



**Barking &
Dagenham**

Barking and Dagenham Joint SEND Area Inspection Improvement Plan

September 2024

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Introduction

Welcome to the joint area SEND inspection improvement plan, developed in response to the Ofsted/CQC inspection carried out on Barking and Dagenham's Local Area Partnership between 8 to 12 July 2024. The final report was published on the 6 September 2024.

Overall, the SEND inspection reported progress and improvements despite sharp demand and funding constraints with many strengths and positive outcomes such as;

- ambitious and dedicated staff working with children and young people with SEND;
- partnership between education, health and social care helps to identify needs accurately and provide appropriate support
- regular school attendance and children with SEND achieving well;
- increasing access to specialist hubs;
- highly trained professionals across early years, education, social care and health in identifying and addressing needs;
- children with disability open to social care having their needs met in timely way and;
- wide ranging youth offer and participation for children and young people with SEND.

There were three recommendations for improvement due to slow progress in some areas, particularly in relation to preparation for adulthood; the processes around writing and reviewing EHCPs, and too few families receiving face to face antenatal visits.

A high-level plan has been produced setting out the key actions we will take over the next two years to address those three recommendations.

The improvement plan has been produced collaboratively with input from all partners of our SEND Area Board; including the Just Say Parents Forum. In the coming months, this inspection focused plan will be incorporated into our overall strategic SEND improvement plan with a performance and outcomes tracker enabling progress to be reported.

The partnership SEND Area Board, chaired by the Strategic Director Childrens and Adults (DCS/DASS) is responsible for ensuring recommendations are responded to and acted upon, overseeing the delivery, monitoring and evaluation of this inspection improvement plan, alongside the wider SEND improvement plan in operation.

The Board will report into the existing corporate governance mechanisms responsible for all Council improvement activity, including Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as well as the ICB and Health and Wellbeing Board. The SEND Area Board meets monthly to provide oversight and challenge, and progress will be formally monitored at all levels of the organisation.

This document sets out our mission and ambitions; governance arrangements, followed by the high-level plan for responding to the inspection recommendations and how we will organise ourselves to deliver upon our ambitious plans.

Our mission and aspirations

- To work collaboratively with comparison, persistence, and resilience to give all children and young people with SEND in Barking and Dagenham the best chance in life. This means supporting them to be happy, healthy, achieve their potential, be part of their communities, be as independent as possible, and empowered to make choices about their future.

We will work in partnership to:

- Develop and deliver sufficient, high quality, local education provision for our children and young people with SEND
- Support, develop and retain a highly skilled workforce, in schools, Social Care and Health services with strong knowledge and skills around SEND and Inclusion.
- Increase access to therapies, such as Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy support for children and young people who need this.
- Expand the choice of positive education, training and employment destinations for young people with SEND at ages 16, 19, and beyond, with clear information provided about these options to children, young people and their families
- Develop a bridge to Adult and Community Services, with clarity around options and choices for young people.

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Our mission and aspirations

- Work across all areas that are important to children, young people and their families - health, wellbeing, relationships and social skills, community, housing, leisure and employment - to provide services and support as close as possible to where the children and young people live – as they grow into adulthood.

