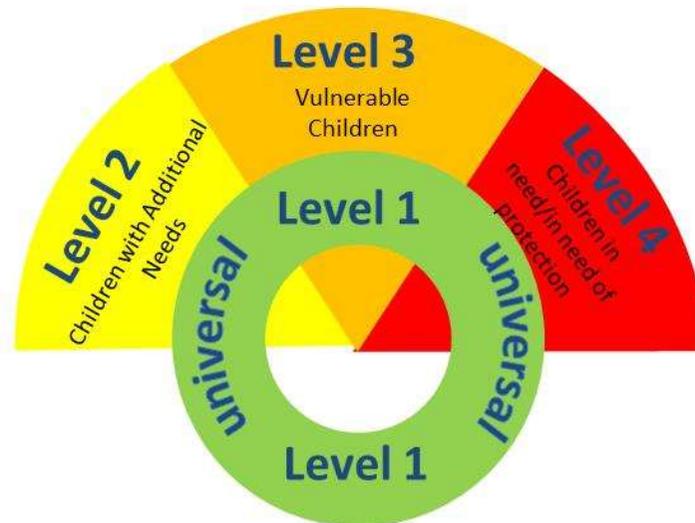




“The right help at the right time”



Poole Children's Trust Early Help Strategy 2017-2020



Contents

1. Definition of Early Help.....	2
2. Vision	2
3. Achieving Our Vision.....	3
4. Meeting Our Priorities	4
5. Key Principles	5
6. Early Help across the Poole Levels of Need	6
7. Governance, Planning and Commissioning of Early Help Services	12
8. Measuring Success.....	12
Appendix I - Needs analysis.....	13
Appendix II – Levels and continuum of need.....	15

1. Definition of Early Help

Early help is about identifying need for support at an early stage and providing purposeful and effective help as soon as possible to prevent those issues escalating and becoming more complex to resolve. Early help can be offered to children and young people aged 0-19 years, to families and parents, including to vulnerable groups.

- So that problems don't arise in the first place (prevention)
- So that problems are dealt with early so that risks and impacts are reduced (early intervention/secondary prevention)
- So that we support children, young people and families when they are more vulnerable and have more complex or longer-lasting needs

2. Vision

Children, Young People, Parents and Families and their local communities will have the skills, resilience and resources themselves to cope with adversity and challenges.

Children, Young People, Parents and Families can easily access services that meet their needs at the right time and in the right way to achieve good outcomes and best value for money.

Services will be coherent, integrated, targeted at those in most need and focused on improving outcomes and reducing the need for more specialist high cost services.

3. Achieving Our Vision

This is a partnership strategy; its delivery depends on successful working, not only with statutory agencies such as Police and Health but also a range of other agencies and providers including: schools, other council services, Early Years providers, Further Education and the voluntary and community sector.

To achieve our vision, working in partnership, we will:

- Support universal settings to act effectively as the first port of call for families, build resilience and identify where a family needs additional support
- Ensure that children, young people and their families with additional and emerging needs can access the support they need (Level 2 services) to prevent individuals from becoming part of an ongoing cycle of delivery and to avoid escalation of need
- Provide support across partners, for children, young people and their families, that meet their needs and prevents escalation to Level 4 services unless required. Where Level 4 services are required all staff are clear how to access help and support is received quickly.

[Section 6](#) explains how this works operationally across the Poole Levels of Need.

This strategy is a refresh of Poole's first Early Help Strategy, as such much is already in place to deliver it; an implementation plan for 2017/18 sets out the further work required.

The strategy and implementation plan have been informed by our needs analysis (see [appendix I](#)).

4. Meeting Our Priorities

The Early Help Strategy supports delivery of the Poole Children's Trust Children's Services Strategic Plan, specifically:

Deliver excellent safeguarding and early intervention to keep children safe and promote their welfare

Ensure that children, young people and families receive effective early help and early intervention to improve their resilience and improve outcomes.

Dorset Sustainability and Transformation Plan

Prevention at Scale and Integrated Community Health Services

Borough of Poole's Corporate Strategy:

'Ensure all children and young people have the chance to achieve their full potential'

Phase 2 of the 'Troubled Families' programme has been mainstreamed into Poole's Early Help Offer. This means that:

All families that have been assessed as being at Level 3 will be treated as being part of the programme, as long as they meet core programme criteria. They will have a lead practitioner, an early help plan and their outcomes will be monitored to ensure that services are achieving sustained change with the family.

