

To all local authorities in England

April 2024

To Whom It May Concern

Our ref:

Re: S31 Grant Determination Letter for Early Years, Childcare and Families - Families First for Children Pathfinder Grant GD 31/7152

This Determination is made between:

- (1) **The Secretary of State for Education** and
- (2) **The local authorities listed at Annex A**

Purpose of the Grant

The purpose of this grant is to provide support to local authorities (LA) in England towards expenditure lawfully incurred or to be incurred by them.

This grant is intended to support the projects these local authorities have been requested to undertake, relating to the Families First for Children Pathfinder (FFC) programme, as described in the government's strategy and consultation, Stable Homes, Built on Love. Through the FFC Pathfinder programme, we will work with local areas in two waves to co-design and deliver end-to-end service reform, implementing new Family Help services, child protection arrangements and support for kinship care. This will deliver our future vision for how we want to work with children and families in a select number of areas.

We propose to offer S31 grants to 7 local authorities to fund their work on Wave 2 of the Families First for Children (FFC) Pathfinder to expand the rollout of reform across family help, child protection and family networks (from 3 to 10 pathfinder areas). We will work with these seven local areas, taking a test and learn approach. Applying learning from Wave 1 LAs, we will agree local models of delivery and test the deliverability of policy expectations set out in the FFC design specification to deliver reforms across a more diverse range of areas.

Between October and November 2023, we ran an open grant competition to select LAs for wave 2 of the pathfinder. We received 39 applications from LAs and their partners (police and health), which were assessed in six lots based on their geography and Ofsted judgement. Following a transparent commercial process, the highest scoring applicants from across the six lots were Walsall, Luton, Warrington, Wirral, Redbridge, Lewisham and Warwickshire.

The aim of the FFCP programme in Wave 2 is to:

- Take a 'test and learn' approach to answer some of the challenging questions about 'how' to operationalise, integrate and embed reforms – and how these will work - in local areas.
- Work with the key partners in local areas on the reform journey, creating sector champions.
- Develop evidence about specific new ways of working, including where there are risks and how to mitigate these.
- Inform future revisions of the statutory framework (including Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018).
- Provide evaluation evidence on implementation, delivery, and any emerging impacts, including any barriers, facilitators, and unintended consequences.
- Evidence implementation costs for the reforms.

The payments specified in this grant letter will enable Wave 2 local areas to prepare in March for FFC implementation which is due to begin in April 2024. This includes producing final delivery and costed plans for the pathfinder in their area and to begin engagement with the programme's national partners (DfE, external Delivery Partner and independent Evaluation Partner). Following the completion of the delivery plans and costed plans, DfE intends to make further grant funding available to the local authorities for the delivery of the pathfinder in 2024/25.

Local areas will receive support from an external delivery partner, Mutual Ventures, to help them implement the required changes.


DfE will work with the Evaluation Partner (Verian, Alma Economics and National Children's Bureau (NCB)), selected through the commercial process of appointing a preferred supplier to evaluate the impact of this programme.

Annex A provides details of the payments being made to local authorities involved in the programme where funding was agreed by 4 April 2024.

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State

Helen Waite
Deputy Director
Department for Education

Signed by person authorised to sign on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education:

Signature: 

Name: Helen Waite

Role: Deputy Director

Date: 14/03/24

Families First for Children Pathfinder programme GRANT DETERMINATION [2023-24]:

The Secretary of State for Education (“the Secretary of State”), in exercise of the powers conferred by section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003, makes the following determination:

Citation

1) This determination may be cited as the Families First for Children Pathfinder programme Grant Determination [2023-24].

Purpose of the grant

2) The purpose of the grant is to provide support to local authorities in England towards expenditure lawfully incurred or to be incurred by them.

Determination

3) The Secretary of State determines the authorities to which grant is to be paid and the amount of grant to be paid; these are set out in Annex A.

Treasury consent

4) Before making this determination in relation to local authorities in England, the Secretary of State obtained the consent of the Treasury.

Payment arrangements

5) The total grant to be paid to each authority is set out at Annex A. The grant will be paid in March and will be for the sum attributed to a proportion of the fixed costs to Families First for Children Pathfinder local authorities in the 2023-24 financial year.

UK Government Branding

6) The Grant Recipient shall at all times during and following the end of the Funding Period:

6.1 comply with requirements of the Branding Manual in relation to the Funded Activities; and

6.2 cease use of the Funded by UK Government logo on demand if directed to do so by the Authority.

7) **Branding Manual** means the HM Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland ‘Funded by UK Government branding manual’ first published by the Cabinet Office in November 2022 and is available at <https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/marketing/branding-guidelines/> including any subsequent updates from time to time.

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State

Helen Waite
Deputy Director
Department for Education

Annex A

Families First for Children Local Authority	April 2024	DfE Ref
Warrington	£60,000	
Wirral	£60,000	
Redbridge	£60,000	
Walsall	£60,000	
Lewisham	£60,000	
Luton	£60,000	
Warwickshire	£60,000	