

Opportunities for integrated working through Sure Start Children's Centres

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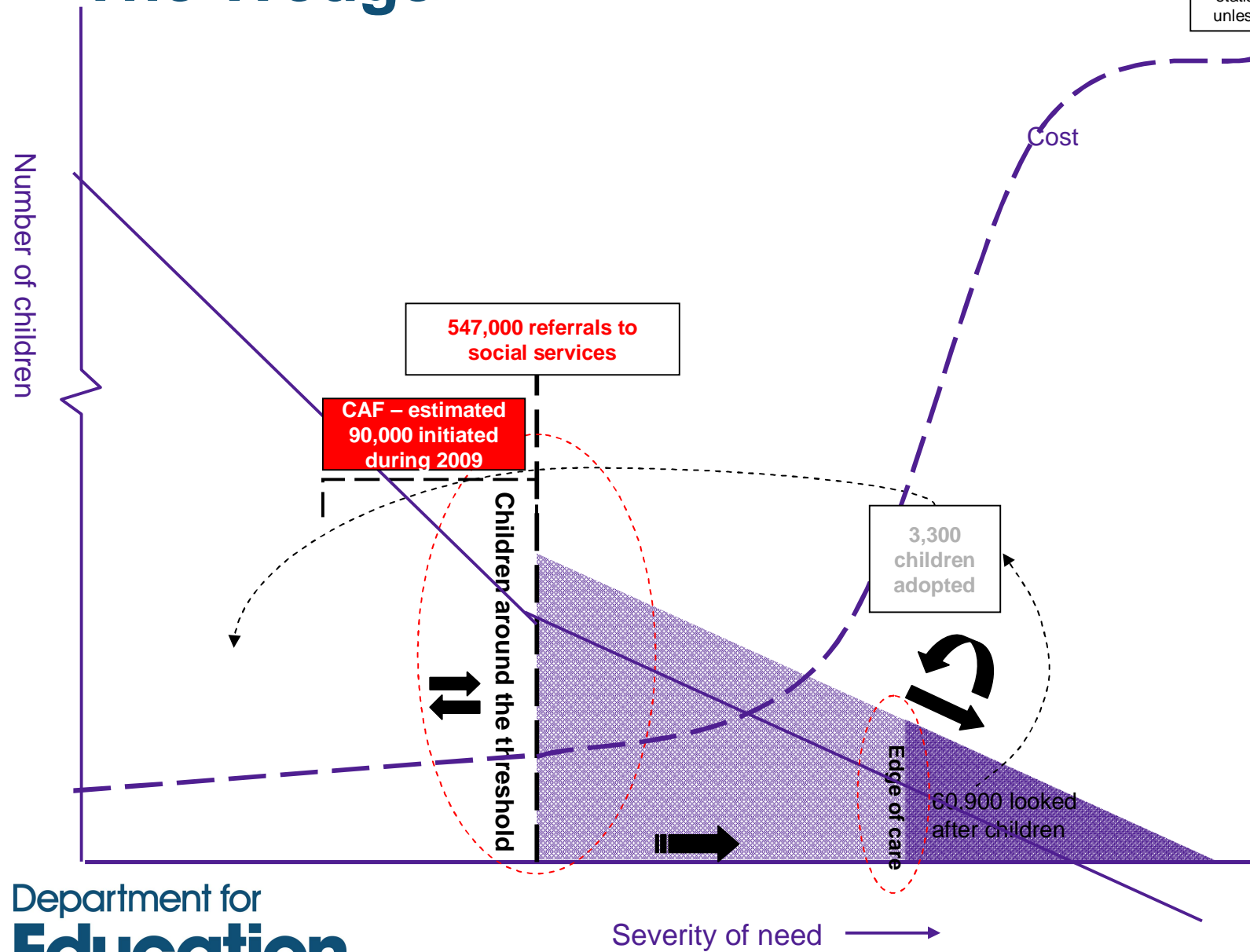
Department for
Education

Foundation years: crucial for early intervention

- **“A child’s experiences during their early years provide the essential foundations for life. Their development during this period influences their basic learning, educational attainment, economic participation and health.”** (Dyson, A. et al. 2009)
- **“We have found overwhelming evidence that children’s life chances are most heavily predicated on their development in the first five years of life”** (Field, F. 2010)
- **“Giving every child the best start in life is crucial to reducing health inequalities across the life course”** (Marmot, M. 2010)

'The Wedge'

All figures are national statistics, 31 March 2009, unless otherwise indicated



In July DfE and DH published:

