

Accessing Early Help and social care services

When to access and why

Meeting the needs of a child with SEND can sometimes be challenging, and you might feel that you need some extra help and support to improve things for your child and your family. In Shropshire, parents can access support and guidance to be able to meet the needs of their children at an early stage through Early Help services which are available to all parents or through services that are offered through more targeted support.

Family Information Service

In the first instance you can contact the Family Information Service to find out which services are available by calling 01743 254400, or using Shropshire Council's Local Offer <http://shropshire.gov.uk/early-help/>

How/ who can make a referral for Early Help?

Before making a referral, it should be considered if the child's needs can be met by universal services. These are services available in your local area which are accessible to all children. You can find details about a range of Early Help services on the Local Offer: <http://shropshire.gov.uk/early-help/parentscarers/information-and-resources/>

You can also explore the services available by completing a *Shropshire Family Webstar assessment* and a *Whole Family Action Plan* with support from a relevant professional. In lots of cases this will be your child's school.

School or a professional involved with your child may make a referral using the online system ECINS. If they do not have access to ECINS, copies of the paperwork can be obtained online through the Local Offer at <http://shropshire.gov.uk/early-help/practitioners/early-help-forms/>

It is important that the referrer gains consent from you to put in a referral.

Further information on the referral process can be found at <http://shropshire.gov.uk/early-help/>

What support will be offered?

COMPASS

All new referrals need to go to Shropshire's First Point of Contact (FPOC) also known as COMPASS. The first call will be acknowledged as an 'initial concern.'

Compass promotes the offer of early help to children and families in the first instance, where it is safe to do so.

Anyone can contact COMPASS to discuss any concerns they have regarding a child. This might be parents and carers, school or another professional.

If you want to talk about your concerns you can book a telephone consultation with an early help social worker or a targeted youth worker by calling **0345 678 9021**.

Following an initial call, it will then be determined what level of support is required. The levels are as follows.

Level 1- universal: children with no additional needs and there are no concerns. No additional support required other than what is offered universally.

Level 2- Early Help: some additional support required. For example, access to services such as 'All In' or Autism West Midlands. Issues may relate to health, education or social development and are likely to be short term.

Level 3- Targeted Early Help: Specific targeted support from services such as EnHance, Family Support and Targeted Youth Work. Further information on these services can be found at <http://shropshire.gov.uk/media/7646/shropshire-early-help-services.pdf>

Level 4- Targeted- complex/ significant needs

Under Section 17 – 1989 Children Act, a child shall be taken to be in need if

- (a) s/he is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision of services by a local authority;
- (b) his/her health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for him of such services;
- (c) s/he is disabled.

If it is decided that the child is a 'child in need', the referral will progress to social work assessment.

Social care and EHC needs assessment

When a request is made for an assessment for an Education, Health and Care Plan, the Local Authority should request advice from Social Care as part of the assessment. Firstly, checks should be made to see if the child or young person is in receipt of targeted services, has an early help or child in need assessment underway, a plan in place or any other social care involvement.

If there is, or has been social work/ care involvement, the social worker should contribute to the EHC assessment.

Where a Social Worker is not currently allocated, FPOC should be contacted to share information about any previous involvement.

If there isn't, or hasn't previously been any social care involvement, social care needs must still be considered as part of the assessment and advice sought from relevant professionals.

Social Care and EHC Plans

If a child or Young person is issued an EHCP and social care needs have been identified, provision must be included in Section H1 and/ or Section H2 of the Plan.

The type of support which can be listed in H1 is any social care provision which must be made for a child or young person under the age of 18. This provision is outlined in section 2 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act (1970) and includes:

- Practical assistance in the home
- Provision or assistance in obtaining recreational and educational facilities at home and outside the home
- Assistance in travelling to facilities
- Adaptations to the home
- Facilitating the taking of holidays
- Provision of meals at home or elsewhere
- Provision or assistance in obtaining a telephone and any special equipment necessary
- Non-residential short breaks

Provision should be detailed, specific and normally quantified. This means it should clearly identify what the provision is, how often it will be delivered and by who.

Any other social care provision should be listed in H2. This may include provision identified through Early Help and/ or Children in Need assessments.

For children and young people under 18 this might include

- Residential short breaks
- Services provided arising from their SEN but unrelated to a disability
- Any provision secured through a social care direct payment.

For young people over 18, this might include:

- Any adult social care provision to meet needs set out in an adult social care and support plan

The Local Authority may also choose to specify any other social care required which is not linked to their learning difficulties or disabilities if appropriate.

Where can I get further information, advice or support?

Contact the IASS team on:

Phone: 01743 280019 (Open 10am-4pm Monday—Friday)

Web: www.cabshropshire.org.uk

www.facebook.com/IASSShropshire

Email: iass@cabshropshire.org.uk

Address: Fletcher House, 15 College Hill, Shrewsbury, SY1 1LY