

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

27 February 2020

EARLY HELP

Report of the Strategic Director for People

Strategic Aim:	Building a Brighter future	
Key Decision: No	Forward Plan Reference: n/a	
Exempt Information	No	
Cabinet Member(s) Responsible:	Mr David Wilby Portfolio Holder for Education and Children's Services	
Contact Officer(s):	Bernadette Caffrey, Head of Service Early Intervention, SEND and Inclusion	01572 722943 bcaffrey@rutland.gov.uk
Ward Councillors	All	

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:

1. Notes the Early Help Offer for Rutland.
2. Notes and endorses the direction of early help in Rutland outlined in the report.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To update Committee on the Early Help offer for Rutland and to note the drivers which support a whole system approach to early intervention and prevention.
- 1.2 The report sets out the developments across the partnership to continue to improve the early help offer across Rutland.

2 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 2.1 Rutland's Early Help Strategy (2019), sets out Rutland County Council's Early Help Offer and informs the approach the Council, with our partner organisations, take in working with children and families. Rutland's Early Help Offer describes the help for children and families as soon as problems start to emerge or when there is a strong likelihood that problems will emerge in the future in relation to, for example, emotional and behavioural difficulties, risk of criminal activity or parental neglect of needs.

- 2.2 The Early Help Offer includes ‘universal services’, such as schools, health visiting and GP services, or adult learning programmes and also ‘targeted’ services, such as one to one family support in the home, or the Aiming High short breaks for disabled children service, designed to reduce or prevent specific problems from escalating or becoming entrenched.
- 2.3 **Early Help** in Rutland means:
- 2.4 **providing support** - as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child’s life, from the early years through to teenage years
- 2.5 **preventing the problems occurring** - providing targeted early help before any social care intervention, or adding value and collaboration to a social care intervention
- 2.6 **preventing problems escalating** - and also ‘step down’ from social care, where the aim is to prevent re-escalation and further statutory intervention and reducing the severity of problems.
- 2.7 **See Appendix A:** Rutland’s Early Help Strategy, (2019)
- 2.8 Families are encouraged to utilise our advice and information services and our digital offer on the Council website and the Rutland Information Service. We have places which reach all children and families such as our youth groups and our Children’s Centre and Library, our community space on the Barracks and the work we commission from our early years settings and voluntary support groups for example ‘Sunnies’ and ‘Stay and Plays’ in three localities in the community.
- 2.9 Our Children’s Centre and Jules House supports our partnership working by providing ‘safe places’ for children and families to receive for example: speech and language therapy, health visiting and midwifery services, Relate counselling, family therapy, and an emotional well-being nurse.
- 2.10 We have an integrated Early Help and Social Care single front door which supports families and professionals. Our practitioners often act as ‘lead professional’ and complete and hold early help plans. To improve partners engagement in acting as ‘lead professional’, we have Early Help Co-Ordinators who support statutory partners, including schools and early years providers, health and the police, to fulfil this role with families requiring early help.
- 2.11 **See Appendix B:** Early Help Functions and **Appendix C:** Early Help and Send Budget.

3 WHAT WE HAVE DONE AND WHAT WORKS WELL

- 3.1 There is a commitment across Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland’s (LLR) Safeguarding Children Partnership to embed ‘Working Together’ guidance and multiagency early help across the localities.
- 3.2 The LLR Partnership shares a thresholds document and the multiagency referral process which supports professionals to request involvement of children’s social care and early help at an early stage. This promotes a shared professional language that families understand.

