

CHILDREN AND LIFELONG LEARNING SCRUTINY PANEL

DATE	02/03/2026
REPORT OF	Ann Marie Matson - Director of Children Services
SUBJECT	Family Hubs
STATUS	Open

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS

The Family Hubs contribute to 'stronger communities' via the universal and targeted offer to children and families within the community, the work of the teams aligns to the councils values in supporting families at the right time and by the right person, therefore supporting children at the lowest level to meet their needs. The approach from the Hubs offer includes the wider partnership to ensure support can be accessed by families or where appropriate families signposted to community services best placed to meet need.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides information on the impact of The Family hubs across North East Lincolnshire. This report considers data profiles for each Hub, comparison data and also the range of available services to families.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

Scrutiny Members have requested a full update regarding the Family hubs including data profiles, the services offered and utilised, the ward information and outreach offer (where available) and also the future sustainability and stakeholders of the Hubs

1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

Ward Information

There are 7 Family Hubs based across the Authority, the Hubs have a core offer of services delivered from each Hub which will be detailed below, however in addition to this have fantastic connectivity to the wider community and services, therefore are able to provide advice, guidance and signposting to ensure the earliest support for families.

The full ward population data (from 2023) is below:

ward population	0-18 *	0-5	6-12	13-17
Croft Baker	2,169	610	941	618
East Marsh	2,848	1,063	1123	662
Freshney	1,895	532	826	537
Haverstoe	1,428	357	619	452

Heneage	2,606	800	1072	734
Humberston and New Waltham	2,145	544	881	720
Immingham	2,384	639	1012	733
Park	2,349	665	964	720
Scartho	2,228	658	944	626
Sidney Sussex	2,962	1,011	1189	762
South	3,236	954	1295	987
Waltham	1,072	327	436	309
West Marsh	1,809	641	733	435
Wolds	1,553	418	594	541
Yarborough	2,464	786	1017	661

***source ONS mid-2022 Ward 2023 population estimates**

The following data provides the breakdowns of populations available to us from families accessing the Hubs available to them. Families are able to access services within a Hub as they wish, this however does not require the families to register with a Hub, therefore the data below is not a full representation of those accessing the Hubs and provides financial year data on the current registrations for those within the start for life/ best start offer;

Ward	0-5 Members	0-5 Population	Percentage (%)
Croft Baker	94	610	15.40%
East Marsh	148	1063	13.90%
Freshney	83	532	15.60%
Haverstoe	41	357	11.50%
Heneage	105	800	13.10%
Humberston and New Waltham	58	544	10.70%
Immingham	120	639	18.80%
Park	81	665	12.20%
Scartho	100	658	15.20%
Sidney Sussex	147	1011	14.50%
South	144	954	15.10%
Waltham	30	327	9.20%
West Marsh	80	641	12.50%
Wolds	58	418	13.90%
Yarborough	114	786	14.50%

Demographics of those recorded as accessing the Hubs is below, however would still not be a full representation as this information is gained with family consent to do so.

Type	Ethnic Groups	Members
Adult	White	1448
Adult	Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	73

Adult	Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	32
Adult	Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	23
Adult	Other ethnic group	20
Child	White	1466
Child	Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	53
Child	Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	46
Child	Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	32
Child	Other ethnic group	14

Type	Sex	Members
Adult	Female	1436
Adult	Male	304
Child	Female	915
Child	Male	915
Child	Intersex	1

Footfall within each Hub:

2024							
	Reynolds	Central	East Marsh	Immingham	Queensway	Nunsthorpe	West Marsh
Jan	1,140	1,133	487	871	1,052	1,933	488
Feb	515*	1,147	1,247	1,079	1,052	1,886	336
Mar	0*	1,135	1,301	1,082	921	2,076	454
Apr	968	992	1,240	825	830	1,111	507
May	1,255	666	1,289	917	38*	1,628	72
June	1,252	348	1,630	895	503	1,946	269
July	1,227	0*	1,577	889	1,025	2,091	473
Aug	1,393	879	0*	773	1,105	1,703	517
Sept	1,151	575	1,367	978	1,074	1,765	534
Oct	1,240	954	1,236	1,057	1,237	1,862	639
Nov	1,259	1,133	1,308	1,166	1,174	2,047	620
Dec	1,009	747	1,132	764	774	1,347	479
Totals	11,894	9,709	13,814	11,296	10,785	21,395	5,388