- **Families in the Foundation Years – the Government's vision**
- **Supporting Families in the Foundation Years – for commissioners and the workforce how they can deliver on our vision**
- **Evidence Pack**
- **A parent friendly website with resources and links on 4Children's companion website**

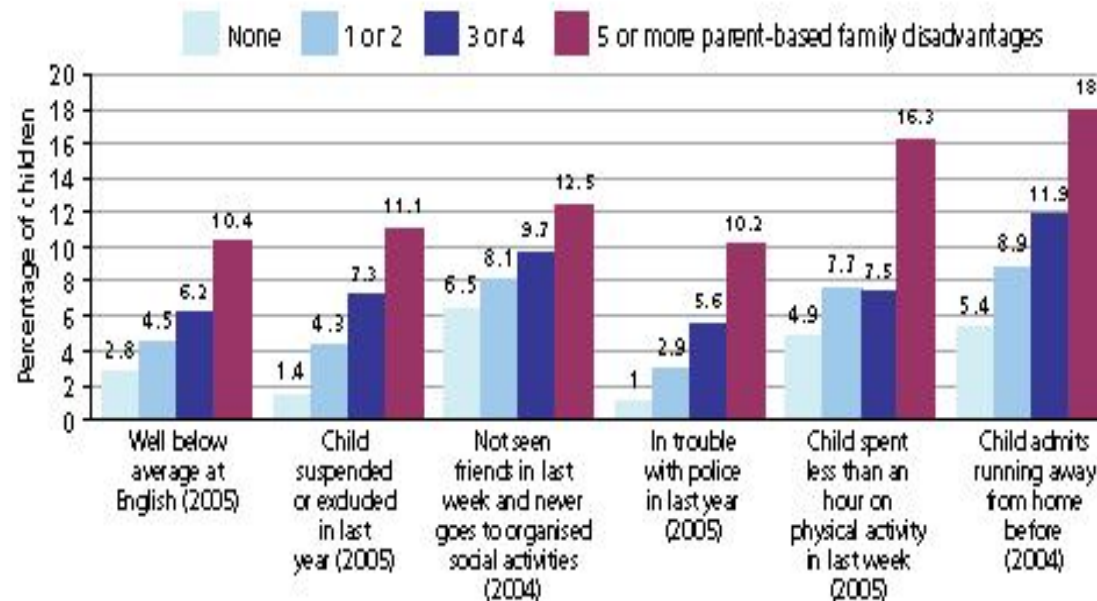
www.foundationyears.org.uk



The importance of integrated working, particularly for vulnerable families

- Analysis by the Social Exclusion Task Force in 2005 found that **children in families that experience multiple disadvantages are more likely to have poorer outcomes in terms of their attainment, cognitive development and behaviour.**

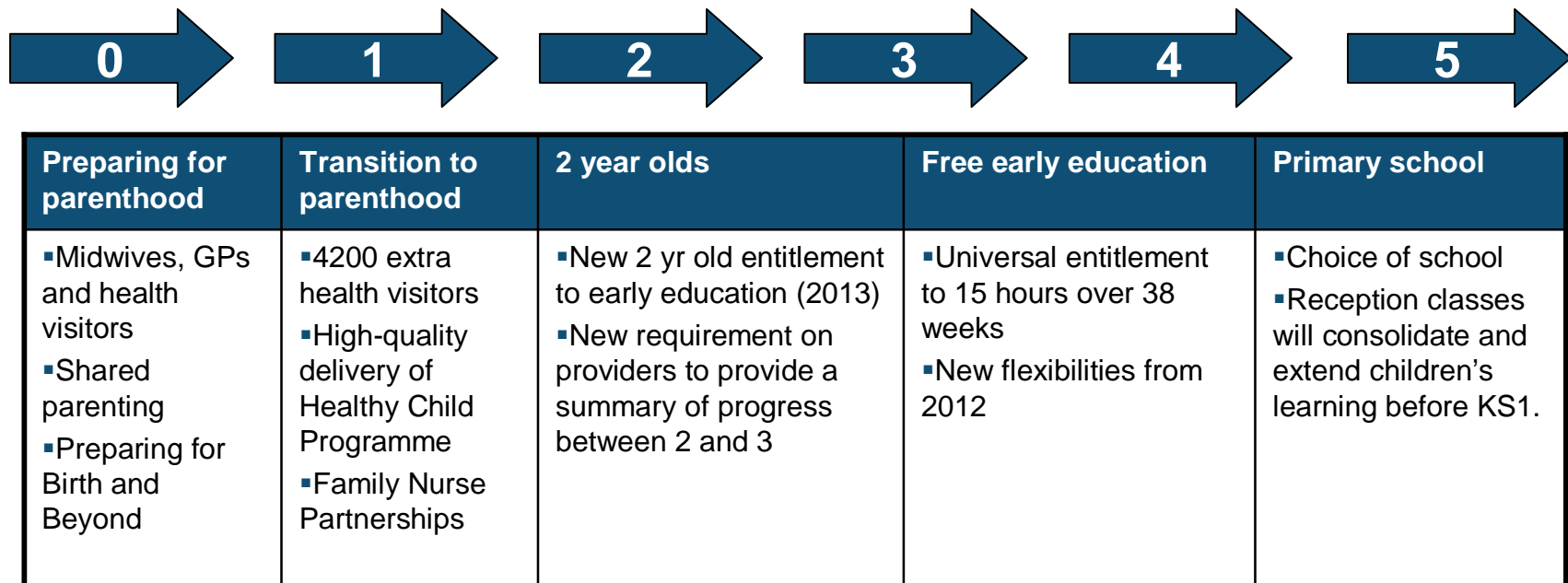
Chart 1: Child outcomes by number of parent-based family disadvantages²



