

Shared Foundation Partnerships Strategy



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Shared Foundation Partnerships Strategy

Introduction

This strategy provides a framework, focus and direction for Shared Foundation Partnerships (SFPs) over three years. Key responsibility for the Shared Foundation Partnerships is part of the remit of the Childcare Strategy Service and is underpinned by the following;

The Council Plan 2015 – 2019

A prosperous city for all

A focus on front line services

A council that listens to residents

Ofsted – Early Years Inspection Handbook 2015

“Highly effective partnership working leads to improvement in provision and outcomes for children and their families.”

Children and Education Services Priorities

- Achieving children
- Safe children
- Resilient children

Aims

The main aim of this strategy is to set out strategic priorities for a strong model of Shared Foundation Partnerships that underpins both the availability and flexibility of early years and childcare places and also quality experiences for young children.

Definition

Shared Foundation Partnerships are childcare networks across the city made up of schools, childminders, private nurseries and playgroups with a focus on ensuring there are sufficient early years and childcare places available to meet demand, flexibility of places from 7am to 7pm and that the places are of the highest quality.

Background

The Shared Foundation Partnership model was created in 2001 as a result of legislative changes to offer early education places for four year olds. This drove the need for schools to work with partners in the private, voluntary and independent sectors to offer early education places. City of York Council was proactive in its commitment to use the private, voluntary and independent sectors not just because of a lack of capital and revenue funding for nurseries in the maintained sector, but because it acknowledged and recognized the knowledge, expertise and skills these different sectors offered to young children. The model has historical significance for the Local Authority as it was at the cutting edge nationally of developing 'wraparound care' and continues to be at the forefront nationally for developing a similar arrangement for the DfE called 'Childcare Hubs'.

Childcare Hubs

The government's strategic partner for Early Years, a national charity called 4Children, has chosen York to be part of a national initiative to test new ways of 'childcare hub' working based on three themes - availability, flexibility and quality of early years and childcare places. Their decision to include York was based on our experience of developing partnership working in the early years and they agreed for three Shared Foundation Partnerships from York to be part of a total of nine 'childcare hubs' across the country.

In April 2015 4Children announced the programme will continue for a further year with more 'childcare hubs' added and a new focus on creating greater synergy between Teaching Schools and 'childcare hubs'. In addition York will be able to access bespoke packages of support on SEND, working with parents and Children Centres (Hard to Reach Families). Bespoke support from 4Children and facilitation from the local authority (LA) have already led to many early achievements for the York childcare hubs and examples are set out at Annex 1.

Please note that all documentation relating to Shared Foundation Partnerships can be found at www.yor-ok.org.uk/shared-foundation-partnership.htm.

Research

Since 2001 the Shared Foundation Partnerships have been the focus of five independent/local research evaluations – looking at stages of partnership development and exploring the good features and proficiency of individual partnerships.

- Evaluation of Shared Foundation Partnerships in York – York LEA and Northumbria University 2003
- National Evaluation of the Wraparound Care Pilot Project – University of Oxford 2004
- Ensuring Continuous and Seamless Provision of Good Quality Services for Young Children – York LEA and Professor Angela Anning 2010
- Evaluation of Community Childcare and Early Learning Hubs - Office for Public Management (OPM) May 2015
- Understanding and Advancing Systems Leadership in the Early Years – University of London. The model of Shared Foundation Partnerships was taken as an example in this research commissioned by the National College for Teaching and Leadership.

This model has won three separate national awards and hence is an award winning arrangement.

Key Principles

For Shared Foundation Partnerships to perform well there needs to be a sense of equal participation, with no one sector dominating and with all interests reflected in local agendas and action planning. Building respectful relationships and trust between partners takes time but once established means professional challenge can take place more easily thus allowing partnerships to grow and work more closely to further improve outcomes for young children.

To help bring partners together and develop partnership working around a common focus and shared agenda some basic principles were developed:

- Seamless transition – supports continuity for children attending more than one provider across a day /week and smooth transitions for children moving on to another setting /school.
- Quality provision – focus on all settings in the partnership identifying and sharing good practice to support ongoing review and reflection and hence delivery of high quality provision.
- Sharing of information – sharing best practice. Many partnerships now share resources and arrange/attend joint training.
- Support vulnerability – and supporting children with SEND / additional needs.

