

# Creating Opportunities – Positive Futures

An early help strategy for children, young  
people and families in Bracknell Forest  
2015 – 2017



**Foreword:**

We are pleased to introduce *Creating Opportunities – Positive Futures: an early help strategy for children, young people and families in Bracknell Forest (2015 – 2017)*.

We believe that early help can make a significant difference to outcomes for children, young people and families, and that support offered early can significantly reduce the need to seek or receive help or support at a higher level of support, where needs are greater and have a more negative impact on outcomes.

This strategy signifies our ongoing commitment to working in partnership with others to build on the progress made to ensure that early help is embedded into the routine delivery of all services and continues to have a positive impact on outcomes for children, young people and families in the borough.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

*Creating Opportunities- Positive Futures* provides the framework to enable the organisations that are represented on the Children and Young People's Partnership to continue to develop early help support to children, young people and families in Bracknell Forest. The term early intervention has been replaced by the term early help which was introduced following the review by Professor Eileen Munro of Child Protection in England in 2011.

This strategy sits under the overarching approach developed by Bracknell Forest Council; *Bracknell Forest's Approach to Prevention and Early Intervention*, which is designed to demonstrate the commitment of the Council to ensuring prevention and early intervention are central to planning and to ensuring the best possible outcomes for people living in the borough.

[www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/bracknell-forest-approach-to-prevention-and-early-intervention.pdf](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/bracknell-forest-approach-to-prevention-and-early-intervention.pdf)

The successful delivery of early help to children, young people and families in Bracknell Forest is reliant on the strength of partnership working, leadership and management commitment, and having a clear, robust and agreed framework from which to work.

This strategy supports the delivery of the priorities in *Creating Opportunities - a joint strategic plan for children and young people in Bracknell Forest 2014-2017*. Following consultation with over two thousand young people to inform the plan we believe that these priorities are those that are most important to children, young people and families in the borough.

### Outcome Priorities of the Children and Young People's Plan

OP 1	Raise levels of attainment and pupil progress across all phases of learning for all pupils
OP 2	Improve physical and emotional health and wellbeing from conception to birth and throughout life
OP 3	Safeguard and protect children and young people
OP 4	Improve outcomes for the most vulnerable children and young people in the borough
OP 5	Strengthen families through effective multi-agency coordination and support
OP 6	Reduce the impact of poverty on children and young people

## Underpinning Principles of Early Help

1. A focus on identification of need and swift access to appropriate early help.
2. Support available for the child/ young person's journey throughout all key life stages offering continuity and flexibility wherever possible.
3. Equality of access to early help provision.
4. Families recognised as central to defining and addressing problems and empowered as partners in the process of early help.
5. Work with the whole family, including fathers and other carers.
6. Promotion of personal responsibility and resilience rather than dependency.
7. Active engagement of children, young people and families in the planning and delivery and evaluation of services.
8. Commitment to collaboration, joint commissioning and multi-agency working and to overcoming organisational barriers to achieving better outcomes.
9. Shared systems in place to provide effective early help.

## Aims of the Early Help Strategy

- To improve outcomes and life chances for children, young people and families placing the well-being of the child / young person at the centre of all that we do.
- Increase access to timely, targeted and appropriate services.
- Manage highly predictable risk better (e.g. parents who have been in care themselves and parents who have previously had children removed.)
- Refocus resources and expenditure from crisis intervention to early help, investing in proportion to need.
- Provide a focus on the whole family and the role of the family in the planning and delivery of early help.
- Ensure interventions have a strong evidence base and any services commissioned are able to evaluate and demonstrate impact and outcomes.
- Further develop multi-agency and integrated working, including using and sharing data and information more effectively.
- Strengthen the role of universal services provision in early help.
- Communicate the early help offer and how it can be accessed
- Develop skills and management support/supervision for early help workers
- Develop specific training for early help workers e.g on the threshold document, identification and intervention re: neglect, solutions focussed intervention etc.

## 2. WHAT IS EARLY HELP?

**Early help** refers to a way of working which will ensure that children, young people and families who are at risk or vulnerable to poor outcomes are identified early and that their needs are effectively assessed and met by agencies working together. The aim being to prevent their escalation (early help) rather than to respond only when the difficulty has become so acute as to demand attention (late intervention).

## Early Help is defined as:

**C4EO (2010)** – Intervening early and as soon as possible to tackle problems emerging for children, young people and their families or with a population most at risk of developing problems. Early intervention may occur at any point in a child or young person's life.

**Working Together (2015)** defines early help as a of means providing support as soon as the problem emerges, at any point in the child's life, from the foundation years, through to the teenage years.

## Early Help is supported by the following legislation:

**Section 10 of the Children Act 2004** – places a duty on partners to cooperate to improve the wellbeing of children and young people.

**Section 11 of the Children Act 2004** – places a duty on partners to make arrangements for ensuring that their functions / services are discharged with regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

## 3. NATIONAL CONTEXT

Early help has been a core strand of Government policy for a number of years, the publication of the Lord Laming Inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié was a significant catalyst for change which led to an ambitious policy programme, *Every Child Matters*, which included introducing new legislation to enable those working with children, young people and families to work in a more integrated and coordinated manner, with early help emerging as a key theme running throughout.

