

Cover/title page

Include WSCB logo/branding

# Warwickshire's Early Help and Targeted Support Offer

What it is, who it's for and where to get it

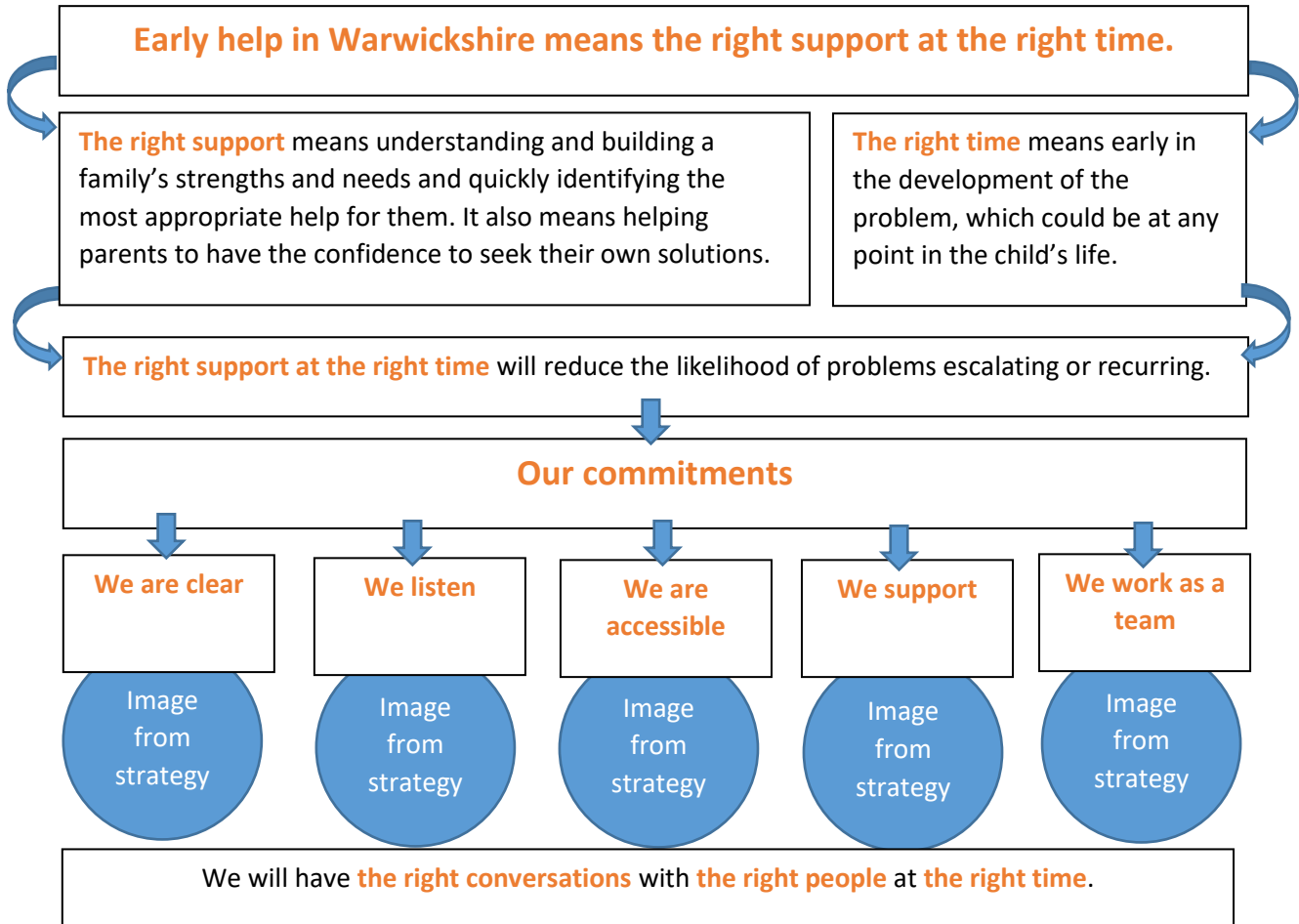
Include somewhere on title page the same strapline with ticks so it matches with the strategy

The right support  at the right time

## Background

Our **Early Help Strategy 2018–2023** sets out our partnership vision for early help in Warwickshire. It is based on national evidence and what local families have told us they want and need. Our strategy represents the commitment made by all organisations to making this happen.

