**Early Help Offer at Frederick Gent School**

At Frederick Gent School we understand that from time to time family life can have its complication and sometimes young people and their families may need some extra support.

Early help is support given to a family when a problem first emerges. It can be provided at any stage in a young person’s life. The early help offer at Frederick Gent School gives parents a framework for asking for support; and for the school to approach families where we can offer support. Early help support can be delivered to parents, young people or whole families, but the main focus is to improve outcomes for young people.

Statutory guidance highlights and informs the importance of providing early help intervention. Frederick Gent School follows guidance within:

* Children Act 1989 & 2004
* Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2019
* Working together, 2018

The early help offer recognises that it is more effective to provide early help when problems first arise than to intervene later. The early help offer works to improve the protective factors which reduce risk to a young persons well being. They include:

* Developing strong social and emotional skills
* Having a strong social support network for the family
* Good parental mental health
* Income support, benefits and advice
* Good community services and facilities

Early help can offer children the support needed to reach their full potential. It can improve the quality of a young person’s home and family like, enable then to perform better at school and support their mental health. Research suggests that early help can:

* Protect children from harm and build resilience
* Reduce the need for a referral to child protection services
* Improve young peoples’ long-term outcomes
* Support the young person in developing strengths and skills that can prepare them for adult life

Signs that a young person and/or their family may benefit from early help include:

* Displaying disruptive or anti-social behaviour
* Being bullied or bullying others
* Having poor attendance at school
* Being involved in, or at risk of, offending
* Having poor general health
* Having anxiety, depression or other mental health issues
* Misusing drugs or alcohol
* Having a particularly challenging relationship with parents or appearing to be unusually independent from their parents
* Experiencing difficulties at home, such financial, housing domestic abuse, parental substance abuse or parental mental health problems

Some groups of young people may be more likely to need early help than their peers. These include, but are not limited to, young people who;

* Have been excluded from school, or are at risk of exclusion
* Have had missing episodes
* Have special educational needs
* Are disabled
* Are in care or a preparing to leave care
* Are young carers
* Are young parents (or about to become young parents)
* Are experiencing housing issues

At Frederick Gent School staff may identify a possible need for early help services or a family may request support. In some cases the school may be asked to provide early help support for a family by Derbyshire Starting Point. This may be as a result of a concern being raised to Starting Point, a referral from another professional or following a social care assessment.

If school staff identify a possible need for early help a referral will be made to the school Early Help Team. This team consists of a family support worker and a youth worker. Where it is felt appropriate, for example where specific expertise is needed, early help staff from other schools within The Two Counties Trust may be used to support a young person and/or family.

The referral will be discussed by the early help team and the Deputy Head Teacher with responsibility for safeguarding. Where the referral is accepted by the early help team the young people and their families may be supported at a number of levels

* Direct individual work with the young person (tier 1)
* Direct work through group work with the young person (tier 1)
* Direct work with the young person and the family following an early help assessment (tier 2)
* Derbyshire Early Help Intervention Team (tier 3)

Each young person and/or family at tier 1, 2 or 3 will be supported by a named worker.

If staff have identified that there may be a need for early help support, this will be discussed with the family by a member of the pastoral team for the year group or one of the early help team. The young person and their family will be asked to consent to this support.

When providing early help Frederick Gent will ensure that there are frameworks and structures in place to support this work including information sharing, procedures around step up into Childrens Social Care, robust recording and advice, and support to staff in early help activity. Frederick Gent School will record all actions taken and referrals within the young persons safeguarding records on My Concern

As part of the early help support the school may seek additional support from other agencies for the young person and/or their family. Information will only be shared with these agencies once consent has been gained from the family (TTCT Information sharing and privacy notice). External agencies may include, but are not limited to:

* School health services
* Health services including GPs and Health Visitors
* CAMHS
* Derbyshire Recovery Partnership
* The ELM Foundation
* CGL
* The police
* Social Care services
* Housing
* Food Bank
* Careers services
* SNAP development
* Bereavement services
* Youth offending services
* Derbyshire Fire Service
* Other schools

Where there is a need for more than one agency to be involved with a young person and/or their family a team around the family (TAF) meeting will be held to share information and coordinate response. A TAF meeting will usually result in an action plan for support for the young person and/or family.

Topics and areas of work which may be addressed through individual direct work and group work may include, but is not limited to:

* Work on self esteem and confidence
* Personal, social development
* Anger management
* Sexual health, sexuality, healthy relationships and consent
* Risky online behaviour
* Anti social behaviour and risk taking
* Family relationships
* Alcohol and drugs
* Mental health and emotional wellbeing
* Grief, loss and bereavement

Early help staff will be line managed and supervised by the Deputy headteacher with responsibility for safeguarding. This will include regular reviews of actions taken with a young person and or/family. Regular review meetings will be held where each case will be discussed. This may result in the support for a young person/family moving up or down the levels of support. In some cases the school will seek additional advice via Derbyshire Starting Point as to the best course of action. This may involve a young person and/or family being stepped up for an assessment by social care.

As part of the monitoring and quality assurance process the designated governor for safeguarding will meet with the Deputy Headteacher and/or Early Help team to discuss an overview of the early help support being provided to students at least termly.

If a young person or family has concerns about the way they have been supported they should contact the Deputy HeadTteacher in the first instance. If the concern is not addressed to their satisfaction then the school complaints policy should be followed.

Deputy Headteacher/Designated safeguarding lead: Rachael Skelton

Designated safeguarding governor Sandra Fitton-Wilde

Family Support Worker Leah Hine

Youth Worker Linda Piper