A range of reviews have been undertaken since 2010 which have informed the way in which early help has been developed, these include:

- *The Marmot Review – Fair Society, Healthy Lives (2010)*  
<http://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/projects/fair-society-healthy-lives-the-marmot-review>
- *Frank Field: The Foundation Years: preventing poor children becoming poor adults. Report of the Independent Review on Poverty and Life Chances. [2010]*  
<http://www.frankfield.com/campaigns/poverty-and-life-changes.aspx>
- *Dame Tickell Review: The Early Years: Foundation for Life, Health and Learning [2011]*  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-early-years-foundation-stage-review-report-on-the-evidence>
- *Graham Allen: Early Intervention: The Next Steps [January 2011]*  
[http://www.grahamallenmp.co.uk/early\\_intervention](http://www.grahamallenmp.co.uk/early_intervention)
- *Early Intervention: Smart Investment, Massive Savings [July 2011]*
- *Professor Eileen Munro Review of Child Protection Final Report May 2011*  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/175391/Munro-Review.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/175391/Munro-Review.pdf)

Further work continues to be undertaken on a national level which provides an ongoing evidence base for continued development of early help including:

**"Rapid Review to Update Evidence for the Healthy Child Programme 0-5: summary". Public Health England, March 2015.**

This review includes systematic review level evidence published from 2008 to mid-2014, focussing on "what works" in terms of universal and targeted preventive and treatment interventions related to the Healthy Child Programme for 0-5 year olds. It summarises key messages from the research and looks at implementation and workforce skills and training.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/healthy-child-programme-rapid-review-to-update-evidence>

### **Early Intervention Foundation**

The Early Intervention Foundation (EIF) was officially launched on 15 April 2013, with cross-party support.

The EIF is a resource to investigate and promote effective interventions and good practice, following a national review of prevention and invest to save programmes, which provide better outcomes for children and young people.

The main tasks of the EIF include to:

**Assess** what programmes work – to determine both the best early interventions available and their relative value for money.

**Translate** this into practical, evidence-based **Advice** to local commissioners, service providers and potential investors to enable them to make the best choices for supporting children and families.

**Advocate** for Early Intervention as a serious alternative to expensive and ineffective late intervention.

Information on the EIF can be accessed at: <http://www.eif.org.uk/>

### **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)**

The publication of this revised statutory guidance built on the messages from Professor Eileen Munro and includes legislative requirements and expectations on services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. The guidance includes a section on early help and an expectation that all professionals including those in universal settings understand their role in identifying emerging problems and sharing information to support early identification and assessment of needs.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

### **Local Research**

Bracknell Forest is one of nine Local Authorities (LAs) across England that participated in the Local Authority Research Consortium Round 6 (LARC6) during 2014 (report published April 2015).

LARC is a sector-led research project where individual LAs carry out their own research within a national framework supported by National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) and Research in Practice (RiP) researchers.

The aim of the research undertaken in 2014 was to focus on the issue of neglect and consider how to encourage family and local community to take a more active role in identifying early indicators of neglect. The findings from the report published in April 2015 will be used to further develop local responses to neglect. The full report can be accessed at:

[http://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/LRCN01/LRCN01\\_home.cfm](http://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/LRCN01/LRCN01_home.cfm)

### **Troubled Families Initiative Phase 2**

At the 2013 Spending Review it was announced that the Troubled Families programme would be expanded to work with 400,000 more families from 2015 to 2020, with £200 million funding for 2015 to 2016. The Budget in March 2014 announced that work with up to 40,000 of these families would begin in the 2014 financial year.

In phase 1 of the Troubled Families Programme Bracknell Forest was successful in meeting the targets set by the Department for Communities and Local Government and was confirmed as an early starter of Phase 2 which will form a key part of the early help offer going forward.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/support-for-families>



#### 4. VALUE FOR MONEY

In addition to the benefits of early help on outcomes for children, young people and families, significant savings have been identified where early help is successful. Within the national context of austerity measures it is important to consider how services can be delivered in a different way to secure value for money and seek savings where possible.

Individual Examples of savings that can be made are detailed below:

- An Incredible Years parenting programme with children diagnosed with disrupted behaviour costs an average of £1,344 over a six month period to improve a child's behaviour. Without intervention, it is estimated that an individual with conduct disorder costs an additional £60,000 to the public services by the age of 28. (*Early Intervention: Securing Good Outcomes for all Children and Young People, 2010*)
- The cost of prematurely excluding a child is £300,000 which includes the costs from educating the child elsewhere and the bill for deploying services such as social care, benefits, and the probation service. The estimated cost to the individual ranges from a reduced chance of securing stable employment, to the risk of getting involved in substance abuse with the associated costs of support. (*The National Behaviour and Attendance Review, Interim Report 2007*)
- CAF episodes are leading to better outcomes in response to a whole range of needs. The analysis from 80 case studies identifies potential savings of between £5,000 and more than £150,000 being reported. The CAF process gives a systematic framework for early intervention programmes and practice with clear evidence of payback. (*Early intervention, using the CAF process and its cost effectiveness. Findings from LARC 3, 2011*)

#### National Reviews of potential cost savings

*National Audit Office (2013) Early Action: Landscape Review*

This report focuses on early action in social policy, encompassing health, education and reducing youth crime. The NAO examined evidence on the potential of early action to deliver value for money and reduce public spending over the long term. The report concludes that a concerted shift away from reactive spending towards early action can result in better outcomes and greater value for money.

