

Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Select Committee



12 September 2019

Safeguarding of Children in Surrey

Purpose of report: Scrutiny of Children's Social Care

Introduction:

1. The purpose of this report is to set out progress against the Children's Social Care Family Resilience Transformation. It sets out progress against anticipated benefits outlined in the report to the Children and Education Select Committee in March 2019, alleviating key areas of improvement identified in the Ofsted inspection of Children's Services (2018).

Transformation activity

2. The restructure of the children's service directorate progressed at pace and the new structure was fully implemented by 7 May 2019. This exercise took into account approximately 2700 staff. Our commitment was to go live on 1 April and the four week delay was due to extending some parts of the consultation process to ensure we reached everyone affected and met our statutory responsibilities.
3. The Children's Single Point of Contact (C-SPA) (referred to as Family Safeguarding and Early Help Hubs in March 19 paper), went live 7 May 2019. This involved moving the service out of Guildford Police Station and into Guildford Borough Council Offices. The C-SPA replaces the previous MASH, is made up of three parts: Request for Support Team located with the corporate contact centre in County Hall, the Early Help Hub and the Multi –Agency Partnership (MAP). The focus of this service is to direct children and families to the right help as quickly as possible. The C-SPA has a range of professionals from health, education, social care and police.
4. The ability to provide a whole child response will be strengthened in the near future by secondments into the C-SPA from key education officers with expertise in SEND and children missing education. As part of the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Strategy we are working towards integrating Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) into the C-SPA and conversations have begun with 0-19 public health about how children may benefit from their service integrating with the C-SPA.
5. The preparation for the switch from the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) to C-SPA involved launching our revised levels of need document, Effective Family

Resilience, in February 2019. This was followed with an extensive roll out of workshops across the partnership involving practice leaders from the partnership in their delivery. By the first week in June more than 1500 individuals had taken part in these workshops.

6. The commitments made in the March 2019 report have largely been met, the only exception is the co-location of the disabled children's teams which remain in the centralised Children's Resources Teams and will move to quadrants in October 2019:
 - 22 Family Safeguarding Teams in line with the Hertfordshire model.
 - 15 Targeted Youth Support teams and 8 Safeguarding Adolescent teams to deliver youth justice programmes and contextual safeguarding.
 - Co-location of disabled children's teams with quadrants
 - Co-location of fostering teams with quadrants
 - Locating leaving care teams with looked after children's services in the quadrants.
 - Locating newly qualified social workers in the main teams with additional support.
7. The March 2019 select committee report acknowledged that whilst the restructure was subject of a stretching timetable the real work to transform the culture would take place after this event. However, in preparation we have worked across our services to review work against the levels of need and supported managers to improve their grip on the work in their service.
8. The North East quadrant has struggled to achieve stable staffing and it is significantly more difficult to achieve practice improvements when there is insufficient qualified staff and a high turnover of locums. Fairmount House in Leatherhead is too far from the community we serve and workers spend too long travelling to see children. Cabinet approved our plan to lease Ashley Park House in Walton on Thames and we are working with corporate colleagues to enact the agile working and 'closer to residents' ambition. We intend to occupy the new premises from October 2019, the site is in the heart of our busiest communities and we are optimistic that this will improve our ability to attract and retain staff.
9. The Family Centre transformation is on target to meet the identified £1 million saving in 2019/20 through developing 20 centres with satellite capacity across the county. Family Centres will work with children aged 0-11 years, focussing on families most in need.
10. Family centres will focus on the supporting children and families needing additional help at levels 2, 3 and 4 that are less likely to achieve their potential due to challenging individual or family circumstances to:
 - Reduce inequalities for disadvantaged children and families to prevent the need for statutory services
 - Strengthen family relationships and enabling families to stay together
 - Improve child and family health and wellbeing
 - Improve outcomes at school
11. The list of Family Centres, locations and providers is set in in Appendix A.

