**Oxfordshire**

**Early Help Strategy**

**& Work Plan

March 2019**



**Introduction**

This document is intended to outline what the **current** provision of Early Help looks like in Oxfordshire; the Early Help ‘Offer’ available from partner organisations individually and collectively.

It also identifies new and continuing challenges for partners in delivering a coherent and consistent early help offer, and proposes how we might work together to tackle these issues.

**Background**

There is a body of evidence which highlights the factors that place children at risk of abuse or neglect, developing mental health problems, struggling or failing in education or becoming involved in crime or antisocial behaviour.

Early help is the early identification of such factors and responding to emerging problems for children, young people and their families. It refers both to help in the critical early years of a child’s life when the fundamental building blocks for future development are laid but also throughout a child, young persons and families life.

If early help is not offered there is a real risk that for some children their social and emotional development will be irrevocably impaired they will experience harm or their family life will break down

Early help is a way of working across agencies and services that supports families, children and young people to overcome difficulties and build their resilience so that problems do not escalate and they are able to thrive, live and engage happily in their communities.

The ethical, financial rationale and evidence base for providing “early help” within a whole -family model is very strong. Many recent publications highlight the need for strategic partners to provide a co-ordinated targeted and evidenced based early help offer particularly for families with multiple and complex need.

The message is clear, preventative services cost less and are more effective than reactive services. They are also more effective in improving the life chances of children young people and families.

The new 2018 [‘Working Together’](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/729914/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children-2018.pdf) document states:

“Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later.

“Local organisations and agencies should have in place effective ways to identify emerging problems and potential unmet needs of individual children and families. Local authorities should work with organisations and agencies to develop joined-up early help services based on a clear understanding of local needs. This requires all practitioners, including those in universal services and those providing services to adults with children, to understand their role in identifying emerging problems and to share information with other practitioners to support early identification and assessment.

“Effective early help relies upon local organisations and agencies working together to:

• Identify children and families who would benefit from early help

• Undertake an assessment of the need for early help

• Provide targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family which focuses on activity to improve the outcomes for the child”

“Local authorities, under section 10 of the Children Act 20045, have a responsibility to promote inter-agency co-operation to improve the welfare of all children.”

**Early Help in Oxfordshire**

Early help is already established as a core principle in many areas of practice in Oxfordshire and there is substantial commitment and energy to support and work with families as outlined in the CYPP [(Children and Young People’s Plan, 2018 – 2021)](https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/childreneducationandfamilies/ChildrenAndYoungPeoplePlan2018-2021.pdf).

Through the Children and Young People’s Plan, agencies children, young people and families have agreed that the vision for Oxfordshire is that**;**

**“We want Oxfordshire to be a great place to grow up and where children and young people have the opportunity to become everything they want to be”**

Key to delivering this vision is to offer early help services to families. Early help ensures that families receive accessible co-ordinated support when they need it across a continuum from universal preventative approaches (services offered to whole population to prevent problems from escalating) through to more targeted help where families are experiencing more complex and multiple difficulties (services offered to particular children young people and families with risk factors and vulnerabilities) in order to reduce the problems that have started to emerge and prevent escalation of problems.

Feedback from service users and practitioners indicates that the critical features of an effective early help offer includes;

* Families and children want services and support when problems first emerge
* Families do not want to be passed from one service to the next
* Families do not want to endlessly repeat their story to different professionals in duplicating services
* Families want a relationship with a trusted worker who can engage with the family and coordinate support
* Families want to experience a holistic (whole) family approach that addresses the child’s needs in the wider family context
* Streamlined referral and assessment processes.

Oxfordshire’s Multiagency [Threshold of Needs document](http://oxfordshirescb.proceduresonline.com/files/threshold_needs.pdf) (refreshed in 2018) describes the continuum from access to universal services through to targeted support and is designed to support practitioners to identify need and provide the right service at the right time to children and families.

The “windscreen” below illustrates the continuum of need which recognises that at some point in their lives families may require more support than universal services can routinely offer



**Level 1 (universal)**

Most children reach their full potential through the care of their families, communities and the support of a range of services provided universally e.g. schools, primary health care and leisure services.

