

The Early Help Offer

We are a cluster of three schools. We have strong links with our neighbouring schools, and with our local community.

The Early Help Team meet together every month to discuss which children and families we may need to support.

The Early Help Team

Mercia Academy - Family Support Worker - Gill Francis
Mercia Academy - Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) - Marie Payne
Newhall Junior school - Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) - Debbie Wardle
Newhall Infant and Nursery School - Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) - Shelly White

Contact Information

Mercia Academy	Tel: 01283 216404	Email: pastoral@merciaacademy.org.uk
Newhall Junior School	Tel: 01283 217472	Email: d.wardle@newhall-jun.derbyshire.sch.uk (From 18/08/24: Debbie.wardle@newhalljunior.org.uk)
Newhall Infant & Nursery School	Tel: 01283 216496	Email: shelly.white@newhallinfant.co.uk

Out of Hours (4pm – 8am Monday – Friday, all year round) – Starting Point Emergency Tel: 01629 553190, Police 101 or 999

Our primary aim is to identify needs early and to make sure that appropriate support is put into place. ALL staff recognise their role in ensuring safeguarding practices to ALL children during the school day. We believe that information sharing, and timely effective support can ensure that ALL children and families get a good start in life. Families may need support from a wide range of agencies. We recognise that other agencies will be able to support families based on their specialised work. Therefore, our role is often to signpost families to the resources that will best support their needs. In summary, these are to:

- Identify children and their families who would benefit from Early Help utilising the Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (DDSCP) thresholds
- Undertake an assessment of the need for Early Help using the DDSCP approved Early Help Assessment (EHA)
- Ensure provision of targeted Early Help services to address the assessed needs of a child and family which focuses on activity to significantly improve the outcomes for the child. This involves the use of evidence-based interventions as set out by the Early Intervention Foundation (www.eif.org.uk/how-do-we-know-early-intervention-works/)
- Share information on that provision which is consistent with the child’s welfare and with due regard to confidentiality

We work within the requirements of the Children Act 2004 and within the statutory guidance “Working Together 2023” and “Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023”

How will we know when Early Help is needed?

Staff have regular contact with children and their families throughout term time. All staff recognise their role in identifying needs of vulnerable children and their families need for early help. Staff are clear that acting on hearsay is not appropriate. All staff will advise ‘concerned others’ to report their safeguarding concerns to Starting Point. However, all reports of concern made to the school are logged on the school’s safeguarding system – MyConcern, as a record that advice has been given to those reporting concerns. The DSL, in liaison with the Family Resource Worker and the Child Protection Officer, review the entries. A secure electronic record is maintained as a chronology of concerns. Where appropriate the pastoral team and DSL for each school will assess the needs of a family and this may identify that an Early Help Assessment is required. The Early Help Team meet on a monthly basis to discuss any children or families needing support and also monitor attendance and behaviour in school

Early Help Process

- Identification of families and needs – may be identified by school or external agencies, or self-referred by parents
- School to assess need for Early Help with parents and possibly other agencies where appropriate.
- Schools/agencies to provide signpost to targeted Early Help services.
- Share information with all agencies involved in support.
- Agencies access specific tailored needs with partners.
- School and other agencies deliver services.

- Manage and quality assure arrangements. • Share information with parents. Escalate support if required.
- Provide complaints process