12. Six Districts/Boroughs have identified lead providers through local solutions: Mole Valley, Guildford, Runnymede, Epsom & Ewell, Spelthorne (excluding Stanwell) and Reigate & Banstead. In these areas the Family Centre transformation is progressing at pace with most areas being operational from the end of September.
13. We are working in partnership with Tandridge District Council and Woking Borough Council for them to become the lead providers, with Implementation from mid November 2019.
14. Waverley, Surrey Heath Elmbridge and the Stanwell area of Spelthorne have gone through a tender process to identify a lead provider. Contracts have now been issued and we are moving into the mobilisation phase. Implementation starting in some areas at the end of September 2019
15. The new Family Centre model will continue to provide support to vulnerable families regardless of where they live through outreach. The outreach will take place in satellite centres, community venues and family homes. Family Centres are part of a network of support for families provided and commissioned by Surrey County Council, supported by extensive local community and voluntary organisations. The new Children's Single Point of Access (C-SPA) responds to requests for support by identifying the most appropriate support to meet the needs of families and either signposting or directly allocating resources.
16. Family Centres will continue to build on existing relationships with the early years settings through the network meetings to promote the Family Resilience and the role of the early years setting in identifying families in need of support.
17. Early years settings have accessed the Family Resilience Levels of Need Training and there is further training planned for the autumn. The training clarifies levels of need and when and how to access the CSPA.
18. Following approval at Cabinet in June this year to commission early help and emotional wellbeing provision for children, young people and their families, we have recently launched a tender process to award contracts for the delivery of these services. The purpose of the commission is to:
 - support families to build resilience through safe, nurturing relationships that enhance emotional health and wellbeing and enables children and young people to thrive.
 - coordinate early help across geographical and school based communities.
 - enable young people to develop skills, knowledge, self-esteem, and positive emotional wellbeing
 - provide whole-family early help support working specifically with those families who would benefit from access to timely early help
 - join-up with other local early help providers and schools (including Surrey County Council services) to enable families to access early help as part of a joined-up pathway at the right time, in the right place
19. The providers will work with children, young people and families who require some additional support regarding a range of issues including health, identity, emotional

wellbeing, family and social relationships, learning, behaviour, housing, and employment. They will help to ensure that families have access to support at the right time, in the right place and the right cost, reducing the need for access to statutory services. The offer will be delivered locally, in an integrated way, through purposeful, consistent relationships between children, young people and families and their allocated worker.

20. The tender is open until 16th September when the evaluation period will begin. Contracts will be awarded mid- October. The new contracts will commence on 14th January 2020 and run until 31st March 2022.
21. The Early Help Advisory Boards use and effectiveness has been variable across the County, in some areas they have been successful at bringing agencies together to discuss local need and develop local delivery whilst in other areas they have added little value and duplicated existing partnership arrangements.
22. The new Family Resilience delivery structure has created four quadrants, each led by an Assistant Director responsible for Early Help, Targeted Services, Family Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting in their area. The recommissioning of the Level 2 Early Help Services will create lead providers in each District and Borough. In addition to robust contract monitoring through the directorate commissioning team, the Assistant Directors will lead local arrangements for the oversight of the effectiveness of Early Help on a quadrant basis.
23. The Assistant Director for C-SPA and Early Help deploys her resources (community connectors, family centre advisors, family information service, parenting advisors) to grow and support early help delivery across the county and to assist quadrant Assistant Directors to develop practice locally. Surrey County Council does not propose funding the servicing of Early Help Advisory Boards as we are confident the new arrangements will provide both support and rigour to the early help offer.
24. In respect of fostering households, in 2017/18 there were 57 new households approved and in 2018/19 this was 75. 11 households have been approved since 01/04/2019 and a further 42 are in stages 1 and 2 of the assessment process. This represents a significant improvement in our development of fostering households.
25. The Mockingbird fostering model will go live in October 2019, this will provide with a more resilient service that mirrors extended family networks and will enable us to care for some of our more troubled young people in local families rather than our reliance on external and residential providers,.

