

Families First Partnership Programme: Glossary

As part of the government's new reforms across the children's social care system, we understand there is a lot of information to understand when it comes to the Families First Partnership Programme (FFPP).

This includes new terminology or phrases that will be used as services work closer together to implement these changes and support more children and young people to grow up safely, with the right love and support around them.

To help you get to grips with these reforms in more detail, please see below a glossary of useful terms and definitions to guide you through these changes.

We've also included other useful words that are regularly used by services to safeguard children and young people.

General terminology

Term	Definition
Families First Partnership Programme (FFPP)	<p>The Families First Partnership Programme is a set of new national reforms introduced by the UK government.</p> <p>The aim of this is to transform the children's social care system to help more families stay together and thrive without the need for children to come into care.</p>
Universal early support	<p>Universal early support provides support when need is identified at any point in a child or young person's life.</p> <p>It is not service specific to one organisation.</p>
Early family help	<p>This is the collaborative approach that takes place across all agencies and partners to work with children, young people and families to prevent the need for statutory intervention and meet need at the earliest opportunity.</p>
Family help	<p>Family help aims to improve children's outcomes.</p> <p>This is done by understanding and responding to the needs and circumstances of the family as early as possible.</p> <p>This enables children to thrive and families to remain together.</p> <p>Family help will take place at the heart of communities and bring local services together under a combined, multi-disciplinary practice approach and service offer.</p> <p>It will be underpinned by a set of key principles that will inform the delivery of services.</p>

	<p>Family help can start at any level from family hubs to schools and nurseries.</p> <p>As part of the new integrated system, family help will include targeted early help, child in need and child protection.</p>
Targeted early help	Children and families with multiple and/or complex needs that require a plan in place. A lead practitioner must also be appointed.
Child in need (Section 17)	<p>This is a general duty for local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need or are disabled.</p> <p>It must also promote the upbringing of such children by their families by providing a range and level of services appropriate to those children's needs.</p>
Child protection (Section 47)	The duty of local authorities to investigate where they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found, in their area, is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.
Children in care	Children and young people who are cared for by the local authority following evidence that a child is at significant risk or harm.
Multi-agency child protection Teams (MACPTs)	<p>Multi-agency child protection (MACPTs) teams consist of a set of professionals from different agencies. This may include social work, police, health, and education.</p> <p>They work together to protect children from significant harm.</p> <p>They will share information, identify risks, and provide consistent support and protection for children and families by working as one team.</p>
Family group decision making (FGDM)	Family group decision making (FGDM) is a strength-based, voluntary process where a child's extended family and support network come together to create a plan for the child's care and safety
Lead child protection practitioner (LCPS)	<p>A position responsible for and undertaking direct child protection practice together with families where this is needed.</p> <p>Where there are concerns about significant harm, the LCP will take statutory child protection decisions with input from the wider (MACPT).</p>

Family help lead practitioners (FHLPs)	<p>A position that will maintain the relationship with the family and continue to coordinate the support and services for them.</p> <p>The FHLP will remain involved in direct practice with the family throughout.</p> <p>The FHLP will remain the main point of contact for the family for as long as they require support.</p> <p>The FHLP will be alert to all forms of significant harm and work with multiagency child protection teams (MACPTs) and Lead Child Protection Practitioners</p>
Lead professional	No matter what your role may be in the system, whether it be a teacher, nursery manager or health visitor etc., we all have a role to play in early help and it is our responsibility as lead professionals to build a trusting relationship and coordinate support for a family when they come to us asking for support.
Other useful terms	
Multi-disciplinary practice approach	Professionals from different services working together to find a comprehensive solution.
Service offer	A range of statutory and non-statutory support provided by a local authority and its partners to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and their families.
Integrated system	In this context, this means various agencies working together to seamlessly plan and deliver comprehensive, child-centred support.
Strength-based	A person-centered way of working that focuses on an individual's abilities, talents, and assets rather than solely their problems or deficits, to empower them to lead fulfilling lives, maintain independence, and achieve their goals
Children and young people	<p>The term 'children and young people' refers to individuals up to the age of 25.</p> <p>In law the term 'children' refer to anyone up to the age of 18.</p> <p>'Young people' is defined as young adults who continue to receive support from children's social care as care leavers or through education, health and care plans, up to the age of 25.</p>
Multi-agency working	A range of practitioners and professionals from different backgrounds working together, to enable the best outcomes for children, young people and families;

Multi-disciplinary working	<p>This is a term used for working across organisations to meet children, young people and families' needs. This includes effective information sharing, joint decision-making and co-ordinated interventions, to facilitate effective help, support and protection.</p> <p>This includes child protection where individuals from different agencies come together into a single team to deliver statutory child protection functions whilst remaining connected to their parent agency.</p>
<p>Family group decision making terminology</p> <p>Here are a list of terms and definitions which may be used during the family group decision making process as part of the new FFPP reforms.</p>	
Family group decision making (FGDM)	<p>A strength-based, voluntary process based on informed consent where a child's extended family and their support network are supported to arrange a meeting to understand the concerns laid out by the local authority relating to the care of the children and their safety.</p> <p>The family network is able to offer areas of support to contribute to reducing risk and they design and create their own plan to address these issues with limited to no professional oversight.</p> <p>A family receiving an FGDM are allocated to the FGDM team whose members are listed below and the FGDM co-ordinator takes a key role in explaining this to all attendees and chairing the FGDM when it happens.</p>
Family group decision making manager	<p>The manager of the service will consult on potential cases for referral. They will also accept formal referrals to the team, allocate cases to the family group decision making co-ordinators.</p> <p>Their role also involves supervising and supporting the co-ordinators and offering guidance and assistance to wider children's services staff planning towards family networking meetings.</p>
Family group decision making co-ordinator	<p>The co-ordinator is given information from the FGDM manager about the family's circumstances and is asked to arrange an in-house meeting with the lead professional to simply put the referral into succinct bullet points which are taken out to the family and explored with them.</p> <p>Consent is sought from the parent/caregivers and from young people aged 16+.</p>

