

28/11/2018

By email

Dear Head teacher,

Re: Early Help Assessments

I am writing to you to update you and seek your support regarding Early Help Assessments. As part of our work focusing on ensuring that there are effective early help arrangements, we have been providing a lot of scrutiny to the role of the Lead Practitioner and external partners taking a lead for Early Help Assessments (EHA).

You will be aware that all referrals to the council for an EHA come through the one front door for social care and early help. For any EHA requests, they go to the Early Help Assessment Partnership Allocations Hub which meets fortnightly to review these and then allocate them to the most appropriate agency. The hub can also be used to look at existing EHAs which require multi-agency support.

Due to the frequency of the hub, it is accepted that schools cannot always attend the 30 min slots allocated to requests. As agreed, there is a proforma in place that schools are expected to complete in advance of the request being heard at the hub. Unfortunately, this is not routinely completed which would support the hub in having the full picture of what is going on for the family to inform appropriate allocation and resources.

In addition, many schools report that they are already doing a lot of early help work supporting students and their families and effectively leading EHA's within their own schools with minimal support from other agencies.

As a result of this feedback, the council's early help service recognise that there is a need for additional support for schools in particular to support with the completion of EHA's, processes to follow and how to ensure the principles for an EHA are in place as outlined within Leicester's Early Help strategy which can be found [here](#). Information on how to make a referral for an EHA can be found [here](#).

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In summary these are:

1. Consent to take part in an Early Help Assessment gained
2. An assessment of need is undertaken with an action plan in place
3. A focus on outcomes for children and their families
4. A team around the family approach (whole family work) must be in place
5. Regular review of the plan with the family
6. Management oversight must be in place

To support with this, the council have a small team of Early Help Assessment Co-ordinators in place who can provide support to schools with the following:

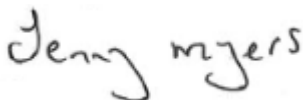
1. Support to complete the early help assessment and information on how to access pathways for support
2. Follow up support if schools are identified as the most appropriate agency to lead the EHA from the Early Help Partnership Allocations Hub
3. Supporting with read access to Liquid Logic and navigation around the system.

You can access this support by simply emailing Early-Help-Queries@leicester.gov.uk and one of the Early Help Assessment Co-ordinators will contact you.

This service is available from now and will be followed up with a detailed presentation at the next Designated Safeguarding Leads Forum on the 14th January alongside a progress update on the work undertaken by the Council's Early Help Service to implement the Early Help Schools Guide as commissioned by the Leicester Education Strategic Partnership. This guide can be accessed [here](#).

I also thought it would be useful to bring to your attention that within the updated statutory guidance for schools and colleges on safeguarding children and safer recruitment, using early help as an approach is much more visible and a key priority within *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018* which can be found [here](#). It is also helpful to review chapter one in *Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2018* which is all about a partnership response to early help, this can be found [here](#).

Yours Sincerely,



Jenny Myers
LSCB Independent Chair