The key principles of our Early Help Strategy are summarised below:



## Early Help and Targeted Support Offer

This **Early Help and Targeted Support Offer** is about putting our vision into practice. It sets out:

- > **What** early help and targeted support mean in reality
- > **Who** they are for
- > **How** early help and targeted support are delivered and accessed, and how they join up with other levels of service
- > **Where** people can go to get early help and targeted support

This document has been written primarily for professionals working within early help and related services, but should also be accessible to parents. Further resources will be designed specifically with families in mind.

## Early help and targeted support: some key definitions and principles

- > **Early help** and **targeted support** are the terms used in Warwickshire to describe the support offered to children, young people and their families to help them **early on** when a problem arises, or when there is the **likelihood** of a problem arising.
- > Support ranges from an **extension of universal services** (for example, **information** and **advice**), through more **specific guidance** and **support**, to **targeted services** and **time-limited support programmes**.
- > **All** children, young people and families in Warwickshire are **entitled** to access early help and targeted support **if** and **when** they need it.
- > **Information and advice** are available to **everyone**, so that families can build the **resilience, capacity** and **resources** to manage their own issues.
- > Support (including information and advice) becomes **early help** as soon as a problem **starts** to emerge, or when it is very **likely** that a problem will begin to emerge.
- > This approach is underpinned by the principle of **proportionate universalism**, which means that early help is available to **everyone**, but with a scale and intensity that is proportionate to need. Services are designed **flexibly** in recognition of the fact that a family's level of need will be fluid over time.
- > Early help **does not** always mean early years. Although research shows that most impact can be made in those crucial first few years of a child's life, **early help** and **targeted support** can be needed and accessed at **any time** and at **any age**.
- > The **purpose** of early help and targeted support is to offer the **right support** at the **right time** so that problems are less likely to **escalate**.
- > Early help and targeted support are also an important part of a child or young person's 'step down' from being vulnerable or in need. The right support at the right time leads to **sustainable** changes, so that problems are less likely to **recur**.
- > Early help and targeted support can be accessed through a **variety of organisations and groups in Warwickshire** and are not limited to statutory agencies like Warwickshire County Council and the NHS. Early help and targeted support happen **in partnership** across these organisations through a range of **multidisciplinary teams**, as well as through specialist individual services working together with families.

**Child in need:** a child or young person whose health or development would be significantly impaired without the provision of services. Those with the highest level of need include children looked after, children in need of protection, and those with severe disabilities or complex physical or mental health needs.

**Vulnerable child:** a child or young person whose outcomes would be impaired without the support of services. These children are at risk of becoming 'in need' because of one or more vulnerability factors, e.g. having a parent with mental health needs or having poor school attendance.

## The stepped approach

The **stepped approach** is well established in Warwickshire, describing four broad levels of additional need and the services offered across all children and family organisations to meet those needs. In summary:

- > **Ground level: Universal preventative support**  
Universally available information, advice, guidance, signposting and services with a focus on prevention, available to everyone to meet the basic needs of all families.
- > **Step 1: Universal directed early help**  
Universally available information, advice, guidance, signposting and services, with an emphasis on self-help and peer support directed towards an emerging or potential issue. This is referred to within health services as **Universal Plus**.
- > **Step 2: Targeted support**  
Additional and targeted support at the right time, when the family needs it.
- > **Step 3: Specialist support**  
Specialist support for children in need and their families.
- > **Step 4: Safeguarding**  
Intensive support and intervention for families with the most complex or critical needs, including those in need of protection.

Our **Early Help and Targeted Support Offer** focuses largely on steps 1 and 2 of this model. However, we recognise that a family's needs will change over time, and perhaps frequently. We therefore ensure that early help is accessible across **all** these levels, rather than being defined by discrete stages in a process. Early help and targeted support at steps 1 and 2 need to work flexibly and seamlessly with ground level, specialist and safeguarding services.

Our new model of **children and family centres** is being designed with this flexibility in mind, with a range of information, guidance and support being available through the same local access points. Key organisations from the statutory, voluntary and community sectors will work together to ensure families have access to the right support at the right time. This might include working with some adult-focused services, to ensure the whole family is being supported in the way they need.

Similarly, **family support work** is being redesigned to ensure the right help is available for families with different levels of need, when they need it. This ranges from early help accessed via children and family centres to more targeted family support for those at risk of needing specialist or critical intervention.

## What does early help and targeted support in Warwickshire look like?

Universal preventative support, available to all

# Early help and targeted support

Specialist support and safeguarding

WHAT?