**Level 2 (vulnerable)**

From time to time some children will become vulnerable and will require additional support because of their own development, family circumstances or environmental factors. These children and young people are at risk of not reaching their full potential and their life chances may be impaired without the provision of additional services. These services can be delivered by a single agency or several agencies through an Early Help assessment and “Team Around the Family” (TAF) approach.

Locality and Community Support Services were established in 2016 to work alongside universal partners to identify emerging need in vulnerable families and support the use of early help tools to provide services at the earliest opportunity and prevent the need for escalation into statutory services

**Level 3 (complex)**

These are children and young people whose needs are more complex. This refers to the range of needs and depth or significance of the needs. They are at risk of social or educational exclusion. Their health, welfare, social or educational development is being impaired; and life chances will be impaired without the provision of additional services. Locality and Community Support Services are available for consultation or a referral to Children’s Social Care may be needed for these families where concerns are significant.

**Level 4 (critical)**

These children and young people have needs that are complex and enduring and are at risk of significant harm or removal from home. They require statutory or specialist services for example Child Protection intervention, Youth Offending Service or specialist help such as CAHMS (Child and Adolescent Metal Health Services).

Oxfordshire strongly recognises the importance of, and need to work in an integrated way with partners across all four levels of need.

Partnership delivery of the Early Help offer is enabled from within a complex landscape that incorporates 240 state primary schools 40 state secondary schools, nurseries, Health Services, Police, County, District and Town councils. There is also a thriving Voluntary and Community Sector (which includes Faith groups) that are also involved with children, young people and families in various ways. Delivering a coherent and consistent Early Help Offer within this complex network of service delivery is challenging.

**Early Help work in Oxfordshire**

The Children and Young Peoples Plan includes a commitment by all agencies to “identify and solve problems early, both from an early age and when problems first arise” and to “shift the focus to prevention and early help through real partnerships and using resources effectively”.

In 2017 Oxfordshire’s Children’s Safeguarding Board and Children’s Trust issued a series of recommendations on how to tackle the challenges to providing co-ordinated early help across Oxfordshire;

* Agencies need to ensure that emerging need is identified as soon as possible to avoid problems becoming more complex through an integrated whole system offer from early help to meeting the most complex needs
* Cultural change is required to remove barriers, challenge and work differently
* Effective networks need to be created across the system connecting all community based groups and services in a local setting
* There is a need to ensure the workforce has the capacity and resilience so that they are effectively equipped capable and competent to deal with the complexity of work
* Investment needs to be in evidence based models
* Approach should be restorative and build family resilience

**What has been achieved in 2018?**

**Annex A** details the current Early Help ‘Offer’ from each individual agency, and demonstrates how the OSCB/Children’s Trust recommendations have been put into practice within their own organisation.

The real strength of early help is recognised as being through partner agencies working together to provide more co-ordinated services, which are responsive to local needs. Below are some examples of such multi-agency early help practice;

***Challenging behaviour, School Attendance & Exclusions***

**Creation of Learner Engagement Strategy**

The number of children not attending school and or being excluded have increased in Oxfordshire in recent years, in line with national trends. This strategy is designed to build resilience, promote collective responsibility and to support all pupils and so improve attendance and reduce exclusion.

The strategy is underpinned by early help principles recognising the need to ensure that agencies work together collaboratively with parents children young people and families when problems at school first emerge to ensure that help is available to reduce the number of pupils missing out on their education entitlement due to poor attendance and exclusion

In addition to the above, School Liaison Officers have been recruited to work directly alongside the Locality Community Support Service (LCSS) and support schools in identifying the range of factors which contribute to individuals’ poor attendance and helping to develop a multi-agency approach to addressing these, both at a school and a family level.

The Learner Engagement team is working alongside LCSS, Health, Police and schools to address issues around challenging behaviour and to support schools to identify children at risk of exclusion at an earlier stage and use early help processes to support the child and family and prevent escalation.

