



STOCKPORT
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL



Stockport
NHS Foundation Trust

Start Well Strategy 2021-2024

‘Hugs, lullabies and smiles from parents could inoculate babies against heartbreak, adolescent angst and even help them pass their exams decades later’

Winston, R and Chicot, R (2016)



Purpose of the Start Well Strategy 2021-2024

Getting it right in the Early Years presents the best early intervention and prevention opportunity across the council and Foundation Trust; leading to improved outcomes for children, families, communities and reduced financial burden on the state.

“The foundations for virtually every aspect of human development – physical, intellectual and emotional – are laid in early childhood. What happens during these early years (starting in the womb) has lifelong effects on many aspects of health and well-being – from obesity, heart disease and mental health to educational achievement and economic status”

Marmot (2010)

The Start Well strategy underpinned by the Healthy Child Programme details how Stockport Council working with the Foundation Trust and other partners is meeting its duty to improve outcomes for all children 0 – 5 years, reduce health inequalities and ensure there is sufficient, high quality early education and childcare. It builds on the learning from the Early Years Peer Review (October 2019) and learning and developments from the COVID-19 pandemic.



Stockport's vision and ambition for children and young people

Our vision is for all children and young people to have the best start in life, be happy, safe, to be able to build and maintain healthy relationships, attend school and learn, be prepared for adulthood and able to achieve their goals. We want families to feel supported, confident, resilient and connected to their community.

Our ambition is for Stockport to be the best place for all children to grow up happily, healthily, with a good education, confidence, ambition and surrounded by love, care and kindness. We seek to support our children and families to thrive through

working together to build nurturing and trusting relationships.

Inclusion is at the heart of our work with children and young people. Our practice is founded on the belief that every child and young person matters and matters equally. We will nurture sustain and further develop connections, relationships and mutual support between ourselves and within our communities in Stockport to build a better future, where all children and young people can thrive and no one is left behind.

Stockport's outcomes for children and young people

We want children and young people to be able to say...

- ✓ I feel safe
- ✓ I feel part of my community
- ✓ My voice is heard
- ✓ I enjoy good health and wellbeing

- ✓ I am happy and have people I can trust
- ✓ I am confident and able to reach my goals
- ✓ The people who love and care for me are enabled to do this

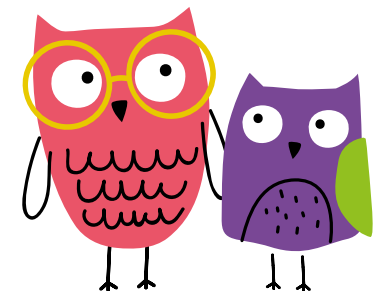
(Adopted from the SEND Outcomes through the voice of young people)

Stockport Start Well Vision

‘Working together with families and communities, all children in Stockport will have the best start in life and be ready for school’

This ambition will be achieved through a prevention and early intervention approach which focuses on relationships, between parents and infants, their wider community and the services that provide help in that community.

A system wide focus on improving outcomes in child development and school readiness which goes beyond traditional early childhood services is essential. This requires a change in culture across the workforce so that everyone knows what it means to give children the best start in life and how they can contribute towards this vision.



Overarching objectives of Start Well Strategy

Working together with families and communities:

- We will develop a shared understanding of school readiness, working to this understanding across health, early years and education.
- We will further develop a strategic communications plan to support key messaging, influence practice and change behaviours.
- We will ensure the provision of high quality integrated services which support parents and carers to nurture their children and recognise the impact of adversity.
- We will provide comprehensive early identification of need and effective evidence based help that promotes all areas of child development with an increased focus on Speech, Language and Communication (SLC) and Social and Emotional (SE) development.
- We will work with partners to ensure an appropriate childcare offer that supports economic wellbeing and that children are educated in high quality early years settings.
- We will promote the sharing of health and development information between health visitors, early years providers and schools to support smooth transition points for children.



What will be the impact of Start Well?

If we achieve our vision it will lead to:

- A whole system/community approach that supports children to get the best start in life
- Successful engagement and empowerment of parents/carers and local communities to support children's school readiness journey pre-birth to 5 years
- Reducing health and development inequalities for children 0-5 years
- Increasing the number of vulnerable children reaching their full potential and starting school ready at the end of Reception



What Stockport Parents say...

