

Early Help

Early Help & Support

What types of support are available?

Day to Day and Pastoral Support

Most families, most of the time, need little or no external help or support. If they need help it is usually provided by universal services, such as schools and the NHS. However, all families can have times when difficulties arise and they either may not recognise it or may not know how to start putting things right. At Skerton St Luke's we believe in 'working together to support' for all of our children by working with families to provide early help and support: signposting to other organisations, making referrals or completing an Early Help Assessment.

Early Help Assessment

For those children and families whose needs and circumstances make them more vulnerable, or where schools need the support of other agencies to meet the needs of the family, a coordinated multi-agency approach is usually best. In Lancashire, this is achieved through undertaking an Early Help Assessment and assigning a Lead Practitioner to work closely with the family to ensure they receive the support they require. At Skerton St Luke's, we believe that we are a key partner in any multi-agency work to support families due to the excellent relationships we develop.

What is Early Help?

Early Help means providing help for children, young people and families as soon as difficulties start to emerge or where it is likely that issues will impact negatively on children's outcomes. At Skerton St Luke's, we follow the Lancashire County Council guidance and protocols in terms of the Early help offer.

Early Help...

- is for children of all ages and not just the very young.
- can be very effective in supporting a child, young person and/or their family to step down from statutory services as well as preventing the escalation of issues.
- is important because there is clear evidence that it results in better outcomes for children.

Lancashire County Council recognises that Early Help is a term that describes much of the everyday work of schools.

<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/practitioners/supporting-children-and-families/>

Early Help in Lancashire

The vision of all partner organisations working with children and families in Lancashire is to improve children's lives by working in partnership to raise aspirations, build achievement and protect the most vulnerable.

This is based on the belief that:

- Children, young people and families develop resilience if there are protective factors in place such as: a positive relationship with an adult; good literacy and communication skills; good school attendance; and, parents in or actively seeking/ready for work
- Children's needs are best met when help is offered in a universal setting within a socially mixed group and early on when problems start to emerge
- Children and young people's needs are best met when addressed in the context of the whole family, meaning that parents/carers/siblings' needs are addressed with consent as part of a holistic and integrated Early Help response

Early Help services should **support** and **strengthen** families so that they can **thrive**.

We follow the **Working Well with Children and Families Guidance**

<https://www.lancshiresafeguarding.org.uk/media/19299/wwwcf-part-1-and-2-final.pdf>

https://panlancshirescb.proceduresonline.com/pdfs/WWWCF_3_Lancs.pdf

As a school we also use the Lancashire CSAP (Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership) website:

The CSAP website is full of useful safeguarding and CP information.

<https://www.safeguardingpartnership.org.uk/>

Early Help Assessment

The Early Help Assessment is an intervention with a family to gather, explore and analyse with them information about all aspects of the child or young person (and their family's) life and then to identify areas where change will address support needs and positively impact on their lived experiences.

This is recorded on an Early Help Assessment form which includes the family's Early Help Plan.

The Early Help Assessment is **not** a referral form for professionals to complete to access other services supporting children, young people and families. The Early Help Assessment should be completed by the professional supporting the family to identify the family's unmet needs and develop a plan of support with the family.

Your Family's Early Help Assessment is available to all practitioners and professionals working with children, young people, and their families across Lancashire.

Working alongside families from a holistic, strength-based approach when areas of support are first identified will stop escalation towards crisis and the need for more intensive and specialist intervention.

Through the Early Help Assessment, Plan, and reviews via Team Around the Family meetings the wider partnership of services can provide families with the right support at the right time.

Lancashire's Children and Family Wellbeing Service-early help referrals

Lancashire County Council's Early Help Offer Lancashire's Children and Family Wellbeing Service (CFW) offers practical support to children, young people, parents/carers and families.

This support can be provided on a whole range of issues which may be affecting individuals or the family and is offered through a network of centres as well as in the community or in the family

home. The main focus of the service is to provide an enhanced level of support which is prioritised towards those groups or individuals who have more complex or intensive needs or who are at risk and particularly where we think that providing early help will make a positive difference.

We want any problems to be identified early and appropriate support be put in place on a basis on mutual respect and sensitivity to the family. Any concerns and referrals are made via early help and by having parental consent for an early help assessment.

Lancashire Children's Services Safeguarding Hub (MASH) – the single point of contact to support the child and family.

We use the Continuum of Need to establish the level of support needed. Please see below:



Help and Advice for Parents/ Carers

As parents/carers, you want to make sure that your children develop healthily and thrive. We're here to help you with advice on how you can build strong relationships with your children and keep them safe. Here is advice and resources for helping parents to keep their children safe, advice for parents on keeping children safe out of school, at home and online, when using the internet, social networking websites and playing online games, help and advice for creating a safe and nurturing environment for your children.

For guidance, further details can be found from:

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/>

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/>

<https://www.bbc.com/ownit>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/44074704> – staying safe online