- “Evidence from NESS demonstrates the importance of multi-agency team working and cutting across services boundaries.” (Pinney, A. 2007)

The Government's Vision

- While significant progress has been made, there needs to be a new **joint approach** across foundation years services if the full benefits are to be realised and all children will benefit from the programmes and support in place.
- A child's journey through the foundation years:



Children's Centres Core Purpose

The Government believes that children's centres should have a clear core purpose focused on: Improving outcomes for young children and their families, with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged families, in order to reduce inequalities in:

- **child development and school readiness;**

Supported by improved:

- **parenting aspirations, self esteem and parenting skills;**
- **child and family health and life chances.**
- This will require **collaboration** with local partners particularly health visitors and social workers, in order to be effective.

Importance of the Healthy Child Programme

- Universal public health programme
- Integrated working can help increase coverage, quality and for meeting needs identified in reviews
- National group exploring feasibility of integrating EYFS and 2-½ yr HCP review
- Sharing summary of EYFS with HVs
- Using the Personal Child Health Record (red book)

Outreach and Family Support

- One of the key aspects of early intervention provided by children's centres.
- Unique role in supporting families, particularly those in greatest need, as part of a **multi-agency team**.
- We are working closely with the National College of School Leadership to appoint 3 '**outreach system leaders**' who will advocate and promote effective evidence based practice for outreach and family support.
- They will work to increase the **professional identity** of outreach and family support practitioners in children's centres so that they feel increasingly confident in their skills and working with other partners and professionals.

