

# What is Early Help in Childrens Social Care and what is our graduated approach?

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## Areas Covered

- Early Help Overview
- Connecting Partners beyond Childrens Social Care
- Working together earlier for improved outcomes
- Q&A

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## What is Early Help?

- Early help and early intervention are forms of support aimed at improving outcomes for children or preventing escalating need or risk. Because of this they are also sometimes referred to as prevention or preventative services.
- These services are part of a “continuum of support” and provide help to families who do not, or no longer, meet the threshold for a statutory intervention.

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## Early Help Assessments

- Early Help Assessments are completed where it is felt that there is an unmet need for the requiring early intervention or support, but it is unclear what that support should look like – or who is best placed to offer the support required.
- The assessment will seek to identify the current needs of the family and will include the wishes and feelings of all family members/carers.
- The person completing the assessment will also gather information from other professionals or agencies involved with the family in order to inform the assessment (such as schools, health visitor or SOLAR for example).

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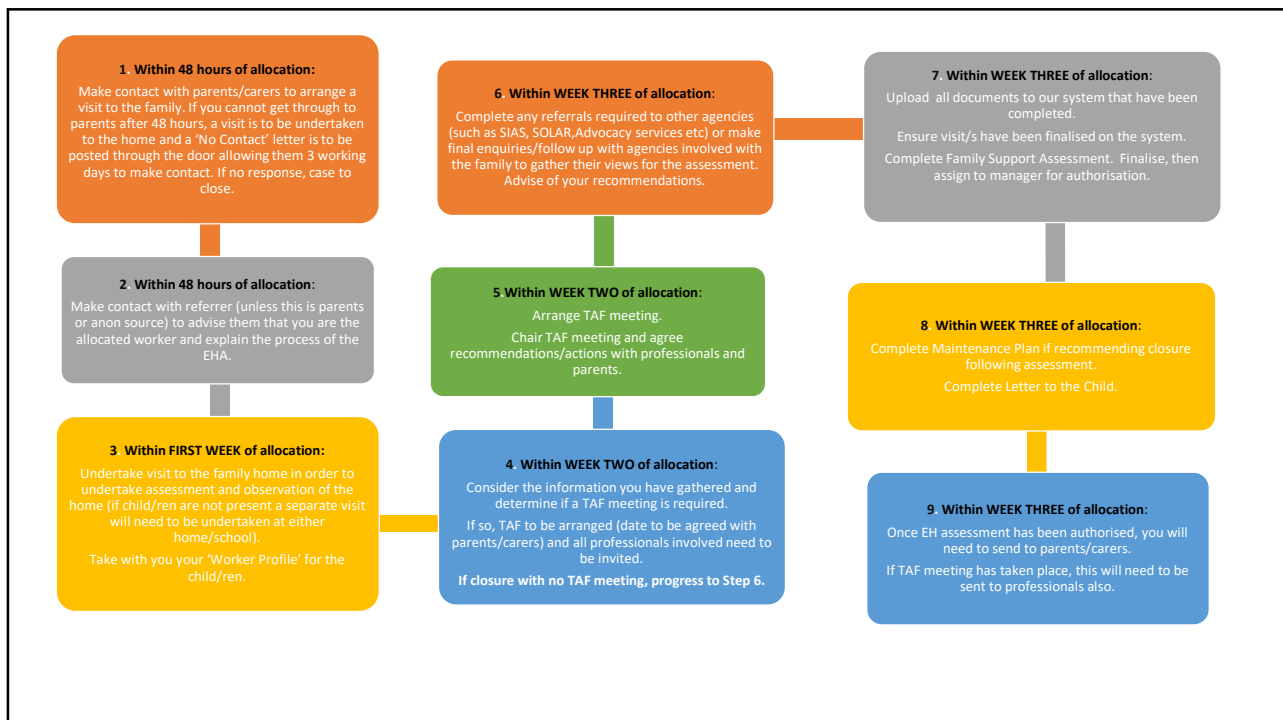
## Early Help Assessments

• *There are two ways in which EH assessments are completed in Solihull:*

1. Professionals/agencies who are working with the family are encouraged to complete an EH Assessment where there is an unmet need for a young person. Guidance/support for professionals is available on the SSCP website: [Solihull Multi-Agency Early Help Flowchart updated 05.24 \(procedures.org.uk\)](https://procedures.org.uk). The EHA can be submitted to SSCP for the purpose of evaluating, improving and monitoring support provided by services. This will help to improve the services provided to families in the future but **IS NOT** an avenue for requesting further support via Children's Services or the Family Support Service (Targeted Intervention).
2. EH Assessments are also completed by family support workers within Children's Services (Family Support Services) where a referral has been received via MASH with the recommendation for EH intervention.

Next is a process map to provide an idea of the steps taken when an EH Assessment is completed within Children's Services:

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### **Case Study**

Gemma is mother to Zack (4) and Emily (7).

