

Overview of collated feedback from children, young people and parents/carers

In order to start the conversation with key multi-agency partners around the development of a revised Early Help approach to supporting children, young people and families in Slough, an initial meeting and further workshop was held with Strategic Leads to undertake a self-assessment, utilising the Early Help System Guide. Further work was then undertaken with the Early Help Champions Forum (operational group) to gain their views and insight into how Early Help was working in Slough. The Early Help System Guide reflects the consultation undertaken with partners as key stakeholders (see Item 4.1)

A Task and Finish Group was set up to develop the new Early Help Partnership Strategy for Slough. As part of their role, members of the group undertook some low level consultation and gathered feedback from children, young people and parents/ carers on their understanding of Early Help, what their experiences were and how they would want an Early Help Service to work for them.

Children and young people

34 children and young people were consulted with through a group based session with Together As One and ICB, individual views from pupils at St Joseph's School and individual views from children and young people currently supported via the Targeted Early Help Service.

Overall, it was clear that the term 'Early Help' didn't resonate with the majority of our children and young people, with some believing this meant 'Early Years' and was only about supporting young children. However, when asked of they knew what a Family Support Worker or a Youth Worker did, they understood these roles and how they can provide additional and targeted support. Many of the children and young people asked, were able to name trusted adults they could go to if they needed help, with the majority highlighting school roles such as Teachers and Pastoral Support.

Children and young people were able to express what they wanted from 'Early Help' once this term was clear. Here are some examples of what they told us;

'Early Help means that children like me that get into trouble or problems for different reasons, get help from people like you, before it becomes a bigger problem and becomes serious'

Young person open to Targeted Early Help

'(Early Help is) prevention or a cure'

Young person at Together as One

'Giving us help to fix our issues'

Young person at Together as One

'The vibe or relationship would make me work with the person, I judge people on how they act and speak to me. If I don't like them, I wont talk or work with them'

Young person open to Targeted Early Help

'Before the serious organisations get involved'

Young person from Together As One

'Help before problems get bigger'

Young person at St. Joseph's School

'Don't stereo-type me or judge me'

Young person from Together as One

'Schools need to promote other services better'

Young person from Together as One

Parent and carers

10 parents and carers who had received support from Targeted Early Help were asked about their experiences in accessing and receiving support from when they first sought help or when they were referred. The majority of parents/carers understood the concept of early help in the context of the targeted service they were receiving which would be expected as they were service users, however, some reflected on the need for better accessibility to support.

Some examples of what parents/carers told us;

'If early help was not available from my family support worker, I would not have been able to get the support from the school in the way that I did'

'There needs to be more information and contact details on how to access early help'

'I didn't know where to go for support. I spoke to the doctors and didn't feel listened to or that they helped me. I think if others had taken the time to help I would have known earlier what support was out there'

'You have been approachable and I don't feel judged. I feel you are the first person to have taken time to find out what the difficulties are. I feel you want me to achieve'

'Early Help can prevent getting involvement from social care which was very important to me. Otherwise, I would will feel like a failure'

'Now I understand what Early help is . For me it means breaking the cycle. Early Help come in to help us to give children the childhood they should have had'

'I feel more advertising out there is needed. Images of the change that can happen. People don't know how much help is out there to support a family'

The feedback received from children, young people and parents/carers have been key to us building the principles of our strategy to ensure we are delivering early help support in the way that our children, young people and families need. Recognising what has worked for them and what they feel would work better are key to us getting our offer right for Slough.