

# Early Help Policy

*We take our responsibility for safeguarding our young people helping to support them and their families very seriously. We know the benefit of identifying the need for early help and working with parents to act early as a way of supporting before needs become more serious.*

*The school communities will therefore:*

- *ensure and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk to adults who will listen*
- *ensure that all children know there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty*
- *include in the curriculum opportunities for Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) classes, which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help*
- *work with parents and children to help improve lived experiences if/when required*

*Each school has its own safeguarding team and child protection policy which is clear on each of their websites and around the school site.*

## **Early Help can support children and their families who may be struggling with:**

- parenting – routines/family rules;
- families who may not be eating healthy food or keeping to a healthy lifestyle;
- low income or poverty;
- transport;
- limited community integration;
- young carer circumstances;
- substance/alcohol abuse;
- breakdown in family relationships;
- domestic abuse;
- breakdown in community relationships;
- Special Educational Needs (refer to local and school offer);
- child mental health;
- isolation;
- adult mental health;
- disability within the family;
- bereavement;
- attendance and punctuality;
- changes in behaviour;
- poor behaviour and risk of exclusion;
- child unaware of how to keep themselves safe online;
- child unaware of danger and how to keep themselves safe;
- child demonstrates sexualised behaviours;
- frequent house or school moves;
- extremist views;
- children who may become involved in anti-social or criminal activity;
- children associated with gangs;
- children going missing from care or from home;
- children who are at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;
- private fostering arrangements (a child from another family living within your home)

The list above provides examples of areas where, without intervention a family may break down or a child may be put at risk of neglect, emotional, physical or sexual harm. The school has no pre-prescribed criteria for supporting children and families. Each case is assessed according to needs and a bespoke programme put in place for that child and/or family.

The school will always gain consent and aim to involve children and their families at all stages of Early Help. The only exception to this is when the school believes that the child is at risk of significant harm and if:

- by telling parents it would put the child at further risk of significant harm or
- it would put an adult at risk of significant harm or
- it interferes with a criminal investigation.

### **How we might be able to help and support:**

Below are some ways we can offer support in our school:

#### **Pastoral Support**

- Class teachers, Form Tutors, Year Group Leaders picking up concerns quickly
- Meet & Greets
- Safe Spaces
- time with pastoral staff
- mentors
- Time Out or access to nurture rooms/designated rooms (depending on age and need this may include access to services such as play therapy, emotional literacy support, school counsellor)
- school led intervention programmes such as No Worries.....
- Education Welfare Officer to offer support and advice on attendance or punctuality
- PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education Programmes) and RSE (Relationship and Sex Education) programmes
- online safety support and advice through our computing programmes and parental information

#### **Safeguarding Teams and Family Support Worker**

All schools have Designated Safeguarding Team and access to a Trust Family Support Worker who will liaise with families, provide advice and sign-post to support. The safeguarding team or Family Support Worker may recommend completing a broader Early Help Assessment to understand and support appropriately. The Family Support Worker may also visit parents and carers at home. However, Early Help is a team effort (as shown by this Shropshire Early Help graphic below) and falls into a stepped approach according to need (in the table below):



## How we put Early Help into practice:

Families whose needs are met by on-going services such as schools, GP's, Health Visitors and Dentists alongside the love, care and protection of parents, carers and communities. Some limited intervention from a universal service may be needed to avoid arising needs or to meet a single identified need. The majority of children living in the UK will fall into this category.

### What do you need to do?

Access support in your community.  
 Call First Point of Contact 0345 6789021, Option 2 for Early Help and Support Team (EHAST).  
 Email the Family Information Service - [shropshireFIS@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:shropshireFIS@shropshire.gov.uk)

**Families needing information and advice**

Children and young people with additional needs (not just Special Educational Needs and Disabilities), that can be met through a single agency response or through agencies working together to provide a coordinated partnership response. The support required may only be short term, but if ignored, these issues could escalate.