<http://www.nao.org.uk/report/early-action-landscape-review/>

*Early Intervention Foundation (2014) Spending on Late Intervention: how we can do better for less.*

This report estimates how much public service, locally and nationally, spends on Late Intervention for children and young people, responding to the more severe problems that they experience. Nearly £17 billion per year is spent in England and Wales by the state on short-run late intervention, with the largest single items being the costs of children who are taken into care (Looked After Children), the consequences of domestic violence, and welfare benefits for 18-24 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).

The £17 billion is spread across many different public agencies at national and local level, from local authorities, the NHS, schools, welfare, police to the criminal justice system. Local authorities bear the largest share at £6.5 billion, followed by welfare costs of £3.7 billion and the NHS at £3 billion.

The Early Intervention Foundation has now reviewed the evidence for hundreds of Early Intervention programmes in order understand what works. The report states that many have shown the potential to address the problems outlined in this report, with careful commissioning and high quality implementation.

<http://www.eif.org.uk/publications/spending-on-late-intervention-how-we-can-do-better-for-less/>

## 5. NEEDS ANALYSIS

The information below provides an overview of the context for Bracknell Forest, more detailed information on key areas of need can be found by accessing the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment; this provides a wide range of information on the health and wellbeing of the population, broken down in detail to ward level wherever possible.

<http://jsna.bracknell-forest.gov.uk>

The Borough's population is 115,058 (ONS mid year statistics 2012, based on the 2011 Census), of which almost 26% of the population is aged between 0 – 19 years. The 0 – 14 age group as a percentage in Bracknell Forest has decreased from 21% in 2001 to 19% in 2011, but is still slightly higher than the national average which is 18%. Within this the 0 – 4 age group has increased from 7,699 to 8,027, this increase has significance in terms of school places.

The 2011 Census showed that 84.9% of the population of Bracknell Forest was White British and the BME population was 15.1%. The presence of the Gurkha regiment at the Royal Military Academy in Sandhurst has led to a significant Nepali community in the south of the Borough.

Since 2001 the proportion of school pupils from Minority Ethnic Groups has increased steadily from 6% to just over 19.5% in January 2015. 11.3% of pupils have English as an Additional Language (EAL) and 81 different languages are spoken in our schools, although many of these in very small numbers.

Bracknell Forest is one of the least deprived areas of the country (ranked 291 out of 326 local authorities in England on the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010). Property prices and levels of car ownership are significantly higher than the national average and average free school meals eligibility remains relatively low in the national context 8.5% in January 2015.

These headline figures mask significant pockets of deprivation. Five wards in the borough have free school meal entitlements ranging from 11.9% to 17.3%. Poverty in Bracknell Forest has risen and is now 11.4% (as defined by the Department for Work and Pensions). Six wards in the borough have child poverty figures above the South East average of 14.6%, and one ward is above the England average of 20.1%.

In 2014 the % of pupils at the Early Years Foundation Stage achieving a good level of development was 65%, compared to 60% nationally.

In 2014, 68 % young people achieved 5 + A\* to C grades in GCSE, and 56.1 % achieved 5+ A\* -C including English and mathematics. Both are above the England and South East averages for attainment.

In 2014, 98% of students who took A level examinations resulted in a pass grade.

Approximately 17,241 pupils are on roll in primary, secondary and special schools in Bracknell Forest (January Census 2015).

The 2011 Census identified that there were 14,895 families with dependent children which represents 46% of all families in Bracknell Forest. This is higher than the South East average of 42% and the England average of 43%.

In Bracknell Forest there were nearly 2,800 pupils identified for the Pupil Premium either because they were eligible for free school meals (in the last six years), a service child or a looked after child.

The 2011 Census identified 592 young people aged between 0-24 years providing unpaid care.

At the end of March 2015 122\* children were subject to a child protection plan, neglect was the highest category of registration with 68 children subject to a plan under that category.

At the end of March 2015 104\* children were looked after by the local authority.



At the end of March 2015 550\* children were receiving support from Children's Social Care under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 (Child in Need).

(\* figures provided are provisional until confirmed following statutory returns)

At the end of March 2015, 349 CAF assessments had been completed this included 108 Family CAF assessments.

At the end of March 2015, 352 referrals had been taken to the Early Help Hub for a multi-agency discussion. 9 cases were stepped up to Children's Social Care and 113 cases were stepped down from Children's Social Care for ongoing support at Tier 2.

### **Target Groups for Early Help in Bracknell Forest**

The needs analysis identifies the fact that Bracknell Forest is an affluent authority with the majority of children, young people and families achieving well and have good health and wellbeing outcomes. This overall positive picture masks the fact that some children, young people and families are experiencing difficulties and require additional support to address these difficulties.

The following list is an example of the types of difficulties being faced by children, young people and families and we believe that by providing early help we can prevent the difficulties from escalating to more serious issues in a significant number of cases.

- Children living in poverty or in low income households
- Children with learning difficulties/disabilities
- Children who are young carers
- Children who are subject to abuse
- Children who live in households with domestic abuse
- Children at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation
- Children in care who are looked after by the local authority
- Children who have mental health issues or have a parent / carer with mental health issues
- Children who have substance and alcohol misuse issues or have a parent/ carer with alcohol or substance misuse issues
- Children / young people at risk of offending

***N.B*** This list is not exhaustive and is intended to provide an idea of the needs that may indicate additional help / support is needed.

