

Early Help Offer

As a sanctuary of Christian love, we forge futures in our community. We inspire a joy of learning and a delight in one another. In faith, we are refined through challenge, growing with God, together.

The light shines in the darkness and the darkness shall not overcome it.

John 1 v.5



1. Policy Statement

Early Help means providing support as soon as a need emerges, at any point in a child's life. At Poulton-le-Sands Church of England, we recognise that early, timely support can prevent concerns from escalating and improve outcomes for children, young people and their families.

Staff understand that any professional can provide Early Help and that it forms a key part of our everyday safeguarding and pastoral practice. Lancashire County Council recognises that Early Help describes much of the routine work undertaken by schools and this policy sets out how Poulton-le-Sands CE delivers its Early Help offer in line with local guidance and expectations.

The initial contact for Early Help at Poulton-le-Sands CE is Mrs Vicki Wheeler, Pupil and Family Support Worker. She may manage Early Help cases directly or in conjunction with a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

2. Aims of the Early Help Offer

The aims of our Early Help offer are to:

- Identify concerns at the earliest possible stage
- Provide appropriate support to children, young people and families
- Prevent issues from escalating to statutory intervention
- Support children and families to step down from statutory services where appropriate
- Promote positive outcomes for children in terms of wellbeing, safety, attendance, behaviour and achievement
- Work collaboratively with families and partner agencies

3. Scope of Early Help

Any pupil or family may benefit from Early Help. Staff will be particularly alert to the potential need for Early Help for pupils who:

- Are disabled, have certain health conditions, or have specific additional needs
- Have Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND), whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan
- Have mental health needs
- Are young carers
- Show signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement, organised crime groups or county lines
- Are frequently missing or going missing from home or care
- Are at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual exploitation or criminal exploitation
- Are at risk of being radicalised
- Are misusing drugs or alcohol
- Have family members in custody or are affected by parental offending
- Are living in family circumstances presenting challenges, such as substance misuse, adult mental health difficulties or domestic abuse
- Have returned home to their family from care
- Are at risk of honour-based abuse (HBA), including female genital mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage
- Are privately fostered
- Are displaying harmful sexual behaviours which may pose a risk to themselves or others
- Are persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day or not in receipt of full-time education
- Show early signs of abuse or neglect, or any other identified reason requiring additional support or intervention
- Have experienced multiple suspensions and are at risk of, or have been, permanently excluded, including from alternative provision or a pupil referral unit (PRU)
- Have experienced bereavement
- Are viewing problematic or inappropriate online content or developing inappropriate relationships online

4. Our Early Help Offer

Poulton's Early Help offer includes, but is not limited to:

- Pastoral support from school staff
- Monitoring and support for attendance, behaviour and wellbeing
- Emotional and social support for pupils
- Support for parents and carers through advice, guidance and signposting
- Early identification of additional needs and appropriate referrals
- Liaison with external services where appropriate

Support is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains appropriate and effective.

5. Working with Families and Early Help Process

Where Early Help is appropriate and consent has been gained, the DSLs or Pastoral Team will take the lead. This includes liaising with other agencies and, where appropriate, initiating an Early Help Assessment and coordinating a Team Around the Family (TAF) approach.

The local Early Help process will be followed to ensure that children and families receive the right support at the right time. Staff may be required to contribute to or support Early Help Assessments led by other professionals and, in some cases, may act as the Lead Practitioner.

All Early Help cases are kept under regular review to assess the impact and effectiveness of the support being provided.

6. Partnership Working

Poulton recognises that some needs are best met through partnership working. We work closely with a range of agencies and services, including health, education, social care and voluntary organisations, to ensure children and families receive the right support at the right time.

Barnardo's Moving Mindsets



**Changing childhoods.
Changing lives.**



We have an Educational Mental Health Practitioner that comes into school on a weekly basis to support the mental health and emotional wellbeing needs of the children and young people in our school. They can also signpost and refer to other appropriate local services and support groups.

For more information about what the MHST offers, please see the link below or contact Mrs Wheeler in school.

Barnardos Moving Mindsets – Morecambe Bay Mental Health Support Team

Citizens Advice Bureau - Schools & Family Adviser

We are very fortunate to be part of the Citizens Advice Bureau Schools Project. Parents and Carers can contact the advisors (Jeni and Charlotte) directly or speak to Mrs Wheeler who can help with a referral.



