

Family Hubs Small Grant Scheme March 2024

Introduction

A central component of the City of Wolverhampton Council's 'Our City, Our Plan' is **'Strong families where children grow up well and achieve their potential'**.

As you will know well, Wolverhampton is a vibrant and diverse city. It is home to 264,407 people (2021 census data) from all over the world: over one third of the population are from Minority Ethnic backgrounds; 19% of residents were born outside the UK; around 90 languages spoken in the city; and 63,051 of these are children under the age of 18.

Family Hubs Programme

Wolverhampton is one of 75 Local Authority areas chosen to deliver the DfE's Family Hubs Programme.

Family Hubs are a locality-based way of joining up the planning and delivery of family services and support and make it possible to do more to support families at the earliest opportunity. They bring providers of services and support together to improve access for families and put relationships between families, professionals, statutory services, and voluntary and community organisations at the heart of family support.

The Family Hubs and Start for Life programme sets out the vision for providing families with the joined-up support they need to care for their children from conception, throughout the early years, childhood, adolescence, and into the start of adulthood.

Family Hubs will provide an effective offer of early help enabling families to receive the right service at the right time. They offer support to families starting in pregnancy with a great Start for Life offer, and continuing to support families with children aged 0-19 years, or up to 25 yrs where the children / young adults have special educational need or disabilities (SEND).

Our eight Family Hubs (Eastfield, Rocket Pool, Graiseley, Bingley, Whitmore Reans, Dove; Low Hill, and Children's Village) have evolved from: the former Strengthening Families Hubs; Wolverhampton's emphasis on embedding an Early Intervention Offer; and a focus on relationship-based practice known as Restorative Practice (RP). The RP model emphasises the importance of building effective relationships to help families make sustainable change; working with families rather than doing things to them or for them.

For more information about Families Hubs see:

- [Family Hub Leaflet](#)
- [Family Hub webpages](#)

Wolverhampton Family Hubs 'Hub and Spoke' model

The Family Hub buildings, and the services activities and support provided from, are only part of the story. In Wolverhampton we have adopted a Hub and Spoke model with the Family Hub buildings being at the centre but connected to and reliant on a network of 'spokes' which provide connections

with people across each Family Hub area through existing trusted organisations and groups. These include voluntary, community and faith organisations, schools, and other community facilities. Together the 'Hub' and the 'Spokes' maximise the opportunity for all families to engage and receive and benefit from the support they need through a wider range of activities, help and support provided in the right way for them at the right time.

These grants aim to facilitate the develop and facilitate effective local networks of support and bring the Hub and Spoke model to life.

Oversight

The Family Hub Steering Group oversees the programme and has clear governance and accountability arrangements. There is a clear vision and commitment to embed the 'Think Family' approach and ensure all families can access local and bespoke services at the right time.

System transformation

Family Hubs are not just about buildings and services but require us to do things differently to improve the way we work together. To do this we are focusing on the three key Family Hubs principles of access, connections, and relationships. There is also a focus on prioritising strength-based conversations, taking a trauma informed approach and co-production with families to ensure inclusive practice. We are also developing stronger connections with voluntary and community organisations including, faith groups. Finally we will work to improve the digital offer and strive for equity for our communities.

Our Family Hubs Delivery Plan enables us to combine and develop a Family Hubs Outcome Framework. Our measures of success aim to demonstrate improved outcomes and tell us how we are making a difference.

National and local Context

There are a number of strategies and policy developments both locally and nationally that have shaped our Family Hub programme.

1. The Children, Young People & Families Plan 2015-2025 has three overarching strategic priority areas: Education, Learning and Opportunity; Family Strength and Resilience; Health and Wellbeing. [The Children, Young People & Families Plan for Wolverhampton 2015-2025 \(wellbeingwolves.co.uk\)](https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/children-young-people-families-plan)
2. The Best Start for Life - A vision for the 1,001 critical days – sets out the Governments vision for championing better support for families to make sure every baby gets the best start in life. [The best start for life: a vision for the 1,001 critical days - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/best-start-for-life)

THE GRANTS

The purpose of the Wolverhampton Family Hubs Small Grants scheme is to improve outcomes for children and families through:

- Contributing to and/or increasing the uptake of services which could include:
 - strengthening parent and child relationships
 - increasing/improving the offer of parenting support, or
 - meeting the wider family hub criteria see [Annex E - Family Hub Model Framework](#)
- Community engagement - targeting those communities who have yet to engage and/or who are at risk of poorer outcomes e.g. experiencing racial inequalities, high levels of deprivation.
- Co-design/production of services and activities that meet local need.

How to Apply

- Please make sure you read these guidance notes carefully.
- The deadline for applications is 12th April 2024
- Return completed application forms to: familyhubprogramme@wolverhampton.gov.uk
- You will receive an acknowledgement that you application has been received.

Amounts available

The total grant pot available is in the region of £590,000

Grants to organisations are available in two categories:

- (a) Micro grants from £100 - £1000
- (b) Small grants from £1001 - £10,000

It is intended that the application form and expectations are proportionate to each grant category.

Links with other services and organisations

Successful applicants will be expected to develop links with services which may include Midwifery, Health Visiting, Family Help, and other Family Hub partners e.g. faith and community groups, charities and social enterprises.