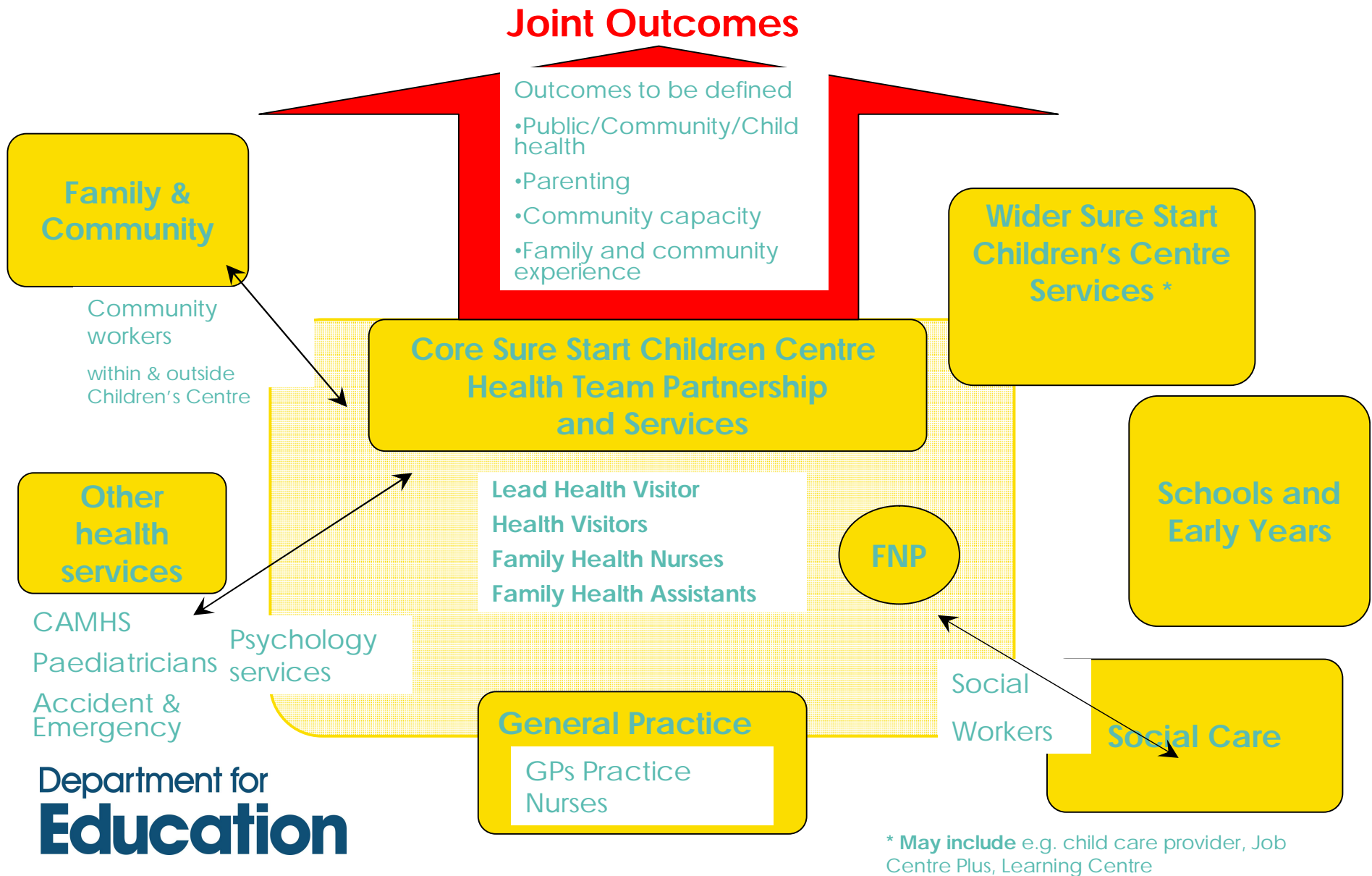
Health Visitors and SSCCs

- The **Health Visitor Implementation Plan** reinforces the importance of the relationship between Sure Start Children's Centres and the health visiting provision.
- ***Supporting Families in the Foundation Years*** highlights the unique role health visitors play in working closely with children's centres and primary care to join up healthcare and child development.
- DfE are currently working with health visitor **early implementer sites** to learn best practice about joined up working in the context of the new service vision, and are committed to sharing this best practice around all the relevant networks.