The Model in Practice

- There are currently 31 Shared Foundation Partnerships in York each with their own unique identity and local brand. They meet at least termly and are

asked to develop action plans which are submitted to the Local Authority (LA) on an annual basis. The action plans are a useful step in collaboration and setting out next steps collectively. They are also asked to nominate a partnership SENCO and QTS whose main roles are to coordinate and lead on implementation of best practice for SEND and Inclusion and improved Learning and Development.

- As part of their ongoing development, partnerships are encouraged to consider extending their membership to include childminders, and out of school clubs and further develop links with their local Children's Centres, and where possible other partner agencies such as Health Visitors. Many partnerships are further developing an integrated approach by establishing their own logos and branding, pooling funding and resources for training and are encouraged to look at sufficiency (how supply matches need) at a local level rather than on an individual basis.
- The LA delivers bi-annual training package, providing an opportunity to update on pertinent key issues and policy changes and to focus on specific topics to support ongoing partnership development such as data sharing and analysis, moderation and transition. A central database held by the LA records member details of each partnership, lead contact details and nominated partnership SENCO and QTS. Partnerships are requested to update these details on an annual basis.

Benefits of Shared Foundation Partnerships

Members of the partnerships have identified a wide range of benefits arising from partnership working including:

- sharing good practice, developing relationships, peer to peer support and professional development, improved communication and the sharing of information, joint moderation, improved support for children with SEND, improved transitions and flexible wraparound care to meet the need of local families,

All of which support delivery of high quality provision and improved outcomes for children and their families.

A 'How To' toolkit developed by 4Children for setting up childcare hubs lists similar benefits and these are set out at annex 2.

This type of model is also hugely beneficial to the local authority given the impact it can make on improving outcomes, sufficiency and flexibility of places all driven at a community level. It also brings positive recognition to the City of York for a well researched/award winning model that works and shows system leadership at its best.

Ofsted – Based on the Early Years Inspection Handbook 2015

Based on the Inspection handbook it is essential that all members of Shared Foundation Partnerships continue to work together to improve outcomes for children in their local community. More detail is set out at Annex 3.

Ofsted Annual Early Years Report 2015

Key statements from this year's Annual Report advocate further reasons to celebrate and promote York's Shared Foundation Partnership model. These are set out at Annex 4.

Role of the Local Authority

The Shared Foundation Partnerships continue to evolve and part of the LA role is to shape the model to be strong and fit for purpose to meet future changes nationally and locally eg 30 hours of early education and childcare for three and four year olds . However, it is fundamentally vital that in developing the strategy and model that the needs and expectations of the Shared Foundation Partnerships are reflected accurately, particularly given their positive support and commitment to date to this way of working. The LA role also includes;

- Maintaining a high strategic profile for SFP's locally and nationally
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the model to achieve the key themes and respond to changes locally and nationally
- Targeting support towards the 'childcare hubs' to trial new ways of learning and share this across the other SFP's
- Targeting support to increase proficiency
- Maintaining a central database of members, identified leads, SENCO/QTS
- Annual letter to SFP's setting out expectations for the following year, areas of focus for development and submission of an action plan
- Delivery of twice yearly training and networking event
- Facilitate a Shared Foundation Partnerships Group to oversee implementation of the Action Plan
- Supporting optimum delivery of key priorities and policy developments through integrated partnership working e.g. delivery of free early education and childcare places for 2 year olds, the introduction of Early Years Pupil Premium.

Key Challenges

- Different levels of maturity depending on a number of factors such as how new the SFP is, changes in members, merging with another SFP
- Continuity can be dependent on a key individual and hence when staff change the momentum can be affected.
- Time to attend meetings can be an issue alongside suitability of times and venues which are mutually convenient for all within the SFP.
- Challenges around the partnership SENCO post – time required to provide support re: SEND, KS2 post being SENCO representative for the SFP
- Membership – Health visitor and childminder involvement and further developing links with Children centres and other NHS teams and services.
- Funding – need to consider how limited funding pot can be best used to support ongoing development of partnerships including the partnership SENCO role.
- Maintaining mutual respect between schools and settings as membership within partnerships changes due to staffing changes and ensuring we have clear, effective communication channels.