	<p>The coordinator will ensure direct work is undertaken with the children/young people and a suitable date, time and venue for the conference is made.</p> <p>The role of the co-ordinator is to facilitate the meeting to be balanced, and child/family focussed.</p>
Family	<p>In the context of FGDM, family means not only blood relatives, but adults who you trust and are close to you in any capacity e.g. a friend, neighbour, faith community link or work colleague.</p> <p>The people with parental responsibility who informally consent to the FGDM decide who will attend their meeting and will consent to the information being shared with them before and at the FGDM.</p>
A family networking meeting	<p>A strength-based, voluntary process based on informed consent where a child's extended family and their support network are supported to arrange a meeting to understand the concerns laid out by the local authority relating to the care of the children and their safety.</p> <p>The lead professional will organise and chair this meeting, but the focus remains the same as FGDM, that the family are involved, consent and take a key role in designing the family plan they will make themselves.</p>
Terms used during the FGDM process	
Consultation	<p>This is an in-depth discussion between a lead professional and the manager of FGDM on whether a particular family may benefit from an FGDM or family networking meeting.</p> <p>A decision is made based on the complex family circumstances needing either an FGDM, a family networking meeting or another suitable service of support.</p>
Referral	<p>This is a form which is completed by the lead professional requesting involvement from the FGDM service.</p> <p>It lists important details about the family's circumstances, concerns of the local authority, what the referrer expects to be addressed within the FGDM/family networking meeting and the strengths of the family.</p>
In-house meeting	<p>This is the first part of the FGDM process following allocation to a FGDM co-ordinator.</p> <p>The co-ordinator will meet with the referrer to understand the family referral and the referrer lists the main concerns from the local authority which they would like the family to be</p>

	made aware of and address when they meet for the FGDM and devise their family plan.
Informed consent	FGDM consider informed consent to be a fully understood decision from the parent/caregiver or young person aged 16+ in which they agree and wish to participate in an FGDM/family networking meeting.
Voluntary agreement	FGDM consider voluntary agreement to mean that parent/caregivers and young people aged 16+ can 'opt in' and 'opt out' of the FGDM process at any point, this also relates to informed consent.
Family finding	<p>The FGDM co-ordinator supports the parent/caregivers to consider a trusted list of extended family/others from their family network who they would like to be involved with the FGDM process.</p> <p>The co-ordinator will then offer a visit to each of these attendees to help prepare them for the conference explaining the process, outlining their concerns and explaining the responsibilities of being part of the FGDM.</p>
Neutral venue	<p>The FGDM co-ordinator will network within the local community to agree with the parent/caregiver where the FGDM will be held.</p> <p>We consider the choice of venue to be very important and must be neutral and relaxed in order to support the family to feel comfortable to contribute effectively.</p> <p>In respect of family networking meetings, the family can choose a venue which may include their own home.</p>
Terms used during an FGDM meeting	
Ground rules	<p>The family will set these and agree what is important for all to follow whilst in an FGDM meeting.</p> <p>For example, one person talking at once and taking breaks when necessary.</p>
Private family time	<p>This is an essential part of any FGDM.</p> <p>This is time for the family network to be alone to devise their plan with as limited professional input as possible.</p> <p>The family network decide how long they need to spend privately and can call for assistance if they are struggling or if a concern occurs.</p>
Part 1 – Information sharing	This is the first part of an FGDM which is an opportunity for the lead professional to go into more depth and explain the local authority's concerns in relation to the care of the children/young people.

	<p>The support network also has the opportunity to ask any questions they may have relating to these concerns or how they will address them in their plan.</p> <p>The children/young people (if in attendance) will be supported to share their wishes and feelings during part 1, or, if they prefer, the FGDM coordinator can speak on their behalf.</p> <p>The lead professional's attendance is important during part 1 as they are the owner of these concerns and their availability to discuss this with the family is essential to be confirmed.</p> <p>The lead professional will then leave the meeting once part 1 is completed.</p>
Part 2 – Preparation for private family time	<p>This is the part of the FGDM where we will facilitate discussion with the family around how they may want to approach creating their plan and we will offer guidance if necessary, but the role of the FGDM coordinator is to prepare and empower the family to devise their own plan.</p>
Part 3 – Confirming the plan	<p>The family have devised their plan and it is the role of the FGDM co-ordinator to check that it covers the areas of concern raised by the local authority.</p> <p>With permission, the co-ordinator will take the plan away to type it up before sharing it with the parent/young person over 16 and then the lead professional for oversight.</p>
FGDM review	<p>The family plan made is looked at by the family in a follow up meeting to understand if things are working and if anything can be done to rectify any areas of the plan that are not working.</p> <p>We expect that the lead professional will monitor the family plan made and we advise families to take a copy of their family plan to all professional meetings.</p>