7. Safeguarding, Roles and Responsibilities

We ensure that:

- All staff and volunteers can identify risk factors that indicate a pupil or family may benefit from Early Help and understand how to share concerns with a DSL
- Mrs Vicki Wheeler, Pupil and Family Wellbeing Practitioner, will undertake a Family Early Help Assessment where appropriate
- DSLs and the school's Pupil and Family Wellbeing Practitioner will signpost and refer families to appropriate support agencies
- DSLs and the school's Pupil and Family Wellbeing Practitioner will lead on Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings where appropriate
- DSLs will follow local safeguarding processes and refer to Working Well with Children and Families in Lancashire guidance, using the Continuum of Need

Early Help does not replace statutory safeguarding duties. If concerns escalate or a child is at risk of significant harm, the school will follow its Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and make referrals without delay.

8. Guidance and Frameworks

This policy is informed by and aligns with the following guidance:

- Lancashire County Council – Supporting Children and Families
- Working Well with Children and Families (WWCF) Guidance
- Pan-Lancashire Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains compliant with local guidance and continues to meet the needs of our school community.

Date reviewed: September 2026

Agreed by Governors: October 2025

Signed:

Mrs Laura T. Gardner
Headteacher

Next review date: September 2027

Appendix

Further information and useful links:

- **Lancashire Family hubs**
- **Lancaster City Council – Cost of Living support**
- **Lancaster City Council Community Hub**
- **Morecambe Bay Food Bank**
- **Eggcup** Lancaster & Morecambe low-cost food scheme
- **The Olive Branch** Food Bank
- **Household Support Fund**
- **NSPCC**
- **Lancaster CVS Directory** Find support for your health and wellbeing, join social activities, and get help with cost-of-living problems.
- **Barnardos MyTime to Thrive** Mental health support for children and young people
- **Kooth - Mental Health Support**
- **ADHD North West** Charity offering support for parents and children with ADHD or on the pathway for diagnosis



C.H.A.T.S Parent Support Group (Lancaster and Morecambe area) on Facebook



Who is it for?

Any **parent/carer** involved in the support of any child/young person struggling with mental, emotional or behavioural difficulties.

What happens?

The Facebook group is a friendly, safe space to talk, listen and help each other, available 24/7.

You don't have to post or comment, sometimes just reading about what others are experiencing is help enough.

We also host **face-to-face meetings, workshops** and **Zoom meetings** during term-time.

Rebecca - 07852297215

Claire - 07494206371

chats_123@yahoo.com

When?

CHATS Social Café (in person) drop-in

First Friday of the month
10am until 12pm

CHATS Face-To-Face meeting

Second Thursday of the month
10am until 12pm

Come along, have a brew and find your people.

CHATS Workshops

(places need to be booked)

Third Thursday of the month
10am until 1pm

Where?

More Music - Devonshire Road,
West End, Morecambe, LA3 1QT

CHATS Zoom meeting drop-in

(login details are on the Facebook group)

Last Wednesday of the month
7pm until 8.30pm



**How to join the zoom meeting
last Wednesday of every month 7pm - 8.30pm
(term-time only)**



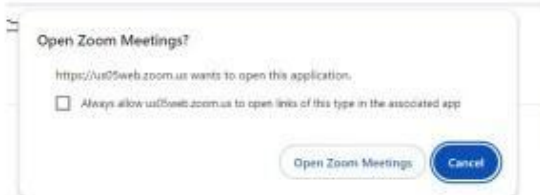
Log into your account and click on the **'Join'** button
on the top right side of the screen

Join Meeting

Enter the meeting code into the box - **580 384 9520**

Meeting ID or Personal Link Name

Join



If this box pops up, tick the box and
click the **'Open Zoom Meetings'** button

Enter the passcode into the box - **47iwud**

Enter meeting passcode

Join Meeting Cancel

You will then be in the 'Waiting Room' and we will allow you in

**You DO NOT have to have your camera OR your microphone on,
you can simply listen along and comment in the chat box if you want to.
It is a safe space to find support whether you want to speak or not.**

