



One-minute guide

Surrey Partnership Helping Families Early Strategy (2020-23)

What is the purpose of the Helping Families Early Strategy?

The purpose of the Strategy is to bring together the key components of how as a partnership we help families early in Surrey, identifying and responding to problems at the earliest opportunity and preventing the need for late and often high cost intervention. We can help each other to do this by having an effective partnership strategy that brings together the principles, ambitions and practice that will make the most difference to the lives of children in Surrey.

‘Providing early help is more effective than reacting later. Early help means providing support as soon as possible as a problem emerges at any point in a child’s life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. Early help can also prevent further problems arising; for example, if it is provided as part of a support plan where a child has returned home to their family from care, or in families where there are emerging parental mental health issues or drug and alcohol misuse.’

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

What does Helping Families Early mean?

Every conversation, phone call, meeting or offer of help that builds family resilience is ‘helping families early’. It is a partnership approach with everyone playing their role at the right time in the right way with a common language and culture that ‘we are early help’. Helping Families Early is everyone’s responsibility – it is not a separate service or even a collection of services, it is an activity undertaken by almost everyone who works with children, young people and their families, such as schools, GPs, early years settings and the police.

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

- Identify children and families who would benefit from early help
- Undertake and assessment of need for early help
- Provided targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family which focuses on activity to improve outcomes for the child.’

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

What are the principles and ambitions for helping families early?

We are committed to the following principles which inform the way we work with children and families.

We will:



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- Empower families to take responsibility by working with them, not doing things to or for them.
- Recognise that family, friends and community can be the most effective and sustainable forces of “help”.
- Enable support at the right time, in the right place, in the right way.
- Work in partnership to make best use of shared resource, skills and knowledge
- Embrace a strengths based, whole-family approach to finding sustainable solutions.
- Build our work on an evidence informed approach.
- Understand the power of good communications both with families and with colleagues.



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