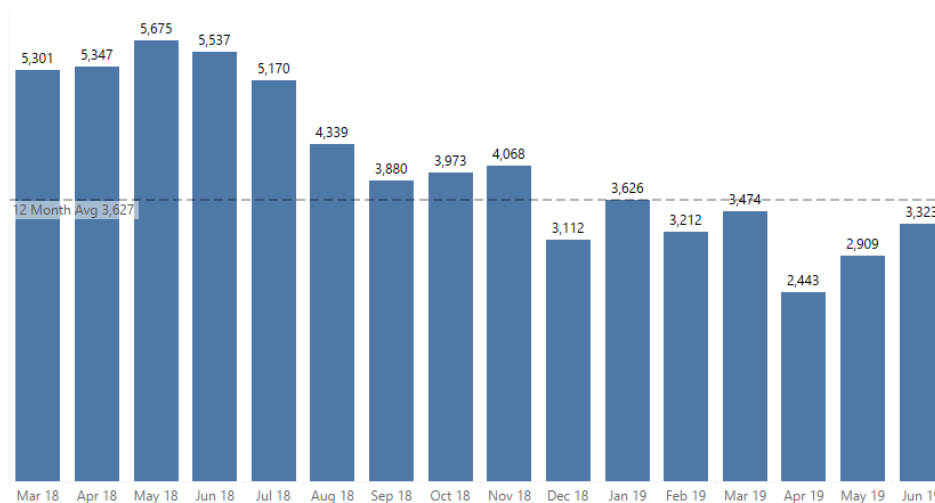
Impact

26. The impact of the transformation work to date has been scrutinised by Ofsted who has carried out three monitoring visits to date and by the Department for Education (DfE) appointed children's commissioner who has send a team of thirty on two occasions. The Ofsted monitoring visits are published on the Ofsted website. The children's

commissioner's most recent visit was in April 2019, just as the final parts of the restructure were taking place. Whilst the commissioner's report to the secretary of state was not published on this occasion, it endorsed our approach and the pace of change and reminded us that the task in hand. *'My team were impressed that despite the magnitude of change and some necessarily difficult restructuring and HR processes, morale amongst staff is positive and there is overall confidence in the improvement journey.'*

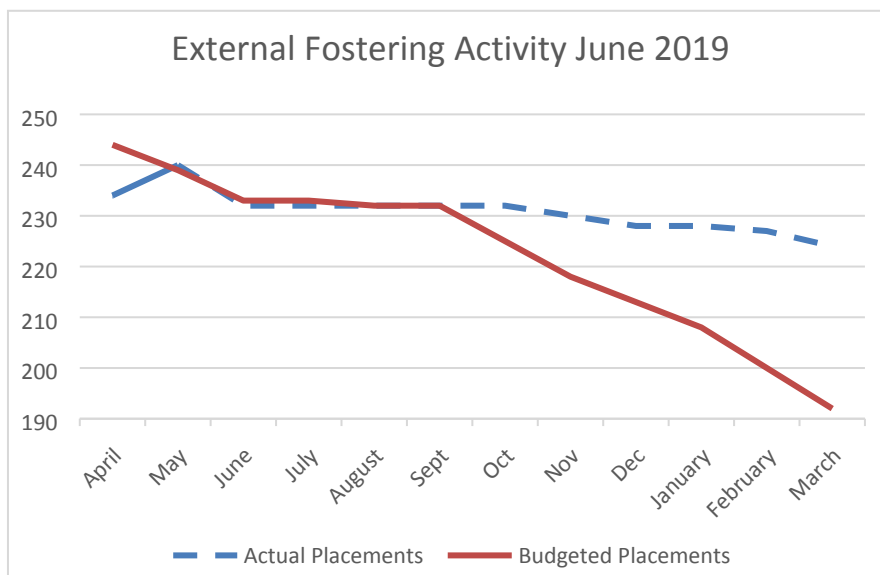
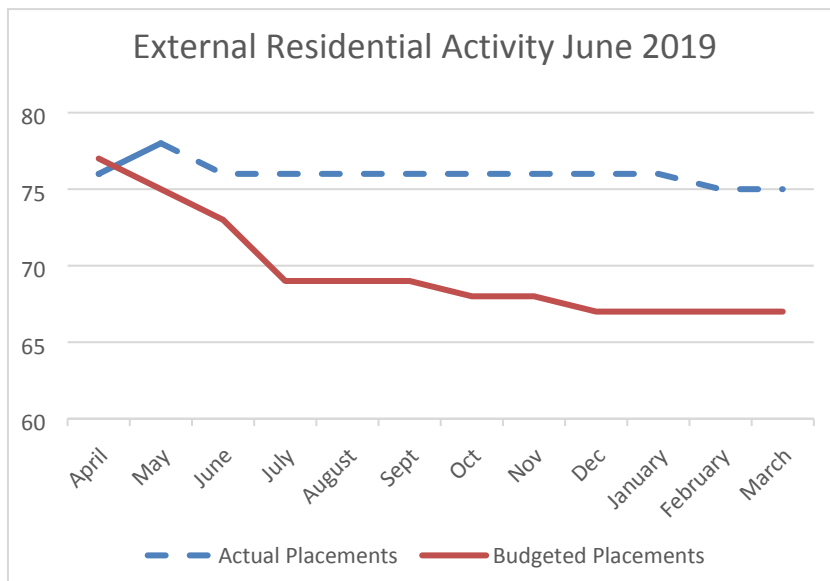
27. The target savings from the re-structure was £6.3 million, the final structure represents a reduction of £6.8 million. This saving will not be realised in full for this financial year because of the number of staff who are working their notice or receiving payment in lieu of notice and this, coupled with our continued reliance on interims, leaves a pressure against this saving of £2 million in this financial year.
28. Our ability to recruit and retain high quality staff has been a challenge both historically and presently. We recognise that we cannot make enough progress until we achieve this. Approximately 330 staff exited the organisation as an outcome of the restructure either through voluntary redundancy or through the selection process. Whilst there was a reduction in numbers of staff we still have gaps to fill, particularly in respect of permanent team managers and social workers.
29. There has been a good response to recent advertising campaigns, we have attracted and offered posts to high quality candidates and took a stance not to offer if we were not fully confident at interview.
30. The five Director posts have been filled and in post by August 2019. The Assistant Director posts in Family Resilience and Safeguarding, Corporate Parenting and Quality Assurance have all been filled with the final person will start in October 2019.
31. The main vacancies are in front line practice and management positions and we plan a 4 pronged approach to recruitment from September 2019:
 - **Return to social work programme** – for people who have left the profession and wish to return.
 - **Converting agency to permanent** via a rapid assessment process.
 - **Oversees recruitment**
 - **Partnership with Community Care** to promote the service
32. Ofsted carried out a monitoring visit 5th and 6th June 2019, just one month after the C-SPA became operational. The report is in the public domain but in summary they reported that the service was appropriately staffed, appropriate thresholds were applied, there is evidence that partners understood the new thresholds and that there were clearly evidenced decisions on children's records. There were some areas to strengthen regarding the use of chronologies to inform decision making and understanding about the impact of some forms of domestic abuse. Whilst we were heartened by this largely positive feedback, we remain grounded in the scale of the improvement task as a whole and recognise that this is just one part of a very large system.

