



Early Help Policy 2023-2025

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Electronic copies of this plan are available from	Mereside Primary School, Blackpool
Hard copies of this plan are available from	Mereside Primary School, Blackpool
Date of next review	September 2025 (or as required)
Person Responsible for Review	Jane Walpole (DSL)

We recognise that Mereside Primary School plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing pupils with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

The school community will therefore:

- Ensure and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to
- 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.

Early Help Framework (EHF)

The Early Help Framework (EHF) aims to help identify the need for other services, including health, social services, police, behavioural and Educational Psychologists.

Our school recognises the importance of effectively using the Early Help Framework to access support for children and their families and we recognise that every person whose role involves working with children and young people needs to be prepared and able to recognise the need for support. Our school has an important role to play and is well placed to offer Early Help to support families. We aim to use the Early Help Framework to identify and provide the appropriate support for individual children/families to help early identification.

We use the Early Help Framework when:

- There is a concern about a child's health, welfare, progress in learning or other aspect of their wellbeing
- A child's needs are unclear, different from the norm and/or broader than the school alone can address

Using the EHF will help identify the child/family's needs and work with other agencies to help meet those needs. The elements that form the Early Help Framework will include collating and sharing information on the following areas:

- General health
- Physical development
- Speech, language and communication development
- Emotional and social development
- Behaviour 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 the Early Help Assessment

It may be necessary to complete an Early Help Assessment with a child/family at any time. The decision to carry out the assessment should be taken jointly with the relevant staff and will be

reported to a member of the senior leadership team (SLT) and/or Safeguarding team, the pupil (where appropriate) and parents/carers.

Where the input of more than one agency is required (a multi-agency response) to support the family's circumstances, a lead Key Worker within the school will be identified.

The lead Key Worker will document an Early Help Record with the family, with consent, as a tool for understanding strengths and needs, establishing goals and record the work undertaken by all practitioners to support the child and family.

The lead Key Worker will also be responsible for liaison and information sharing with all agencies who are named in the Early Help Record who collectively will work with the family in a coordinated way to support the family to achieve the goals established in the plan.

If the family's needs are more complex, services such as Social Care and Families in Need may be appropriate and able to offer more targeted and intensive intervention.

Guidance

1. Any concerns will be discussed with the child, parents and other agencies already involved with the child/family, unless doing so could be prejudicial to a child's wellbeing.

2. Key Workers will be involved in the process of completing the assessment with academy staff, pupil and family. At this stage, actions will be agreed that can be delivered by the teacher and the school. Following receipt of any information raising concern, the Key Worker and Designated Safeguarding Team will consider what action to take and can seek advice from a number of resources, as required:

- Early Help Hub
- Team around the child and family
- CAMHS
- Blackpool Social Care

3. This may mean discussions with other agencies involved. To avoid confusion, there will be a Key Worker, who will check the child's progress. This will be a member of the school's Pastoral Team.

Possible outcomes of the assessment

- Concerns have been resolved and no further action(s) is required

- Actions have been agreed and a date has been set for reviewing and monitoring progress
- Actions have been agreed and further action is required from other agencies and these have been identified
- A parent refuses consent in completing an Early Help Assessment. In this event, academy staff will clearly record the refusal. It is possible to override this lack of consent and where academy staff are concerned about a child's welfare or safety a member of the Designated Safeguarding Team will seek immediate advice from the Duty Social Worker.