker was an excellent listener and I felt truly heard after she left my home. The Key Worker gave me a plan and helped me yesterday with what resources are available.

In my time of need, it was comforting to know that my son and I were being looked after and we had a go to."

*"I cannot thank you enough for the support you have given to A***** in the last few weeks, thank you for your help."*

I' m new to this country & got frustrated

"You gave me very strength& support, gave me lot of information, now I'm feeling that there is someone for I can talk with you freely, I feel happy & confident. Thank you."

“Thank you very much for your interest and help. You are a wonderful person, emotional and affectionate. thank you for your effort. All thanks, appreciation and respect to you. Thank you very very very much”

‘Parents stated that they are happy with the plan as they want ‘all the help they can get to better manage their son's behaviour before he becomes too big for them to manage.’

“Parents don't want support from Stronger Family's to finish but are aware and pleased that most of the plan have been achieved. They are able to look at situations in a different way and are equipped to manage situations better. They have also got additional support that they can reach out to if it is required in the future.”



<http://www.brilliantparents.org/>

WHAT WE DO

“Brilliant Parents knows that most parents are brilliant, but we also know, as parents ourselves, that bringing up children is one of the most challenging and emotionally demanding jobs a parent will ever do. Sometimes it can feel that parenting has turned into a battle, rather than an adventure. Brilliant Parents runs Parenting Courses supporting families across London, working with parents to turn the experience back into something that is positive and rewarding.

For you, the parent, our courses make daily life a little less about conflict and more about fun, by introducing techniques we can help you break a negative cycle with an emotional toddler or a complex teen. Our Parenting groups are run through peer support, delivered with opportunities for you to reflect on your own. Using years of research completed by Parenting Experts, Triple P, Brilliant Parents will help you understand your child’s complicated behaviours as well as your own and show you ways to communicate with your child.”

ARE YOU A HILLINGDON RESIDENT AND THE PARENT OR CARER OF A TEENAGER WHO IS STRUGGLING WITH ANY OF THE FOLLOWING?

Are you a Hillingdon resident and the parent or carer of a teenager who is struggling with any of the following?

- *Persistent disruptive behaviour in school*
- *School refusal*
- *Alienation from the family*
- *Vulnerability due to additional needs*
- *Involved in substance misuse*
- *Social, emotional, or mental ill health*

Through our Parent Champion network, Brilliant Parents offer peer to peer community-based support for parents of children 10 – 18 years of age, across Hillingdon.

This unique style of support consists of weekly check-ins via a phone/zoom chat. Our Parent Champions are volunteer parents who understand local, cultural needs and are trained to offer non-judgemental support.

Sometimes you may just want a space to offload, other times you may want some guidance, or to discuss a particular issue. Whatever your need, our Parent Champions are here to support you.

[Register for a Parent Champion here](#)

SCHOOLS

Brilliant Parents believe that parenting programmes should be as readily available as ante-natal classes. When offered in school, seminars and parenting programmes can help to improve relationships between school and parent/carer; these programmes encourage positive parenting outside of the school setting and empower parents to be more confident in their role.

We know that schools realise the importance of forging good relationships with parents/carers and how these positive connections lead on to support a child's learning, development and behaviour. A close partnership between school and parent/carer is essential if a child is to achieve their full potential.

Appendix K

Glossary

A&E	Accident and Emergency
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
CAFCASS	Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CLA	Children Looked After
CNWL	Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust
CP	Child Protection
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
EAL	English as an Additional Language
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan
EHM	Early Help Module
EWO	Education Welfare Officer
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulations
GP	General Practitioner
LA	Local Authority
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
MASH	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
NEET	Not in Education, Training or Employment
NHS	National Health Service
OLA	Outside Local Authority
OT	Occupational Therapy
PACE	Police and Criminal Evidence Act
SAS	SEND Advisory Service
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
Solihull JTAI	Solihull Joint Targeted Area Inspection
UASC	Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children