### What do you need to do?

Single agency should talk to the family and carry out an Early Help Assessment (EHA) to ensure the child receives the right support, in the right place, at the right time. A Team Around the Family (TAF) meeting must take place to agree a coordinated response which will be detailed in a Family Plan.

**Families needing help**



The child has a high level of unmet and complex needs or is in need of protection and requires support from Children's Services:

- Child is/or may be at risk of significant harm if they remain in their parent's or carer's care and requires a Child in Need assessment and support.
- Child is assessed as having suffered significant harm requiring a multi-agency Child Protection plan to safeguard them.
- Child may need to be cared for outside their immediate family full time.

**Families who have a child in need, at risk of harm or requiring specialist services**

### What do you need to do?

Call First Point of Contact 0345 6789021, Option 1 for Children's Social Care. This may include making a referral to Children's Social Care, signposting to specialist services or a recommendation might be that an Early Help Assessment is appropriate.

**Families needing more help**

Targeted provision for children with multiple issues or complex needs where a coordinated multi-agency response is required. Despite Early Help interventions via a single agency or partnership working, these are children and families whose needs are not being met due to their range, depth and significance. This makes them very vulnerable and at risk of poor outcomes. Recognising the importance of relationships in identifying the most appropriate lead professional.

### What do you need to do?

Practitioners should talk to the family and carry out an Early Help Assessment (EHA) to ensure the child receives the right support, in the right place, at the right time. A Team Around the Family (TAF) meeting must take place to agree a multi-agency coordinated response which will be detailed in a Family Plan.

More information, including a range of services, can be found on the Shropshire Early Help Page [here](#). There is also a range of information and resources [here](#). Please note that we work with providers in Worcestershire who offer a similar range of services. There is a Cleobury Community drop in on a monthly basis please, see details below or contact the school for future dates.

## Cleobury Community

Free information, advice and support

### Early Help Framework

The Early Help identify the need for social services, police, Psychologists.

We use the Early Help

- there is a concern
- progress in learning or
- a child's needs are and/or broader than the

Using the EHF will help and work with other needs. The elements Framework will include on the following areas:

- general health
- physical development
- speech, language and
- emotional and social
- behaviour

The Cleobury Country Centre  
 Love Lane, DY14 8PE

Friday, 9am-11 am on:  
 15 Sept 2023 20 Oct 2023  
 17 Nov 2023 15 Dec 2023  
 19 Jan 2024 16 Feb 2024

You can chat, have a coffee and see how we can help you with:

- Housing support
- Children's health and wellbeing
- Healthy living advice
- Dementia support
- Family life
- Home fire safety
- Domestic abuse support
- Drug & alcohol support
- Financial advice
- Getting older

and lots more!

Shropshire Strengthening Families

Shropshire Council

### (EHF)

Framework (EHF) aims to help other services, including health, behavioural and Educational

Framework when: about a child's health, welfare, other aspect of their wellbeing unclear, different from the norm school can address

identify the child/family's needs agencies to help meet those that form the Early Help collating and sharing information

communication development  
 development  
 development

- self-esteem, self-image and social presentation
- family and social relationships
- self-care skills and independence
- learning, including: understanding, reasoning and problem-solving, progress and achievement in learning, participation in learning, educational aspirations
- basic parental care, including safety and protection
- emotional warmth and family stability
- parental guidance, behaviour boundaries and stimulation at home
- family history, including functioning and wellbeing
- wider family
- housing and financial considerations
- social and community factors

### Completing An Early Help Assessment

It may be necessary to complete an Early Help Assessment on a child/family at any time. The decision to carry out the assessment should be taken jointly with the Safeguarding team, the pupil (where appropriate) and parent/carers. Where the input of more than one agency is required (a multi-agency response) to support the family’s circumstances, a lead early help practitioner should be identified.

The lead Early Help Practitioner will develop an Early Help Record and Action Plan with the family as a tool for understanding strengths and needs, establishing goals and record the work undertaken by all practitioners and the family. There will be regular check ins to see if actions are making a positive difference to children.