Gemma split up with the children's father Peter 6 months ago. This split was acrimonious, and the children were being emotionally impacted by witnessing the ongoing conflict between parents. Alongside this, Peter's contact with the children was inconsistent. Peter would turn up at the family home whenever he felt like, demanding to see the children. This was disrupting the children's routine. Mother was also not in receipt of her full benefit entitlement, and she was struggling financially as Peter was not contributing to the children's care.

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An Early Help assessment was completed to gain the whole family's views, and a Family Support plan was recommended. The plan was to:

- Review the Team around the Family meeting following the initial TAF that took place as part of the EH Assessment.
- Help parents to understand the impact of parental conflict on the children
- For both parents to consider 'Parenting Apart' – a programme that supports separated parents who are in conflict.
- To gather the wishes and views of the children

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### Outcome

The FSW convened a TAF meeting with parents and school, and a plan was put in place to support the children at school.

The Worker was able to build a strong relationship with parents offering high support but also challenge when needed. Mother grew in confidence, and parents agreed a contact plan.

Sessions were completed with the children to gather their wishes and views, and a safe person at school was identified that they could talk to if they were worried about anything at home.

Both parents participated in the '**Parenting Apart**' programme which helped educate them around the impact of parental conflict on the children. During the Workers involvement there were no further incidents at handover for contact.

Once Peter was made aware how much Gemma was struggling financially, he agreed to provide financial support.

The Worker helped mother to claim her full benefit entitlement which reduced the financial stress. The children felt that they had a more stable routine as they were no longer exposed to the difficulties in their parent's relationship and were able to spend time with both mum and dad in a safer and more consistent way.

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## Head Teacher coaches

We now have in place 2  
Head Teachers coaches-  
working 4 day per week  
Jane Taylor and Kara  
Evans

Their role is to support  
schools with our  
universal offer around  
early help

Signposting and  
supporting schools as  
needs for children and  
the families emerge and  
to prevent escalation

Working closely with our  
4 Early Help  
Coordinators

Raising awareness of key  
services in place across  
the borough

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## Achieving a graduated approach

### Universal

Children and young people have needs that are met within universal provision (such as through their GP or school)

- Community and Partnerships
- Family information Service

### Extra Help

Children and young people with extra needs that can be met through a single agency response and/or partnership working.

- Schools
- Health visitors
- Police
- Parenting programmes



### Targeted Early Help

Children and young people with complex needs may require a targeted, coordinated response with a lead professional.

- Intensive Family Support Service

### Specialist

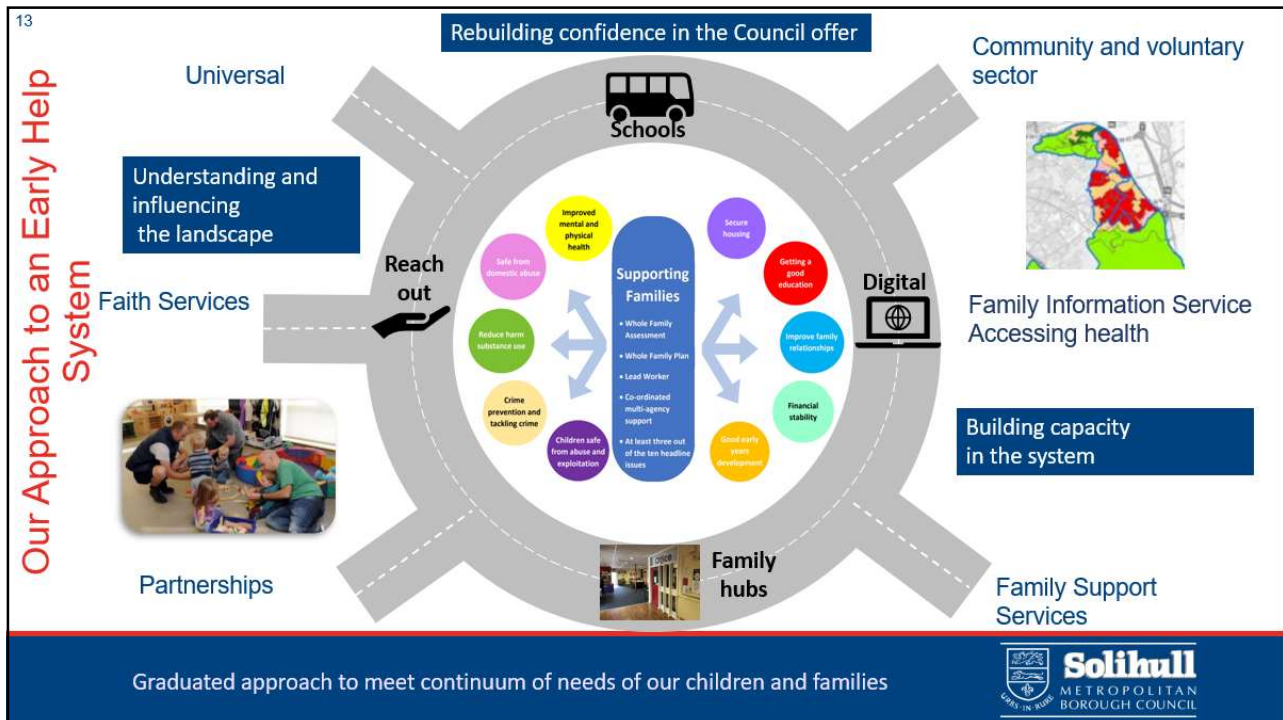
Children and young people with significant needs or a child in need of protection.

