

Step-Up and Step-Down Practice Guidance

Step-Down process from Family Support and Safeguarding Team to Family Wellbeing Intensive Family Support.

The Social Worker and their Team Manager discuss if the level of need is suitable for Step-Down. Management oversight and rationale should then be added to LCS. The Social Worker will discuss the Family Wellbeing Service Intensive FSW offer with the family and child/ren, and request consent for a Step-Down discussion with the FWB Service.

The allocated Social Worker should then contact the Family Wellbeing Service Support Leader (for that locality) via email, to discuss the request for Step-Down and to arrange a telephone conversation to discuss reasons for Step-Down to the FWB Service. The FWB Support Leaders have a regular slot each week put aside for Step Down conversations. North is on a Wednesday 4-5pm and East and South on a Thursday 2.30 to 3.30pm.

- North: Suzanne Thorne Suzanne.thorne@n-somerset.gov.uk
- South and East: Victoria Lawton Victoria.lawton@n-somerset.gov.uk
- If Vicky or Suzanne are on leave, please contact the Early Help Hub at the Front Door Support Leader Dave.slack@n-somerset.gov.uk
- Any issues please contact: Family Wellbeing Locality Team Manager Tracey.lewis@n-somerset.gov.uk

If the FWB Service Support Leader is on annual leave, an out of office message is to be penned, advising that any step-down requests are to be forwarded to Dave Slack or Tracey Lewis instead.

This conversation is to ascertain whether the Step-Down to a FWB Service Intensive FSW is agreed as a suitable next step. The Social Worker will need to be clear about what the role of the FWB Service Intensive FSW will be. This discussion may lead to signposting to other services, a supported Step-Down to universal services in a Family Hub or Children Centre (See Step-Down to Universal Services) or a Step-Down meeting with the FWB Service, for allocation to a FSW.

If agreed by Step-Down to FWB Service, a step-down meeting will be arranged within 2 weeks of the request. If appropriate and timely, this could be the final CIN meeting. If this is not appropriate, then FWB Service Support Leader will liaise with the allocated Social Worker to identify a date. Attendance will be with a FSW (if capacity allows) or



FWB Service Support Leader. The Social Worker will be told about estimated allocation times.

If a FSW has not been identified at this point, the child/ren's record will remain in the Step-Down tray with oversight by the Support Leader, until capacity allows for the family to be reassigned and allocated. The FWB Service Support Leader or a FWB Service Intervention Leader will advise the Social Worker and the family at the meeting, that a FSW is not available at this time and will advise of an approximate timescale for allocation. An interim plan will be agreed whilst awaiting allocation of a FSW, which could include access to a Family Hub, a Childrens Centre or to community services. The family will be provided with the FWB Service Support Leader's contact number to support sharing of information should their circumstances change.

The Social Worker arranges the Step-Down meeting, ideally in a Family Hub or Children's Centre, sends the invites and supports the family to attend.

The allocated Social Worker facilitates the first half of the meeting with a clear Step Down plan.

The FWB Service Support Leader or FSW facilitates the second half of the meeting; working together with the family to create a family plan, with regards to the next steps. After the meeting, the Social Worker needs to Step-Down the child/ren's record from LCS to EHM using the Step-Down function. The meeting notes, plan and name of the Support Leader (and FSW if known) are recorded on the Step-Down transfer request section of LCS.

Please note that the record must not be closed on LCS before this step - if it is, there is no way of stepping it down to EHM.

The Step-Down function then shows the request and child/ren's record within the EHM Step-Down tray. The FWB Service Support Leader then progresses this task for allocation. It is essential that the meeting notes and plan are included in the Step-Down, in order to progress.

Step-Up process from Family Wellbeing Service Intensive Family Support: Early Help to Front Door.

FWB Service FSW completes the Step-Up request form and discusses with their Support Leader and Team Manager, who will provide further guidance and support, regarding whether a step up discussion at the Front Door is needed.

The FSW should be discussing their increased concerns with the family and advising them that they are having discussions with their line manager and the Front Door to consider whether a Step-Up to a Family Support & Safeguarding Social Worker is needed.

If the family had a Social Worker less than 3 months ago, the FSW can call the Social Worker for advice and support and the Social Worker may be able to complete a one-off joint visit or agree to call to the family in order to prevent a Step-Up.

Please note there are no guarantees that the family will Step-Up to Family Support & Safeguarding, unless there are child protection concerns at the level of significant harm. If it is thought that the threshold of significant harm may be met, consent is not required, although it is good practice to keep the family informed and maintain their engagement wherever possible.

EHM case notes should be added to evidence the conversations with parents, the new concerns and the request for Step-Up discussions. The form, should also be added to EHM.

If the Front Door management agree to step the family up, and the family consents, it will be sent to Family Support and Safeguarding Team for an assessment of need. All recording from here on in should be on LCS (a clear case note should be put on EHM to indicate this, and the EHM episode closed).

Where Front Door management advise that the referral has not met threshold for Family Support & Safeguarding intervention, guidance will be provided by Front Door management to the referrer.

A record of the conversation will be noted on EHM by the FWB Service FSW, detailing the conversation and actions to follow. This needs to be completed within 24 hours of the conversation taking place.

Step-Down from, CIN or FWB Service Intensive FSW, to universal services within a Family Hub or Children's Centre.

Sometimes, when Family Support & Safeguarding (SW) or FWB Service (FSW) intervention is coming to an end, the family may need extra support to access Universal Services available within the Family Hub or Children's Centre. When this is necessary: The SW or FSW will then discuss a closing plan with the family and will highlight relevant Universal Services available within a Family Hub or Children Centre. If the family wish to engage with Universal Services, after the SW or FSW ceases their involvement, then signposting to those services will be offered.

If the family need some low-level support to access those groups, then the FWB Service Intervention Leader (FWIL) for that area can be contacted by the SW or FSW to discuss the family's unmet needs.

- North: Helena.crump@n-somerset.gov.uk
- East: Madeline.williams@n-somerset.gov.uk
- South: Denise.payne@n-somerset.gov.uk and Donna.haines@n-somerset.gov.uk

A meeting at the Family Hub or Childrens Centre can be arranged in order to introduce the family to a named Children Centre Worker, a Group Facilitator or a FWIL, who can then introduce them to the building, services and activities available, as well as to the staff team. This meeting should be arranged by the SW or FSW as part of the closing plan.

The named worker will then subsequently meet and greet the family when they access the centre and will encourage participation and engagement in the services available. No records will be kept on EHM, or otherwise, and there will be no expectation that information will be shared with the SW or FSW once their involvement has ceased. Please note this is a Step-Down procedure to support engagement in Universal Services at a Family Hub or Childrens Centre, and it cannot be used as a route for monitoring children's and families' progress and outcomes.