84,281

*Closed for refurbishments

2025							
	Reynolds	Central	East Marsh	Immingham	Queensway	Nunsthorpe	West Marsh

Jan	1,218	1,078	1,272	953	1,285	1,803	685	
Feb	1,173	908	1,023	908	1,255	1,771	756	
Mar	1,308	1,280	1,273	1,177	1,439	2,033	832	
Apr	1,290	1,199	1,182	939	1,210	1,849	909	
May	1,156	1,000	1,111	1,154	1,116	1,930	806	
June	1,356	1,099	1,169	1,118	1,160	2,072	883	
July	1,490	1,762	1,402	1,090	1,361	2,227	945	
Aug	1,234	854	1,151	970	949	1,651	591	
Sept	1,390	736	1,474	1,046	1,309	2,280	991	
Oct	1,457	664	1,402	1,168	1,153	2,366	860	
Nov	1,266	998	1,213	947	1,162	1,948	761	
Dec	799	693	1,020	644	796	1,795	420	
Totals	15,137	12,271	14,692	12,114	14,195	23,725	9,439	101,573

There has been an enhanced offer within the Hubs being built since 2024 which has impacted footfall to an increased level, this is positive to see families accessing the range of services within the Hubs and the increased offer for parents and children over 5years.

Earliest offer to all families across the Authority

The following provides an overview of the offer from within the community and Hubs:

- Home Learning Environment - Raising Early Achievement in Literacy (REAL Approach)

Engaging parents in their children's early literacy development has been shown to improve children's outcomes and help to narrow the gap between disadvantaged and other children. Making it REAL (Raising Early Achievement in Literacy) is an award-winning programme that works with practitioners to support children's early literacy and development. Making it REAL helps practitioners to build parents' knowledge and confidence so that they can help their children with reading and writing and create a positive early home learning environment. Teachers and practitioners share the framework with families through a series of home visits and literacy events. They work together to support children's early literacy development.

Between April 2024 and March 2026, 10 Family Help Practitioners were trained in the REAL approach, alongside 49 early years practitioners from a range of different services for young children, including childminders, daycare settings, community resources (Climb4, VANEL, Centre4, Nunny's Farm), schools and academies, education support services, faith group leader – who all deliver

borough -wide at a universal or targeted level (not Hub based). Family Help Practitioners are aligned to trained settings to offer the home visiting element of the support, and support with termly literacy events, they are also a link for Family Hubs and Start for Life and family Help and maintain regular contact.

- Parenting - Togetherness Approach Training (Solihull)

A programme for parents/carers delivered in a group setting or on a 1:1 basis, intended for parents/carers who want support with more sensitive and effective parenting. The programme aims to develop the parent / child relationship and in turn promotes effective behaviour management.

The model focuses on three concepts; containment, reciprocity, and behaviour management, how they facilitate the understanding of relationships and how to apply this in different contexts. Underpinned by research in early brain development and the significance of early relationships and experience, there is an emphasis on close, connected, attuned relationships.

Antenatal Togetherness (12 delegates trained between April 2025 and March 2026) including Midwifery support worker, NSPCC colleagues, health visitor, faith-led antenatal education teacher, Maternal Wellbeing, Navigo perinatal mental health services, Navigo parent-infant relationship services, perinatal early years practitioner, infant feeding peer supporter, who all deliver borough wide at a universal or targeted level (not Hub based).