When appropriate, the lead Early Help Practitioner will also be responsible for drawing all agencies who are named in the Early Help Record into a Team around the Family (TAF). The TAF will work with the family in a coordinated way and will meet with the family to achieve the goals established in the plan.

If the family’s needs are more complex, services such as Children’s Services may be appropriate and can offer a more targeted and intensive intervention. Please see [here](#) for a link to the Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership which has their policies and procedures [here](#) (including threshold documents)

If a parent refuses consent in completing an Early Help Assessment we will record the refusal. However, if we are concerned about a child’s welfare or safety the Safeguarding Team will seek immediate advice from the Duty Social Worker from Social Services Triage Team.

### Example Points of Contact/Multi-Agency Links

Universal – All children	Early Help: Families needing help	
Family Friends School Staff Governors Parent Teacher Association (PTA) Breakfast Club After School Clubs	Family Support Worker School Safeguarding Team Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) Police GP Health Visitor Midwife School Nurse Food Bank School Staff LA SEN Team LA Transport Team	Churches and Religious Leaders Housing Association Landlords Young Carers Citizens Advice Bureau Job Centre Traveller Support Services Army Support Services Interpreter Education Access Service Communication with Previous Settings Parenting Courses - Understanding Your Child



<p>Community Clubs (i.e. sports, arts etc.)</p>	<p>Sleep workshops Parenting support line Working on your relationship workshops</p>	<p>Family Information Service Community Hubs and Drop Ins Shropshire Beam – wellbeing service</p>
<p><b>Targeted Early Help: child or family need more help or specialist support</b></p> <p>Targeted Early Help School Safeguarding Team Social Care (Initial/Core Assessment) Parenting Courses - Understanding Your Child App and Courses Paediatrician Counselling Play Therapy 1:1 Therapy from specialist therapists Children and Young People’s Services (CYPS) Education Access Service Physiotherapist Family Endowment Fund</p> <p>Keep Safe Work Occupational Therapist Winston’s Wish (SWITCH Programme) Education Psychologist Cruse Bereavement Care The Samaritans Domestic Abuse Support Services We are with you Shropshire - Drugs and Alcohol Support NSPCC Child Online Protection and Exploitation Centre (CEOP) Channel Programme</p>		<p><b>Child in Need – child or family need high level support to prevent harm</b></p> <p>Social Care – Child Protection (CP), Child in Need (CIN) School Safeguarding Team Social Worker Police – Police Protection Order (PPO) Courts – Care Proceedings Counselling Therapy Channel Programme Specific services as appropriate</p>

Please see the Shropshire Early Help page for links to services ( [here](#) ) and/or a directory of links created by SGET [here](#).

### Example Early Help/Safeguarding Workflow within schools.

The safeguarding teams in schools have job descriptions to provide clarity on their roles and responsibilities. Below is an overview of how different roles in the school support on the workflow to provide the appropriate level of support to ensure children the safety and welfare of children.

