

Family First Hub launch

A new Family First Hub was launched at Derry's Gasyard Centre on Friday 12 June pledging to bring together statutory, voluntary and community groups for the benefit of all families in the area.

The hub was formally launched by the Mayor of Derry City and Strabane District Council, Elisha McCallion.

The Family First Hub covers the Triax area which includes the Bogside, Brandywell, Creggan and Fountain and brings together a co-ordinated network of statutory, community and voluntary agencies to provide a range of early intervention services to families and children in need and to avoid family disruption. The purpose of the hub is to provide points of contact for information and timely access to family support.

Speaking at the launch, Mayor Elisha McCallion said that the Family First Hub marks a positive step forward in improving family life in communities which have experienced high levels of deprivation and child poverty. She said: "It is clear that the hub is already helping and supporting families to get the necessary supports they need through collaborative working and early intervention. I commend all those involved in the work of the Family First Hub and I am aware that it is one of four Hubs across this city.

"Collaborative and effective working together is the key to the way forward for our children and their families," the mayor concluded.

Mr Pat Armstrong, Western Trust and Professional Lead for the development of family support hubs, acknowledged the importance of the hubs in providing co-ordinated early intervention to support families in need and to prevent deterioration in family circumstances which may require statutory intervention.

He said; "The emergence of the Family First Hub is the culmination of key conversations between statutory, voluntary and community agencies who are committed to working partnership to promote the well-being of children and young people in the Triax areas.

"The Hub brings together experienced individuals and agencies who care deeply about their communities and want improvements and positive outcomes for families and their children."

Claire Gallagher, Co-ordinator of Family First Hub explained how the Hub works.

"The Hub, as a collective partnership, engages with families who experience difficulties or changes linked to financial stress, dealing with difficult behaviours, general parenting or worried about a young person's health or well-being.

"The hub's approach is to help families access support and information and to develop skills to address difficulties.

The Family First Hub stresses the importance of partnership working with families and to ensure parents and children have access to the right service at the right time," she said.

To find out more about Family First Hub, can contact Claire Gallagher, Co-ordinator on (028) 71 373870