Togetherness 2 day Foundation Training (70 delegates between April 2025 and March 2026) including public health nursing, social workers, early years practitioners, childminders, faith group leaders, Young Minds Matters, fostering service, school nurses, Young Carers service, family time service, dedicated safeguarding leads in schools/academies, teaching assistants in schools/academies, youth workers, compass go services, alternative provision teaching staff – who all deliver borough -wide at a universal or targeted level (not Hub based).

Early Years Foundations Stage Togetherness (17 delegates trained between April 2025 and March 2026) including local daycare settings, early years settings, childminders and preschools - who all deliver borough -wide at a universal or targeted level (not Hub based).

As this offer is delivered on a 1:1 bespoke basis the overall numbers accessing this offer can not be provided, however professionals confirm they continue to deliver this within daily practice. Due to the breadth of the professionals trained this has been successful in being more widely accessible to families.

- Parent-Infant Relationships, and Perinatal Mental Health Multi-Agency Training

Born to Bond – one day training of 65 practitioners from across the wider children's workforce completed this training around Parent-Infant Relationships. All practitioners deliver borough -wide at a universal or targeted level (not necessarily Hub based).

Born to Bond Webinar – awareness of Parent-Infant Relationships – 89 practitioners from across the wider children’s workforce completed this training. All practitioners deliver borough -wide at a universal or targeted level (not necessarily Hub based).

Introduction to Infant Mental Health recorded webinar is available via AcademyNEL as a pre-requisite for the below training sessions.

Multi-agency Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Awareness - Perinatal mental health refers to the health of parents during pregnancy and in the first year of life and can have a significant effect on the child’s outcomes. The course covers elements of Maternal Mental Health, Infant Mental Health and the importance of the parent-infant relationship in building attachment and aims to support an awareness for all practitioners working with families during this critical time. 39 practitioners from across the wider children’s workforce completed this training around Parent-Infant Relationships. All practitioners deliver borough -wide at a universal or targeted level (not necessarily Hub based).

Infant Communication – Baby’s Voice - Training available around infant communication and mental health jointly delivered by Parent-Infant Relationship Health Visitor and Dr Sophie Lowe from Growing Well Together Team. This is a half-day session that focus’ on infant behaviours in relation to emotional health and is available for practitioners who have previously attended either– introduction to infant mental health, or Multi-agency perinatal and infant mental health training. **New for 2026.**

Growing Well Together services (Parent-Infant Relationship Service) offer outreach support for families within a NEL postcode.

- Infant Feeding

Infant Feeding Peer Supporter are able to outreach to families who most need the support by home visiting, and online support. This support is available to everyone with a NEL postcode.

- Outreach Activity – Summer 2025

Three outreach activities were run throughout the summer holidays in 2025 which were in areas that were not in walking distance to a Family Hub – the average attendance at each session was between 30 and 50 people (adults and children). We do not have the information about attendee postcodes as this data was not collected at the time. In addition to this all 7 Family Hubs had a fun day which was able to be accessed by all children.

- Family Hubs and Start for Life have a digital offer available to all - [Start for Life | NELC](#)

Family Information Service – Families First – provide daily information via social media to families about what is available locally for families. They offer general sharing of information, and daily sharing of baby and toddler groups available borough-wide. Other pertinent information useful for families is shared

continuously, and this is widely accessed across NEL by over 10'000 families.

- In addition to the offer from the Family Help Team there is also the Young and Safe Team who are primarily an outreach service to increase engagement in community activities, reduce anti social behaviour and increase engagement with professionals. This team is able to use space within the Hubs to ensure a safe space for children as needed.

