

Families First Practice Guidance

Completing a Families First Assessment (FFA)

Purpose:

The purpose of this example is to support Practitioners in their work with families to:

- Understand how to record the information within the FFA and relate it the Hertfordshire Families First Outcomes Plan
- Demonstrate all relevant evidence of needs and family strength is gathered to ensure a robust support plan can be put in place.
- Better evidence the sustained outcomes you plan with the families receiving coordinated early help support.

Who is this aimed at?

This guidance has been developed to assist Key Workers undertaking a Families First Assessment with Families.

This FFA is for John (38) ,Julie(37) ,Ben (12) and Susan (10) Family

Housing Tenure Type –LA/HA Rent

Ethnicity – White British

Services (including GP/educational setting/ Health visitor and other professionals working with the family or a family member)

Manually input all services currently working with the family, health, education, community services, including your own service.

Name of service/agency	Contact name of worker	Telephone number	Which family member linked to this service	What support are they providing
East County Primary School	Miss Smithson	00199 000987	Susan	Education
East County Secondary School	Mrs Jones	00199 111222	Ben	Education
East Herts Medical Centre	Dr Stagg	00199 333331	All the family	Health
East Herts Homes	Mr Terrace	00199 454678	John and Julie	Housing

Families First Practice Guidance

What the Family Would Like to Change

Why has this assessment been started and what is the intended outcome?

The assessment has been started following a referral to children's services by school that raised concerns regards the child's attendance being below 90% and the child being at risk of offending due to anti-social behaviour. The referral was presented to the Triage Panel and further concerns were considered including Rent Arrears leading to Risk of Homelessness; Domestic Abuse incidents and Risk of Family Breakdown.

The outcome from Triage panel was for an FFA to be completed.

The intended outcome is for the family to engage in support to prevent homelessness and family breakdown. Stop any further Domestic Abuse incidents and Anti-Social Behaviour and improve school attendance to more than 90%.

How has the information been gathered, who has provided the information?

The information has been gathered by

- face to face meetings with the family in the home
- one to one meetings with the children in school to gain their views and wishes
- Information gathered by the Triage Panel
- Information provided by the school
- Information provided by the housing authority.

What are the family's views including the views of adults, children or young people in the family?

- Julie said that she has been struggling with managing Ben's behaviour since he started in secondary school in September. She said he is always unhappy and refuses to go to school most mornings. She said she was not aware that he was being anti-social and felt that he is a lively boy that is being misunderstood.
John said he has been unable to make ends meet since he lost his job 18 months ago and this is why they are in rent arrears. He does not usually get involved with school problems but stated they would not be able to afford a fine.
- Susan said that she likes school and enjoys going there. She said that Ben can be mean to her at home but no one really listens to her.
- Ben said he doesn't like going to school because he gets bullied, he said he has tried telling mum and dad but no one listens. They are the same boys that get him into trouble on the estate. He says they do bad things and blame him, he never tells on them because they call him a 'grass' and things will get worse.

Families First Practice Guidance

What are the views for other family members? (where relevant)

- *You only need to complete this section where you are including the voice of other family members that may provide care for the children but do not live in the family home. It could also include friends that may have attended a face to face meeting to offer support, or a family member that may have translated for the FFA.*

Brief Family Overview

Family History and story – (where relevant include wider family history)

Until June 2017 John was a Labourer for a small local firm of builders. The firm had to reduce staff due to a reduction in work and John was one of 5 labourers that were let go. He was never on a contract and so he did not get any compensation. He has been unemployed ever since. He feels this has contributed largely to the family's current situation.

Wider family history (where relevant)

- Any information provided regarding the wider family, that may impact on the family for example, can be added here if the family want it recorded.

How are things at the moment?

This section is needs based so if there is no need, the box stays empty, in EHM system toggle heads can be used to evidence individual family member needs.

Children in need of help- (including children who go missing, at risk of sexual exploitation and show signs of neglect)

- No needs identified so I answered No here

Mental Health/Emotional Wellbeing – (please give details including support in place)

- No needs identified so I answered No here.

Drug and/or alcohol abuse – (if yes please give details including support in place)

- No needs identified so I answered No here.

Sexual Health

- No needs identified so I answered No here.

Health and Wellbeing – (e.g. - Physical health, diet, exercise, long term health conditions - please give details including support in place)

- No needs identified so I answered No here.