***Community Around the School Offer (CASO)***

Together with partner agencies, a Community Around the School offer has been established. A number of agencies are providing support services into schools including LCSS, School Health Nurses, Education Services and CAMHS.

The aim is to ensure that these services are coordinated and provide support to schools to identify and manage emerging concerns around safeguarding, mental health and wellbeing of young people, thus preventing escalation and developing resilience in children, young people and families.

Each school and education setting have received a ‘CASO’ information pack, detailing their key locality contacts for each agency.

***Creation of Community Impact Zones***

Two pilot Community Impact Zones are being established in Oxfordshire. One in Banbury and one in the Cowley Road area of Oxford City.

A Community Impact Zone brings together a group of stakeholders from different agencies to focus on improving a particular outcome, or set of outcomes which could be related to health, education or other key metric for children and young people in a given area.

This initiative is very much about working across all agencies to look creatively at prevention in a particular geographical area and think through innovative ways that agencies can work together to make a difference to children and young people.

***School Readiness***

A steering group has been established with partners to create a Readiness for School and lifelong learning Strategy that would sit alongside this strategy and focus on ensuring that early help is being offered in the early years.

Multiagency work undertaken;

* Participation in Public Health England’s (PHE) pilot of Best Start in Life self-assessment, with input from partners across 0-5 services.
* Oxfordshire participated in a project led by Public Health England (PHE) to describe the current situation across the South East with regards to data and school readiness initiatives. Parents participated in focus groups and findings will be published by PHE in 2019.
* Review of Conception to 5 pathway which was originally produced for practitioners in 2014
* Publication of ‘Community Around the Setting’ document, describing the services and resources available to support 0-5’s. Includes an appendix with links to early help resources.
* Publication of ‘Early Years - School Readiness Partnership Agreement’
* Delivery of School Readiness conference in November 2018, a multi-agency conference with Early Years colleagues working together to support practitioners in Oxfordshire – Evaluations were very positive.
* Development of School Readiness webpages for practitioners and parents
* Good Level Development - Oxfordshire’s performance remained steady 73.5%. The Free School Meals gap however has increased from 20%pts to 23%pts this year. Nationally it has remained at 17%pts.
* An Oxfordshire readiness for school strategy will be produced by May 2019 incorporating the findings from the work undertaken in this group and outlining a clear action plan to take this work forward

There are however, still some key challenges across agencies in Oxfordshire to ensure that co-ordinated Early Help is provided across all levels of need at the earliest opportunity to provide the support required to prevent issues escalating.

Members of the Early Help Strategic Board have identified a number of challenges and opportunities in taking forward early help work in Oxfordshire. These are grouped around four key priority areas and will form the basis for partnership early help development work in 2019. See annex B for detail.

**ANNEX A**

**What is each partner’s ‘Early Help Offer’ ?**

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| **Oxfordshire Children’s Services - Early Help Offer** |
| **Locality and Community Support Service** The role of Locality and community support services (LCSS) is to work with professionals (including community and voluntary partners) and provide the following services: * Advice and guidance to all community professionals who have concerns about a child or family and ensure that timely services are provided to that family to prevent escalation of difficulties that could then require statutory intervention
* Be a named link worker to specific organisations for example schools, nurseries GP’s
* Offer “No Names Consultation” service which enables professionals to talk through concerns for children where there is no consent from the family.
* Support professionals when a MASH enquiry does not lead to a Statutory Children’s Services referral to ensure that Early Help Assessment (EHA) Team Around the Family (TAF) processes are in place within the community
* Support professionals to access targeted support within Children's Services to ensure children get the right support at the right time
* Review all Early Help Assessments and support professionals to complete them where appropriate, and offer feedback to support on-going professional development
* Provide support to Lead Professionals, including the provision of advice and attendance at Team Around the Family meetings where appropriate
* Deliver Early Help Assessment & Team around the Family training to ensure plans are child centred and family focussed. In addition the team will facilitate local network and training events in response to your area's need
* Share information of the services/resources available to partners which can be used to support children and families within their locality
* If the family has an EHA/TAF and non-immediate safeguarding concerns arise that require a referral to Children's Social Care (CSC) the LCSS worker, if in support, will initiate this referral into CSC.

