

BASE Academy
Masefield Primary School
Bolton
BL3 1NG

The Early Help Process

Masefield Primary School



Early Help assessment

A child's difficulties must be assessed so that the right support can be provided. This includes talking to parents, other professionals and looking at assessment information. It may be that further advice is needed from other professionals such as an educational psychologist, specialist teacher or health professionals.

Process of referral

1. Decide if it is a child protection concern- if not see the steps below.
2. Check if anyone else is involved and whether an early help assessment has already been completed
3. Obtain consent from parents to undertake the assessment
4. Undertake the assessment- Collect information with the parents/carers and/or young person using assessment tools. This can be done with the family and also with school records. Identify strengths as well as needs and use factual information about the child.
5. Agree the action plan- these could include actions that the family needs to take or specialist services from another agency. If you are not sure they can help then contact them in advance of completing the action plan.
6. Set a review date- it may be possible to do this informally. These can be done with the Lead Professional or it may be necessary to have a Child Action meeting with the family and everyone involved. The Early help should be reviewed and updated every 10 weeks. Once all of the actions are complete the Early Help should be closed.
7. Informed consent- it is important that 'informed' consent is given for the information to be stored and shared. In this section all of the people who the information should be shared with is written here. The form should be stored electronically.

Contact information for Integrated Working team

The IW team can provide advice and support. Contact us on 01204 331392 or 01204 331394.

Further information and a copy of the form is available on our web-site

www.boltonsafeguardingchildren.org.uk

A copy should be given to the family, a signed copy kept by the service/organisation undertaking the Early Help process, and copies sent to everyone identified in the consent section. In addition, a copy should be sent to the IW team – contact details are on the form.

Frequently asked questions

What is the Early Help Framework?

Using the Early Help Framework is the best way to help children, young people and families make improvements and prevent things from getting worse. Before responding to a presenting issue by rushing to make a referral to a specialist agency, make sure you have talked to the parent and young person to get a full picture of the child/family circumstances. A standardised form has been introduced to record this process which fits with Bolton's agreed way of working with families – the Framework for Action.

Should the child be included in the assessment?

As the Early Help Assessment is about the young person - their views should be sought. Even younger children may also be able to make a significant contribution to the carrying out of an assessment. Eg When completing a EH assessment, the practitioner asked a 6 year old "How do you think things can be made better?" "How could the service make things better between you and your mother?" - She was able to offer ideas which were very relevant. This also meant that she was able to understand how extra services were being delivered to help her.

When would a Lead Professional be appointed?

The Lead Professional should be appointed jointly between the parent/young person and practitioners before the end of the first Child Action Meeting. They should be the 'best fit person' i.e. the person who knows the child or young person best and already has a relationship with the family, in most cases the Lead Professional will be the person who has completed the EH form.