



Family Hubs Community Fund Guidance

Introduction

Norfolk's Start for Life and family hub approach is focused on delivering services within the local community network, in locations that are easily accessible and familiar to families.

The Family Hubs Community Fund is designed to support local communities in Norfolk by providing grants to organisations, individuals and community groups who support families with children from conception to 19 years old (25 with SEND), by enhancing community provision and improving access to services. The fund encourages the development and expansion of community groups and activities that promote wellbeing, social networks, and developmental milestones for children.

Objectives

The Family Hubs Community Fund aims to:

1. Support children and families to flourish and achieve their developmental milestones
2. Prevent neglect or emotional harm.
3. Increase social mobility.
4. Promote wellbeing and develop social networks for children and families.
5. Enable parents and carers to receive information, advice and guidance
6. Enable children and families to access local peer support and share experiences.
7. Provide activities that enhance relationships and promote new skills.
8. Meets local needs through an evidenced base focused on the needs of the families and children/young people within local communities.

Funding Categories

Start-up and Expansion Funding: Up to £4,000 per organisation to fund the start-up of new groups or expand existing ones.

This includes:

- a. New activities/groups
- b. Expanding existing activities/groups.

- c. Training for volunteers and group leaders.
- d. Resources and equipment for group use.
- e. Initial set-up costs (e.g., DBS checks, insurance).
- f. Marketing and promotional materials.
- g. Venue hire (up to 12 months).

The fund will support the development of community groups within local communities, helping to grow a network of support for families. We can offer support to help set up new groups and expand existing ones. Registered childcare settings and Schools are welcome to apply however the fund will not pay for staff costs (salaries) which must be covered by other income such as fees.

Groups will do one or more of the following:

- ☐ Involve parents and their children aged 0-12yrs to attend activities together which provide social and developmental opportunities.
- ☐ Offer Peer support groups for parents/expectant parents to support them in their parenting duties.
- ☐ Deliver activities for children aged 0-12yrs to help them Flourish.

And:

- ☐ Are run by members of the community or community organisations, including sole traders.
- ☐ Plan to continue long term and can demonstrate the group is/will be sustainable.
- ☐ Operate on a regular and ongoing basis to meet need (ideally on a weekly basis but monthly as a minimum).

Quality and Sustainability Funding: Up to £2000 to support the purchase of good quality toys and equipment, venue improvements, and other costs to ensure the group's sustainability.

Capital Grant: Up to £9,000 for building alterations, IT upgrades, signage, improving building space and accessibility, and new furniture to support multi-agency service delivery.

Example uses of capital funding:

1. New furniture and technology can be used to accommodate outreach appointments and services.
2. Changes to lighting and sound insulation to be more accessible to children and young people with Autism.

3. Your site has an outside space but needs a robust gate to secure the area for use by children and young people.
4. Shelving for books and resources
5. Display boards for local health, family support and wellbeing information
6. A new door to add privacy to a potential consultation room
7. Small section of fence to secure an outdoor space
8. Outdoor lighting to help navigation around the site after dark and thus extending the hours of use.
9. Projector and screen to enable venue to be used for training of families and local volunteers.
10. Repair or replacement of flooring to make suitable for a wider variety of activities

Infant Feeding Community Grant: Up to £5,000 to support infant feeding groups, including training, running costs, equipment, and resources to support breastfeeding and infant nutrition.

Applications can be made which cover more than one grant category – but the total cannot exceed £10,000.

Eligibility Criteria

Organisations must:

- Have a constitution or signed set of organisational group rules.
- Have a bank account with at least 2 officers/signatories that are unrelated and not cohabiting (In the case of sole traders where it is not appropriate to have 2 officers/signatories, they must have a bank account that it is dedicated to the project and not used for personal/household use.)
- Ensure group leaders and volunteers have an Enhanced DBS check in the name of the group/activity unless part of the update service.
- Have public liability and employer's liability insurance.
- Have signed Child Protection/Safeguarding and Vulnerable Adults policies which have been approved by Safer.
- Conduct risk assessments of the venue and activities.
- Commit to referring families to appropriate support services.
- Register on the Norfolk Community Directory and join SAFER.
- ensured that group leaders have accessed the following:
 - Safeguarding Children training -
 - Paediatric First Aid training
 (or agree to undertake these before the group starts)
- Agree to engage with and support, volunteer and peer supporter opportunities

