



# Buckinghamshire Children & Young People's Partnership

Working together to reach our goals

## The draft Early Help Partnership Strategy for Buckinghamshire (2022 to 2025)

A simple guide to what it is, what it says and how to share your views

We want to make sure that children, young people and their families get the support they need when they need it to deal with any problems they may be facing before they get worse.

This support is known as early help and is provided by lots of different services across Buckinghamshire. These organisations include the Council, health services, education and voluntary and community sector organisations.

Early help services can offer help as soon as a family is facing a problem, through advice and information, drop-in sessions delivered at Family Centres across the county, or direct support from a professional who will work with a family and other professionals to agree a plan to help.

In Buckinghamshire, we already have an Early Help Partnership Strategy that expires in March 2022. It's now time for us to produce our new strategy, a plan for the next 3 years on how we will improve this support, measure our success, and try new things.

We want your views and feedback on our draft strategy so it's the best it can be.

### Early help is...

Providing help as early as possible to children, young people and families so problems don't grow.

When problems grow, they can become longer-lasting, traumatic, harder to resolve and need more costly support from services like social care, health services and police.

### Our early help strategy...

Looks at how we have supported the needs of families, children and young people in the last 3 years and how needs have changed.

It shows what went well, what could be improved and sets our priorities for the next 3 years.

### How you can help...

Give us your feedback on our draft strategy.

This could include what you think of our priorities, plans and vision for the next 3 years.

Here's a summary of our draft strategy (or read our full draft strategy)

Our strategy sets out 4 priorities.

## Priority 1 is strengthen multi-agency strategic governance and joint ownership of the Early Help Strategy

### Priority

# 1

Things we will do include:

- Forming a group made up of staff, early help services and representatives of children and young people. This group can then make a plan for early help over the next 3 years that show how this strategy will be achieved.
- Improve planning and joint working with all the early help organisations and services.
- Make sure data is collected and analysed more regularly. This information will inform what we do next and allow us to share more of our achievements.

[See our draft strategy for a full list of things we will do](#)

## Priority 2 is further develop the Early Help offer to include a targeted response to the increased risk of long-term disadvantage for children, young people and families due to the Covid-19 pandemic

### Priority

# 2

Things we will do include:

- Providing support for those children, young people and families who might be more vulnerable such as:
  - young people not in employment, education or training (NEET)
  - children and young people who are educated at home or are excluded from school and education
  - those vulnerable to exploitation
- Developing a support offer for new parents and carers who have been affected by the pandemic and might have:
  - increased anxieties
  - greater isolation
  - reduced access to help and support to address any developmental delays in their children

[See our draft strategy for a full list of things we will do](#)

## Priority

# 3

Priority 3 is work together to provide effective Early Help in line with our strategic objectives and Early Help Partnership Action Plan, that supports children, young people and families to easily access support.

Things we will do include:

- Reviewing the needs of families, the demand for our services and ensure our support is at the right locations.
- Building on good practice and work together as much as we can.
- Creating a training and support programme for front-line staff that reflects the needs and new challenges families are facing.
- Reviewing how support is accessed, (sometimes called pathways), so that it's clearer, easier and quicker for people to get support from us.
- Identifying additional opportunities to run early help services in different places and develop Family Centres into community hubs. These hubs will be more suitable and inviting to all ages.

[See our draft strategy for a full list of things we will do](#)

## Priority

# 4

Priority 4 is develop a common understanding of Early Help across the partnership and promote a cohesive Buckinghamshire offer.

Things we will do include:

- Increasing the visibility of the early help offer in Buckinghamshire. This means making sure families and professionals are aware of the variety of early help support and services.
- Nurturing a sense of community and partnership amongst the organisations working within early help so everyone knows how they are contributing
- Finding new partners, services and organisations to increase the support and expertise we have available for families.

[See our draft strategy for a full list of things we will do](#)

## What families have told us

Families using early help services have given positive feedback about their experiences. They felt supported to overcome their problems.

*"I really enjoyed the sessions and I started to open up with the help! It was and is the highlight of my week and I'm going to miss seeing everyone!"*

*"I have learnt helpful coping mechanisms to deal with my anxiety and know that help is available should I need it."*

*"My self-esteem and confidence boosted drastically in such a short amount of time."*

(Young people commenting on Family Support Service courses)

*"Great facilitators who ensured a safe and open space for the attendees to open up. Provided useful tips, advice and empathy...The format is very good."*

(Parents of children with SEND attending a nurture parenting group)



Families have also told us where they would like more support. These areas include:

- support for new parents: "I don't know what to expect my child to be doing, I haven't had the chance to discuss their development or compare to other children, which is difficult as he is my first child."
- support for parents/carers of children returning to school following closures due to the pandemic, so they know how best to support those who are finding the return difficult.
- Support for parents/carers of children with SEND. A parenting course specifically for this group was successful and feedback suggested more were needed: "Definitely been worthwhile. It's a shame there isn't an opportunity for more parents to attend."
- Opportunities for parents/carers with shared experiences to meet to support each other.

Families said we should promote the early help offer more widely, including promotion to young people: "I wish I'd known about the early help offer and support a year ago" and "Young people need to know what support is available and how to access for themselves when they need it."

## How we will measure success



We will measure the progress made on our 4 priorities and the success of our strategy by establishing an Early Help Partnership Action Plan.

A dedicated group of people called a 'subgroup' will agree what we need to do to meet our 4 priorities and what success would look like.

Buckinghamshire's Children and Young People's Partnership Board will then use this action plan to measure our progress.

The subgroup will also gather data and report on:

- the needs of families, children, and young people and how we can provide support to meet these needs
- where our early help interventions have been successful. Especially for families who have had multiple and complex needs and no longer need dedicated support from us

## Tell us what you think

1

Complete our [consultation survey](#) by 12 December 2021. You can read our draft strategy in full on the consultation webpage

2

Attend an online event on:  
9 November, 2 - 3pm  
10 November, 11am – 12pm  
15 November, 7 - 8pm

Sign up by emailing  
[Sharon.Sachania@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:Sharon.Sachania@buckinghamshire.gov.uk).



If you need a printed version of the survey, please email [engageeducation@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:engageeducation@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

## **What happens next**

We will look at all the feedback we receive and we will make changes to the Early Help Partnership Strategy and priorities where we need to as a result of what you have told us.

## **Privacy**

We will use the information you provide only for the purposes of this consultation and it will be kept confidential and stored securely in line with data protection laws.

Thank you for taking the time to read this document and share your views. Updates and decisions on this strategy will be posted on our consultation website after the consultation closes.