> Information, advice and guidance > Family Information Service brokerage > Signposting to resources > Family support drop-ins > Peer support and volunteer-led groups > Midwifery > Health visiting > School health > Schools and other education provision > GP and primary care services > Parent and child groups > Universal parenting courses > Advice lines > Adult and family learning > Open sessions with a specific purpose > Integrated Disability Service > Emotional health and wellbeing support

> Direct family support sessions > Emotional health and wellbeing support > Counselling > Relationship support > Housing support > Money management > Targeted parenting programmes > Specific group sessions > Speech and language therapy > Family Nurse Partnership > Midwifery > Health visiting > School health > Paediatrics > Integrated Disability Service > School support services > Police > Probation > Multiagency Youth Justice Service > Targeted youth programmes

WHERE?

> Children and family centres and outreach settings > Family Information Service > Early years settings > Schools and other educational settings > Community hubs and outreach settings > GP surgeries, health centres and other health settings > Online forums and directories > Family homes > Accident and emergency departments > Citizens Advice offices and website > Voluntary, community and faith settings

WHO?

Family Information Service/Children & family centres

☎ 01926 742274 ✉ [fis@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:fis@warwickshire.gov.uk)

🌐 <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/fis>

🌐 <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/childrenscentres>

Targeted Support Team

☎ **Number**

If you are concerned that a child is suffering from ANY form of neglect, abuse or cruelty, call the Multiagency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) immediately on

☎ **01926 414144**

## Our Early Help and Targeted Support Offer

The following sections describe the **what, who, how** and **where** of Warwickshire’s stepped approach. The focus for this document is on the **early help** and **targeted support** steps. However, because needs and services work on a **continuum** rather than in discrete blocks, it is important to also note what happens at the other levels and how they fit in with early help and targeted support.

### Ground level: Universal preventative support

Support at this level is not early help in itself, but it plays an important role in the first stages of early help. It includes universally available **information, advice, guidance, signposting** and **services** that are available to everyone to meet the basic needs of all families, regardless of any additional needs. The focus is on **prevention** and **self-help**, so that families have the resources they need to reduce the risk of problems occurring, or manage them more easily if they do occur.

The **Family Information Service** plays a key role here in providing an advice line, leaflets and online guidance on a variety of issues that affect all families. As well as providing their own information, they also direct families to other online and face-to-face resources. The Family Information Service’s vision reflects our aspirations for universal preventative support across Warwickshire, meaning that information is always provided through multiple channels and in multiple formats to meet a variety of needs:

*“That every family, no matter what their circumstances, race, gender, age, religion, belief, sexual orientation, marital status or disability is able to access accurate, up to date and timely information in a format suitable to them.”*

**Universal services** include schools and other education provision; GP surgeries and other universal health provision; Public Health universal services, such as midwifery, health visiting and school health; libraries; voluntary, community and faith groups; and parent and child groups.

Many of these universal services are accessed through **children and family centres, community hubs** and their outreach locations.

These services are available to **all families** and some services will be offered automatically (e.g. schools and health visiting), but many families may choose not to use information and guidance services until an issue arises. This is when **universal preventative support** becomes **universal directed early help**.

**Who can I talk to?** Warwickshire Family Information Service will either have the information you need or will be able to direct you to where you can find it.

☎ 01926 742274

✉ [fis@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:fis@warwickshire.gov.uk)

🌐 <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/fis>

Families can also talk to their midwife, health visitor, GP, school or early years setting, or pop into their local children and family centre for information.

## Step 1: Universal directed early help

### What is it?

Support at this level is what we call **early help**. Much of this support is the same universally available **information, guidance, signposting** and **services** offered at the preventative stage, but it is offered in response to an **emerging or potential problem**.

Our local health services refer to this as **Universal Plus**, emphasising the fact that it is built on existing universal provision and resources.

Our definition of **early help** includes universal elements, such as **information** and **drop-ins**. These services are available to all but might not be taken up until there is an issue. They therefore play a crucial role in very early intervention, by either **preventing** a potential problem from occurring, or by providing the family with the **tools** and **information** they need to **stop** an emerging problem from developing.

Organisations and groups across different sectors work **together** so that early help is **easily available** to families when they need it. **Children and family centres** and **community hubs** are therefore key to the delivery of early help, by providing a single local point of contact for help with a variety of issues. **Early help family support workers** based at children and family centres offer drop-ins and appointments to support families with specific issues.

The **Family Information Service** offers a brokerage service, which involves **1:1 practical support** for families who need a little help to access universal (preventative or direct) services. This is an important part of ensuring that information, advice, guidance and direct early help services are being accessed at the right time for families who need them and that any barriers to access are removed.

Universal services like **midwifery, health visiting, early years settings, school health** and **schools** themselves also have a crucial role to play. Seeing families on an everyday basis means that **relationships** are formed, issues are picked up **early**, and the right kind of **information** or **support** is found.

