



Ashbourne Primary School Early Help Offer 2025

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Contents:

Section:

1. Introduction.
2. Early Help.
3. Referrals and Vulnerable Children's Meetings.
4. Recording and Reporting
5. Early Help Interventions.

1. Introduction

At Ashbourne Primary School, we recognise the importance of supporting children and families at the earliest opportunity to ensure that all pupils are safe, happy and able to achieve their potential. Early Help provides advice, guidance and intervention where emerging needs are identified, with the clear objective of preventing escalation to more specialist or statutory services.

This document outlines the Early Help provision available within our school and describes the systems and processes that underpin our support for children and families. It is intended to provide clarity and consistency for staff, families and external partners.

2. Early Help

The primary aim of Early Help at Ashbourne Primary is to identify concerns at an early stage and to ensure that appropriate support plans are implemented. This process requires collaborative working between school staff, families and, where necessary, external agencies.

Our Child and Family Wellbeing Leaders, Mrs Jill Simpson and Mrs Ali Blake, are responsible for coordinating Early Help assessments within the school. By

working together with families and professionals, we seek to ensure that children are supported holistically. This may include engagement with health services, housing providers, church or community groups, local police, and other relevant agencies.

Early Help may be initiated when parents, carers, children or school staff express concerns, or when practitioners identify emerging needs. Following assessment, an Early Help plan may be developed, setting out the actions required and the support to be provided.

3. Referrals and Vulnerable Children's Meetings

A clear referral system is in place to ensure that children and families are directed to the most appropriate support. School staff use MyConcern to record and flag vulnerable pupils. The Headteachers, Paula Chisholm and Heather Davis (Designated Safeguarding Leads), hold overall case management responsibility and, in consultation with the pastoral team, determines the level of need. This may range from low-level or emerging needs through to complex concerns or Child Protection matters.

Where Early Help is identified as appropriate, the Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children's Board (DDSCB) approved Early Help Assessment tool is used. This forms the basis of a single plan which is regularly reviewed, with reference to the Derbyshire "Safe and Wellbeing" framework.

Reviews are held on a half-termly basis. These meetings are attended by the pastoral team, including Mrs Jill Simpson and Mrs Ali Blake (Child and Family Wellbeing Leaders), Miss Heather Davis (Co-Headteacher), Mrs Akhurst (SENDCO) and Mrs Michelle Croxall (Pupil Premium Leader). During these meetings, referrals are discussed, resources allocated and signposting to internal or external services agreed.

4. Recording and Reporting

The school uses MyConcern as the primary system for recording and monitoring safeguarding and wellbeing issues. All staff are required to log concerns and ensure that an appropriate action follows each entry.

The Early Help Assessment framework provides the structure for assessing, recording and reviewing children's needs. Where a child transfers to another school, relevant information is either transferred securely via MyConcern or, where necessary, shared directly with the receiving school to ensure continuity of support.

As the school does not have access to the Derbyshire County Council Framework system, direct communication with local social care offices is undertaken when required. Where there are escalating concerns or where there is no improvement in a child's welfare, the Child and Family Wellbeing Leaders will escalate the case to Starting Point, the county's single point of access for safeguarding referrals, in consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

5. Early Help Interventions

Ashbourne Primary School provides a range of Early Help interventions coordinated by the Child and Family Wellbeing Leaders. This support is available during term time and extends into some school holiday periods, including half-term breaks.

Interventions may include individual or small group work with pupils, lunchtime drop-in sessions, and structured clubs to provide informal opportunities for children to access support. For families, flexible appointments are available, including early morning meetings and home visits (by prior arrangement) up to 6.00pm. Telephone and email support is also available.

Where necessary, the Child and Family Wellbeing Leaders represent the school at Case Conferences, Child in Need Reviews and other multi-agency meetings, and provide written reports as required. Joint working arrangements with

partner agencies are well established, with regular communication maintained through meetings, email and telephone contact. Additionally, termly cluster meetings with pastoral representatives from neighbouring schools provide an opportunity to share good practice and discuss community-wide issues.