 The service has now been in operation one year and a great deal has been achieved; * The multiagency Threshold of Needs document, Early Help Assessment and Team Around the Family processes have all been refreshed by a multiagency group to make the process simpler.
* The early help assessment is strengths-based document enabling families to assess their needs and enable professionals to look at how they can support families to take both ownership and control of these needs.
* Information leaflets (in a number of different languages) have been produced for practitioners and families explaining the early help processes and what they mean
* LCSS Link workers are assigned to all schools nurseries and GP practices.
* LCSS have provided training to over 1,500 partners in early help and use of Early Help Assessment and TAF processes.
* The service has undertaken over 3,000 No Name Consultations
* It has supported 2,000 EHA’s to be completed and audited each of those EHA’s giving feedback to partners to enhance their training and development around completing assessment processes.
* In 2017/18 there has been 178% increase in early help assessments
* Since Sept 2017 LCSS staff have attended over 1,492 Teams Around the Family meetings

**Community Co-ordinator Service** Since March 2017 three Community Co-ordinators (north, central, south) have been supporting the 37 community groups who received a share of £1m Transition Funding offered to community groups to develop and run open access sessions for under 5s, and their carers, within buildings, or communities historically served by children’s centres.  **Key Activities of Co-ordinators**The work of the Community Co-ordinators focuses on the following key areas:**Support to individual transition funded groups**Including:* Tailored support to implement community groups’ plans to deliver universal services.
* Focusing on getting systems, processes and training in place for these groups in relation to safeguarding, session planning, delivery and long term sustainability.
* Providing information around appropriate governance structures, including linking groups with OCVA for specialist advice
* Development of a suite of template policies, procedures, session planning and evaluating tools which has enabled groups to focus on delivery
* Observation of sessions, and feedback to strengthen delivery, where appropriate
* Development of a self-assessment to help groups focus on continued development, with support or signposting once they have completed this
* Facilitated links between health services and groups, resulting in health visitor surgeries being held in the majority of community venues
* Enabled groups to access free, or reduced rate, training including PEEP and HENRY (healthy eating)
* Helped groups navigate OCC structures to ensure they contact the appropriate person to resolve issues, including Property and Policy Teams

**Supporting groups to develop networks**Including:* Co-ordination and administration of South and Vale Family Network, including sending out regular newsletter with information. This group provides a valuable forum for groups to share ideas, best practice etc
* Support to, and attendance, at Chipping Norton Network of transition funded groups and other partners including health, churches, voluntary groups
* Networking event, jointly with OCVA in May 2018, for all transition funded groups, acknowledging what they have achieved and focussing on future sustainability.
* Sustainability workshop (October 2018) for all transition funded groups, focussing on groups understanding their value and how they can use this to collaborate with businesses.
* Current discussion with health about establishing a network of breastfeeding champions. Health will offer half-day training to enable champions to be confident in promoting breastfeeding and signposting mothers to sources of further support

 **Work with Oxford Diocese**Oxford Diocese were a key partner during the restructure and actively supported community groups to establish services.  In addition, churches across Oxfordshire run c105 regular groups for under 5s. Joint working with the Diocese continues including: Joint development of a self-assessment tool to enable church-led Stay, Play and Learn sessions to reflect on their provision and strengthen it ensuring that the delivery supports children to be ready for school and lifelong learning. Supported Diocese-led event, ‘Flourishing under 5s’ (September 2018) The self-assessment was promoted and completed by many groups during the session. Co-ordinators ran workshops and provided example resources. Support to Oxford church groups to establish new Stay, Play and Learn sessions**Wider voluntary and community provision** In addition to supporting transition funded community groups, the Co-ordinators are increasingly developing a broad knowledge of the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) offer within the different areas:* Regular information sharing with Children Social Care teams regarding support and services available from VCS
* Visits to schools to increase their understanding of the local VCS resources
* Specific information about VCS provision provided to LCSS workers relating to the needs of a particular child or family
* Developed links with CABs resulting in Energy Advice sessions being delivered in two Children and Family Centres
* Participation in the Oxford Hub and City Council led ‘Oxford Early Years’ Rapid Action Lab’. The purpose of this is to bring together people from a variety of backgrounds to develop and test community driven solutions to support under 5s and their carers.
* Promotion of Family Information Service and Practitioner Toolkit across CSC and VCS