In January 2020, 616 parents and carers completed an exploratory survey exploring their understanding of how they can support their children's speech, language and communication and its links to school readiness. Analysis of the data revealed that most parents are confident about supporting their children, but did not have a clear understanding of how this supported their journey to school readiness.

In our strategy development workshop, parents and carers said that

- They want better information available in one place, online to support children's early development
- They worry they might be judged if they ask for help
- They want community and peer support to help with parental mental health and confidence



What is School Readiness?

Children starting school ready to learn is fundamental to supporting good outcomes later in life.

For the purpose of this strategy, Stockport are defining school readiness as...

The journey to school readiness starts from pre-birth and continues to the age of five. It is developed through relationships and interactions in the home with parents and family members and in the early learning environment.

Supporting a child's early social, emotional, physical, communication and language development.

To be 'school ready' means a child enters primary school ready to engage in and benefit from all the learning experiences available, enabling him or her to become a lifelong learner.

It is recognised that all children have different needs and abilities. These will be embraced on their school readiness journey to ensure they achieve their full developmental potential.

Work will be ongoing to further embed and co-produce a shared understanding of school readiness



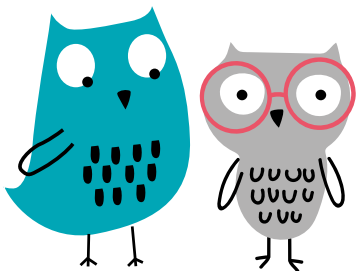
Stockport picture

According to data from 2019, most early years children:

- **Are school ready** – 70.4% of children achieved a 'good level of development' at the end of the early years foundation stage profile (EYFSP)
- **Benefit from the sufficiency of high quality funded early education places.** Stockport is ranked 1st out of 152 local authorities nationally for the number of 2-year olds benefitting from attending Good/Outstanding early years provision. Take up rates for disadvantaged two year olds is high at 87% compared to 69% nationally.
- **Attend early years provision that is graded good or outstanding by Ofsted** - Stockport 95% (nationally 97%).

However,

- The number of births in the more disadvantaged areas of the borough have risen and the two most deprived areas account for 40% of all births, 15 years ago this was 35%
- The percentage of children achieving the expected levels in communication and language at 2 years is 87.6%, compared to 90% nationally
- Compared to national averages, the proportion of children with SEND achieving a 'good level of development' at the end of EYFSP is significantly lower
- In areas of disadvantage, the number of children achieving a 'good level of development' at the end of the EYFSP is declining
- Only 46% of Free School Meal children achieved a 'good level of development' at the end of the EYFSP, compared to 56% nationally



What is Start Well?

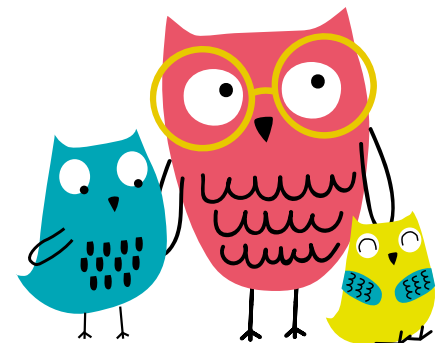
Start Well brings together Stockport's early childhood services who will work together with families and communities to improve outcomes for children from pregnancy through to starting school

The Healthy Child Programme underpins the strategy and effective targeting of Start Well resources to support earlier identification of developmental need and timeliness of evidence based interventions. The Healthy Child Programme is aligned to the Greater Manchester Early Years Delivery Model and 8 Stage Assessment Pathway.

Start Well Health Visiting and Early Years locality teams

- Start Well integrated locality teams (Health Visitors, Early Years & Start Well Coordinators aligned to midwifery) deliver the universal, early help and targeted offer to children aged 0-5 years and their families. The leadership and management structure has been set up in order to deliver an effective integrated model with service leads from different disciplines and by using a cultural model of restorative practice.