Education - (2-18 years) include attendance, children missing education and exclusions

Ben would be toggled and answered as Yes the rest of the family I answered No

Families First Practice Guidance

- Ben's current attendance is 76% since starting secondary school in September. School report that he has a negative attitude towards staff and often disrupts the class when he does attend. He has caused a small amount of damage to the school; he has written on the walls of the isolation room and torn up school books. They say parents have been notified and have been asked to attend meetings; however this has not happened yet due to claims of illness or other appointments.
- Ben is at risk of exclusion if his behaviour continues to deteriorate
- Ben says that he is bullied at school by a group of boys that he also sees outside of school. He has not told school because he says things will get worse but this is why he is 'naughty' in class and why he doesn't want to go.
- John and Julie say that they are not aware that Ben is bullied. They say they have missed a meeting due to an emergency appointment at the doctors but would be happy to work with the school.

Employment (including adult out of work/on out of work benefits and young people not in education, employment or training)

John and Julie would be toggled and answered yes here

- *John says he lost his job due to cuts 18 months ago. He used to be a labourer but the company he worked lost some big contracts. He was not on a contract and so he received no compensation when he lost his job. He has been looking for work but has not been successful. He has at times failed to sign on or produce evidence of looking for work and so the benefits have not always been received correctly.*
- *Julie says she had a part time job in the primary school at lunchtimes, but she had to give this up because Ben is not at school all the time. She would like to return to work but would need to make sure Ben is at school.*

Money Matters – (including debt and rent/mortgage arrears)

John and Julie have rent arrears of £1250 and the housing authority have contacted them to ask for repayment in full or risk eviction. An eviction notice has not yet been issued, however the Housing authority have confirmed to me that there is a risk.

Housing Issues (including homelessness, risk of homelessness or overcrowding)

The housing authority has written to the family regards complaints of anti-social behaviour reported by neighbours. This includes allegations of shouting between the parents plus Ben and his friends causing a disturbance on the estate. If these issues continue the housing authority have said it could lead to a notice for eviction.

Families First Practice Guidance

Healthy Relationships – (including Domestic abuse, inter-family conflict and actual or risk of family breakdown) - please give details including support in place

There have been 2 incidents of Domestic Abuse reported to the police in the last 4 months. These have both been verbal altercations between John and Julie. Both of them state that these were arguments about money and the letters they have been receiving and no violence was involved. I asked how often they were arguing and they said at least once a week but again stated they were never violent. I reminded them of the reports from neighbours and the police and asked them how they felt about this. They said the neighbours were just nosy and wanted them out anyway. I asked them if the children were around when they argued. They stated sometimes but they again said it was never violent, they said most of the time the children were in bed anyway and could not see how their arguing could impact on them as they feel this is normal within relationships.

Community and Social behaviour – (young people and adults, including any recent history of being a victim or offending)

Ben has been reported to the local housing authority for anti-social behaviour. This has been mainly with a group of boys who do not live on the estate. It has included riding bikes through front gardens, noise and being rude to residents when they complain to them. So far this has not been reported to the police. Ben reports the boys who come round are the same boys he claims are bullying him at school.

Are there signs of Neglect	No
-----------------------------------	-----------

Caring Responsibility

Are any of the adults carers'?	No
Do any of the children/young people have a caring responsibility?	No

Parenting

Basic care - include comments on stimulation, guidance and boundaries and stability (include all parents who the children spend two days or more with each week)

Mum states that she does most of the parenting, dad agrees this and says it was always this way when he was working and he does not see why it should change. Mum is struggling with morning routine and getting Ben to school; Dad is not up in the mornings and does not help with this issue.

Families First Practice Guidance

Ben goes out with his friends and the only rule mum gives is that he stays on the estate. She says she has had neighbours knocking on her door but she ignores them because she does not want the argument and thinks they are complaining for nothing as “kids will be kids”. She has no consequences in place for Ben with his refusal to go to school or his behaviour.

Mum prepares all the meals and does all the housework including the children’s bedrooms, the children have no responsibilities in the house.

Family Dynamics (highlight positive and challenging relationships including both parents, even if in separate households, and extended family carers)

The family admit to “bickering” to sort out their issues, they say this is normal within their family including extended family. The maternal grandparents live in Spain and the children see them once every other year when they visit the family. The paternal grandparents do not live near the family and very rarely see them. They report that there hasn’t been a falling out within the family; it’s just how they are.

