

Early Help Support



2021 - 2022

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How to Contact our Early Help Team:

Safeguarding Team -

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1. Early Help

From time to time, family life can have its complications and sometimes families may need some extra help. To support and advise you at such times we have an Early Help Offer and a Family & Support Worker.

Early help, also known as early intervention, is support given to a family when a problem first emerges. It can be provided at any stage in a child or young person's life.

Early help services can be delivered to parents, children or whole families, but their main focus is to improve outcomes for children.

For example, services may help parents who are living in challenging circumstances provide a safe and loving environment for their child. Or, if a child is displaying risk-taking behaviour, early help practitioners might work with the child and their parents to find out the reasons for the child's behaviour and put strategies in place to help keep them safe.

By working together, we can better support children and families. Sometimes families need support from a wide range of agencies or people, for example, health services, housing services, family support workers, social workers and local police. As a school, we may be able to signpost a range of services to support families beyond the educational setting.

Early Help services aim to both provide advice and/or intervene where there is evidence of emerging needs with the objective of preventing escalation to higher level services.

Our primary aim is to identify support early, and to make sure that appropriate plans are put into place. This will require working with the school staff and other agencies if needed. We will also use existing interventions already in place within the school setting.

Jo Lee (Family and Pupil Support) coordinates Early Help assessments and support.

2. How will we know when Early Help is needed?

Parents, carers, children and staff may tell us that support is required, or practitioners may identify that there are emerging needs and services might be required, as there are concerns about a child or family.

Our team will assess the needs and this may identify that an early help assessment is needed and the subsequent action that needs to be taken.

3. Referrals and Vulnerable Children's Meetings

We now utilise an internal referral system that is designed to give the pertinent and succinct information to our Early Help and SEND Teams in order to triage cases and direct our response.

This helps us to prioritise need and to ensure the child and parent are directed to the appropriate services either internally or externally.

School staff use MyConcern (Safeguarding) and internal secure documents (Early Help), to record vital information about vulnerable children.

The Head Teacher (DSL) has case management responsibility and in consultation with the Safeguarding and Early Help teams will identify the level of need e.g. low level, emerging, complex or Child Protection concerns. Where emerging needs are identified the DSCB approved Early Help assessment tool can be used to support the information gathering and planning process.

Caseload Management reviews are held every half term with the Early Help Team.

4. Recording and Reporting

Our current system is MyConcern. Staff can log concerns and assign tasks to be completed. For each concern logged, an action must be taken by the staff member.

The structure that children will be supported and reviewed through will be the Early Help Assessment format, which is currently the assessment process used by the Local Authority. If a child moves school, a tracker is placed on the front of the file to ensure a child's information is read and acknowledged or it is transferred electronically via MyConcern.

An important role for the Family and Pupil Support Worker is to step up the Early Help Assessment to Starting Point, where there has been no improvement to the welfare of the child, and there are escalating concerns around the safety and wellbeing of a child. Where there are immediate Safeguarding concerns it will be taken to Starting Point, the county's single point access for safeguarding referrals, following consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Leads in School.

5. The following Flow Chart shows the process that takes place in school whenever a concern is raised about the emotional wellbeing or progress of a child.

Ashbourne Hilltop Primary SEMH, SEND & Early Help Offer