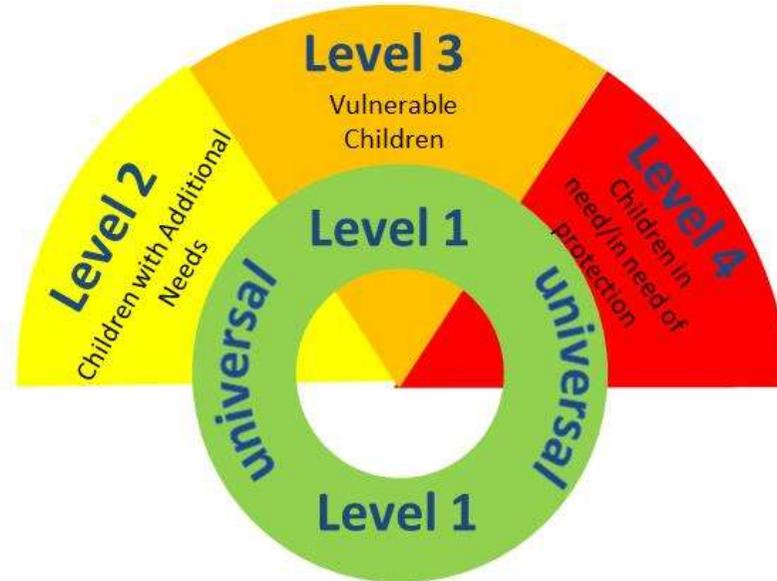
5. Key Principles

Key principles which will guide the Early Help strategy offer:

- Children, young people and their families are central to defining their strengths and challenges and addressing these; we will support them to have the skills and resources to be self reliant.
- We will make it easy for children, young people and their families and those who work with them, to access information, advice and support.
- We will support the capacity of our universal services to respond to emerging issues and support families to address them without requiring escalation to more targeted services.
- We will identify strengths in a family and ensure risks are identified at an early stage so that the family or young person can receive the appropriate level of response through Poole's partnership Early Help Offer.
- We will use the experiences of children, young people and families and their views to review and improve services delivery.
- Our services will demonstrate the impact they have on improving outcomes for children, young people and families.
- We will develop the skills of our children's services to ensure we have an effective Early Help Offer.
- We will ensure that our Early Help Offer is differentiated according to level of need so that families receive the right support at the right time.

6. Early Help across the Poole Levels of Need

This diagram shows the Poole levels of need (Level 1 Universal supports all children which is why the green ring continues while need increases)



1. **Level 1 - Universal Services.** All children will receive Universal services, including as need increases
2. **Level 2 - Universal Plus Services.** Children and families who have additional needs
3. **Level 3 - Partnership Plus Services.** Children and families who are vulnerable and need a multi-agency response
4. **Level 4 - Specialist/Statutory Services.** Children and families with the highest levels of complex need, including those at risk of significant harm (child protection), Children in Need and children and young people with an Education Health & Care Plan.

see Bournemouth & Poole LSCB levels and continuum of need <http://www.bournemouth-poole-lscb.org.uk/> attached as appendix II

Our aim is to make it easy for children, families, young people, and those who work with them, to access information, advice and support. It is recognised that some families' needs can escalate and de-escalate - whether families receive services from one or all four levels of service; the critical thing is the need to work and integrate with partners across all levels of provision. Providing the right help at the right time will both support families to be self-sufficient and support Poole to make best use of its resources.

Accessing the right support at this stage will prevent individuals from becoming part of an ongoing cycle of delivery and to avoid escalation of need which may result in specialist/statutory services and interventions being needed. Children, young people and families will access these services directly either by self-referral or via a referral from a universal or other service.

Level 1: Universal Services

All children will have needs that are met by the resources of families, friends and neighbours and by Universal services, such as children's centres, early years settings, child health services (via the child health programme), positive activities for young people, general practitioners and schools.

Early Help Offer at Level 1

Universal services are the first port of call as families identify the need for help.

Children, young people and families must be able freely access information and advice appropriate to their needs.