- Children in need (CIN)
- Child protection and courts
- Children looked after
- Care Experienced young people

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MENTAL WELLBEING GRADUATED APPROACH			
Universal	Universal Plus	Targeted	Specialist
<p>This refers to adjustments interventions and support accessible to all children, young people and families</p> <p><b>SOLAR</b> <a href="#">Solar - Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust (bsmhft.nhs.uk)</a></p> <p><b>Forward Thinking Birmingham</b> Forward Thinking Birmingham we work with children, young people and young adults who are struggling with their mental health.</p> <p><b>RISE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dimensions</li> <li>• Mental Health in Schools Teams</li> <li>• Primary Mental Health Teams</li> <li>• Targeted Emotional and Mental Health Support</li> </ul>	<p>This refers to support and interventions for children, young people and families who require extra help in order to make the best of their life chances.</p> <p><b>SOLAR</b> <a href="#">Solar - Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust (bsmhft.nhs.uk)</a></p> <p><b>Forward Thinking Birmingham</b> Forward Thinking Birmingham we work with children, young people and young adults who are struggling with their mental health.</p> <p><b>NSPCC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Links to mental health support</a></li> </ul> <p>General Practitioner (GP)</p> <p><b>Barnardo's</b> Online resources</p> <p>Well-being: Give children</p>	<p>This refers to support and interventions for children, young people and families that have more enduring emotional and mental health needs.</p> <p><b>Solihull Family Support Service Targeted Offer</b></p> <p><b>Target Group:</b> Children and families identified as having additional needs but not yet in crisis.</p> <p><b>Objective:</b> Provide early intervention to address emerging mental health concerns.</p> <p><b>Interventions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family support workers providing home visits to offer guidance and support.</li> <li>• Small group programs for children focusing on social skills, emotional regulation, and coping strategies.</li> <li>• Peer support programs and mentoring schemes.</li> <li>• Workshops and support groups for parents on managing children's</li> </ul>	<p>This refers to support and interventions for children, young people and families who require involvement from appropriately qualified professionals to meet their needs</p> <p><b>Living Well Consortium</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Living Well UK is a free mental health services Solihull &amp; Birmingham to improve the health, social care for local people by our therapists.</li> </ul> <p><b>NHS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online Cognitive Behavioural Therapy/Other MH conditions</li> <li>• GP Website</li> <li>• Online Counselling</li> </ul> <p><b>Support for additional needs and disabilities</b> <b>SOLIHULL LOCAL OFFER</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Referral for a HAF activities code for families not entitled to benefits.</li> <li>• Direct Work on age stage development, resources provided and impact on child</li> </ul>

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## Family Hub Offer for Solihull

The Family Hub offer includes a combination of **hub buildings, outreach and digital services**.

In Solihull we now have:

- **4 Hub buildings (Evergreen, Elmwood, Riverside and Hatchford Brook)**
  - Operating **weekdays** and **evenings**.
- **Outreach** venues, where part-time services and activities take place in **community venues**
- **Digital offer for the whole borough**
- (e.g. website, online groups, advice, App)



### Children's Services

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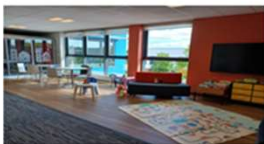
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## Where are we now?

4 Hub Buildings & Outreach Offer.  
Opened May, June and September 2024.  
Consistent feel, welcome and branding.



**Solihull  
Family Hubs**



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**“We were overwhelmed  
and didn’t know where  
to get help.”**

A newly-arrived family came into the Hub to seek help about school places. They arrived in the UK only five days prior.

Staff called the school admission staff and helped the family complete and send across the necessary forms, securing a mid-year transfer for their child!

They bumped into another family who had also recently arrived in the local area, and spent time sharing and learning about each other's experiences.

*Image does not depict the children or adults described above.*

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## Contacting the Hubs



[www.solihull.gov.uk/family-hubs](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/family-hubs)

[Solihull Family Hubs | Facebook](#)

### **Elmwood Family Hub – Smiths Wood**

Catherine Price (Hub Co-ordinator)

[Elmwoodfh@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:Elmwoodfh@solihull.gov.uk)

### **Riverside Family Hub – Chelmsley Wood**

Louise Sparkes (Hub Co-ordinator)

[Riversidefh@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:Riversidefh@solihull.gov.uk)

### **Hatchford Brook Family Hub – Elmdon**

Shelly Curtis (Hub Co-ordinator)

[Hatchfordbrookfh@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:Hatchfordbrookfh@solihull.gov.uk)

### **Evergreen Family Hub - Kingshurst**

Jenny Edwards (Hub Co-ordinator)

[jennye@colebridge.org](mailto:jennye@colebridge.org)

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