33. The impact of the work to support Effective Family Resilience has been significant. One of the key challenges from the May 2018 Ofsted report was to reduce the volume of work in the MASH and those inappropriately going on to assessment.
34. The chart below shows the number of contacts created formerly in the MASH and since May in the C-SPA. The greatest reduction in this is attributable to the work with Surrey Police to apply our levels of need framework in advance of submitting referrals to Surrey Children's Social Care. Effective Family Resilience was launched in February 2019 and there is clear evidence of partners using this in advance of submitting a request for support and in the C-SPA when we respond to these requests.



35. The effect of lower numbers of contacts is that we are able to provide a better response to these families through signposting to early help or to level 3 targeted services as the C-SPA is focused on either sending families direct to these services or via signposting, therefore removing the need for local allocation panels. This process is facilitated through weekly calls with the Family Support Programme leaders and regular meetings with the commissioned level 2 providers.
36. A further impact of both the reduced number of contacts and the better application of thresholds is that the average caseload across the service has become more manageable. In July 2018 we reported that some workers were carrying caseloads in excess of 30 children and for some in excess of 40. It is impossible to do good work in with this number of children per worker. The average caseload in the Family Safeguarding teams of 15 children, in assessment it is 17 and for Looked after Children this is 16. These are average caseloads and the system is not sophisticated enough to pick up part time workers therefore some workers do have higher caseloads and we are addressing the variation with managers.
37. The potential impact of these lower caseloads is not yet fully translated into quality work with families. In order to achieve this we are providing the following a raft of training including refresher child protection, action learning sets for first line managers, and training in aspects of motivational interviewing to meet our statutory duties (assessment, parenting assessment, generic motivational interviewing).