It is important to ensure that the **right support is identified at the right time** for any child or young person experiencing difficulties and that a **good assessment** of need is undertaken as **early as possible** to prevent needs escalating and becoming more severe.

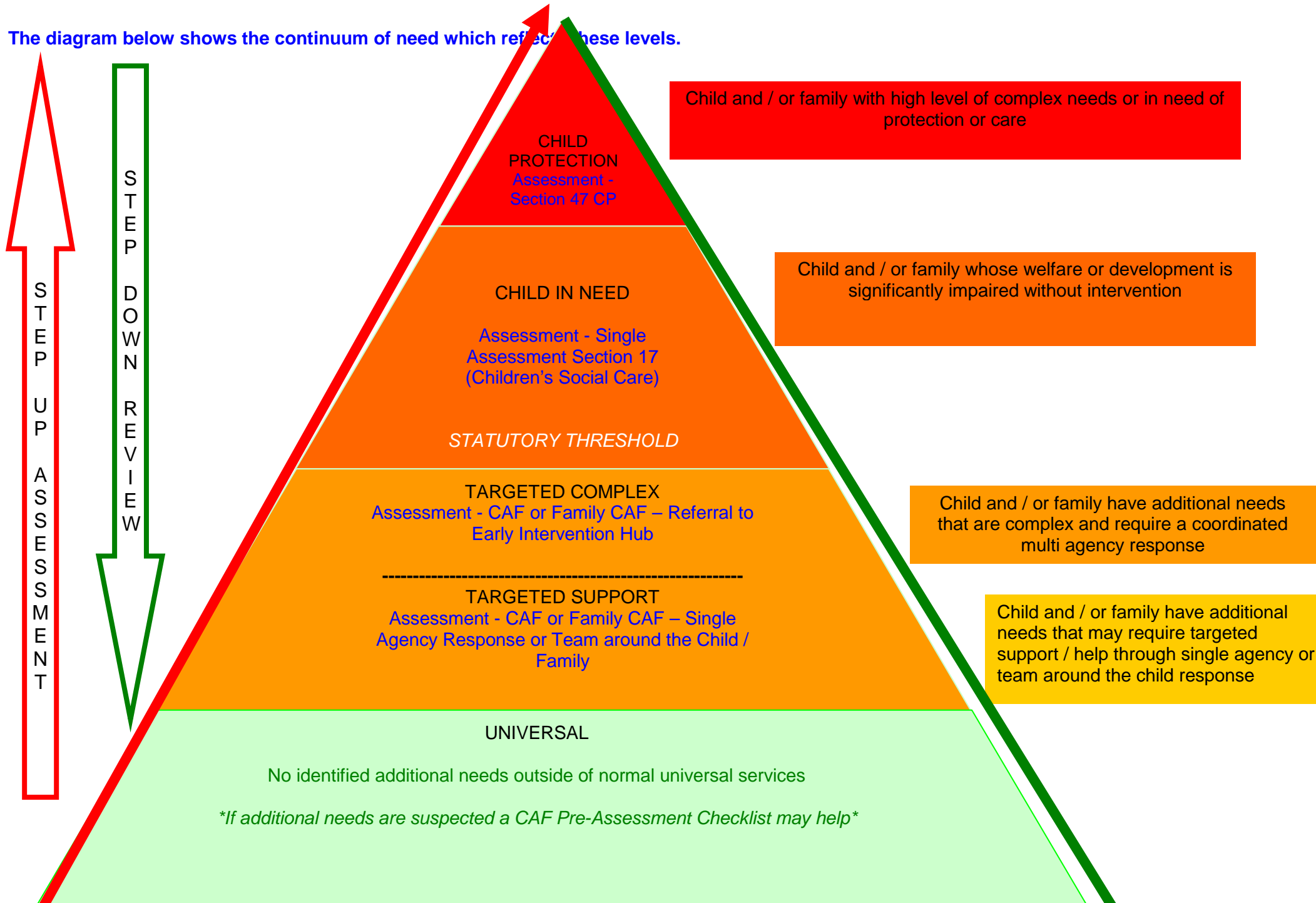
## **6. LEVELS OF NEED and EARLY HELP SUPPORT**

The LSCB has undertaken a review of thresholds for support and have produced a threshold document in order to support professionals in understanding the different levels of need that exist and understand the thresholds for services. The threshold for early help sits at level 2 and level 2a as shown below.

The threshold document can be viewed at: <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/bf-lscb-thresholds.pdf>