**Library Stay, Play and Learn Sessions**In March 2018 an exciting project started in nine of Oxfordshire’s libraries, in conjunction with Children Education and Families developing and delivering Stay, Play and Learn sessions for under 5’s. it is intended that this provision will be rolled out across the library service. Again these services are being designed to ensure that that the delivery of sessions supports children to be ready for school and lifelong learning. .**Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)*** Early help triage has been established in the MASH. This ensures that referred families who have needs, but do not require statutory intervention by a social worker, are offered a timely early help response to prevent further escalation of need.
* An Education representative also sits within the MASH. This role is a key role in ensuring good communication between schools and Children’s services. The education representative provides feedback to all schools on progress of MASH referrals and outcomes.

**Family Solutions Service*** This service was established in March 2017 and integrated children’s social care Family Support teams with the Early Intervention service. The aim is to provide timely support and interventions through case work and targeted interventions to vulnerable children and families requiring statutory or targeted support to reduce safeguarding concerns.
* The service is delivered from eight children and family centres where there is a statutory social work team and an early help team which work together to provide casework and targeted interventions to children and families whose needs range from preventative (Tier 2) to complex and critical (Tiers 3 & 4). This model is designed to ensure good working relationships and smooth transition between Early Help and Statutory Social Care teams when cases need to “step up” from Early Help to Children’s Social Care or when cases can “step down” from Children’s Social Care to Early Help.
* A weekly multi agency referral and assessment meeting takes place (RAP) to ensure that services are co-ordinated around these vulnerable children and they are receiving the right services at the right time.
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| **School (and College) Health Nurses (5-19yrs) - Early Help Offer** |
| * A Named school nurse is provided for each Secondary School / College (and access to a nurse is provided for Primary Schools from Primary School Team
* Provide range of services from immunisations to early identification of need including assessment of children’s emotional needs
* Undertake health assessments and make referrals to appropriate teams
* Drop-in sessions for young people and 1:1 support
* Work with children to ensure good transition
* Offer Health Assessments
* Offer Health Promotion
* Provide National Child Measurement Programme Reception and Year 6 plus follow-up
* Write alongside Schools and colleges Schools Health Improvement Plans and College Health Improvement Plans (including community offer)
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| **Health Visitors (0-5yrs) and Family Nurse Partnership - Early Help Offer** |
| * Family Nurse Partnership provide services to 200 < 19 year Teenage Conceptions

This is a two year Programme at the end family transition to Health Visitors services * >90% population seen
* Best Start in Life (1001 Days) & School Readiness ready to learn
* Provide 5 Mandated Contacts

Health Promotion and Developmental Reviews1. Antenatal (70%)
2. New Birth visit
3. 6-8 weeks (Maternal Mood assessment)
4. 1 Year
5. 2 Year – Ages and Stages Questionnaires data Speech & Language Therapies / Communication Priority
* 80% contacts universal
* 20% for more complex families (parenting, perinatal Mental Health)
* Children transition from Health visitors to school helath nurses when children reach school age.
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| **Probation Service - Early Help Offer** |
| * Treatment for violent offenders (domestic and sexual)
* Drugs / alcohol interventions