The Parent, Carer, Young Person, Child or Family Agreement (a consent form is part of the FFA and will need to be signed once the information is recorded on the EHM system and the print out version is shared with the family.)

Family Plan

This is based on the conclusions of the assessment. The plan is **SMART**(Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timely) and clearly relevant to an identified need and the requires of Hertfordshire Families First Outcomes Plan.

Families First Theme	What do you want to achieve?	Action	Who’s	By When	Support method	Family member
Where a need is identified above you should identify that section in this column.	Evidence the intended or desired outcome of the action to address the need.	What needs to happen to achieve the outcome?	Who will be supporting with the action	1 st TAF date or sooner if needed	Evidence any support that will be needed to meet the action (e.g. introduce parent to family centre)	Which family member(s) will benefit from the identified action.
Education	Ben’s attendance to increase to over 90% and maintained for at least 6 months.	Parents and Ben to work with Mrs Jones – school teacher to discuss the issues and work out a plan to support Ben into school.	Mrs Jones John Julie	15-Feb-2019	Keyworker will facilitate a meeting and support the parents with the plan in the home. To be reviewed at each half term	Ben
Employment	John and Julie to engage with support to	Parents to engage with DWP programmes	Keyworker, DWP	15-Feb-2019	Keyworker to help organise a calendar for the parents to	John, Julie

Families First Practice Guidance

	progress back into work and sustain this.				ensure they do not forget appointments	
Money	The rent arrears to be managed appropriately for at least 6 months	Parents to work with the housing authority to agree a payment plan	Housing Officer	15-Feb-2019	Keyworker to refer to housing officer.	All family
Housing Issues	Family to actively reduce their risk of homelessness for at least 6 months	Engage with housing authority and support to reduce anti-social behaviour complaints	Housing Officer	15-Feb-2019	Keyworker will refer parents to mediation and support Ben with behaviour	All family
Healthy Relationships	John and Julie to resolve issues without arguments and maintain this for at least 6 months.	Attend mediation programme	Keyworker	15-Feb-2019	Keyworker will refer to mediation sessions	John and Julie
Community & Social Behaviour	Ben not to engage in anti-social behaviour for at least 6 months.	Ben to attend positive activities Julie and John to learn parenting strategies.	Keyworker	15-Feb-2019	Keyworker to work with Ben and find positive activities. Parents to attend parenting programme.	Ben, John and Julie

Families First Practice Guidance

Outcomes

This section is completed on EHM only after the above assessment has been agreed and signed by the family.

This is the Key Worker Analysis of the current risks, strengths and protective factors in the family (based on your assessment)

There should be no information added here that has not been discussed with the family. This might include information that the family may not agree with, but it should have been discussed with them prior to adding to the FFA.

Strengths

The family are close and supportive of each other. They are willing to work together to make a change and will engage with the services and support offered. The school is willing to work with the parents and Ben to resolve the school issues. John and Julie have both expressed a desire to get back into work and want to engage with the back to work programme that is offered. The housing officer is happy to support by negotiating a payment plan and the family are willing to sign a behaviour agreement to show their willingness to change.

Protective Factors

The family are engaging really well with the Families First process so far and the keyworker is happy to support them through the challenges they have raised. The children are both in school and they are aware of the situation and willing to support which will be an excellent protective factor for the children. Housing are now fully aware of the family's situation and will continue to work with the family to prevent risk of homelessness.

Risk Factors

If the parents do not engage with the DWP programme there is a risk that their benefits will reduce and result in them going further into debt. If the parents fail to engage with mediation and use the strategies they learn they risk further complaints of Domestic abuse from neighbours to housing and the police. If the parents do not engage with the parenting support and put the strategies into place there is a risk that Ben will continue to engage in anti-social behaviour and remain a school refuser. Any of the above could increase the family's risk of homelessness.

Families First Practice Guidance

More information required (please detail concerns that need further investigation)

There have been a couple of concerns raised in this assessment that will need further investigation once the family are fully engaged with the support.

- Ben's behaviour towards Susan and why she does not feel listened to.
- Parents understanding of the impact of their arguing on the children even if they are in bed.
- Ben's accusation of being bullied and how this will be managed by the school and the parents.

The Future (Unborn baby, starting school, starting work, parent returning to live with family etc)

No needs identified so I left this blank

Outcomes of Assessment:

TAF Review

Reason for Action Taken

A Team Around the Family is going to be formed and a meeting to discuss and implement the identified actions will be held.