

Early Help

5 Minute Facts

What is it?

Early Help is a way of bringing workers together to work with children and their families when they need extra support. This could be for any reason including health, education, parenting, emotional well-being and many more.

Support can be delivered from a wide range of services depending on what is needed; services already working with the family might offer additional help or requests for support could be made to specialist and targeted services. All services in Bolton are signed up to using the Early Help process.

Early Help is for children of all ages up to age 18 – as soon as problems start to stop things from getting worse.

Parents (or a child themselves if they are old enough) can ask for Early Help, or a worker that is already involved with a family may suggest that Early Help support might be needed.

How does it work?

Once it has been agreed that Early Help would be beneficial, the parent, child and worker should discuss and agree what is going well for the family and what extra support is needed (an assessment and plan). The assessment and plan will be recorded on a standard form to make sure that everyone understands the situation and works well without the family having to repeat their information. Sometimes, if a few services are needed, it might be helpful to ask everyone to have a meeting to ensure that all the support is co-ordinated. This is called a 'Team Around the Family (TAF)'. One person should make sure that the action plan is working and review

progress with the family – they are called the Lead Professional. The Lead Professional is usually someone who knows the family well and is often the person who started off the Early Help process.

How can we be sure Early Help is working?

After the assessment and plan has been put together, the family, with their Lead Professional, should agree a timescale to review it. This is usually 8-10 weeks but may be sooner if this is what is best for the family. The review should include the parents and child and should support the family to identify progress and ensure actions have happened. Importantly, it should identify how things are improving. If Early Help is still needed, this should be continued or if other actions are needed they can be added to the plan. Again all this will be recorded on a standard review form. On the other hand, if things have improved, everyone will agree that it is okay to close the Early Help Assessment and Plan.

Copies of the Early Help Assessment and Reviews are sent to the Early Help database, where it is recorded if an Early Help process has been started or is ongoing. This allows services to coordinate better around a family and ensures only one Early Help Assessment is ongoing at any one time. Reports are produced on how many Early Help Assessments are ongoing, but there is no reporting on individual cases.

For more information...

Further information about Early Help, guidance and template documents can be found on the website:

www.boltonsafeguardingchildren.org.uk

All the local info I need is just a click away!



www.mylifeinbolton.org.uk

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