From the Hub buildings the following services are offered:

- Midwifery
- Job centre plus
- Smoking Sensations
- VANL- Deliver in 5 of the hubs including gardening group
- Birth registrations- Deliver in 4 of the Hubs
- Health visiting- development checks
- Compass go for visiting in the local area
- Navigo for visiting in the local area
- Housing (home choice links)
- Womens Aid to meet with families
- GP based in Immingham on a Tuesday accessible for people attending groups
- Young Persons Domestic Abuse advice
- School Nursing
- Speech and Language (Chatterbugs)
- Family group Conferencing can be planned from any Hubs to make this accessible to families
- Young Carers Groups and activities, all schools in the borough also have access to young carers drop ins (All ages)
- Sensory Rooms in all hubs open for use
- Access to kitchen facilities and washing facilities which can be used by families
- Bread deliveries to support those in need
- Girls Group- Focus upon exploitation and vulnerability, healthy relationships, confidence building (10years +)
- DART group (targeted group) with a focus upon domestic abuse, transport is provided (7yrs to 14 yrs with their mother)
- Baby Rhyme Time (0-9mths)
- Learning through play (0-5 years)
- Middy Rhyme Time (9mths -18mths)
- Stay and play (1-5yrs)
- Adult learning Groups (Maths, English, Sign Language)
- Baby Massage
- Story Time Sessions (0-5yrs)
- Parenting Group- Solihull and also Solihull parenting group for children within additional needs
- SWAN- sessions for parents for children on the neurodiversity pathway
- Parents supporting parents group for families with a child with a disability (Peer support group)

In addition to the services above there are drop in sessions for any families to come into the hub for support and advice, there are staff members on duty in the Hubs should a member of the public attend for support. For children who are school age, we also support in ensuring access to community provision outside of the Hub setting to encourage peer relationships and positive activities. There are a number of Voluntary organisations who already provide services for children who are school age and above, therefore we work with the agencies to prevent duplication, aligned to right support by the right person.

The new Best Start Guidance which is pending from the Government will also enhance our offer with developing delivery of further Evidence Based Interventions within the Hubs, enhancing the digital offer and support in the community.

Early help Co-ordinators (EHC) are linked to all settings, schools, nurseries and colleges across Borough and voluntary and health sector so they can be reached to support any families that there are worries for. The EHC would give advice, guidance and has good knowledge of what is available so families can be supported by the right service at the right time, this is ensuring support and identification of need at the earliest point and support to identify universal and community services available to support families.

Targeted Support

In addition to the above offers under a universal offer we also have a targeted provision delivered by the workforce based within the Hubs, this involves weekly direct intervention with the families, which is based upon assessment of needs and plans developed with the family and other professionals as a co-ordinated approach to deliver positive change. This work can be but is limited to, parenting support, domestic abuse, substance misuse, reducing parental conflict, neglect, vulnerabilities, harmful sexualised behaviour, support re SEND and Missing.

The data below represents families currently supported by Family Help without a social worker;

New FH episodes starting	2024-25 (Apr-Jan)				2025-26 (Apr-Jan)			
	0-5	6-12	13-17	Total	0-5	6-12	13-17	Total
Croft Baker	25	39	25	89	19	22	17	58
East Marsh	59	59	53	171	39	75	49	163
Freshney	8	20	21	49	7	15	12	34
Haverstoe	2	17	8	27	2	9	7	18
Heneage	44	37	28	109	35	58	30	123
Humberston and New Waltham	11	25	14	50	12	14	9	35
Immingham	39	28	23	90	23	30	18	71
Park	22	37	24	83	11	31	19	61
Scartho	14	22	11	47	7	23	17	47
Sidney Sussex	27	49	33	109	27	47	35	109

South	64	66	41	171	46	69	50	165
Waltham	2	6	4	12		7	3	10
West Marsh	41	44	29	114	36	36	35	107
Wolds	6	25	6	37	6	13	7	26
Yarborough	18	44	28	90	32	22	20	74
Grand Total	382	518	348	1248	302	471	328	1101

Overall the numbers of children open to Targeted support have reduced with the exception of one ward, this is a positive and indicates the drive aligned to the values of the council that families needs should be met at the lowest level by community services. Information analysis also indicates that referrals from community groups are low into TAF and Family Help therefore evidencing support is meeting needs at the right level. Heneage Ward have received an increased offer from the Early Help co-ordinator for that area which would support the increase in identification of those with increased need.