The strategic priorities within this document address some of the key challenges. However, some of the challenges are operational and to be addressed at a local SFP level.

Shared Foundation Partnerships Strategy

Strategic Priorities

	Strategic Priority	Action	Deadline for Completion	Lead Responsibility	Success Criteria
1	Strengthen Steering Arrangements	Broaden membership of the existing hub panel into a Shared Foundation Partnership Group.	June 2015	Childcare Strategy (BM)	Diverse representation and continued engagement at each meeting.
		Develop remit.	June 2015	Childcare Strategy (BM)	Agreed remit.
2	Continue to Raise the Profile Locally, Regionally and Nationally	Regular briefings to senior leads etc and as part of Headteacher Induction Programme. Also ensuring new childcare providers are encouraged to join their local SFP.	Ongoing	Childcare Strategy(BM)/ Early Learning and Welfare(JSR) /Shared Foundation Partnerships	Senior sponsorship from senior leads, headteachers, councillors.
		Include within strategic documents.	Ongoing	Childcare Strategy (BM)	Potential and value of the model recognised within other strategic documents.
		Develop an online clip to showcase the model.	April 2015	Childcare Strategy (BM)	Celebration and promotion of the model.
		Annual Celebration Events to also promote individual brands and support transition etc	Summer Term	Shared Foundation Partnerships	Positive feedback from providers and parents about events.
		Sharing learning with other hubs involved in national programme with 4 Children.	Bi – Annual Training	Childcare Strategy (BM/NS) /Hubs	Positive evaluations from training sessions.

	Strategic Priority	Action	Deadline for Completion	Lead Responsibility	Success Criteria
		Develop a Charter with Executive Member endorsement to encourage sign up by individual members to their local SFP. To include principles, ethos etc.	April 16	Childcare Strategy(BM/NS) /Hubs	Childcare providers and schools committed to signing a charter.
3	Increase Proficiency of Individual Shared Foundation Partnerships	Develop Criteria for Red, Amber, Green Rating	October 2015	Childcare Strategy (BM/NS)	Effective targeting of LA support to improve proficiency.
		Baseline all SFP's criteria	January 2016	Childcare Strategy (BM), Early Learning and Welfare (JSR)	Effective baseline to support targeted support and challenge.
		Target support and challenge based on agreed rating	January 2016 ongoing	Early Learning and Welfare (JSR)	Proficient partnerships with more rated 'Green'.
		Capture and Share learning from 'hubs' and good practice from other Shared Foundation Partnerships	Bi-annual training	Childcare Strategy (NS) / Early Learning and Welfare(JSR) /Hubs	Good practice identified and validated. Shared and embedded with other SFP's
		Monitor annual action plans based on three themes of availability, flexibility and quality and other key principles.	March 2016	Childcare Strategy (BM/NS) / Early Learning and Welfare (JSR)	Impact is evidenced.
4	Trial new ways of working with the three 'hubs'	3 key areas 1. Target support and challenge based on key principles and themes of availability, flexibility and quality (see below). Also key priorities	March 2016	Childcare Strategy (BM/NS) / Early Learning and Welfare / Hubs (JSR)	Capacity is targeted with impact evidenced.

	Strategic Priority	Action	Deadline for Completion	Lead Responsibility	Success Criteria
		<p>identified by SFP's eg Moderation.</p> <p>2. Greater synergy between Teaching Schools and SFP's.</p> <p>3. Access bespoke packages of support with 4Children to support the three themes.</p>	<p>March 2016</p> <p>March 2016</p>	<p>4Children, Childcare Strategy(BM) and Teaching Schools</p> <p>Childcare Strategy (BM) / Childcare Hubs</p>	<p>Greater clarity about synergy between Teaching Schools and SFP's with potential leading to further strengthening of the model.</p> <p>Relevant packages accessed with positive feedback with impact on three themes.</p>
5	Key Theme: Improving Quality	<p>Assess outcome data for schools and providers within individual Shared Foundation Partnerships</p> <p>Develop an action plan with childcare hubs to improve quality and share good practice with other SFP's.</p>	<p>April 2016</p> <p>April 2016</p>	<p>Early Learning and Welfare (JSR)</p> <p>(JSR)</p>	<p>Improvement in quality with all setting judged 'good' or 'outstanding'.</p> <p>As above</p>
6	Key Theme: Availability of Places (30 hours)	Develop template for Shared Foundation Partnerships to assess parental demand for 30 hours/ childcare in their local area and upload data to Tribal to feed into sufficiency assessment and surveys.	September 2015	Childcare Strategy (BM/NS)	Effective template that is fit for purpose and used by SFP's
7	Key Theme: Flexibility of Places	Identify and develop solutions to improving information to families eg Social Media, Widget device (+ any key messages re recent government elections)	Ongoing	Families Information Service (NMc)	High level of 'hits' from parents and positive feedback from parents on

