

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO EARLY HELP

Every family has its ups and downs. Being a parent is hard work and there are no instruction manuals. Sometimes, you or your children may need extra support. This may have been before your children were born, when they were very young, or maybe it may be necessary to seek help sometime through their school life. There is nothing to be ashamed of in asking for help. Early help supports you to recognise what's going well for you, where you may benefit from extra help, and who can help you.

What is Early Help?

Early Help means providing support for families as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. An Early Help assessment is a way of getting a picture about the whole family and using it to help you see what is working well and what areas could do with a bit of extra support. It is a voluntary process and can only happen with your permission. A member of trained staff will sit with you to gather information and will have details of other agencies that can also help and guide you and will take a role in supporting your family. With your permission, people from different organisations working with your family will share information to work together to help support you and your children. This could be school, health visitor, mentor, nursery, etc. The information gathered will help to set some targets for both you and the people working with your family.

Who do I speak to?

At Barrow, the pastoral team is Mrs Woodland for wellbeing and behaviour and Miss Fairweather for medical needs, they are able to listen to concerns and signpost parents to the correct agencies. If you would like to make an appointment to speak or see these ladies, contact the school office.

How might the support be managed?

If you have a concern that needs more than the support from the Pastoral Team and a referral for further help has been accepted, a team around the child (TAC) meeting can then be arranged where everyone comes together to make a support plan. This is reviewed at regular intervals to ensure that progress is being made for your family and that the right support is in place. At this meeting, a lead practitioner will be identified who will arrange the review meetings but also will be someone you can speak to at any point about any concerns or issues that you and your family are experiencing.

The lead practitioner can be anyone who works with your family. You are asked who you would like to take this role: it may be a worker you see most often, or find most approachable. It doesn't have to be the worker who undertakes the assessment with you at the start.

Who might the school refer to?

The Early Help Team
Children and Young People Services
The In Year Fair Access Panel
County Inclusive Support Service
School Nurse
Speech and Language Therapist
Educational Psychologist
Young Carers
SENDAT
Sendias
Local Offer Broker
Educational Welfare Officer

Signposting: agencies that school might suggest as sources of further support

Citizens advice Bureau
GP
Occupational Therapist
Paediatricians
One Life
Freedom Project
Housing Association
Food Bank

Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service

When should I contact the Pastoral Team?

Contact us when you have a concern which is affecting your child(ren). We will always try and see you quickly or give you a telephone call to arrange a meeting time.