Universal and community-based services also ensure that any **additional** or **underlying** issues are identified and worked through. This may happen, for example, by signposting a family to a particular website or leaflet (universal, ground-level information) or by recommending a particular course (universal but directed help).

Those found to be already in need of **targeted, specialist** or **safeguarding** help are referred quickly by universal services to the right level of support.

How is it delivered?	Where is it?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Information, advice and guidance (on paper, face-to-face, by telephone or online)</li> <li>&gt; 1:1 practical support via Family Information Service brokerage for families who need a little help to access services</li> <li>&gt; Signposting to resources</li> <li>&gt; Family support drop-ins and appointments at children and family centres</li> <li>&gt; Peer support and volunteer-led groups</li> <li>&gt; Public Health universal services, such as midwifery, health visiting and school health</li> <li>&gt; Universal education services, such as schools</li> <li>&gt; GP and primary care services</li> <li>&gt; Parent and child groups, such as Stay and Play</li> <li>&gt; Universal parenting courses</li> <li>&gt; Advice lines</li> <li>&gt; Adult and family learning courses, such as REAL and REAM (literacy and maths)</li> <li>&gt; Open sessions with a specific purpose, such as breastfeeding drop-ins and Chatter Matters (speech and language development)</li> <li>&gt; Integrated Disability Service</li> <li>&gt; Low-level emotional health and wellbeing support for children, young people and parents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Children and family centres and outreach settings</li> <li>&gt; Family Information Service</li> <li>&gt; Early years settings</li> <li>&gt; Schools and other educational settings</li> <li>&gt; Community hubs and outreach settings</li> <li>&gt; GP surgeries, health centres and other health settings</li> <li>&gt; Online forums and directories</li> <li>&gt; Family homes</li> <li>&gt; Accident and emergency departments</li> <li>&gt; Citizens Advice offices and website</li> <li>&gt; Voluntary, community and faith settings</li> </ul>
<p><b>Who is it for?</b></p>	<p><b>Who can I talk to?</b> Warwickshire Family Information Service will either have the information you need or will be able to direct you to where you can find it.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; All families who wish to use it</li> <li>&gt; Families who would like additional information on a specific issue</li> <li>&gt; Families who have been signposted to a universally available service to help them with a specific issue</li> <li>&gt; Families who need a little help to access universal services</li> </ul>	<p>☎ 01926 742274                  ✉ <a href="mailto:fis@warwickshire.gov.uk">fis@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>                  🌐 <a href="https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/fis">https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/fis</a></p> <p>Families can also talk to their midwife, health visitor, GP, school or early years setting, or pop into their local children and family centre for information.</p>



## Step 2: Targeted support

### What is it?

**Targeted support** is closely linked to **early help** but it represents a step up in the level of need. Support is directed at specific issues, with an agreed plan about the intended outcomes and timeframes.



Families will voluntarily consent to a **single assessment** to determine their targeted support needs. This is coordinated by a nominated **lead professional**. Because families are best supported by those they already know, the lead professional will often be someone from the child's educational setting. However, the assessment may involve a number of professionals across different organisations; this will depend on the particular needs of that child and family, and which (if any) services they are already in contact with.

Children needing help at this stage are not '**children in need**'. The purpose of the single assessment is to agree a **coordinated plan of support** that addresses the identified issues before they escalate. This support comes from a range of sources, as shown in the 'how' and 'where' sections that follow.

**Targeted support officers** (TSOs) have a key role to play in supporting lead professionals with single assessments and those involved in delivering the identified help. Targeted support officers have previously been known as **CAF (Common Assessment Framework) officers** and **early help officers**. The team has evolved to meet changing demand and the new TSO offer is being redesigned to better reflect the service required at this level of need. The offer includes five elements, each offering advice, support and direction to professionals on targeted support options for children and families:

- > Telephone duty service
- > 1:1 consultations (individual professionals leading on assessments and plans)
- > Targeted support clinics (several professionals from the same school or agency)
- > Multiagency collaboration clinics (professionals across different disciplines)
- > Locality panels (district-based multiagency problem solving)

A coordinated **targeted support plan** is likely to include an element of support that is available universally. The **Family Information Service** plays a key role here in either providing information directly or offering practical support via their brokerage service.