Overall Impact and Future Developments

The overall impact of the Hubs continues to ensure support and community engagement at the earliest and lowest level, this in turn also ensures families in the community know where to access if they are in need of support. Additionally the workforce know their communities and families and therefore can identify increasing need and respond appropriately.

In line with the Social Care reforms, the integrated offer of family help will be further strengthened and Family Hubs will be central to this. The Government have confirmed the funding for Best Start Family Hubs will continue from 2026–29 and have introduced Best Start in Life: Healthy Babies to strengthen the health offer in the first 1,001 days. Locally, we have transformed our seven hubs into accessible “one-stop” holistic support venues for families (0–19, or up to 25 with SEND), we have refreshed our Early Help Strategy, and continue to review our targeted Family Help offer aligned to national guidance, ensuring the right support at the right time and at the lowest level. Future updates on developments, delivery and performance of the family hubs will be brought through the wider transformation agenda within the Social Care Reforms briefings, giving Members clear visibility of progress, outcomes and next steps.

The Best Start Guidance is yet to be received, however this will outline the services to be delivered as a partnership for children alongside rebranding of all the Hubs to Best Start Family Hubs. The Evidence Based Interventions will also enhance this.

Within the developments of the Hubs offer, this will include how we increase our 5-19 offer aligned to the current community provision and the areas of need remaining. This will be part of the youth offer planning currently underway.

In addition to the National Reforms of social care and upcoming SEND reforms will also identify changes to the current offer, which will be aligned to need and community/ local

offers. The Government have announced additional SEND practitioners in the Hubs, however the remit of this is yet to be confirmed within the Guidance.

There is work ongoing to develop the offer for children whose parents use drugs and alcohol in partnership with Public Health. In addition to this training from NACOA has also been commissioned to support practitioners in working with children of adults who use alcohol.

We will have an enhanced parental conflict offer which will include a digital offer of how to parent together and apart.

We are revamping the Young Carers offer, working closely with Education and updating the assessment which has been co-produced with children.

We are undertaking service wide training for Safe and Together intervention to allow all practitioners to undertake assessment and work with parents where domestic abuse is a feature

We are planning to develop a boys group focussing upon vulnerability akin to that of the girls group.

2. RISKS, OPPORTUNITIES AND EQUALITY ISSUES

No decision is being sought, the above detail is to update the meeting of the current and comparative position of the Family Hubs and offer opportunity to review the impact for children and families as a result of the offer.

3. REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

No decision is being sought, the above detail is to update the meeting of the current and comparative position of the Family Hubs. The Hubs are well received by the community of North East Lincolnshire and the only communications changes in the short term future will include the name change to 'Best Start Family Hubs' as aligned to the new government guidance. This new guidance also provides opportunity to expand the Hubs offer alongside the considerations already underway to enhance the 0-19 offer.

4. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

No decisions are being sought, the financial requirements of the Hubs are already considered within wider budget setting.

5. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IMPLICATIONS

There are no decisions being requested. The Current offer for children and families is well received by those accessing the Hubs and community offers, this will continue to be enhanced aligned to new government guidance (when received) which will allow further opportunity to meet the needs of children in their community and at the earliest time.

6. CLIMATE CHANGE, NATURE RECOVERY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

None identified

7. PUBLIC HEALTH, HEALTH INEQUALITIES AND MARMOT IMPLICATIONS

Health services are currently based within the Hubs delivering key services in more local arrangements for children and families, including midwifery and Health visiting services. The new Best Start offer is being devised in partnership with Public Health, the ICB, Navigo and the Health and Care Partnership to ensure health needs are met.

MONITORING COMMENTS

In the opinion of the author, this report does not contain recommended changes to policy or resources (people, finance or physical assets). As a result no monitoring comments have been sought from the Council's Monitoring Officer (Chief Legal Officer), Section 151 Officer (Director of Finance) or Strategic Workforce Lead.

8. WARD IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific ward implications, the ward data profiles are included above.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None- this is a standalone report

10. CONTACT OFFICER(S)

Harriet Malkin, Deputy Service Director
Charlene Sykes, Service Director.