- 3.3 **See Appendix C:** LLR Safeguarding Children Partnership Thresholds Document (2019)
- 3.4 There is a fully integrated front door to children's services. Early Help teams are located together with children's social care teams, which enables good professional dialogue and working together to identify and put in place timely support. We have reduced the number of children experiencing dual interventions from early help and social care and this has improved capacity within the early help service.
- 3.5 We have worked across the partnership to create an environment that promotes joint working, examples include, co-location and locality working in our Children Centre and Jules House, delivering multidisciplinary workforce development and building social capital through our volunteer programme and supporting our young people to be community activists.
- 3.6 Our joint services are achieving demonstrable positive outcomes for children and families, such as:
- 3.7 The number of Early Help cases that need to step up to Children's Social Care are consistently low, less than 4%, demonstrating that we are providing an appropriate level of intervention and enabling families to sustain positive change in their lives.
- 3.8 Families who have had an Early Help intervention engage well with services and report achieving positive outcomes, (96% in Dec 2019).
- 3.9 Satisfaction and engagement levels are consistently high in our Children's Centre, Aiming High services and few families disengage or withdraw their consent to work with the service.
- 3.10 Our service for young people is being led by what young people tell us works for them; the evening youth group currently has 30 young people attending, the drop in youth café after school and in the half terms. Our youth team are acting as independent advocates in supporting children to have a voice in their social care plan, feedback from young people is consistently positive.
- 3.11 Our Troubled Families Programme, known as Changing Lives in Rutland, payment by results outcomes and longitudinal studies evidence sustained long term change for families, for example school attendance and return to training and employment.
- 3.12 We have few persistent absences and our permanent exclusions figure of 2 children, Year to Date (YTD) and a reduction of 32% YTD on 2018/19 of children needing alternative provision.
- 3.13 Our SEND service is meeting its legal timescales, (100% compared to the national figure of 69%), the quality of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) and Care Plans has improved and parents are positive about 'getting to know you' meetings and annual reviews. Our SEND Peer Review (November 2019) evidences that joint working in Rutland is improving outcomes for children with disabilities.

4 CHALLENGES – WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO

- 4.1 The service has to continue to demonstrate value for money and, working with local and regional partners, measure long term well-being and sustained impact following our intervention. This is alongside improved local data that enables us to predict demand and inform commissioning accordingly.
- 4.2 The significant increase in demand for SEND services, for example, has meant the Early Help service has had to develop early intervention plans to support children with disabilities or support young people waiting on CAMHS services. We have remodelled some of the functions within our teams to meet changing needs, for example the creation of well-being practitioners across LLR.
- 4.3 Promote continued ownership of our Children’s Plan for Rutland which embeds a ‘whole system approach’ overseen by a robust governance and accountability structure for example, a re-energised children and young people’s partnership group.

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Early Help service has in place mechanisms to consult with children, young people and families through, for example, the Rutland Youth Council, the Disabled Young People’s Forum and the Children’s Centre Governance Group.

6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 6.1 None.

7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no financial implications

8 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 There are no legal or governance considerations.

9 DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has not been completed.

10 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (DPIA) has not been completed.

11 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Our youth service and our community safety service are working with local community groups and town and parish councils to support young people in their community and to engage them in positive activities and reduce the risk of antisocial and criminal behaviour. The youth team for example, are supporting Uppingham Town Council to set up a youth provision – created a guidance document for them, secured free safer recruiting training and identified new volunteers.

12 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 Rutland's Early Help Strategy, 2019) clearly sets out our intention to work collaboratively to meet the education, health and social and care needs of children and young people.

13 CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13.1 As outlined the effectiveness of the Early Help offer is dependent on a whole system and partnership approach. The service will continue to look at opportunities across early help and the partnership to ensure early help services continue to develop to meet the changing needs of Rutland children and families.
- 13.2 It is recommended that Committee notes the contents of the report and endorses the direction of early help provision in Rutland.

14 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 14.1 There are no additional background papers to the report.

15 APPENDICES

- 15.1 Appendix A: Early Help Strategy
15.2 Appendix B: Early Help Functions
15.3 Appendix C: Early Help and SEND Budget
15.4 Appendix D: LLR Safeguarding Children Partnership Thresholds Document

A Large Print or Braille Version of this Report is available upon request – Contact 01572 722577.