Level of Need	Examples of Types of Services
<p><b>Level 1 - Universal</b> – these are children with no additional needs; all their health and developmental needs will be met by universal services. The majority of children living in each local authority area require support from universal services alone.</p>	<p>Education, Children’s Centres and Early Years Settings, Health Visiting, School Nursing, GP, Midwifery, Youth Services, Police, Housing, Voluntary and community sector, Family Information Service.</p>
<p><b>Level 2 - Targeted</b> – these are children with additional needs who may be vulnerable and showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect; their needs are not clear, not known or not being met. This is the threshold for a CAF (multi-agency early help assessment) or a Family CAF to be undertaken.</p> <p>A CAF or Family CAF will help to assess additional needs and may lead to a Team around the Child (TAC) or Team around the Family (TAF) meeting or a targeted single agency response.</p> <p><b>Level 2a) - Targeted Complex</b> - Where a CAF or Family CAF has identified additional needs that are more complex and indicate a higher level of risk factors, a more coordinated multi-agency response may be required. This is the threshold for a referral to the multi-agency Early Intervention Hub.</p>	<p>Support will be provided by Universal Services (as above) with additional input from targeted services such as:</p> <p>Health Visitors, School Nursing, Education, Children’s Centres, Educational Psychology, Educational Welfare, Traveller Education Service, Family Support Advisers, Behaviour Support Service, Margaret Wells Furby, Aiming High, Targeted Youth Support services, Voluntary and community services, Youth line,</p> <p>Parenting programmes, Family Intervention Team Youth Offending Prevention Support, Drug and alcohol services, Adviza (formerly Connexions), Berkshire Women’s Aid (BWA)</p>
<p><b>Level 3 - Children in Need</b> – these are children who are unlikely to achieve or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health and development will be significantly impaired, without the provision of services; or children who are disabled.</p> <p>They may require longer term intervention from statutory and specialist services.</p> <p>This is the threshold for an assessment led by children’s social care under s.17 Children Act 1989.</p>	<p>Universal and targeted services as at level 1 and 2 may be accessed as part of a package of care in addition to:</p> <p>Local Authority Children’s Social Care, CAMHS – Tier 3, Domestic Abuse Perpetrators Service (Tier 2), Berkshire Women’s Aid (BWA), Family Group, Conference, SEN Team, Pupil Referral Service, Specialist health services / Family Nurse Partnership, Learning Disability Team (CSC), Children’s Specialist support Services, Youth Offending Service, Drug and alcohol services, Family Intervention Team, Probation Service, Voluntary and community services.</p>
<p><b>Level 4 - Child Protection</b> - these children are suffering or are likely to suffer significant harm. They will require intensive support under s.47 Children Act 1989.</p> <p>This is the threshold for child protection.</p>	<p>Universal and targeted services as at level 1 and 2 may be accessed as part of a package of care in addition to:</p> <p>Children’s Social Care, Specialist health or disability services, Youth Offending Service, CAMHS – Tier 4, Family Intervention Team, Voluntary and community services, Berkshire Women’s Aid (BWA), Domestic Abuse Perpetrators Service (DAPS), Drug and alcohol services, Fostering and Adoption, Probation Service</p>

The diagram below shows the continuum of need which reflects these levels.



## 7. A FRAMEWORK FOR EARLY HELP IN BRACKNELL FOREST

It is important that children, young people and families are provided with opportunities to identify difficulties, and to seek support to change their behaviour to achieve positive results. Some may do this with little or no outside assistance, and others may require a greater level of support.

It is equally important that those working with children, young people and families in all sectors are able to recognise assess and support children and young people where they may be experiencing difficulties.

The framework below identifies **the systems, processes and plans** to ensure we are able to secure improved outcomes through more effective prevention and early intervention.

The framework shapes the way in which partners working with children, young people and families deliver early help in Bracknell Forest in partnership and form the core part of this early help strategy.

### **Bracknell Forest Children and Young People's Partnership - Early Help Framework**

- **High quality universal services are the building blocks of early help.**
- **Children's workforce able to identify needs at an early stage.**
- **Children's workforce is able to complete a CAF (early help assessment) or Family CAF in partnership with the child, young person or family.**
- **Children's workforce has a clear understanding of the levels of need, and how services and support may be accessed.**
- **There is a clear process in place to support effective multi-agency coordination of targeted support.**
- **There is a clear step up and step down process to support referrals into and out of Tier 3 services.**
- **Deliver a coordinated programme of early help across all ages and stages of a child's development.**

### **Early Help Assessment (CAF or Family CAF)**

The CAF / Family CAF are the main early help assessment processes in place to enable practitioners to undertake a holistic assessment of need and identify what support is needed in order to reduce the risk of needs escalating to require Tier 3 intervention.

A CAF provides a framework to assess the needs of a single child, and a Family CAF provides a framework for a practitioner to assess the needs of more than one child within a household.

A CAF may lead to support being provided by one or more agencies and the family can be supported through a Team around the Child or Team around the Family approach.

Where needs identified are more complex a CAF / Family CAF may be used to refer a case to the Early Intervention Hub for a more coordinated multi-agency support package to be considered.

In a small number of cases a CAF/ Family CAF may lead to serious child protection concerns being identified, in these cases the CAF is referred directly to Children's Social Care.

Regular multi-agency training on CAF in Practice, CAF Assessment Skills and Lead Professional role are provided throughout the year.

More information about the CAF can be found at:

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/commonassessmentframework>

### **Early Intervention Hub**

The Early Intervention Hub was established in 2012 and is a multi-agency meeting which provides a coordinated package of support where needs have been assessed and are considered to be more complex (but not yet reaching the threshold for Tier 3 statutory intervention).

The Hub meets on a fortnightly basis and is independently chaired by the CAF / Early Intervention Officer. A wide range of agencies attend the meeting to consider completed assessments and agree the support that can be provided and who will act as the lead professional for the case.

The Hub acts as a key transition point in terms of cases that are a cause for concern and need to “step up” to Tier 3 statutory services, and also for cases that have been supported at Tier 3 and are ready to “step down” to a lower level of support.