How is it delivered?	Where is it?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Direct family support sessions via children and family centres</li> <li>&gt; Emotional health and wellbeing support for children, young people and parents, including counselling and relationship support and access to the RISE service</li> <li>&gt; Practical support for housing and money management</li> <li>&gt; Targeted parenting programmes</li> <li>&gt; Specific group sessions, such as bilingual Chatter Matters (speech and language development for young children and parents with English as an additional language) and sensory play for young children with additional needs</li> <li>&gt; Speech and language therapy</li> <li>&gt; Family Nurse Partnership (additional antenatal and postnatal support for young parents)</li> <li>&gt; Children’s health services, including midwifery, health visiting, school health and paediatrics as appropriate</li> <li>&gt; Integrated Disability Service</li> <li>&gt; School support services</li> <li>&gt; Police, Probation and multiagency Youth Justice Service</li> <li>&gt; Targeted youth programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Children and family centres and outreach settings</li> <li>&gt; Family Information Service</li> <li>&gt; Early years settings</li> <li>&gt; Schools and other educational settings</li> <li>&gt; Community hubs and outreach settings</li> <li>&gt; GP surgeries, health centres and other health settings</li> <li>&gt; Online forums and directories</li> <li>&gt; Family homes</li> <li>&gt; Accident and emergency departments</li> <li>&gt; Citizens Advice offices and website</li> <li>&gt; Voluntary, community and faith settings</li> </ul>
<p><b>Who is it for?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Families with additional needs who have consented to a single assessment</li> <li>&gt; Families whose needs are not being met by universally available services</li> </ul>	<p><b>Who can I talk to?</b> Professionals should contact the TSO team for support with the single assessment process and targeted support options.</p> <p> <b>Number</b></p> <p> <b>Email</b></p> <p>Families can also call the Family Information Service on 01926 742274, talk to their midwife, health visitor, GP, school or early years setting, or pop into their local children and family centre for information.</p>

### Step 3: Specialist support

Families with multiple or complex needs will require help from more than one service. Children will be assessed as being **'in need'** under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, meaning that their life chances are significantly at risk if they don't receive the right help. They may have been accessing **early help** or **targeted support** that is no longer meeting their needs, or the complexity of their needs means they may have a child in need assessment straight away.

Families consent to this assessment, which is undertaken by a **Strengthening Families** social worker in collaboration with the family and other involved agencies. It is not for children on the edge of care; it is about avoiding escalation to that point and giving families the capacity and resources to manage their own challenges.

While the Family Information Service, children and family centres, universal and targeted services still have a key role to play, a child in need plan will also identify **specialist** services and interventions that will help the child and their family.

These include direct and intensive work with specialist family support workers from the Strengthening Families team; social care; domestic violence support; substance misuse support; intensive mental health services for children and parents including RISE; targeted youth support; targeted parenting programmes; Family Group Conferencing; and Different Futures (delaying pregnancy for those who have already been unable to care sufficiently for another child).

**Who can I talk to?** Strengthening Families teams are based in Nuneaton (Hilary Road), Rugby (Oakfield Park) and Warwick (Saltisford). They can be contacted on ☎ 01926 414147.

### Step 4: Safeguarding

**Warwickshire Multiagency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** is the gateway between child in need support and intervention for those in need of protection or care. It is a partnership between Warwickshire County Council, the police, the NHS and other partner agencies, working to safeguard children, young people and adults.

Specific teams work intensively at this level with children and young people on the **edge of care** and **edge of protection**, linking to both **Strengthening Families** support and statutory **safeguarding**.

Children with this level of need will be assessed as **children in need** but will have **significant additional risks** that cannot be managed through their child in need plan. Further assessment will determine whether **statutory child protection**, **voluntary accommodation** or **care proceedings** are required.

Because children in need of safeguarding often have multiple issues, **early help** and **targeted support** may form part of their protection or care plans. **Early help** and **targeted support**, including information, guidance and brokerage from the **Family Information Service**, are also an important part of plans as children step down from this level of need, to build **resilience** and **capacity** that avoids issues **recurring** in the future.

**Who can I talk to?** To report a concern, call the MASH team on ☎ 01926 414144.

For out of hours emergencies, call the Emergency Duty Team on ☎ 01926 886922.

If there is a significant and immediate risk, call the police on ☎ 999.

## Where to find information, early help and targeted support<sup>1</sup>

- > [Search the Warwickshire Service Directory](#)
- > [Contact the Family Information Service and use their online resources](#)
- > [Contact Public Health services and use their online resources](#)
- > [Find your local school](#)
- > [Find GP services near you](#)
- > [Find your local children and family centre](#)
- > [Find your local library](#)
- > [Find your nearest health visiting clinic](#)

---

<sup>1</sup> All links accessed 05.03.19. Please note, websites will change over time so these links may not continue to work for the full lifetime of this document.