Derbyshire Best Start in Life Local Plan - Addendum

Embedding a Test, Learn and Scale Approach Across Derbyshire Best Start Family Hubs

Derbyshire Best Start Family Hubs will adopt a test, learn and scale approach that uses outreach, engagement and participation activity as a key mechanism for identifying, testing and refining effective practice. Through community outreach, volunteering, family participation and trusted community partnerships, Derbyshire will build understanding of what works for different families and communities. These activities will provide an early opportunity to model and embed a culture of continuous learning and improvement across the wider Best Start Family Hubs programme. Learning generated through outreach and engagement activity will inform wider Family Hub development and help ensure services are shaped by evidence and family insight.

Purpose

This addendum sets out how Derbyshire will embed a structured test, learn and scale approach across the Best Start Family Hubs programme, using outreach, engagement and participation activity to generate learning, inform service development and identify approaches that can be refined and expanded over time.

Why a Test, Learn and Scale Approach?

Families experience different barriers to accessing support depending on their circumstances, communities and previous experiences of services. A single outreach model is therefore unlikely to be effective everywhere. Derbyshire will test, evaluate and refine different approaches before wider implementation, ensuring future investment is informed by evidence of what works for Derbyshire families and communities.

Our Approach

1. Identify

Data, partner intelligence, family feedback and community insight will be used to identify priority communities, barriers to participation and opportunities to strengthen awareness, access and engagement. Priorities will be reviewed regularly as evidence and learning evolve.

2. Test

Initial testing activity will focus on approaches that strengthen awareness, engagement, participation and access to support, including community outreach, volunteering, family participation, communications and community-based delivery.

Activity will be delivered through trusted organisations, community partnerships and settings already used by families, enabling Derbyshire to identify the approaches that are most effective in engaging priority communities and connecting families to support.

3. Learn

A key feature of Derbyshire's approach will be the use of rapid learning cycles. Learning will be drawn from participation data, family and community insight, volunteer and partner feedback, examples of effective practice, and evidence relating to sustainability and value for money.

Quarterly reviews will consider:

- What approaches have been tested.
- What has worked well.
- What has not worked.
- What has been learned.
- What should change next.

Derbyshire recognises that identifying approaches that are ineffective or unsustainable is a positive outcome if it helps direct future investment towards activity that delivers the greatest impact.

4. Refine and Scale

Approaches that demonstrate positive impact will be refined, embedded and progressively expanded across additional localities and Family Hub areas. Decisions about scaling will be informed by engagement with priority communities, increased awareness and access to support, positive feedback, sustainability, value for money and potential for replication in other areas.

Embedding the Approach in Practice

Derbyshire will initially apply this approach through VCFSE outreach pilots and associated engagement and participation activity. These early implementation activities will provide an opportunity to test and refine different methods of engaging families, understand barriers and enablers to participation, and identify the approaches that are most effective in reaching priority communities and strengthening access to support. Learning generated through this work will be used to inform wider Best Start Family Hub development and future rollout, helping to embed a culture of continuous learning, improvement and evidence-informed practice across the programme.

Governance and Oversight

Progress, learning and recommendations for scaling will be reported through Best Start Family Hubs governance arrangements and used to inform future service development, investment decisions and programme priorities.

Intended Outcome

Through this approach, Derbyshire will develop an evidence-informed and scalable model of outreach, engagement and participation that strengthens engagement with underserved communities, improves access to support and contributes to reducing inequalities in outcomes for children and families.