### **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub - (MASH)**

The MASH is currently being developed in Bracknell Forest and will be in place in April 2016. The MASH is a team which co-locates safeguarding agencies and their data, with a view to identifying risks to vulnerable children at the earliest point and responding with effective early interventions. This will also play a key role in ensuring thresholds are clear and that where relevant cases are able to “step up” and “step down” to the appropriate level of need and support.

## Early Help Framework Delivery Plan 2015 – 2017

In order to ensure this plan is successful in delivering high quality prevention and early intervention all the partners who work with children, young people and families have a role to play. A full list of partners can be found at the bottom of this plan.

Progress against this strategy will be monitored primarily through the Children and Young People’s Partnership and the Local Safeguarding Children Board on a regular basis throughout the year, and an annual progress report will be completed in 2016.

High quality universal services are the building blocks of effective early help.
How will this be achieved?
<p>Monitor the inspection outcomes of regulated services and setting and provide support where necessary to raise standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children’s Centres</li> <li>• Early Years and Childminding</li> <li>• Adult and Community Learning</li> <li>• Schools</li> <li>• Health provision</li> </ul>
<p>Provide infrastructure support to the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector to enable delivery of prevention and early intervention support within the local communities.</p> <p>Develop effective links with partners to build capacity within the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector to deliver safe and effective early help.</p>
<p>Provide information and signposting service available to the residents in the borough and to the children’s workforce.</p>
<p>Maternity Services provide effective ante-natal support and able to identify families who may be in difficulties.</p>
<p>Health Visiting Service provide effective support to new mothers and able to identify families who may have additional needs.</p>
<p>School Nursing Service supporting the “Healthy Child Programme”</p>
<p>Early Years provision is a high standard and providing a good start to learning.</p>
<p>Children’s centres providing range of universal and targeted support to families within communities.</p>
<p>Schools raise levels of attainment and aim to be rated as good or outstanding by Ofsted as a minimum standard.</p>
<p>Children and young people in schools provided with information to understand issues that impact on wellbeing, and support where this may be an issue; including bullying, emotional health issues, substance and alcohol misuse, teenage pregnancy and sexual health.</p>

Children’s workforce able to identify additional needs at an early stage
How will this be achieved?
<p>Multi-agency Universal safeguarding training for practitioners working with children and young people across the Borough.</p>
<p>Development and publication of a range of materials to aid practitioners in the recognition and understanding of additional needs and where to access appropriate services – examples include:</p> <p>The “Really useful guide to neglect <a href="http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/useful-guide-to-">http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/useful-guide-to-</a></p>



[neglect.pdf](#)

The Continuum of Family Support Services. <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/continuum-of-family-support-services.pdf>

**Children's workforce is able to complete a CAF (early help assessment) or Family CAF in partnership with the child, young person or family.**

**How will this be achieved?**

Multi-agency CAF in practice training delivered on a regular basis throughout the year  
Multi-agency CAF assessment skills training delivered on a regular basis throughout the year  
Multi-agency Lead Professional training to be developed and delivered on a regular basis throughout the year.  
Bespoke training delivered to key groups of people as and when required (e.g. School Governors, Child Minders)

**Children's workforce has a clear understanding of the levels of need, and how services and support may be accessed.**

**How will this be achieved?**

Multi-agency threshold document developed and widely circulated to all partners.  
<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/bf-lscb-thresholds.pdf>  
Undertake early help audits to determine ongoing understanding and application of thresholds.  
Promotion of threshold documents and tools in multi-agency safeguarding training and in CAF training.

**There is a clear process in place to support effective multi-agency coordination of targeted support.**

**How will this be achieved?**

Early Intervention Hub in place to secure coordination of multi-agency support where needs may be more complex (but do not reach the threshold for Tier 3 support).  
Dedicated CAF / Early Help Coordination to support the process and liaise with partners as appropriate.  
Information on process for practitioners available on website.

**There is a clear step up and step down process to support referrals into and out of Tier 3 services.**

**How will this be achieved?**

Effective liaison between Early Intervention Hub and Tier 3 services to ensure step up (where a case meets a tier 3 threshold) and step down (where Tier 3 is no longer needed, but ongoing support will reduce the risk of further escalation.)  
Development by April 2016 of a Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub which links clearly into the step up and step down processes established.

<b>Deliver a coordinated programme of early help services and support across all ages and stages of a child's development.</b>
<b>How will this be achieved?</b>
Family Nurse Partnership Service supporting vulnerable young first time mothers.
Health Visiting Service delivering universal and targeted support in line with new commissioning arrangements from 2015.
School Nursing Service supporting the Implement the Healthy Child Programme within schools.
Provision of Specialist Outreach Nurse providing outreach support to vulnerable women.
Continued implementation of funding for disadvantaged two year olds.
Continued development of Early Years and Children's Centres support to respond to local needs and issues identified.
Successful delivery of phase 2 of the Family Focus Programme.
The pupil premium will be used effectively within schools to support vulnerable children and young people.
Behaviour Support Team providing a range of targeted support services in schools.
Family support Advisors working with children and families in schools.
Family Intervention Team providing coordinated support including direct work and a range of parenting interventions including parenting skills and development.
Youth Service provision of targeted support to children in schools on a range of health and emotional wellbeing issues; including teenage pregnancy and sexual health, substance and alcohol misuse and mental health support.
Targeted support to children and young people at risk of school exclusion, including the use of the Fair Access Panel.
Targeted support for young people at risk of becoming NEET.
Continued delivery of the Youth Offending Prevention Service.
Continued development of support for Young Carers through commissioned service.
Continuation of the Life Chances Meeting for looked after children.
Continuation of Life Chances Meeting for Care Leavers.
Continued focus on Post Adoption Support.
Ongoing provision of the Domestic Abuse Perpetrators Service at Tier 2 and 3.
Ongoing provision of Symbol Programme to support parents with Learning Difficulties / Disabilities with a child on a Child Protection Plan.
Continuation of Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing Operations Group. Specialist CSE / Missing Social Worker working with vulnerable young people.