- Plan to continue long term and can demonstrate the group is sustainable by preparing a cashflow forecast using the NCC project planning tool or one of the group's choice.
- Operate on a regular and ongoing basis to meet need (ideally on a weekly basis but monthly as a minimum).
- Be run from local community venues, close to where parents live, particularly in rural and isolated communities
- Make a small charge or ask for a voluntary contribution to support the group's sustainability
- Where possible, offer subsidised places to enable families to attend who are not able to afford the full fees

We won't fund:

- Staff salaries
- An application whereby in doing so the organisation exceeds the Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA) threshold of £315,000 during the current financial year plus the previous two financial years – See MFA form for more details

Application Process

1. **Initial Contact:** Email ecabs@norfolk.gov.uk to express interest. An Early Help Community Worker will discuss initial ideas and plans and involve other colleagues to offer support as appropriate e.g. Early Years Improvement and Development worker.
2. **Full Application:** Complete and submit the application form with supporting documents (constitution, insurance certificates, safeguarding policies).
3. **Panel Review:** Applications are reviewed monthly by the Family Hubs and Start for Life panel.
4. **Notification:** Applicants will be informed of the decision within 5 working days of the panel meeting.
5. **Funding Agreement:** Successful applicants will receive a funding agreement outlining expectations and conditions.
6. **Monitoring:** Provide updates and evidence of expenditure approximately 3 months after receiving the grant and at the end of the funded period (approx 12 months).

Conditions

- Grants are awarded on a rolling basis and are subject to availability of funding.
- Funds must be used for the agreed purpose and within the specified timeframe.
- Groups must acknowledge the funding and support from Norfolk County Council when promoting the funded activity/service.
- Regular monitoring and reporting are required to ensure compliance with the funding agreement.

Contact Information

For further assistance and to apply for the Family Hubs Community Fund, please contact:

- Email: ecabs@norfolk.gov.uk

Case Study 1: The Little Lion's Playgroup

The Little Lion's Playgroup is a community group in Norfolk that aims to provide a safe and engaging environment for children aged 0-5 years to play and learn. They applied for funding from the Family Hubs Community Fund and received £3,000 to start new activities and expand their existing ones. With this funding, they were able to purchase new toys and educational materials, cover initial set-up costs like DBS checks and insurance, and create marketing materials to promote their playgroup. They also received £4,000 in capital funding to provide a secure gate and fence to a small outside area that will allow for groups to move outside in good weather. When talking to an NCC community worker they also saw an opportunity to use a further £3,000 to adapt a consultation room with new paint and furniture to enable a suitable infant feeding space. Total grant awarded £10,000.

Case Study 2: The Family Wellness Centre

The Family Wellness Centre is a community organisation that offers various services to support families in Norfolk. They applied for funding from the Family Hubs Community Fund and received £9,000 to make building alterations and improve their facilities. With this funding, they were able to install new signage and purchase new furniture to support multi-agency service delivery. They also made changes to their lighting and sound insulation to make their spaces more accessible to children and young people with SEND. Total grant awarded £9,000.

Case Study 3: The Norfolk Breastfeeding Support Group

The Norfolk Breastfeeding Support Group is a community group that provides support and resources for breastfeeding mothers in Norfolk. They applied for funding from the Family Hubs Community Fund and received £4,000 to recruit, train and equip new volunteers to enable more frequent delivery of group activity. They also received £2,000 to provide suitable storage for breast feeding equipment. Total grant awarded £6,000.

Case Study 4: North Norfolk Parents Group

The North Norfolk Parents Group is a community group in North Norfolk that aims to provide peer support opportunities for parents with children at the local primary schools. They applied for funding from the Family Hubs Community Fund and received £4,000 to start new activities across a neighbouring school community. With this funding they were able to recruit new volunteers and provide a programme of activities and events for those in attendance. They also received £5,000 in capital funding. With this funding, they were able to enhance the main activity space and provide a suitable door on an adjoining room to enable parents to provide for their children whilst also enabling private consultation with specialists when needed. Total grant awarded £9,000.