	Strategic Priority	Action	Deadline for Completion	Lead Responsibility	Success Criteria
					how useful it has been.
8	Succession Planning for individual SFP leads	<p>Develop advice such as mapping expertise, knowledge and skills of members and sharing of responsibilities.</p> <p>Identify nominated 'Chair' for individual SFP's to give clear and effective local leadership and develop links to School /Children's centre clusters. The role of 'chair' could be fulfilled by <u>any</u> member of the SFP to drive the three key themes..</p> <p>Identify other specified roles within an SFP to support the development of specialist areas whilst encouraging peer to peer support.</p>	<p>April 2016</p> <p>April 2016</p> <p>September 2016</p>	<p>Early Learning and Welfare(JSR) / Childcare Strategy (JSR)</p> <p>As above</p> <p>As Above</p>	<p>Positive Feedback from SFP's.</p> <p>Effective local leadership, every SFP with a 'Chair' leading to more systems leadership and proficiency.</p> <p>Appropriate specified roles clear and impacting on specialist areas.</p>
9	Develop strategic Links to School Cluster Model	Explore potential benefits of mapping against School /Children's Centre Clusters and identify ways to develop these links effectively.	April 2016	Childcare Strategy(BM/NS), Children's Centres (PR) and Early Learning and Welfare (JSR)	Effective and appropriate links made that facilitate and impact positively on key themes.
10	Reviewing Membership	Encourage Health Visitor and other NHS agencies involvement with Shared Foundation Partnerships to support Health Needs of the local community and the Integrated Review at 2- 2½.	September 2016	Childcare Strategy (BM/NS), Children's Centres (PR) , Health, Shared Foundation Partnerships	SFP's able to contribute to supporting health needs of the local community and sharing effectively

	Strategic Priority	Action	Deadline for Completion	Lead Responsibility	Success Criteria
					on the Integrated Review.
		Strengthen links with local Children's Centres to support vulnerability of children and families.	April 2016	Childcare Strategy(BM/NS), Shared Foundation Partnerships, Children's Centres (PR)	Vulnerable children identified as early as possible and appropriate support/signposting in place
		Identify vulnerability champions from Children's Centres to support SFP's.	April 2016	Children's Centres(PR)/Childcare Strategy (BM)	As above.
		Include after school provision and other appropriate links that support key themes.	January 2016	Childcare Strategy (BM/KL)	After Schools benefit from relevant learning and contribute to solutions for all three themes inc 30 hours.
11	Develop Potential for Commissioning Arrangements	Capture and share good practice on pooling of budgets eg EYPP. Explore opportunities with Education Endowment Foundation Identification of local community needs to be addressed by commissioning of joint training as identified in the Early Years Offer.	April 2016 September 2016	Childcare Strategy (NS) /Early Learning and Welfare (JSR) Childcare Strategy (BM)/Children's centres (PR)/ Shared Foundation Partnerships	Effective pooling of budgets such as EYPP to meet the needs of individual and groups of children in the local area. As above and SFP's clear about community needs from the EY offer.

	Strategic Priority	Action	Deadline for Completion	Lead Responsibility	Success Criteria
12	SEND	Development of online tool for working with parents	May 2015	Early Learning and Welfare(RS) /SEND	Positive feedback from SFP's about using the toolkit.
		Development of Shared Foundation Partnership Local Offer Statements.	June 2015	Childcare Strategy (DA) /SEND/FIS/Childcare Hubs Childcare Strategy(BM) /SEND/Early Learning and Welfare(JSR)	Positive feedback from SFPs about the Local Offer Statement.
		Review of effectiveness of SENCO support to SFP's and clarify roles and remit for Partnership SENCO.	April 2016	Childcare Strategy (DA) /SEND/FIS/Childcare Hubs Childcare Strategy(BM) /SEND/Early Learning and Welfare(JSR)	Clear roles and remit of Partnership SENCOs.