38. The most recent Ofsted monitoring visit states that: *'A fundamental aim of the remodelling has already been achieved, with a significant reduction in the previously high volume of contacts and referrals, and in the number of child protection investigations, child in need assessments and child protection plans. Consequently, social workers' caseloads across the service have substantially reduced to an average of 15 each. Smaller, manageable caseloads are a critical component of Surrey's 'family resilience' model.'*
39. The Ofsted report from May 2018 was concerned about poor management oversight and supervision. A new supervision policy has been produced, the recording template has been updated and our ability to monitor child supervision records has been improved. Our target is that 75% of all children's records will have up to date supervision and we are currently at 70%, whilst this is not where we need it to be this represents a significant improvement. We recognise that managers still require support to provide reflective and challenging supervision to their workers and this is being addressed through the Surrey Children's Academy and action learning sets.
40. A critical aspect of the service improving is fully understanding the performance and quality of provision. This must run through from front line practitioner to executive director. At the time of the recent monitoring the visit the service had audited practice for more than 500 children. Ofsted commented that this process was enabling us to properly understand the quality of service and *'this ongoing, iterative and highly labour-intensive programme is a critical cornerstone of the local authority's determined plans to achieve a sustained and widespread improvement in social work practice standards.'*
41. The service has developed a comprehensive performance report system from which we can see live performance information and is used daily by front line managers and provides us with monthly reports that enable us to drive performance in certain areas and direct our auditing activity. We have seen a clear correlation in this increased focus from a senior leader level into raised performance against a number of our key performance indicators.
42. The impact of the activity to meet the placement savings is represented in the tables below. External residential activity is three placements higher than budgeted as at the end of June, placement moves have been identified to take place in July and August with number expected to be on track by September. External fostering activity is in line with budgeted. Forecasted placements above reduced to take account of children turning 18 but are not adjusted for expected placement moves.



Conclusion

43. The savings set out in the transformation programme are challenging:
- The savings set out in the staffing structure exceed the targeted amount but will be fully realised but in this financial year there is a cost pressure of £2million against this because of notice periods and locum costs.
 - The savings against children's centre will be realised.
 - The savings against the children's placement budget are on track but these are particularly stretching because of the complexity of some of the older children's needs who are in our care.
44. There is emerging evidence that the transformation is meeting its anticipated impact to enable families to receive robust evidenced based help before their difficulties reach statutory threshold resulting in fewer families in the statutory system. There is still work

to be achieved with partners to fully realise the potential of early help and this work is planned for the autumn term, however there are significantly fewer families in the statutory system and this is as a result of better application of thresholds, better signposting and support to partners through the C-SPA.

45. The improvement in the reliance of agency staff and staff turnover has not been great, we were unable to really promote the service during the restructure but there is a significant work stream on recruitment about to start. The work to locate the NE quadrant in the right area has moved with pace and we anticipate that this will enable us to attract staff.
46. Whilst there have been some significant shifts in how we focus our work with families there has not been a sufficient culture change within the Family Resilience Service to support the programme of transformation. This is, in part, due to the scale of the task in hand and because we had to get the staff in the right place through the restructure to focus on this part of the experience of families. We are heartened that both Ofsted and the DfE appointed commissioner have found that staff morale remains high.
47. There have been no unintended consequences of the move from children's centres to family centres and our plans thus far have not adversely impacted families in rural communities in the county. The impact of the new arrangements will be monitored through the contract management and partnership arrangements
48. This comment from the DfE appointed commissioner in April aptly sums up our assessment of progress. *'The authority has made rapid and solid progress.... It is important to emphasise that this is from a starting point of seriously failing services and there is still some way to go before there is clear evidence that vulnerable children and their families are being better served. Nonetheless, I can give a positive message on the Council's progress and the effectiveness of the leadership that has been put in place.'*

Recommendations:

1. This report is to inform the Committee of the impact of the Department's transformation activity. The Committee is invited to scrutinise the impact and support our continued improvement.

Next steps:

Identify future actions and dates.

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Sources/background papers:

[Ofsted Monitoring Visit June 2019](#)

<https://files.api.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50088564>

Appendix A

Family Centre Transformation - Summary overview

The Surrey Family Centre transformation is on target to meet the required savings in 2019/20. This will be met through the development of Family Centres in areas of disadvantage across Surrey, supporting vulnerable families with children aged 0-11 years. Each of the 11 districts and boroughs will have at least one main centre and there will be satellite centres in some areas.