The Family Information Service (FIS) is a universally accessible free, confidential and impartial information service for parents and carers of 0 to 19 year olds (24 years if their child is disabled). It provides comprehensive and up-to-date information on local organisations, services, childcare, activities and events relating to children and young people, their parents and carers as well as professionals working with Families. It also provides the 'Local Offer' of information for children with SEN or a disability and their carers.

www.poolefamilyinformationdirectory.com

UP for young people in Poole

www.upinpoole.co.uk

This website is for young people. The site is designed as a directory to provide information on local organisations, services, activities and events relating to young people, their parents and carers. As well as specific information young people can be signposted to talk to someone confidentially.

Universal services provide access to support whether this is via a school, Children's Centre, Early Years Setting, GP surgery, Health Visitor, the N.18 Advice Centre, the Family Information Service or other sites where services are based. These services will signpost families to additional support if required and are always available for families who are already receiving extra help.

Universal services will work closely with each other, have an understanding of the role of other services and be able to identify when a child, young person or family needs help or support.

Universal services have an important role in supporting children, young people and their families in dealing with areas that they find difficult in their daily life and building on their strengths.

Health universal services; general practitioners, midwives and health visitors working with children's centres are crucial in that they provide the first point of contact for new families with children's services, they will identify those parents who are vulnerable, identify risk and resilience factors and who would benefit from services within Poole's Early help Offer..

For school-aged children, school staff and linked services (in schools or in the community) such as school nurses, are crucial in identifying vulnerability and ensuring the right help is provided at the right time through Poole's Early Help Offer.

Universal services staff must be able to access, advise and support from more specialist services so that they can work with the child, young person and their family to prevent needs escalating.

Level 2: Universal Plus Services

Some children, young people and families will have additional and emerging needs for which they may seek further support to resolve. They may be supported through the universal services available or they may look to a more focussed targeted approach.

Early Help Offer at Level 2

At Level 2 there is a group work Early Help Offer across all partner agencies. All group work is supplemented by assertive pre and post group support delivered by the most appropriate organisation. There are clear pathways to and from group work with ongoing support plans in place.

Our Poole Early Help group work offer includes a range of group work delivered by health and the Local Authority, and a range of professionals, in our children's centres, school and within local communities. Examples include parenting programmes, targeted youth work and short breaks for children with special educational needs and disabilities.

An Early Help Assessment may be used if it is helpful but will not always be required.

Where group work is not appropriate 121 support will be available.

Level 3 Partnership Plus Services

Children, young people and families at this level will have a number of additional needs which will escalate without a coordinated service intervention.

Early Help Offer at Level 3

Families will have a holistic Early Help Assessment, which considers the needs of the child in the context of the family, to make sure they receive the right service. A trusted lead professional who can engage the child, young person and their family will co-ordinate the support plan.

A multi agency, co-ordinated response will bring together a range of expertise through a Team Around the Family approach. Services will be well-coordinated and the universal service involvement will be an integral part of the families support.

The revised group work offer at level 2 supplements one to one roles for cases at Level 3. There will be a Lead Practitioner who co-ordinates the support at every level for the family and will oversee the plan with the family.

Information will be shared to ensure the family do not have to share their story multiple times and so the young person or family and all who work with them fully understand the outcomes to be achieved.

Features of intervention at this level which will be consistently applied across services:

- Working with the child, young person and family
- Assertive and persistent
- Relationship based, with families, partners, and colleagues
- Whole family systemic – integrated multi-agency plans

- Solution focussed, responsive to the family's requirements and specific needs
- Outcome focussed with evidence of effectiveness
- Building resilience and non-dependency

Some families at Level 3 will be complex with areas of risk and concern. The family and other agencies will be clear who is the accountable manager for oversight of risk and concern.

LEVEL 4 : Specialist/Statutory Services

Children young people who require statutory intervention because they have complex needs and are at risk of significant harm. This will include those who are children in need, children requiring statutory child protection, at risk of custodial sentence or with severe mental health problems which may require inpatient provision. All children's services staff should be clear on the thresholds for risk and concern and how to access help.

7. Governance, Planning and Commissioning of Early Help Services

This Early Help Strategy is monitored by the Children's Trust Board. In addition key indicators are monitored by the Bournemouth and Poole Local Safeguarding Children Board. The strategy and implementation plan is driven and delivered through the Early Help Partnership Group (established 2017).