- The approach to Children's Centres in Stockport has evolved through greater integration of health and early years and the development of Start Well. There is now less emphasis on buildings and more emphasis on how integrated multi agency services are delivered within an area. The Start Well offer and teams have been developed in geographical areas according to need and demand. To support the development of the Start Well model we have two Start Well Hubs (Brinnington and Adswood) and three Start Well Satellites (Central, Belmont and Reddish). In communities where there is no Hub or Satellite, access to the Start Well offer and teams is available through the local Health Centre.



What is Start Well?

SEND Code of Practice sets out our legal responsibilities when supporting children and young people 0-25 years with special educational needs and disabilities. The guidance promotes inclusion, early identification and intervention. It complements the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Team Around the Early Years (TAEY) is our early intervention approach underpinned by restorative approaches which aims to support children and families with emerging needs. The approach enables early years providers to access early help and support for their children and families.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets out the other main universal framework for professionals working with children in the Early Years.

Early Years Entitlement includes work with partners to identify and implement opportunities to improve the local childcare market and support the economic wellbeing of families. It is a priority to ensure geographically appropriately located early education and childcare offers that are high quality and flexible to meet parental needs whilst maximising the take up of the 2, 3 and 4 year old entitlements.

Early Years Provision includes work to maintain a high number of settings Ofsted rated good or better, raising standards in early years settings in order to ensure all children start school ready to learn.

Our whole system and community approach...

This diagram shows the range of services that can support children to get the best start in life.



Our values

Stockport is committed to co-production in all of our work and has agreed a co-production charter.

We are committed to: -

- Open and honest communication
- Actively listening
- Valuing real life experiences
- What matters – tailored approaches to individual needs
- Evaluation and review
- Working together
- Trust and respect

Stockport Co-production Charter

The charter has been co-produced with families, children, young people and health, care and education colleagues.

The co-production charter is about the way we will all work together to create a culture where we will all:

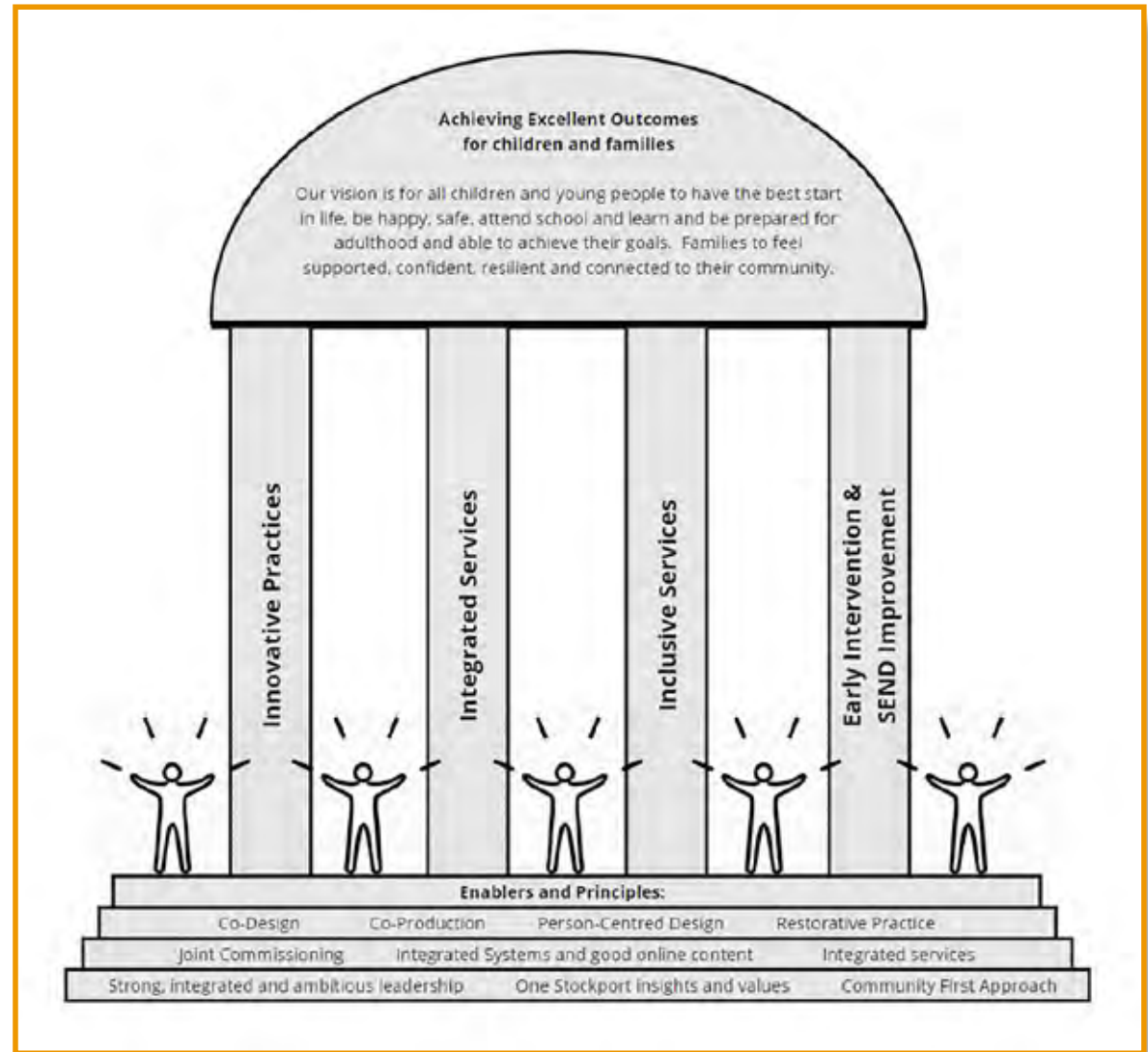


Stockport's way of working – principles and approach

Our approach is based upon: -

- **Innovative practice**
- **Integrated services**
- **Inclusive services**
- **Early intervention**

This diagram shows our principles and approach to achieving the Start Well vision for early years children and their families



Best start in life – essential factors

The Best Beginnings Report (Children's Commissioner, 2020) set's out proposals to ensure all children get the best start in life. This document recognises that the evidence for early years intervention is clear and asks:

Given we've all known this for so long, why haven't we done it?'

It clearly articulates the priorities for our babies and infants that we should focus on based on a solid body of evidence.

- 1. Loving, nurturing relationships with parents and carers**
- 2. A safe home free from stress and adversity**
- 3. The right help to develop good language and other cognitive skills**

4. Support to manage behaviour and regulate their emotions

5. Good physical and mental health and access to healthcare

It is from this guidance that we take forward our Start Well Strategy, building back from the impact of Covid-19 using a plan to deliver our ambition.



Loving, nurturing relationships with parents and carers

- **We will** support parents and carers to provide a warm, nurturing relational environment with their baby
- **We will** provide continuity of care from conception to birth in midwifery and ensure a named health visitor approach is developed to build and sustain relationships with families
- **We will** continue to work with UNICEF guidelines to maintain Baby Friendly status in order to support breastfeeding
- **We will** relaunch the Parent Infant Mental Health(PIMH) pathway and widen the provision of emotional health and wellbeing support
- **We will** work with parents/carers to optimise their child's early brain development to secure speech, language and communication development and emotional regulation
- **We will** further develop, formalise and embed a Social and Emotional pathway
- **We will** provide high quality training and workforce development to support loving, nurturing relationships with parents and carers

A safe home free from stress and adversity

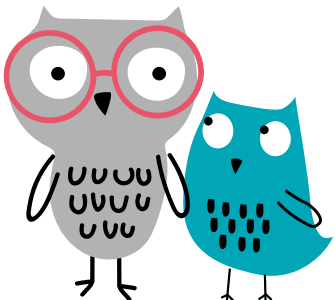
- **We will** use a risk and resilience model to underpin assessment of need and establish named health visitor caseloads
- **We will** further develop an integrated approach to pre-birth assessments
- **We will** implement learning from National and local Safeguarding Reviews to safeguard vulnerable infants
- **We will** work with early years providers to embed and enhance the TAEY model building on the learning to date whilst ensuring an increased focus on vulnerability and Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)
- **We will** increase the number of children 0-4 years supported by an early help episode (EHA) and support plan
- **We will** continue to provide Family Nurse Partnership to teenage parents
- **We will** continue to develop peer led support programmes such as Empowering Parents Empowering Communities (EPEC) to grow community capacity, extend reach and accelerate behaviour change within communities
- **We will** recognise the impact of relationships on parenting and consider interventions to reduce parental conflict
- **We will** ensure the Start Well strategy is fully considered and dovetails into Stockport's financial resilience strategy to address the impact of poverty on child development and school readiness
- **We will** continue to develop opportunities for peer mentoring and volunteering to support economic wellbeing of families
- **We will** provide high quality training and workforce development to support a safe home free from stress and adversity