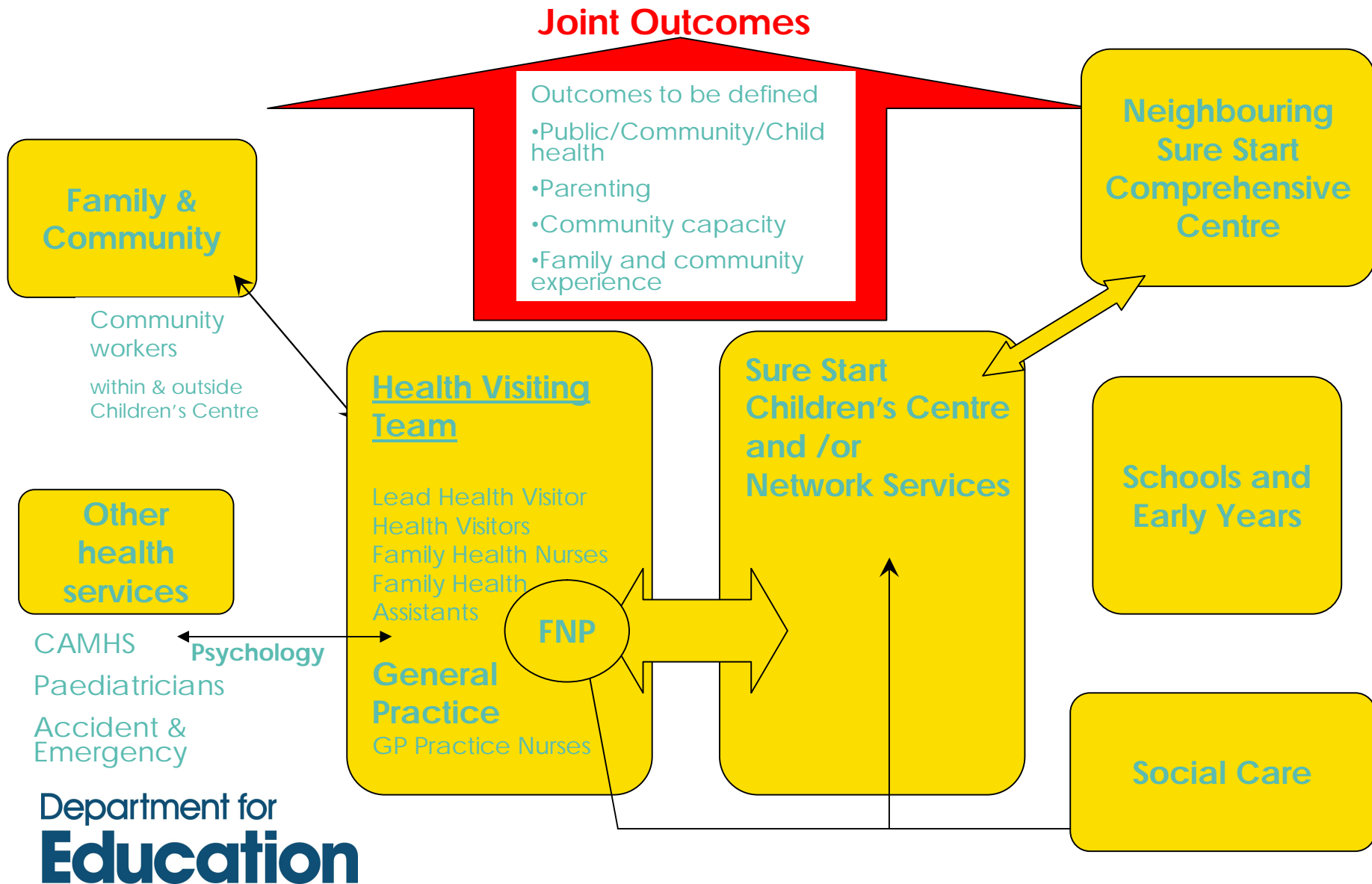
Fitting it all together locally

- Shared goals and outcomes for children and families
- Positive relationships and trust between practitioners
- Understanding and accepting different professional responsibilities and expertise
- Structures and systems help but **relationships** most important
- At a time of change continuity matters for families and front line staff
- What makes sense to a parent – quality of relationship, trust in expertise, continuity, setting
- Organisations and systems to support good practice (quality and safety) not the other way round
- Working with a complex system with multiple partners – ‘both and’ not ‘either or’ i.e. CC and GPs, targeted and universal, individual and community

Local Model (1)



Local Model (2)



The Munro Review and ‘early help’

- Highlighted the importance of offering help to children and families before any problems are apparent or when low level problems emerge.
- **Early help is better for children** on a number of levels: it stops problems getting worse; helps get over bad experiences more quickly and improves outcomes for children.
- The Government wants every Sure Start Children’s Centre to have access to a “**named social worker**”, learning from the named health visitor model.
- As local authorities begin to review and redesign how child and family social work is delivered, there are **opportunities to strengthen the contribution children’s centres make to early help**.
- A “named social worker” will help build confidence in children’s centres to manage risk and take appropriate child protection action where necessary.

Still many challenges

- **We recognise there are still barriers to effective joint working:**
 - Consistently heavy workloads and staff shortages.
 - Continuing structural changes and uncertainty.
 - Different professional terminology and approaches, alongside different training routes and commissioning arrangements.
 - Will take time
 - Challenges for parents

Different models, common themes...

- **Blackpool, East Sussex and Medway (Early Implementer Sites)**
 - ‘Named health visitor’ well embedded.
 - Co-location helps foster positive relationships.
 - Joint meetings between all services ensure effective referrals.
 - Use joint home visits and joint training to good effect.
 - ‘*A very genuine appreciation and understanding of multi-agency working*’ (Blackpool EIS)
- Good work going on in many places, coming out of difficult circumstances

Next Steps

Co-produced approach continues, particularly to look at:

- Best practice in outreach and family support
- Common understanding of “families in greatest need”
- Greater use of evidence based programmes and approaches
- The Healthy Child Programme
- FNP

The Government has committed to look carefully at the issue of **information sharing**.