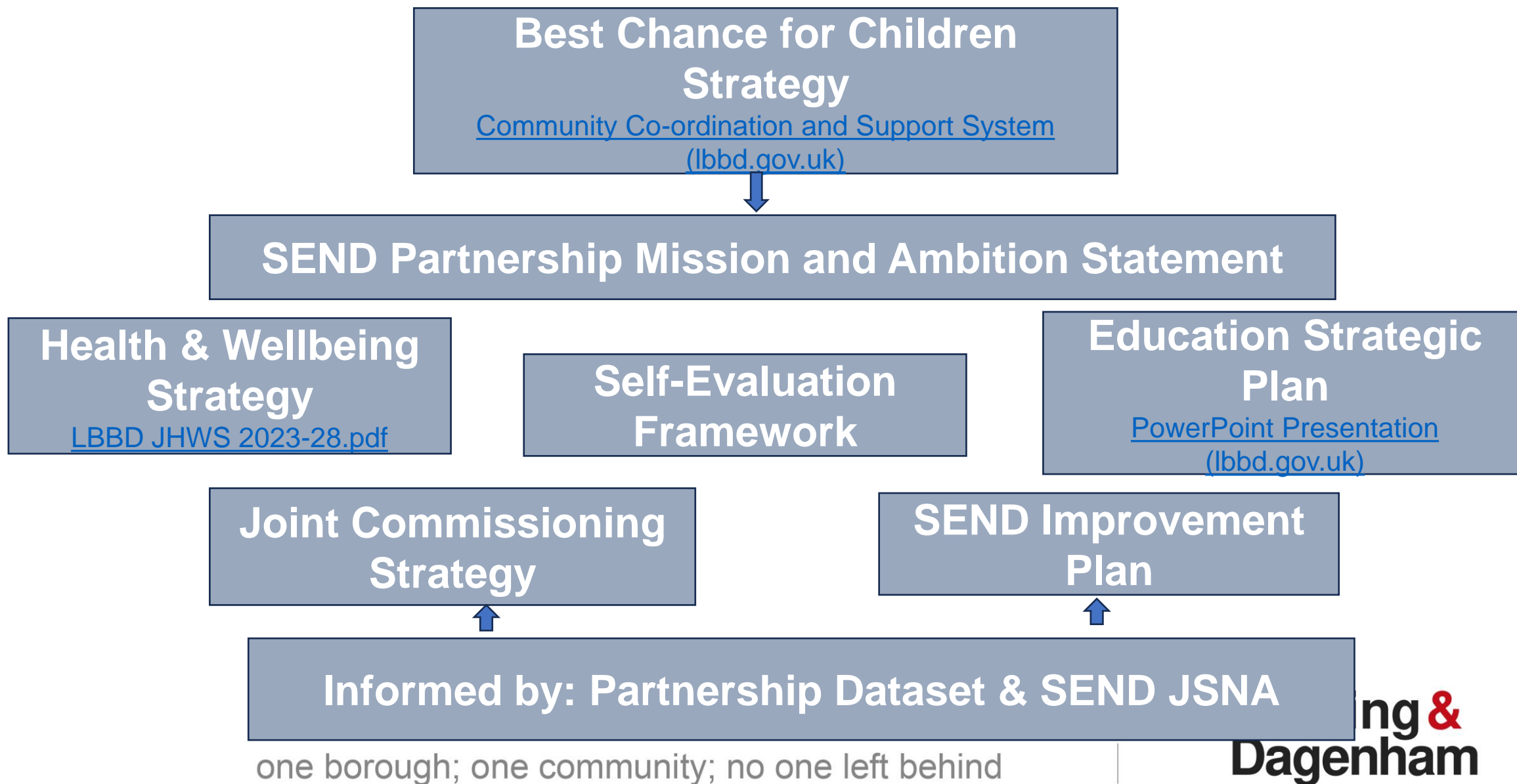
We will do this by:

- Recognising that children and young people with SEND in Barking and Dagenham often require a wide range of additional support.
- Working across Education, Social Care and Health, and with the right partners, in recognition that we can develop and deliver strong outcomes for children and young people and their families when we bring our resources and expertise together.
- Exploring all opportunities for a co-production approach and empowering children, young people, parents and carers when developing, delivering and reviewing services which support them
- Keeping a focus on social justice and working to address areas of inequity.
- When faced with significant challenges, working to find creative solutions and not giving up.
- Developing the market and relationship with local businesses, encouraging them to provide increasing work opportunities for young people with SEND, supporting them to become SEND-friendly employers.