The right help to develop good language and other cognitive skills

- **We will** implement and embed the Speech, Language and Communication (SLC) pathway
- **We will** continue to develop a Start Well and School Readiness dashboard to track the developmental outcomes of early years children
- **We will** implement the learning from Pathways to Talking including the integration of Speech, Language and Communication Therapists within locality team
- **We will** accelerate roll out of the 18 months child development assessment in geographical areas where school readiness outcomes need improving
- **We will** work to ensure eligible children take up and attend early education and childcare entitlements with an increased focus on vulnerability
- **We will** promote and support the importance of the home learning environment
- **We will** provide high quality training and workforce development to support the right help to develop good language and other cognitive skills

Support to regulate their emotions and manage behaviour

- **We will** ensure a good understanding of child development is core to our work with children, young people and families
- **We will** develop the Solihull Approach as the best practice model underpinning the Start Well strategy
- **We will** develop and consolidate across Stockport Family a needs led menu of parenting and family interventions
- **We will** continue to develop our transition pathways from birth to entry to reception and helping parents understanding of children's needs
- **We will** provide high quality training and workforce development to support parents/carers to regulate their emotions and manage behaviour



Good physical and mental health and access to healthcare

- **We will** promote good physical health and development through the review, refresh and relaunch of the Physical Health and Development pathway
- **We will** continue to improve continuity of care through midwifery teams developments and named health visitor model
- **We will** explore and analyse emergency admissions data to understand, address and reduce current trend
- **We will** work with communities, public health and commissioners to better understand access to health care for families with early years children in order to reduce health inequalities
- **We will** continue to develop and ensure robust information sharing with our primary care colleagues
- **We will** consider the ITHRIVE framework when developing all Start Well pathways
- **We will** provide high quality training and workforce development to support good physical and mental health and access to healthcare

Measuring the success of the strategy

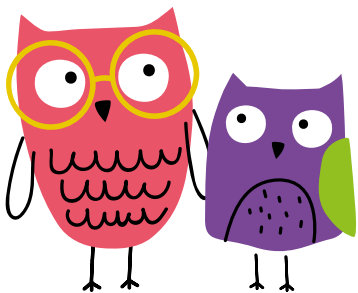
Success will have been achieved against our priorities if by 2024, we have:

- Increased the percentage of children achieving a Good Level of Development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (disaggregated by Free School Meals (FSM) and SEND) **to 56% (FSM 46%), 29% (Special Educational Needs Support 17%) and 5% (Education and Health Care Plan 1%)**
- Increased the percentage of children eligible for FSM achieving the early learning goal for speaking **to 76% (68%)**
- Maintained the percentage of early years settings rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted **to the National average (97%)**

- Maintained the percentage take up of eligible two year olds in receipt of early years free entitlement above the National average. **In 2019 take up was 98% in Stockport**
- Increased the percentage of children achieving expected levels of development in Communication and Language at 2 year development assessment using Ages and Stages Questionnaire 3 (ASQ3) **to 90% (87%)**

***NB () Stockport Baseline Data 2019**

****Targets based on National average 2019**



Performance Management and Governance

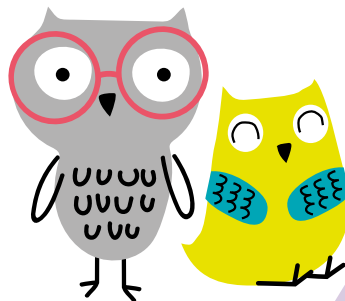
To support the strategy, a detailed performance/outcomes framework will be developed, which will set out the indicators and measures that will be used to assess the success of the strategy, support planning and evaluation.