Achievements of York Childcare Hubs via the 4 Children/DFE National Programme (From April 2013 to date)

- Ongoing commitment to work with the local authority and share good practice with other Shared Foundation Partnerships and LA's.
- Reviewed and strengthened existing membership. One childcare hub re-established their inactive network and broadened membership to include specialist partners.
- Development of unique childcare hub 'brands' and promotional literature.
- Development of a unique widget on the school website for parents to access live vacancy information about all childcare providers who are part of the childcare hub. Live links to Family Information Service.
- Assessed demand for two year old places and created places where there is unmet need.
- Development of a national toolkit 'Working with Parents of Children with SEND'.
- Developing a unique 'Partnership Inclusion Statement'.
- Contributing to a film clip to promote the Shared Foundation Partnership model.
- Held community celebration events/summer transition early years fun days.
- Ages and stages transition document for Rising 5's.
- Shared good practice and learning especially around transition and moderation.
- Developing links with partners agencies such as Children's Centres and Health Visitors.
- Tools to improve quality guidance document.
- Childminder networks invited to use school as venue for their meetings.



Benefits of becoming a Community Childcare and Early Learning Hub

Community Hubs are a solution to the limited availability of high quality and flexibility of childcare and early education that many parents face.

The Community Hubs bring together different kinds of childcare for children 0 – 11 in one local area to offer a blended range of options for parents that are flexible, co-ordinated and high quality in a 'community childcare and early learning hub'. They offer a one stop shop of information for parents to find out about and access childcare that meets their requirements.

Benefits to parents

- Reassures parents about quality of providers
- Provide more flexible and blended childcare to meet needs of parents
- Information available in one place about local childcare available and more accessible
- More quality two year old places available

Benefits to children

- Improved quality of provision leading to improved outcomes
- More effective transition between settings
- Increased amount and quality of 2 year old provision
- Co-ordination between different settings

Benefits to sector

- Inclusive model across whole sector
- Improved training and CPD
- Improved business opportunities – marketing, blended childcare
- Increased awareness in the market of different types of childcare available
- A joint understanding of quality

Benefits to workforce

- Increased pedagogical understanding
- Opportunities to network with different types of providers
- Increased training and CPD opportunities
- Better links with other providers e.g. transition, blended childcare

Ofsted – Based on the Early Years Inspection Handbook 2015

‘Highly effective partnership working leads to improvement in provision and outcomes for children and their families.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum provides a broad range of interesting and demanding experiences that help children to make progress towards reaching the early learning goals. As a result, children are well prepared to move on, including, where appropriate, to school.

Monitoring ensures that individual children or groups of children who have identified needs are targeted and appropriate interventions are secured so that children receive the support they need, including through effective partnerships with external agencies and other providers.’

Ofsted Annual Early Years Report 2015

'School does not have a good enough relationship with its feeder nurseries, pre-schools or childminders to make sure each child has a smooth transition into school'

'More than ever, there is no type of early education that is better for all children. Each family has to weigh advantages and disadvantages and compare the quality of the providers, which are likely to be small in number, that happen to meet the family's constraints'

'Early years is the sole focus of nurseries and pre-schools, which means that excellence in early years is the sole priority for leaders and managers, in contrast to primary schools, which will also have older children's learning to consider'

'What works in making a difference to the progress made by more disadvantaged children – Collaboration between providers to share expertise – where schools and settings shared a site, were directly managed by one over-arching leader or had entered into a professional network with others in the locality, expertise was shared effectively to allow all early years professionals to learn from the best. Many had become early years hubs for their area, championing the importance of early education and raising the quality of learning and development'

'Schools must do more to support transition – if schools are acting in the best interests of children, they will also have strong partnerships with all the early education providers that the children in their Reception classes are most likely to attend. The research underpinning the Tickell review identifies the transition from early education to school as a particular area where some children, particularly more vulnerable children, can encounter difficulties'

'Improved readiness for school will require a combination of system leadership, more focused challenge from Ofsted and greater leadership from primary schools'