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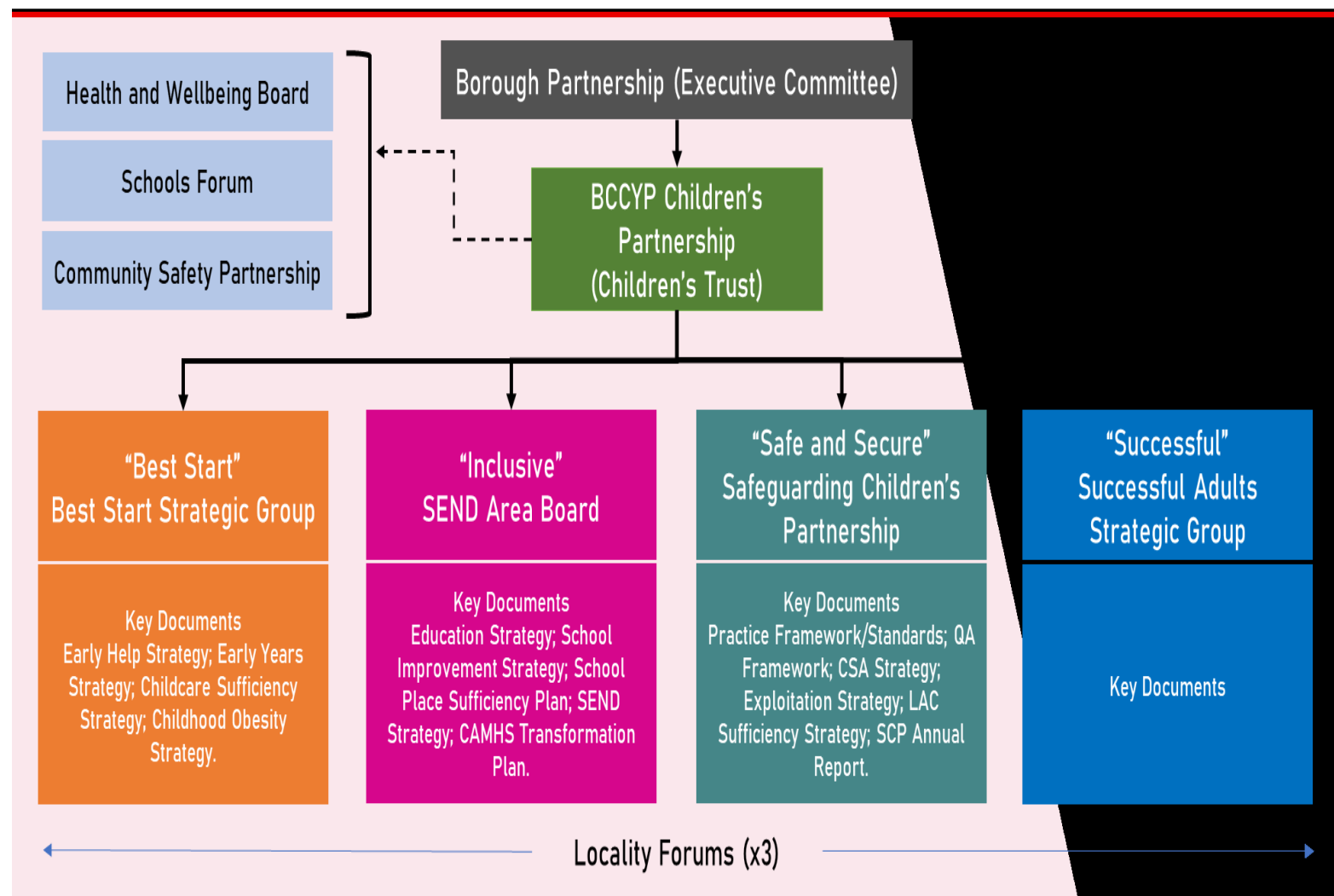
SEND Strategic Framework – strategies and plans to support our improvement plans



Governance Arrangements

The SEND Area Board leads Barking and Dagenham SEND.

- The partnership and governance arrangements are well embedded and going from strength to strength;
- Our Parent Carer Forum, 'Just Say, ' supports, challenges and advises the partnership to improve, address issues, communicate and co-produce.
- Performance and progress against improvement plans are reported to the SEND Area Board.



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Barking and Dagenham's Joint Area SEND Improvement Plan (July 2024 Inspection)

What needs to improve? (Area 1) Leaders across the partnership should act at pace to ensure all children and young people with SEND are effectively prepared for adulthood.

Action	Accountable Lead	By When	Expected Outcomes (what difference it will make)	Measures that matter (outcomes)	
1.1	Recruit EHC Preparation for Adulthood (PFA) Lead to ensure annual reviews and decisions are made in a timely way and attended by key relevant professionals from Year 9 onwards.	Head of SEND	Jan 2025	Increasing number of children and young people with SEND are better prepared for adulthood.	Number and % of annual reviews held at age 14 for children and young people with SEND (Year 9 Annual Reviews).
1.2	Implement revised annual review PFA paperwork across all secondary and college settings, ensuring a particular focus on views and aspirations of young people and how they will be supported (shaping conversation and planning) - checked via audit.	EHC Team Manager PFA Lead	Dec 2024	Improved transition planning at an earlier age (from year 9 aged 14).	Number and % of children and young people with SEND in EET.
1.3	Prioritise year 2 of PfA workstream for the SEND Area Partnership with a robust focus on improving opportunities and outcomes for SEND young people. Include new Post 16 booklet and involvement of employment and housing colleagues.	Chair of SEND Area Board	Dec 2025	EHCs are updated and reviewed in timescale with children's views and aspirations for the future and how they will be supported to achieve the best outcomes for adult life clearly documented.	Reduction in number and % of SEND NEET. Audits (single agency and multiagency) report an increasing number and percentage rated as good or better for children's views and aspirations being clearly documented and outcomes to be achieved.
1.4	Engage external challenge from National Development Team for Inclusion on delivery of PfA improvements for year 2.	Just Say Sponsor Head of Participation Opportunity and Wellbeing	Dec 2025	Better signposting and access to post-16 and post-18 options as well as to adult services.	
1.5	Host partnership (LBBB/NELFT/NELICB) event for children and young people transitioning from children services into adulthood focused on current pathways in terms of eligibility for statutory services and options.	LBBB/NELFT/ NELICB/BHRUT	31 October 2024		Case studies from training and supported employment programmes to demonstrate successes.
1.6	Implement fully the transition pathway in both CSC and ASC, including early notification of young people at age 14, referral to ASC at age 16, and Care Act Assessment at age 17, to ensure a smooth transition of support. Young people to be tracked from age 16 via monthly transition panel.	Head of Disability Service (CCS) Head of Mental Health (ASC)	March 2025		
1.7	Ensure social workers and early help practitioners discuss and record transition in all CIN, CP or Early Help reviews from age 14 onwards, supporting families in understanding and navigating the changes.	Head of Disability Service	March 2025		