Both have preventative impact on parenting and children  |

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| **Schools - Early Help Offer** |
| * Identifying emerging needs in children and young people and work with the family and partner agencies to address those needs to ensure children are in school and able to learn
* Utilising school based resources to support children and families
* Where children require safeguarding support referring to appropriate agencies in a timely way
* Complete early help assessments to gain a holistic view of the families needs and work with the families and partner agencies to try to find solutions to the issues identified.
* Take part in and often take the lead professional role in Team Around the Family.
* School Readiness work with early years settings, health professionals, children and their families to ensure good transition into primary school
* Provide Stay and Play sessions
* Breakfast Club and Wrap Around Care
* Adult education and language skills
* Promoting good attendance and punctuality
* Promoting good behaviour, respect and responsibility
* Promoting self-awareness, emotional and mental health
* Behaviour Support Plans
* Identifying Special Educational Needs
* Supporting children with disabilities
* Supporting LAC with PEPs
* Working alongside Children Services and partner agencies contributing to and supporting children and families who require Child in need and Child protection support.
* Developing children’s awareness of substance misuse, online safety and exploitation (e.g. Safeguarding Children In Banbury project)
* Protective Behaviours work to keep children safe
* Anti- Bullying education
* Signposting families to Foodbank, community fridge and appropriate voluntary sector organisations
* Links with church, mosques and faith groups, voluntary and community sector organisations to support families
* Initiating community around the school processes to ensure community resources are co-ordinated to support children and families where this is required
* Supporting transition to secondary school
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|  **Faith Voluntary and Community Sector - Early Help Offer** |
| * Youth Groups including provision of youth workers 30 in fulltime/part time roles
* Family Support Services
* Early Years Stay and Play
* Diocesan Board of Education providing support to church schools
* Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust and links to 12 Multi academy trusts
* Chaplaincy Teams –
* Fegans – Christian Voluntary Group working with disadvantaged families in Banbury
* Viva Doorsteps Initiative - Viva’s partner network in Oxford, is leading a co-ordinated response to some of the most pressing needs facing vulnerable children and young people in the city.
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| **District Councils (and Towns and Parishes) - Early Help Offer** |
| * Play and Leisure – positive opportunities / preventative services
* Arts Development – Funding Creative Education Partnerships in Cherwell and City
* Parks / Countryside sites
* Provide Funding Pots (small)
* Health / Active lifestyle promotion
* Grants – give out and co-ordinate bids to get funds in
* Affordable Housing – tenancy support
* Community Centres / Outreach / Family support intergenerational work
* Preventative Services
* Community Impact Zones
* In Banbury Brighter Futures, an initiative facilitating a multiagency approach to innovative working in the most disadvantaged communities in Banbury
* Youth Ambition is a part of the Active Communities Team at Oxford City Council. The work they do links into the Council's corporate priority of Stronger, More Active Communities and also delivers the Youth Ambition Strategy. The aim of Youth Ambition is to build meaningful relationships with disadvantaged young people aged 10-21 years old, (or up to 25 if they have physical or learning difficulties), who are from Oxford’s regeneration areas. They engage with young people through youth voice activities, youth clubs, multi-sports sessions and detached work in a variety of settings. They also work in partnership with other voluntary, community and statutory organisations.
* Community Safety provide partnership oversight of Anti social Behaviour, Child Exploitation and County drugs Lines, Modern day slavery
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| **CAMHS - Early Help Offer** |
| * In-Reach service named CAMHs worker for each Secondary School – offer direct help to children and advice to school staff
* Access to In-Reach services for Primary Schools
* Training for Primary and Secondary schools in dealing with child mental health issues.
* Single Point of Access for professionals and families

 - Pre-referral- self-referral- consultation* Provision of Brief intervention
* Access to right support at the right time
* Co-ordinated work with schools, LCSS and School Health nurses to identify emerging need.

In addition, in November 2018 Oxfordshire was awarded £5.4 million over two years to be a pilot site for the Government’s CAHMS Mental Health Green Paper initiative to improve CAHMS preventative services by working with and in schools to identify low level emerging mental health needs in young people and provide services alongside partners to support these young people. The money is also designed to reduce the CAHMS waiting list.Work is currently underway to develop: Two mental health teams in schools to cover Oxford City schools working to school partnerships. Each team will consist of 7.5WTE to cover population of 8000 and 500 interventionsTeams will sit within CAMHS and have integrated referral/triaging pathways and clinical supervision. They will work in an integrated way with School Health Nurses and LCSS.The teams will start working in schools from May 2019 and fully operational by end of December 2019. This is designed as a pilot project with a view that if this is successful there are ambitions to roll out across the county.Work is also now also underway to reduce the CAHMS waiting lists with appointments being offered now to those young people who have been waiting the longest.  |