Family support outreach workers employed at the Family Centres will provide services in the family home, local community venues or the centre itself, whichever best suits the needs of the family.

Lead provider/s within each district/borough are working satellite sites to agree the offer for families in line with the Family Centre specification: assessing needs, deploying staff and using venues effectively to meet the needs of the most vulnerable families. The mobile Family Centre will be available to support families who are more isolated or where there are limited local facilities.

We will be working with partners to enable them to provide universal services within the Centres and thereby focusing Surrey County Council resources on children and families who are more likely to experience poor outcomes without support i.e. level 3 families.

Family Centres form part of the overall Family Resilience approach. The Family Centres will receive requests for support from the new Early Help Hub for level 3 Families. For level 2, partners and families can directly access support from the Family Centre.

We are working towards Family Centres accessing Surrey County Council Early Help Module (EHM) to record their work with families. Family Centres will be monitored quarterly to ensure that they are meeting the requirements of the specification and key performance indicators. Once centres are recording onto EHM we will be able to run reports from this system.

We are currently on track to deliver Family Centre services from September 2019. The tender process has resulted in awarding contracts to Spurgeons, Barnardo's and Surrey Care Trust, these will start to be operational from the end of September 2019.

Discussions with Tandridge District Council and Woking Borough Council are in progress. Both Councils have gone gained approval to proceed, mobilisation is about to commence and therefore we expect services will be operational from mid-November 2019.

For further up to date information on Family Centres and Children's Centre closures, see link to Family Information Service website:

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/families/support-and-advice/family-centres/locations>

District and Borough Family Centre Providers and Locations:

North East Surrey:

Spelthorne:

Stanwell Area Lead Provider	Surrey Care Trust
Main Family Centre	Stanwell Family Centre at Hadrian Way, Stanwell

Spelthorne (remainder of district) Lead Provider	Clarendon Primary School
Main Family Centre	Clarendon Primary School, Ashford
Satellite Sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Buckland Primary School, Staines• Saxon Primary School, Shepperton

Elmbridge:

Lead Provider	Spurgeons
Main Family Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Three Rivers Family Centre at Chandlers Field Primary School, Hersham• Grovelands Primary School, Walton
Satellite Site	Cedar Centre, Cobham

Epsom and Ewell:

Lead Provider	Partnership between Epsom Primary School and Riverview Primary School
Main Family Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Riverview Primary School, Epsom• Epsom Primary School, Epsom

North West Surrey:

Surrey Heath:

Lead Provider	Barnardo's
Main Family Centre	Old Dean Young People and Family, Camberley

Runnymede:

Lead Provider	Hythe Primary School
Main Family Centre	Haven Family Centre at Hythe Primary School
Satellite sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chertsey Family Centre at Chertsey Nursery School • Addlestone Young People and Family Centre

Woking:

Lead Provider	Partnership with Woking Borough Council for them to become the lead provider.
Main Family Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sythwood Primary School • Sheerwater Community Centre

South West Surrey

Waverley:

Lead Provider	Barnardo's
Main Family Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hale Primary School, Upper Hale • Loseley Fields Family Centre at Green Lane, Farncombe

Guildford:

Lead Provider	Guildford Nursery School
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Main Family Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spinney Family Centre at Guildford Grove Primary School • Guildford Nursery School
Satellite site	Ash Family Centre at Ash Grange Primary School

South East Surrey

Mole Valley:

Lead Provider	Dorking Nursery School
Main Family Centre	Mole Valley Family Centre at Goodwyns, Dorking Nursery School

Reigate and Banstead:

Lead Providers	Four providers working in partnership, East Surrey YMCA, Welcare, Furzeffield Primary School, Epsom Downs Primary School
Main Family Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horley Young People and Family Centre at (East Surrey YMCA) • Welcare (Redhill) Family Centre at Welcare House, Redhill (Welcare) • Red Oak Family Centre at Furzeffield Primary School • Epsom Downs Family Centre at Epsom Downs Primary School •

Tandridge:

Lead Provider	Partnership with Tandridge District Council for them to become the lead provider.
Main Family Centre	Tandridge Family Centre at Caterham Pavilion