

Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Focus: Families First Transformation Programme

Families First Partnership Programme National

Context

In response to the Care Review priorities and recommendations, a new national programme has been set up in the Department for Education to improve local services for children and families with transformation activity starting in April 2025.

A national DfE-led programme	Families First Partnership Programme		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding: £523.5m ringfenced for preventative services 	Children and Families Grant £253.5m (previously supporting families)	Children's Social Care Prevention Grant £270m of new funding	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy: Implementing three key reform strands 	Family Help	Multi-agency child protection	Family Group Decision Making
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporates: two previous DFE programmes 	System enablers (i.e. practice, MASA, information sharing, data and digital)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners: Local and national partners 	Supporting Families Programme	Families First Pathfinder Programme	
	Local partners including LAs, police forces, health commissioners and providers, education & VCS.	National partners including DHSC, HO, Ofsted, NHSE, NPCC and other national bodies	

The CSC Prevention Grant has been provided to all LAs:
BCP Council received **£1,173,000** for 2025/2026

To be used in conjunction with the Children and Families Grant (formerly Supporting Families Grant) of **£1,357,900** to enable continuation of existing prevention services

The Prevention Grant is ringfenced to be used for: transformation, including evidence-based service design ahead of new or changed services being launched; and service delivery of both existing and new preventative services across Early Help, Family Help, Family Networks and Child Protection

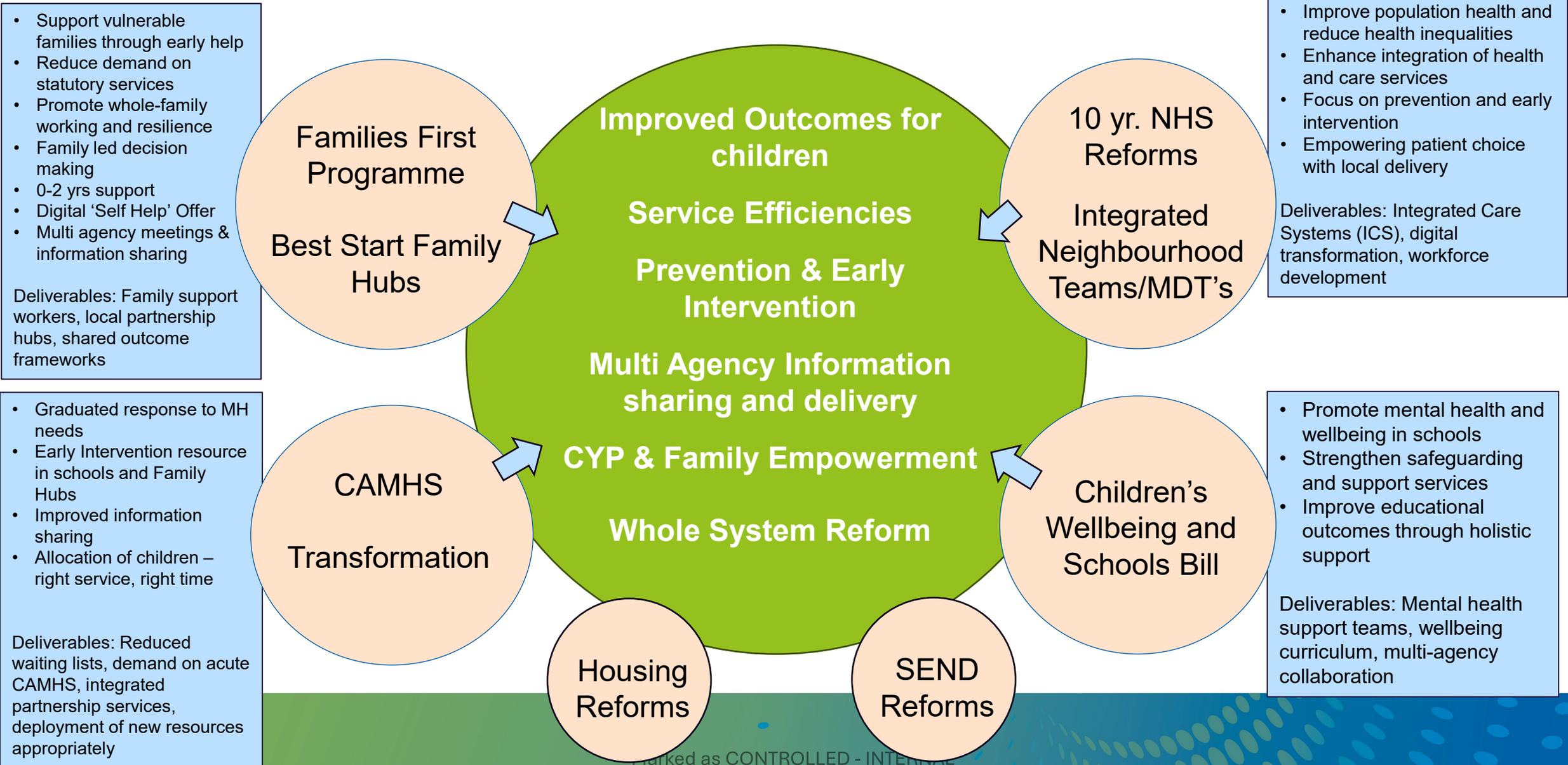
The funding can also be used to support offers of **Family Group Decision Making (FGDM)** to all families at pre-proceedings from March 2026