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| **Police - Early Help Offer** |
| **At present…** * Engage with every school
* Named Police Community Support Offer (Primary) or Police Constable (Secondary) for ‘universal issues’ / prevention
* Schools and Youth Engagement Officer – for early intervention in secondary school
* Neighbourhood Policy Teams (NPTs) attend Neighbourhood Network and Neighbourhood Ambition Groups

**To come…** * Train Neighbourhood Policing Teams how to participate in TAFs and complete EHAs (where best placed to do so)
* Develop referral process from MASH to NPTs where Early Help is agreed response (and where best placed to do so)
* Develop process to identify children at risk of intergenerational criminality / organised crime
* Roll out ‘Safeguarding Children in Banbury’ across county
* Support and Engage in Community Around the School Offer
* Support and Engage in Inclusion Panels
* Connect S Training/Mental Health First Aid – Neighbourhood Policing
* Sharing Intelligence
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| **Oxfordshire Education Services - Early Help Offer** |
| * Vulnerable Families Imperative
* Early Help Champions
* Escalation via CASO, TAF and MASH
* SENSS
* SENDIASS
* In Year Fair Access
* Early Help (corporate scrutiny of exclusions, attendance, Part-Time attendees, SEN Support inclusion, Children Missing Education
* Take part in Systems Leaders
* Consideration of the vulnerable child within the context of their family as a baseline way of working
* Early Help Champions within each Education team at OCC
* Attendance Officers and Exclusions & Reintegration Officers made available to take their place at CASOs as required
* Escalation via CASO, TAF and MASH consistently advocated for all operational work when required
* SENSS available for training on SEN&D and appropriate responses
* SENDIASS available to advocate for the parents on behalf of the child to ensure schools appropriately meet their needs.
* Senior Education lead on Safeguarding in Education OSCB sub-committee
* In Year Fair Access protocol revised as of January 2019, now articulates schools’ equal responsibility for placement of vulnerable pupils, supported by High Needs funding through OCC for integration and exclusions prevention. Each In Year Fair Access child is cross checked against Framework i to ensure the whole picture is clear. If no wider services involved, each In Year Fair Access child to have an EHA completed
* Early Help strategy describes corporate scrutiny of exclusions, attendance, reintegration attendees, SEN Support inclusion, Children Missing Education
* Learner Engagement strategy describes timely use of Early Help through EHA and TAF
* Oxfordshire Schools Inclusion Team (OXSIT) advocacy of Early Help as a pathway for vulnerable pupils, especially with additional needs including social emotional and mental health needs
* Education Psychologists, School Improvement Officers and SEN Officers available to Social Workers and LCSS Workers for training on SEN&D regarding latest research re QFT approaches, most effective interventions, curriculum and assessment issues
* Oxford City Council has described Children Missing Education, exclusions and attendance as areas of scrutiny and support. Education partner sits on Oxford City Council Children & Young People’s Board
* Partner on Oxford City and Banbury Community Impact Zones
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| **Maternity Services - Early Help Offer** |
| * Evidence base is clear how important babies from first 1001 days are
* Maternity booking assessment (9-12 weeks pregnancy) to ensure new mothers are on the right pathway and getting the support they need.
* Family Nurse Partnership for young people under the age of 20yrs
* Perinatal mental health for previous history mental health problems
* Domestic Abuse screening
* Make Every Contact Count (MECCs) = opportunity
* Targeted healthy living clinics (Banbury and Oxford)
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| **Private Voluntary Settings and Nurseries - Early Help Offer** |
| * Identifying emerging needs
* Using schools and pre-school based resources to support children and families when early needs are identified
* Completion of Early Help Assessments and Team around the Family processes
* Working with other agencies, e.g. Health Visitors
* School Readiness and transitions
* School based groups –
* Stay and plays
* Baby groups
* Parent groups
* Nurturing wellbeing (under 5s)
* Funded places for 2 year olds
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| **Other Early help offers**  |
| * Aquarius / Drugs and Alcohol support
* Targeted Health prevention – oral health, smoking
* Accident prevention
* Risky behaviours / Protective behaviours - Work initiated in Banbury through Safeguarding Children in Banbury
* (Safeguarding Children In Banbury) for roll out across the county
* Self-Harm – Pegasus play
* Perinatal Mental Health – OCCG, Adult Mental Health
* Adult Services – Mental Health, Drugs and Alcohol, Domestic Abuse, Transition for those with Learner Disabilities
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**ANNEX B**

