

Pocket Guide

for Early Help practitioners
in Manchester.



Early Help
Manchester.

What is Early Help?

When there are early indications that things are not going well, Early Help is about engaging a child, young person, parent or family in a conversation about how to get things going well again.

Understanding the situation as early as possible and giving the right advice, information and support starts here.

The Early Help Assessment is based on quality conversations.

The new approach is to have holistic and strengths-based conversations by discussing all aspects of life and the whole family situation.

By finding out what is going well, or could be better, people will feel listened to, understood and ready for change.

Top tips

“See the person”

“See the situation”

And working together with the child/young person and family

*“See the steps
to change”*

The What's Working Well Wheel

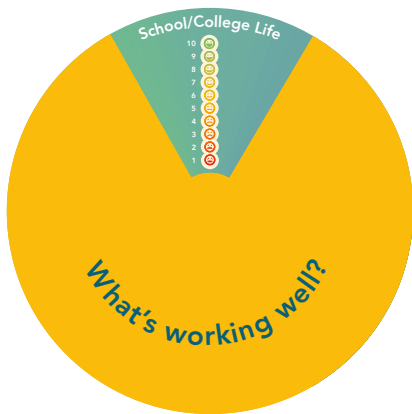
- is part of the new Early Help Assessment approach
- should be used as a conversation enabler
- is a shared tool for use by the practitioner and the individual or family
- puts the emphasis on listening and building rapport.

The Early Help Assessment form and wheel are linked to the Levels of Need and Response Framework using key indicators under the five aspects of life.

Asking about all aspects of life (not just aspects from your specialist area) helps to see past the presenting problem and get to the root cause. There are some prompts to follow to help ensure the conversation covers key reasons for Early Help.

Ask about these things anyway – they may have been issues in the past but are going well now, or they may arise during the process as new issues. A good Early Help Assessment covers all aspects at an early stage.

The What's Working Well Wheel



Quality conversations lead to quality Early Help.

What is important to you?

This is the place to start the conversation, find out what the person cares most about and then bear this in mind when you talk through the five aspects. Follow the order that makes the person feel most at ease and engaged with.

Home Life

- What's working well?
- What could be better?
- What can be done to get things going well again?
- Ready for change?

Housing

- Safe and clean living conditions.
- Household membership, and physical space.
- Residency status.
- Tenancy status.
- Ability to budget.
- Finances for basic needs.
- Able to pay loans/debts.
- Self-reliant or reliant on charity/ food banks.
- Responsible for own finances.

Work Life

- What's working well?
- What could be better?
- What can be done to get things going well again?
- Ready for change?

Employment status

- Caring responsibilities impacting on the ability to work.
- Impact of overwork/unemployment.
- Intergenerational/long-term worklessness impacting on family.
- Health issues/criminal record impacting on employment prospects.

School/ College Life

- What's working well?
- What could be better?
- What can be done to get things going well again?
- Ready for change?

School attendance

- Parent involved in supporting education/behaviour/progress.
- SEND impact on achievement.
- Exclusions.
- Post-16 education, employment and training.
- Significant underachievement compared to age-related expectations without underlying SEND.

Taking steps towards employment

- Adult learning/volunteering/training.

Basic skills

- Numeracy, literacy and language.
- Digital skills and access.

Health and Wellbeing

- What's working well?
- What could be better?
- What can be done to get things going well again?
- Ready for change?

- Special educational needs, disabilities, long-term health needs.
- Significant mental health issues.
- Accessing medical/dental appointments.
- Lifestyle choices around alcohol and drugs.
- Hygiene, weight, appearance.
- Access to exercise, healthy diet.
- Age-appropriate sexual behaviour.
- Care of the unborn.

Social and Community Life

- What's working well?
- What could be better?
- What can be done to get things going well again?
- Ready for change?

Experiencing positive behaviour socially and from the community

Has positive relationships socially and in the community

- Adults not exposed to domestic abuse.
- Children/young people not exposed to:
 - domestic abuse
 - criminal networks/offending
 - online/real-life grooming
 - radicalisation
 - extreme language and behaviour.