*A summary of a range of early help support on offer in Bracknell Forest is attached as annex 1 for information. This is not an exclusive list but is intended to provide an overview of the types of services available to support the delivery of this early help strategy.*

**Partners Responsibility for the Delivery of the Early Help Framework may vary in that some of the partners are responsible for the commissioning of services, whilst others may be responsible for the provision of services. A list of the partners involved in the delivery of this strategy is shown below.**

- Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning, Adult Social Care Health and Housing
- Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust
- Bracknell and Ascot Clinical Commissioning Group
- Schools and Governing Bodies
- Thames Valley Police
- Involve (Bracknell Forest)
- NHS Central Southern Commissioning Support Unit
- Youth Offending Service
- Local Safeguarding Children Board and partner members
- Community Safety Partnership and partner members
- Health and Wellbeing Board and partner members

## **8. MEASURING SUCCESS**

Measuring the success of prevention and early intervention is a challenge and is not achieved in a short period of time. We will use the following mechanisms to determine the impact of prevention and early intervention.

**Performance Data** will tell us how well we are doing against key indicators over a period of time, enable us to see whether our performance is improving, and help us to identify areas of need that may require additional support or development. A list of indicators used to measure the impact of early help is included as annex 2.

**Audit activity** will tell us about the quality of early help work being undertaken across a range of service areas and will determine the effectiveness of early help in improving outcomes.

**Monitoring progress** of the priorities for improvement in the Children and Young People's Plan will provide a wider strategic overview of success and will show whether early help is making a difference to positive outcomes.

**Commissioning** early help support will be informed by the progress made in the provision of early help and the impact this has on reducing the need for support at more costly Tier 3 services. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation as part of the commissioning cycle will inform commissioning activity for early help and where appropriate will be used to inform ongoing developments of services supporting early help in the future.

## **9. CONCLUSIONS**

This document shows that early help is already strongly embedded within our local systems and structures. The Council has developed an overarching approach to prevention and early intervention, and it is a key underpinning principle in the Children and Young People's Plan.

We have identified a range of national and local drivers for early help, and supported this with local research and evidence. Our aims are clear and many of the elements in the framework for prevention and early intervention are already in place, and will be strengthened going forward.

Demonstrating the impact of early help remains a challenge, however we have identified the methods we will use to measure our success in delivering this strategy and look forward to making continued progress in supporting early help with our partners, those who commission and deliver services to children, young people and families in the borough.

## Annex 1: Summary of Early Help Services / Support *(list is not exhaustive)*

### **Behaviour Support Team**

The Behaviour Support Team have advisory teachers and behaviour support assistants that have a wide ranging set of skills to address and identify both school needs and those of its children and families.

<http://schools.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/targeted-services/behaviour-support-team>

### **Drug and Alcohol Team**

The DAAT commissions or provides services for both adults and young people who live in Bracknell Forest. We also monitor the effectiveness of the services and work with our providers to make improvements according to identified needs.

The DAAT offers a Parenting Early Intervention Programme linked to the Family Focus Programme and also offers support to young people through targeted work one to one and in settings.

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/preventionandearlyintervention>

### **Domestic Abuse**

The Bracknell Forest domestic abuse forum is a group of professionals from a number of both statutory and voluntary services, who collectively aim to increase awareness and services to those affected by domestic abuse.

The forum aims to identify and promote good practice, ensuring that agencies know about each other and provide them with the opportunity to develop a multi-agency strategy aimed at reducing the level of domestic abuse in the borough of Bracknell Forest.

A practitioner's page on the website describes a range of training and interventions available on Domestic Abuse.

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/domesticabusepractitioners>

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/berkshire-east-domestic-abuse-cue-card.pdf>

### **Early Years, Childcare and Play and Children's Centres**

Early Years, Childcare and Play provides a range of support, training, advice and funding to providers of early education and childcare to ensure Bracknell continues to improve the quality and availability of provision for children and their families.

Children's centres provide activities for under 5s and support and information for their families. They host services from a range of professionals depending on local need and parental choice.

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/childrenscentres>

### **Education Welfare Service**

The Education Welfare Service works with schools, parents/carers and pupils to fulfill a range of functions which range from looking at circumstances that lead to a child being absent from school and supporting family to overcome difficulties to carrying out a more intensive action where there is persistent absenteeism from school.

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/schooltruancy>

<http://schools.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/targeted-services/education-welfare-service>

**Family Focus** - this is the Bracknell Forest approach to Troubled Families and there is a range of multi-agency support offered to families that meet the criteria for Family Focus.

