

## **Early Help**

### **Early Help Vision**

Children / young people and their families may experience a range of needs at different times in their lives. All children and young people require access to high quality universal services but some also benefit from targeted support to address additional needs which relate to education, health, social welfare, or other issues.

It is important to us to provide a high quality early help offer. Our main aim is that outcomes for children / young people and their families will be improved by ensuring that all children / young people are able to be healthy, safe, valued and achieve their full potential.

The structures team and support workers meet local need through integrated and streamlined working practices and deliver cost effective, sustainable services. The team is based at The Pingle Academy and the service users are at the heart of planning and delivery.

The team has the following objective:

- To provide a high quality service to the families and service users, developing an effective and integrated workforce to respond quickly and to work proactively.
- To reduce duplication and bureaucracy
- To provide flexible services
- To enable more effective early intervention and preventative approaches

The team promotes emotional health well-being, positive behaviour and regular school attendance. Support workers help to identify and support those with, or at risk of developing emotional, behavioural problems through the provision of services provided in the schools / academies and for individual families.

### **The Referral Process**

#### **Managing requests for support and raising concerns**

The team may receive requests for support and have concerns raised about individual children / young people and families from many different sources. These may include the following.

- Self-referral from young person, parent or carer
- Notification of concern or request for support from the school / academy or specialist services



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- Identification of a need from a team member

Regardless of the route of the request for support, a Family Support Referral form is completed. The use of this form ensures consistency of information and the ability to prioritise need. The Team Manager reviews all referrals, assigns a case worker and prioritises as necessary.

Where there is a risk of significant harm, there is an immediate referral made into Child Protection Services.

### **Referrals to other services**

Referrals from the team to any other agencies or services required are actioned after a Family Support Referral has been completed, followed by an initial meeting with the child / young person and / or family, unless the child / young person is at risk of significant harm, in which case referral into Child Protection Services needs to be made immediately.

### **What is Early Help?**

Families can have their ups and downs. Being a parent can be hard work and there is no rule book. Sometimes, you or your children may need extra support. This may be before your children are born, when they are very young, or throughout their school years. There is nothing to be ashamed of in asking for help. The Early Help Service helps you recognise what's going well for you, where you may benefit from extra help and who is the best person to work with you and your family to make this happen. This may be through an Early Help Assessment (EHA).

### **Early Help Assessment**

This starts with an Early Help conversation. You'll chat with an Early Help worker about what's going well and what's not going well for you and your family and they will let you know what sort of help is available. This conversation might lead to an Early Help Assessment (EHA). This is how we get a full picture about the whole family. We use it to help you see what is working well and identify the areas where you could do with a bit of extra support.

It's your choice to take part in the assessment and you can choose who else should be involved.

Every person and family is different, but an Early Help Assessment (EHA) will:

- Help you see what's going well and not so well for your family
- Help you and others to see what support you might need
- Create a picture of your family's circumstances, which can be shared with your permission, so you don't have to repeat yourself to different workers



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- Help you to be part of a team of people working together on the same plan to get things going well again.

### **What happens after the EHA?**

With your permission, people from different organisations working with your family will share information and work together to help support you and your children. This could be school, health visitors, mentors, nursery, etc. This may then be followed by a 'Team around the Family' meeting.

### **Why do I need to give my permission (also known as consent)?**

Your personal information belongs to you. Agencies can't share your information unless you agree, because your information is protected by law under the Data Protection Act.

### **What is a 'Team around the Family' meeting?**

The family and workers involved come together to make a support plan. This is reviewed at regular intervals to ensure that progress is being made for your family and that the right support is in place. At this meeting, you'll choose a 'lead worker'. This can be any one of the people working with your family; you might choose the worker you see most often, or the person you find most approachable. Your lead worker will arrange the review meetings and be someone you can speak to at any point about any concerns or issues you and your family are experiencing.

### **What happens when I stop receiving early help services?**

We want you to become confident and able to find your own solutions and take responsibility for your family. You can continue to use all services that are open to families and children and if your needs change, then please ask us for further help if you need it.