Service delivery should be in line with the **Children's social care: National Framework** and ensure delivery of prevention services, as described in **Keeping Children Safe, Helping Families Thrive**

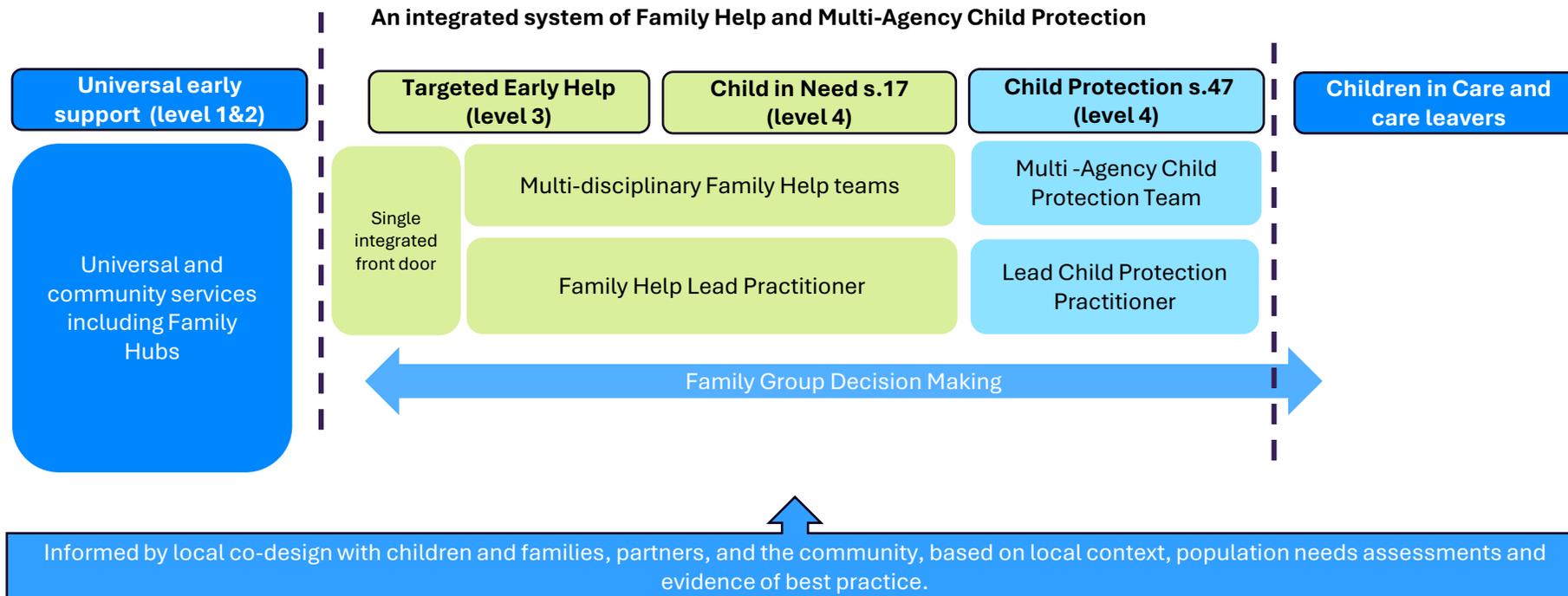
Grant recipients are expected to spend a proportion of the funding (c. 30% of the CSC Prevention Grant) on transformation activity to establish the right conditions for effective and sustainable practice and service change. The remainder will be spent on service delivery, alongside the Children and Families Grant.

The grant recipient is also expected to review its needs assessment(s) of the local area ahead of redesigning services to address these priorities.

Integrating the Reforms – creating a single vision



Local redesign of an end-to-end system of support and protection, emphasising prevention and meeting the local needs of the population through an effective, integrated, joined up approach



Local Implementation Focus

Early Help

- Reviewed implementation of **Family Hubs and Early Help Strategy**
- Relaunch of Strategy in March 2026 – **Partnership Single Assessment & Care Planning Pathway**
- Work with **Schools and Health** Providers Commencing
- Test, link and develop the **Self Help & Online Resources**

Front Door Access

- **New vision** for enhanced working shared with Partners
- Shift from Process, criteria and allocation to **Conversational model**
- Greater understanding needs, more timely support, greater focus on timely earlier intervention

Family Help

- Pilot Team will be launched from March 2026
- Introduction of **Alternatively Qualified 'Family Help Workers'** working alongside Qualified Social Workers
- Workforce development
- Review and development of policy, procedures and quality assurance

MACPT's

- Learning from **Dorset Council Pathfinder**
- Maintain what works well
- Early thinking is an enhancement of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
- Understanding and designing role and functions of Lead Child Protection Practitioners and Chair Protection Chairs

Family Group Decision Making / Practice Framework / Workforce

- Mapping staff skills to offer / facilitate **Family Group Conferencing / FGDM**
- Reviewing current practice and scoping adjustments to be applied
- Options appraisal of cost effective models

Project Implementation