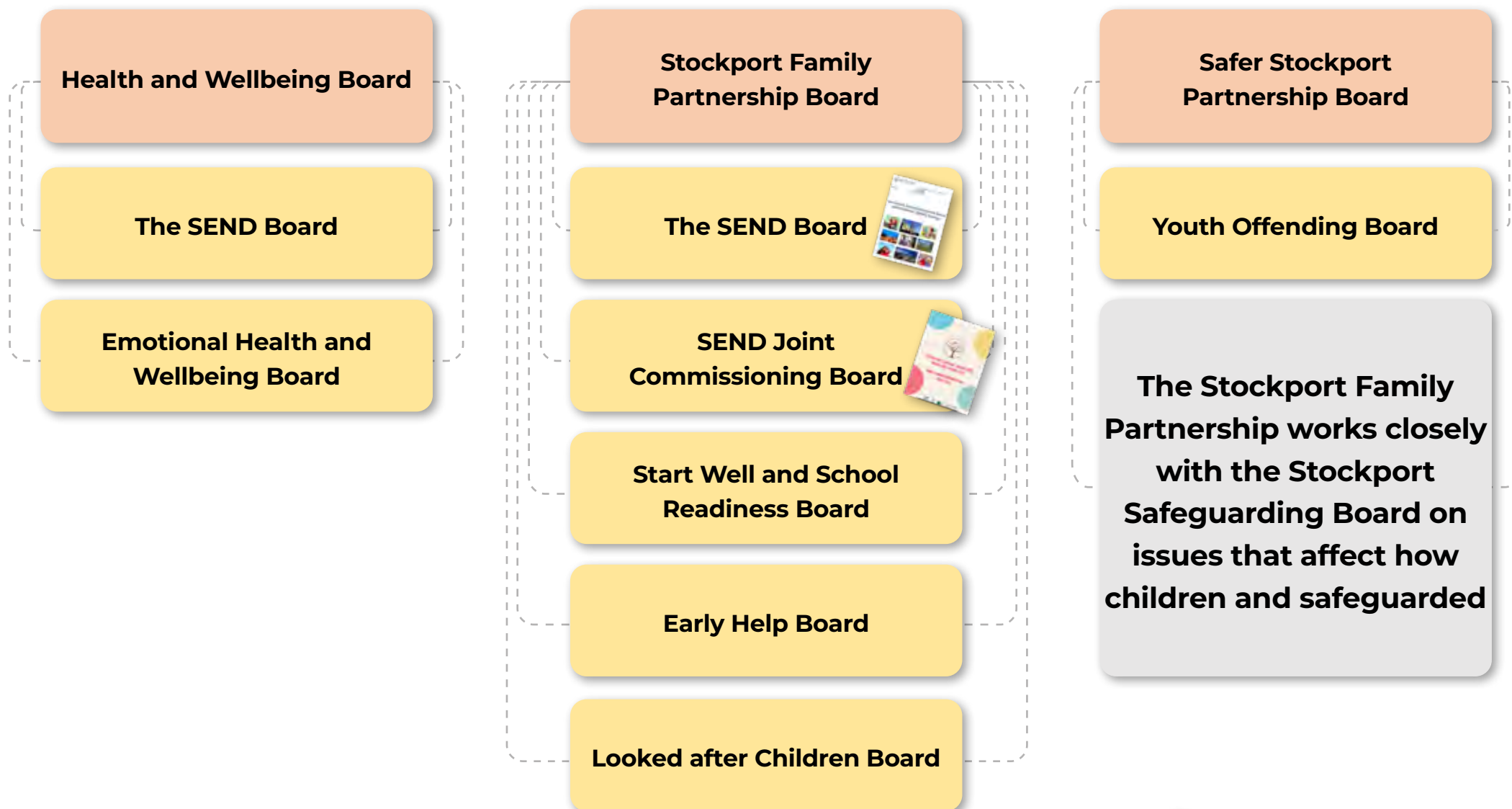
The framework will ensure timely and accurate data which will be monitored by the Start Well and School Readiness Board, reporting to the Stockport Family Partnership Board.

This strategy is a working document and will be reviewed each year with partners, parents/carers and communities.

Individual delivery plans for each priority will detail outcome indicators and performance measures which recognise the wider determinants of schools readiness e.g. breastfeeding prevalence, smoking in pregnancy.

Please see the diagram below for our governance routes and ownership of our delivery plans.





Co-Production Charter



All of our work is co-produced with parents/carers and children.