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What needs to improve? (Area 2). Leaders across the partnership must implement their action plan at pace to ensure there is more robust overview in securing a rapid improvement in the quality of EHC plans.

Action		Accountable Lead	By When	Expected Outcomes (what difference it will make)	Measures that matter (outcomes)
1.1	Implement recovery plan to clear backlog of annual reviews, with temporary additional staff (4 FTE)	Head of SEND	Jan 2025	Improved timeliness of annual reviews decision and issuing amended finals to families and professionals (within timescale).	Improved timeliness and statutory compliance for EHCPs and Annual Reviews, including performance for those children and young people EHE and EOTAS.
1.2	Implement robust monitoring and planning system for annual reviews from January 2025, so that families receive updated EHCPs and professionals can provide necessary updated advice and contributions.	EHC Team Manager	Jan 2025	Children and young people with EHCPs have their voices and aspirations clearly captured and documented with outcomes included.	Delivery of recovery plan and targets set - clear backlog of annual reviews by January 2025. * Complete 347 per month * Complete 2082 by Jan 2025 and clear backlog.
1.3	Implement single oversight of children and young people who are EHE and EOTAS with EHCPs to ensure reviews are completed.	EHC Team Manager	Oct 2024		
1.4	Establish multiagency EHCP Quality Group (membership to include professionals, parent carer forum representation), reporting to SEND Area Board, to oversee improvements in professional contributions and the voice of children and young people and their families - to include external challenge (from partnership with good outcomes). Arrangements to be finalised at November Partnership awayday.	Head of SEND	Dec 2024 Ongoing	Improved quality contributions from education, health and social care in EHCPs. Timely sharing of EHCPs with children, young people and families enabling improved processes and outcomes for all.	Outcomes of audits and moderations - increase in audits on EHCPs rated effective for education, health and social care contributions. Increase in audits rated good or better for voice of children and young people and families. Qualitative measures (e.g., feedback from CYP and families) to better capture the experiences of those directly affected by these plans.
1.5	Implement EHCP quality assurance framework and plan (all levels) with regular cycle, reporting channels and evidence (that learning is implemented) agreed.	Lead Professional (Quality Assurance)	Oct 2024 Ongoing		
1.6	Track social care advice for EHCPs through a Liquidlogic workflow design to ensure timeliness and quality assurance.	Head of Disability Service	Oct 2024		

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What needs to improve? (Area 3) Leaders need to ensure that families receive appropriate antenatal support in line with the Healthy Child programme.

Action	Accountable Lead	By When	Expected Outcomes (what difference it will make)	Measures that matter (outcomes)
1.1	Integrated Care Director NELFT	Oct 2024	A strong partnership between maternity and health visiting services ensured the right families receive an antenatal home visit after 28 weeks of pregnancy enabling earlier identification and support if required.	Number and percentage of vulnerable families receiving an antenatal home visit (as a percentage of antenatal referrals received by maternity) - baseline will be established by December 2024 and target will be set for new contract (commencing 01/01/2025).
1.2	Public Health Consultant	Dec 2024		
1.3	Public Health Consultant and Provider Lead	March 2025	Improved access to antenatal support services and care received after birth.	Number of families who refuse the antenatal home visit.
1.4	Integrated Care Director NELFT Public Health Consultant BHR Maternity Lead	Dec 2024	Improved identification of risk and sharing those risks across the system and governance structures.	
1.5	Public Health Consultant	Jan 2025	A clear data picture of what type of contacts families are receiving, to allow determination of whether need is being met and whether protocol is working.	Vulnerable families who are identified later than the 28 week visit.
1.6	Integrated Care Director NELFT	Dec 2024	Clear data will allow resource to be allocated to those families who need the support most, and improve their outcomes (whilst not adversely affecting outcomes in other parts of the service).	
1.7	Integrated Care Director NELFT	Jan 2025	A clear protocol (signed off by clinical leads) which determines which families are allocated an antenatal home visit, ensuring those families with needs and vulnerabilities are provided with early support.	Number of families referred onto other support services following antenatal contact.