In response to identified need Poole Local Authority, neighbouring authorities and the Clinical Commissioning Group commission a range of Early Help Services through pan Dorset Joint Commissioning arrangements or through local Poole commissioning. An example of this is evidence based Parent Support Programmes (see Poole Parenting Support Strategy). Information about these services and how to access them can be found through The Family Information Directory.

8. Measuring Success

Success will be measured against the outcomes for children, young people and families, through key performance indicators and tracking the Implementation Plan.

Appendix I - Needs analysis

The Poole Children's Trust understands the needs of the children, young people and families in Poole and sets its priorities from several different sources.

At a strategic level the Joint Strategic Needs analysis provides the overview of the needs of the population, including children across Poole (<http://www.publichealthdorset.org.uk/understanding>). It tells us that while overall many children in Poole have good outcomes, particular vulnerable groups and children in specific areas of Poole do not do as well and will require targeted Early Help.

Alongside and informing the JSNA, specific needs analyses are undertaken around vulnerable groups (e.g. The Needs Analysis on Children with SEN and Disability)

In addition the Children's Trust looks at the effectiveness of services and the impact they are having on improving outcomes for young people. The views of young people are vital to help understand what needs to change (e.g. recent work with young people on changing the service delivery model around emotional well being and mental health)

Key messages about the need for Early Help are:

- Poorer outcomes for children in specific areas of the town: Turlin Moor, Bourne Valley and parts of the Town Centre.
- Vulnerable children's attainment gap, particularly at Key Stage 2.
- Poorer outcomes for some children with SEN and/or a disability.
- Pressures on children in care services and child and adolescent mental health services.
- The growing diversity of the town and how services respond to that diversity.

- Specific issues around risky behaviour for teenagers.
- The impact of domestic abuse, parental mental health and parental substance misuse on children.
- The impact of the lack of affordable housing and in work poverty.

In November 2016 a detailed analysis was undertaken of those families known to local authority case management services who were children in need, at Level 3 and Level 4 (see levels of need in next section). This snapshot of need (of 835 children) confirmed the following need profile:

- Overall for Poole the 5 main child characteristics recorded were: non-school attendance, child mental health, child health/disability, self esteem and anger-management.
- Alderney had by far the highest number of cases for almost all the child characteristics recorded, followed by Newtown and Hamworthy West.
- 418 (50%) of the total 835 children & young people had at least one of the toxic trio (adult mental health, Substance Misuse and Domestic Abuse)

The analysis also showed that at level 3 we need staff that have the skills to work with families in:

- Adult and child/young person mental health
- Domestic Abuse
- Adult drug and alcohol issues
- parenting

Appendix II – Levels and continuum of need

LEVEL 1 UNIVERSAL	LEVEL 2 UNIVERSAL PLUS	LEVEL 3 PARTNERSHIP PLUS	LEVEL 4 SPECIALIST / STATUTORY
Children with no additional needs	Children with additional needs	Vulnerable children with high level additional needs requiring coordinated services	Children in need and/or children in need of protection who require statutory services and/or local authority care
All children and young people access UNIVERSAL services			
IDENTIFICATION: Children who make good overall progress in all areas of universal development and receive appropriate universal services	IDENTIFICATION: Children and Young People with additional and emerging needs which cannot be met without the support of additional services Many needs will be met by staff in universal services receiving advice and support from specialist services	IDENTIFICATION: Children and young people at this level are vulnerable and are characterised by the level and / or combination of needs within their families. They will have a number of high level additional complex needs which may escalate without a co-ordinated service intervention. There may be an element of unknown risk within the child's situation that requires further assessment.	IDENTIFICATION: Children in need and / or children in need of protection from likely or actual significant harm, often associated with concerns of immediate or ongoing physical, emotional or sexual abuse or severe neglect. (see LSCB Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Safeguarding Procedures), and those in need of local authority care
RESPONSE: To access universal services e.g. GP, Health Visiting, Nursery, School and Pre-School	RESPONSE: These children may require a lead professional if coordinated support services involving more than one agency is required. The lead professional could be within the universal setting or the additional support service.	RESPONSE: In these cases an Early Help Assessment is required and a Lead professional should be identified. Assessment should lead to a multi-agency support plan overseen by the Lead professional utilising Team Around the Child/Family meetings as needed. If there is a level of unknown risk within the complex needs of the family, statutory single assessment and intervention may be required and so a referral is made to Children's Services Social Care.	RESPONSE: Referral to Children's Services Social Care or specialist services for intervention.