Guiding Principles for grantees

All activity will need to be underpinned by the following key principles:

- Parents, children and young people's voices – we will design activities and support with children, young people, and parents / carer, and encourage them to be involved in delivering these where appropriate. We will also capture their lived experience to inform future provision.

- Quality and impact – we will ensure that our work is making a difference, and work with partners to build evidence, demonstrate value and champion the impact that provision has on children, parents, and communities.
- Partnership – we will seek to work with other organisations and services and build strong alliances and networks.

Outcomes

1. **Outcomes for applications that aim to strengthen parent and child relationships** or offer parenting support :
 - Improvements in their relationship with their child
 - Improvements in their mental health
 - Improved engagement with other services
 - Increased involvement in their child’s development
 - Increased self-confidence
 - Improved understanding of their child’s needs
2. **Outcomes for applications that support community engagement and increase take up of services across the Family Hub sites**
 - Communities that have yet to engage
 - Parents and Carers with additional vulnerabilities who are at risk of poorer outcomes.
 - Fathers and Co parents
 - Families experiencing SEND.
 - Communities experiencing racial inequalities, deprivation, isolation.

Access to the support provided by successful applicants

The organisation will ensure there is equity of access for all families. As a minimum, this includes a requirement for the organisation to comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, ensuring that premises, activities and support are accessible to children and families from all the protected groups (age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation). Volunteer peer supporters will reflect local community diversity.

Location of Activities / Support

Activities and support will be delivered from one or more of the following:

- The applicant’s base
- outreach into families’ homes
- A Family Hub or one of the ‘spoke’ locations
- A suitably accessible community venue
- A suitably accessible virtual platform

Activities and support will need to be fully accessible and delivered flexibly on different days/time of day including weekends to meet the family's needs.

Workforce

A key element will be for the workforce / volunteers to have the skills and knowledge required to support:

- Advice or connection to further support
- Early identification and referral into appropriate support and wider Family Hub services

Successful applicants will be expected to take advantage of free training offered or promoted by the Family Hubs programme.

Safeguarding

The Children Act (2004) (Section 11) places a statutory obligation on all organisations that may come into contact with children directly or indirectly to ensure that they safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people whilst carrying out their normal functions.

A culture must exist within the organisation that 'safeguarding is everybody's business'. Providers must ensure that those who use the services are safeguarded and that staff are suitably skilled and supported. Effective safeguarding arrangements should be in place to safeguard children, young people and adults with care and support needs including, safer recruitment, effective training and supervision / support. Robust processes should be in place to assure themselves, regulators and commissioners, that these arrangements are working.

The organisation must ensure that robust safeguarding policies and procedures are in place in line with those of the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Partnership including:

- All concerns that children and adults who are suspected of being abused, or who are at risk of being abused, are reported to the Wolverhampton Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
- Active support for safeguarding investigation enquiries and processes e.g. Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews where required.
- Contributing to effective inter-agency work to safeguard children, young people and adults
- Having arrangements in place for effective information sharing in line with national guidance and local safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Appropriate safer recruitment processes are in place (including enhanced DBS checks) for all staff who work directly with children, young people and adults with care and support needs.
- Appropriate supervision and support arrangements should be in place.

The organisation should manage risk appropriately to protect vulnerable children, young people and adults from avoidable harm and treat and care for people in a safe environment.

Who will make the decision

All applications will be scored and ranked by a panel made up of representatives from the relevant Family Hub and will include: Family Hub Lead, a parent, a representative from the Voluntary,

Community, Social Enterprise and Faith (VCSEF) sector and another appropriate partner from the local area?

What will happen after the decision has been made.

All applicants will be notified by email as to whether their application has been successful or not. We will provide constructive feedback, on request.

Successful applicants will be required to submit the documentation set out in the application form prior to the grant agreement being signed off.

We will send a grant agreement with our terms and conditions for you to sign and return. If we need to ask you to change your approach in order to fill a gap, we will arrange to meet with you.

Payment

Payments will be made quarterly in advance, with an amount being withheld from the final quarter's payment which will be payable once your final monitoring and financial claim has been received. We will discuss this in detail with you before the award is made.

Monitoring and evaluation

We expect you to monitor your activities, including keeping accurate records of how many individuals and families have attended the funded activity. Monitoring should be submitted quarterly and include quantitative and qualitative components demonstrating the impact your funding has made.

For each project this will include information on:

- Number of people attending groups and their age
- Parental status of users - mothers, fathers, grandparents, co-parents
- Where the group/service/offer is based
- Ethnicity of people attending groups
- Method of delivery of the offer - virtual or face to face
- Number of volunteers / staff on the project
- Details of training completed or delivered by staff on the project
- Case studies or video diaries to show benefits to families

What if we are unsuccessful?

Should your application be unsuccessful Wolverhampton Voluntary and Community Action (WVCA) may be able to help to identify other possible sources of funding for projects. Please get back in touch with your local Family Hub Lead.

What do we do if we don't agree with a funding decision?

Following the grant making decision panel meeting, we aim to send confirmation of grant offer or rejection within the dates stipulated.

If your application is unsuccessful, we can provide constructive feedback upon request. Depending on the refusal reason, you may be able to apply for a different project, but you cannot re-apply for the same project unless your refusal confirmation says so.

Advisory note

If your annual income is above £5,000 per annum your organisation will need to register as a registered charity: <https://www.gov.uk/setting-up-charity>