Parents	Class teachers/Form Tutors/Support Staff/Pastoral Lead/Behaviour Support	DDSL/DSL/Family Support Worker See Job Description/Safeguarding Policy for further information	DSL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaise with school – keep school informed.</li> <li>• Act on advice and support.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Log on My Concern (clear summary; details of how the concern was followed up and resolved; note of any action taken/decisions reached/outcome)</li> <li>• Report straight to FPOC (0345 678 9021) <a href="#">SSCP</a></li> <li>• Engage children in their pupil voice as appropriate.</li> <li>• Keep an active eye on persistent disruptive behaviour and exclusion patterns – raise awareness to DDSL/DSL/Behaviour Lead/SLT as appropriate.</li> <li>• Liaise with families and agencies as appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Triage what comes through My Concern, spot patterns, identify support, raise awareness.</li> <li>• Know a range of services to signpost to or websites that have this range of services (School Website; <a href="#">SSCP</a>; <a href="#">NSPCC</a>; <a href="#">Shropshire Early Help</a>)</li> <li>• Liaise with Early Help Services: Charlotte Evans; Locality Development Officer- South; Strengthening Families People Directorate; Tel: 01743 252411; Mobile: 07990 086208; Email: Charlotte.Evans@shropshire.gov.uk</li> <li>• Complete Early Help Whole Family Assessments (<a href="#">Practitioner Information</a>)</li> <li>• Lead Early Help Meetings</li> <li>• Complete MARF/ and or other screening tools/ assessments and refer to SSC threshold document <a href="#">here</a> (e.g. Neglect; self-harm; suicide prevention; CE; substance misuse; DA; Prevent)</li> <li>• Actively engage with Early Help, CIN, CP</li> <li>• Inform and liaise with <a href="#">Education Access Service Inclusion Service</a> (Engage in Inclusion Advice Forum early) (<a href="mailto:educationaccessservice@shropshire.gov.uk">educationaccessservice@shropshire.gov.uk</a>; <a href="mailto:inclusion@shropshire.gov.uk">inclusion@shropshire.gov.uk</a> 01743254397) asap e.g. where challenging behaviours are starting to emerge and school based support through the graduated response is not bringing about suitable change, or via COMPASS where more than one suspension/persistent disruptive behaviour is becoming evident</li> <li>• Refer to FPOC (0345 678 9021 <a href="#">SSCP</a>)</li> <li>• Refer to <a href="#">Prevent</a> (use link for form) (<a href="mailto:prevent@warwickshireandwestmercia.pnn.police.uk">prevent@warwickshireandwestmercia.pnn.police.uk</a> Prevent Team on 01386 591835)</li> <li>• Refer to <a href="#">DBS</a> where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child.</li> <li>• Refer to police when a crime may have been committed (999; 101: <a href="https://www.westmercia.police.uk/">https://www.westmercia.police.uk/</a>; <a href="mailto:kate.oen@westmercia.pnn.police.uk">kate.oen@westmercia.pnn.police.uk</a>; local CSOs <a href="https://www.westmercia.police.uk/a/your-area/west-mercia/shropshire/cleobury-mortimer/?introducingyourlocalpolicingteam=contact-us">https://www.westmercia.police.uk/a/your-area/west-mercia/shropshire/cleobury-mortimer/?introducingyourlocalpolicingteam=contact-us</a>)</li> <li>• Support and advise staff. Liaise with staff. Plan training of staff on key themes/updates</li> <li>• Act as a point of contact for safeguarding partners</li> <li>• Liaise with the HT and senior leaders (e.g. SEN; Attendance; Behaviour) and keep them informed</li> <li>• Liaise with the LADO through the FPOC 03456789021</li> <li>• Liaise with families.</li> <li>• Oversee records and their appropriate transferal (as in policy)</li> <li>• Liaise with computing leads on online safety.</li> <li>• Liaise with PSHE leads about priorities/themes.</li> <li>• Ensure active use of policy by all.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have key information and links on website.</li> <li>• Have key information and links to send to administrators/staff to send out to parents as appropriate.</li> <li>• Report overall picture termly to Safeguarding Governor (<a href="#">template available</a>) and have overviews ready for Ofsted (My Concern Dashboard): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The single central record for the school</li> <li>○ Records and analysis of sexual harassment or sexual violence</li> <li>○ Records and analysis of bullying, discriminatory and prejudiced behaviour, either directly or indirectly, including racist, sexist, disability and homophobic/biphobic/transphobic bullying, use of derogatory language and racist incidents</li> <li>○ A list of referrals made to the designated person for safeguarding in the school and those who were subsequently referred to the local authority, along with brief details of the resolution</li> <li>○ A list of all pupils who have open cases with children’s services/social care and for whom there is a multi-agency plan</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Check that liaison with outside services is happening and that timelines are in place.</li> <li>• Lead on systems and structures</li> <li>• Ensure active use of policy by all.</li> <li>• Oversee training (statutory – see <a href="#">template</a> and to meet need)</li> <li>• Liaise with other DSL’s to share information at transition/transfer</li> <li>• As for DDSL</li> </ul>

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