Personal safety

- Children/young people not:
 - missing from home/playing truant
 - at risk of CSE/FGM
 - left home alone
 - isolated and lacking of self-worth
 - demonstrating disruptive, challenging behaviours
 - at risk of forced marriage.

The Early Help Assessment

- is one form that can be used for the whole family (use extra pages as needed)
- is a record of an Early Help conversation, and it requires consent
- includes a person's own words so it is clear what matters most and how able and ready someone is to make changes and what is required

- helps partners across sectors to work together
- is strengths-based, focusing on what's going well, not just what could be better, to form a clear, shared plan
- assesses a person's readiness to change and personal responsibility
- promotes self-help, access to the community offer, information, advice and guidance

- can be used to co-ordinate support from partners as part of the agreed plan
- includes an overall score of readiness to change to help develop an achievable, self-owned plan
- allows for a practitioner view to add to the self-assessment, identifying if this is different and what is required.

Levels of Need and Response Framework

- This is designed to be used alongside an Early Help Assessment.
- It indicates what you might see in the five aspects of life at different Levels of Need.
- Families will not always be at one Level of Need, and may move between levels and continue to access universal services.

Detail on the Levels of Need and Response Framework is on manchester.gov.uk/earlyhelppractitioner

The 5 Levels of Need

Level 1

Child, young person or family whose needs are being met, or whose needs can be met by universal services.

Level 2 (*Universal+*)

Child, young person or family with additional needs that can be met by a single agency providing additional support or by signposting to an additional agency.

Level 3

Child, young person or family who would benefit from a co-ordinated programme of support from more than one agency using the Early Help Assessment, Team Around the Child/Family and Early Help Hubs.

Level 4

Child, young person or family who requires intensive and co-ordinated support for complex issues via targeted services/Early Help Hubs, and where support at level 3 has not improved outcomes.

S17 Child In Need

Some CIN will be well supported and have their needs met at level 4 without the requirement for social work intervention. Other CIN will have more acute needs and will require social work support within level 5. There will be social workers within the Early Help Hubs who will screen and escalate cases where the threshold for Sec. 17 assessment and intervention is met.

Level 5

Child or young person at risk of, or suffering significant harm, due to compromised parenting, or whose needs require acute services or care away from their home.

What happens after I have completed an Early Help Assessment with a family?

1. Register your assessment by securely sending it to eha@manchester.gov.uk
2. Continue to work with the family and see they are working towards agreed actions to get things going well again.
3. Hold review meetings with a family and other practitioners who may be working with them to assess if things are going well again.

4. If you and the family feel the Early Help Assessment and plan have improved things and they are going well again, you can close the assessment by sending an email to eha@manchester.gov.uk
5. If you and the family feel stuck and further support is needed, contact your Early Help Hub.
6. If needs change and a safeguarding issue/significant risk of harm emerges, you must contact Children's Services on 0161 234 5001.

Useful websites and information

Lots of information and support in your local area is available for families at manchester.gov.uk/helpandsupportmanchester

There are also links that take you to the SEND Local Offer manchester.gov.uk/sendlocaloffer

Practitioners can access information about Early Help and the Early Help Assessment at manchester.gov.uk/earlyhelppractitioner

Contact your Early Help Hub

For general advice, guidance and information, ring your hub on:

North Early Help Hub
0161 234 1973

Central Early Help Hub
0161 234 1975

South Early Help Hub
0161 234 1977

To make a request for specialist support (or targeted support outside your agency) for families, complete an Early Help Assessment form and send to:

North Early Help Hub
earlyhelpnorth@manchester.gov.uk

Central Early Help Hub
earlyhelpcentral@manchester.gov.uk

South Early Help Hub
earlyhelpsouth@manchester.gov.uk

If you have safeguarding concerns or feel a child or young person is at significant risk of harm, you must contact Children's Services on 0161 234 5001.