**Early Help – Opportunities and Challenges**

**Challenges**

**External Environment and Capacity**

* Austerity - Shrinking resources across public sector
* Increased demand / complexity of ‘social’ issues
* Brexit (staffing impact)
* Time to complete EHA form
* Time / resources to convene TAF
* Families passed from one agency to the next (remit)
* Agencies cannot always provide a lead professional for each family
* Geographical variations in provision
* Training

**Culture**

* Having a common understanding of ‘Early Help’ across all agencies
* Strategic Ownership
* Change fatigue
* Lack of awareness of other help available (eg. Voluntary Sector)
* Lack of confidence / Risk aversion
* Resilience / Responsibility of parents (Self Support / Self advocacy)

 **Data and Performance**

* Data Sharing restrictions / limitations
* Performance Monitoring difficulties across agencies
* No single system to update with all agency involvement

**Communication**

* Not clear on what’s the process are now, and what assistance is available from other partners
* Lack of clarity on how information about processes and services is communicated
* Lack of confidence in understanding of the system which affects ability to access the help available

**Opportunities**

**External Environment and Capacity**

* Economies of scale
* Reallocation of Resources
* Clearer guidance on who is responsible for what
* Reduce ‘competition’ between schools for people, resources etc.
* Improve engagement with Adult Service (Mental Health, Substance Abuse)
* Clearer information on who else is engaging with that child / family
* Having a person who is distant to co-ordinate multi-agency sessions and identify who is appropriate with capacity to write early help assessments
* How many can a school manage? Schools creating thresholds within their systems – need a named external person to help prioritise within capacity available. Reshape LCSS offer.
* No agency has any one resource that they can put in. We need to work together to have a shared objective to make a system wide change

**Culture**

* Pace (need ambition for more)
* Action
* Expectation of accountability to partners
* Know small but significant area differences and focus on specialist needs with targeted response.
* Work up Neighbourhood Networks
* Build partner priorities into OCC obsessions
* Seek commonalities in strategic objectives across agencies – to inform one common Early Help Strategy across all agencies endorsed by all Senior Leaders and promoted as such.
* Real partnership with shared ownership – common vision.

**Data and Performance**

* Have named people with access rights to data who provide shared chronology
* Know who (which services) is measuring what
* Gathering data across borders where families move around
* Know how to share the information that is collected
* Campaign around what data can be shared (GDPR scares people)
* Breakdown that we know about community (breakdown of data) and use this to add this with individual child data
* Children travel and so data needs to be available across locality area
* Named key professionals who are working with a child on a shared system (within OCC Single View)
* PCSO data to be inputted onto system so can be accessed by professionals via MASH.
* Development of shared chronology data.
* Countywide Platform
* Measure impacts from early help offer
* School readiness work to feed into early help agenda
* Collecting a lot but not sharing
* Could there be the opportunity for a platform for shared chronology
* Managing information across systems – planned moves, in-year moves and ensure data sharing keeps up – multi-agency chronologies. Take learning from MASH model around TAFs
* Be clear about objectives at a partnership level
* Being smarter about data we have – capacity in system to ‘helicopter out’ to analyse the data – looking at community / family / intergenerational issues.

**Communication**

* Map provision and associated language (de-Oxfordshire County Council all Early Help logo/docs etc)
* Link to Children and Young People’s Plan (multi-agency)
* Messaging needs to be more positively framed.