

Family Support Hub Launched for the Upper Springfield & Whiterock Area in Belfast

On Friday 7th November 2014 a wide range of representatives attended the launch of the Upper Springfield & Whiterock area's Family Support Hub including health visitors, local community service providers, voluntary agencies, Belfast Health & Social Care Trust staff, Helen Dunn Family Support Hub Regional Coordinator and MP for West Belfast, Paul Maskey.

Deirdre Walsh Director of the Whiterock Children's Centre, the Lead Agency appointed in the area to coordinate the Hub says *"the purpose of the Family Support Hub is to bring together a variety of organisations that provide services for children, young people and their parents and carers. It will work with families to find out their needs and connect them to the right sorts of advice and support at times when they need them. Like many other representatives from West Belfast, our Hub members see this as a very positive step for the type of partnership working that lots of people locally have been working hard to embed regarding children, young people and family services"*.

Helen Dunn, Regional Family Support Hub Coordinator adds *"hubs have been designed to increase awareness, accessibility, and co-ordination of family support resources, with an emphasis on prevention and early intervention. They will act as a key point of contact at a local level and connect families, in a non-judgmental and non-stigmatising manner, to family support services"*.

Paul Maskey, MP for West Belfast added *"I welcome the development of the Upper Springfield & Whiterock Family Support Hub. It demonstrates the commitment in local areas to do all that is necessary to achieve better for local families. Whilst austerity means we must protect frontline services, we need to exercise caution when it comes to early intervention and prevention, such as the Family Support Hub model, because initiatives like this can be just as important. There is a 'pause' on the development of Hubs as a result of funding. It is critical that the proposed two other Hubs for West Belfast are developed. Whilst the resources given to individual Hubs are not huge, they enable very important capacity building and cohesion around services, which can only benefit families in West Belfast and have a lasting impact"*.

For further information about the Upper Springfield & Whiterock Family Support Hub please contact Brenda Kilpatrick, Hub Administration, C/O Whiterock Children's Centre, Telephone 02890 438438 Email: uswfamilyhub@outlook.com