



Earl Sterndale CofE Primary School

Early Help

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**Created/reviewed by:** S Humpleby

If you are a child at home and are worried about something but don't have a trusted adult at home who you can talk to, remember the Childline number 0800 1111



## What is Early Help?

At Earl Sterndale CofE Primary School we understand that 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.

We believe that 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.

We aim to:

**Work to families' strengths** especially those of parents and carers and take time to understand their needs fully.

**Build the resilience of parents**, young people, children and communities to support each other.

**Focus on preventing problems** before they occur and offer flexible, responsive support when and where it's required.

**Base all we do on evidence** of both what is needed and of what works and be brave enough to stop things that are wrong.

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.

## What support do we offer?

Our offer is embedded in Earl Sterndale CofE Primary School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and is part of our continuum of work in helping to keep children safe.

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL, can offer advice on a range of concerns or can signpost parents to other sources of information, help and support.

### **What sort of concerns might parents share with us?**

A wide range of issues such as behaviour management, domestic abuse, mental health issues, housing concerns, financial worries and debts, mobility difficulties, parents in prison, bereavement and loss, cyber bullying – in fact any concerns which you are worried might be having a negative impact on your children.

### **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.

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

### **How will families be supported through our Early Help Offer?**

Children and families will be supported and reviewed through the Early Help Assessment format, which is currently the assessment process used by the Local Authority. Our DSL can meet informally with parents/carers and children in the first instance and this can be followed by completing the Early Help Assessment. Following the assessment, families may be supported by a range of professionals from within and beyond school. Team Around the Family meetings may be held in school to identify what is working well, what needs to change and to agree actions to help and support families.

Gaining the views, wishes and feelings of the child is central to our safeguarding policy, and staff will also carry out direct work with children, for example completing Voice of the Child.

We are unable to use the DCC Mosaic system which would enable us to enter case notes and documents. Access to the system would also flag up concerns. As this is unavailable to us, we will contact the local Social Care Office when needed or Starting Point advice line.

An important role of the DSL 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 well-being of a child. Where there are immediate Safeguarding concerns, the case will be referred to Starting Point, the county's single point access for safeguarding referrals, following consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Leads in School.

We also provide support for individual pupils through the Derbyshire Positive Play and Nurture programme. We work closely with other agencies who can provide more specialist support for our families, for example, CAMHS and Crossroads. We can also signpost support groups and parenting courses on offer in the local area.

### **When will Early Help be available through the school?**

The Early Help offer provided by the school will be available during term time only. The DSL may attend prearranged meetings during school holidays if the need has been identified for open cases. In order to support families during holiday times, we will signpost agencies and activities who are available when school is closed.

### **Starting Point**

If you are concerned that a child is suffering or at risk of significant harm, please contact

**Starting Point: 01629 533190**