**Family Intervention Team** – provides targeted support to families in need of support and works primarily with families who are at Tier 2. Support includes parenting workshops, one to one visits and more intensive intervention where a range of complex needs are identified.

### **Family Information Service**

The Family Information Service (FIS) provides a free and impartial information and signposting service. This information relates to childcare and other services that support parents and carers of children and young people up to the age of 20. The service also works with organisations and professionals who support families.

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/familyinformation>

<http://bracknellforest.fsd.org.uk/kb5/bracknell/directory/family.page?familychannel=0>

### **Family Nurse Partnership**

The Family Nurse Partnership is a voluntary home visiting programme for first time young mums, aged 19 or under (and dads). A specially trained family nurse visits the young mum regularly, from early in pregnancy until the child is two. The Family Nurse Partnership programme aims to enable young mums to: Have a healthy pregnancy Improve their child's health and development Plan their own futures and achieve their aspirations.

[www.fnp.nhs.uk](http://www.fnp.nhs.uk)

### **Free Early Education funding for 2 Year Olds.**

Some 2 year olds and all 3 and 4 year olds are entitled to 570 hours per year of free early education over no fewer than 38 weeks of the year.

This entitlement starts from the term following their 3rd birthday until they reach compulsory school age (beginning of the term following their 5th birthday).

Free early education places are available at a range of early years childcare providers including nursery schools and classes, day nurseries, pre-schools and childminders.

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/freeentitlementtoearlyeducation>

### **Family Support Advisers (FSAs)**

Family Support Advisers help schools and parents to understand each other better and to work together in children's best interests. FSAs have real influence on positive outcomes for children – by encouraging parental involvement in the school and its activities, developing parenting skills and supporting families with information, advice and guidance.

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/familysupportadvisers>

<http://schools.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/services-schools/family-support-advisers>

### **Family Group Conference**

A Family Group Conference (FGC) is a child and family-led meeting and can be used whenever a plan or decision needs to be made about the safety and well-being of a child. It is chaired by an Independent FGC Co-ordinator who is appointed to assist the family in arranging the meeting.

An FGC referral can be made by any worker who feels that a family they are working with has the resources, capacity, and wider family network, to come together and work in partnership.

Email: [rick.bearcroft@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:rick.bearcroft@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

<http://www.frg.org.uk/involving-families/family-group-conferences>

### **Healthy Child Programme**

The Healthy Child Programme for the early life stages focuses on a universal preventative service, providing families with a programme of screening, immunisation, health and development reviews, supplemented by advice around health, wellbeing and parenting.

This is supported by Health Visiting Services covering the 0 – 5 year age range and School Nursing Service covering 5 – 11 year olds

### **Health Visiting Service**

Provides practical support and health advice within the community with a focus on families and young children up to the age of five-years-old.

Health Visitors work in various locations including the family home, children's centres and GP surgeries.

<http://www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/ServiceCatInfo.asp?id=15>

### **Maternity Services – Frimley Park**

The maternity services at Frimley Park include midwifery and obstetric care. They aim is to provide a service to meet the individual needs of all women and their families, throughout their pregnancy, birth and in the early days at home.

<http://www.frimleypark.nhs.uk/services/welcome-to-maternity>

### **Outreach Contraception and Sexual Health Service**

The service aims to work with women to address issues of sexual and reproductive health and healthy lifestyle choices. The aim of the service is to reach women who find it hard to access traditional mainstream services and provide support to achieve health and wellbeing goals.

0755 411 5050 [sarah.burton3@berkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:sarah.burton3@berkshire.nhs.uk)

[www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk](http://www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk)

### **Pupil Premium**

The Pupil Premium was introduced in April 2011 and is additional funding given to schools in England to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and close the gap between them and their peers. Pupil premium funding is available to both mainstream and non-mainstream schools, like special schools and pupil referral units. Information on the Pupil Premium can be found on individual school websites.

A policy on the use of Pupil Premium for Children in Care can be found at:

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/administration-of-pupil-premium-for-looked-after-children.pdf>

### **School Nursing Service**

Provides support and health advice to children and families and support to state maintained schools/ free schools and Academy schools.

<http://www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/ServiceCatInfo.asp?id=1>

### **Short Breaks (formerly Aiming High)**

The Short Break Service in Bracknell Forest commissions and promotes activities for children and young people with disabilities and their families.

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/shortbreaks>

### **SEN and Local Offer**

From September 2014 local authorities are required to publish information online about services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) aged 0 - 25.

The Local Offer will provide accurate and easy to understand information for parents, carers and young people about available services and how they can access them.

The Local Offer puts all the information in one place, regarding Health Care, Social Services, Education, leisure activities and support groups available in the area. It also explains the additional or different provision provided for children who have SEND.

<http://schools.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/targeted-services/sen-local-offer>



### **Safeguarding and Inclusion Team**

The Safeguarding and Inclusion Team currently consists of the Team Leader for Safeguarding and Inclusion, the Anti Bullying Coordinator and the Inclusion Support Officer.

<http://schools.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/targeted-services/safeguarding-and-inclusion-team>

### **Teaching and Support Service**

The Teaching and Support Service provides a team of specialist teachers who are available to assess and directly teach children with Special Educational Needs. Children are identified by their school who would benefit from a specific, individualised intervention programme and a request may be made to the service for either individual teaching or small group teaching.

<http://schools.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/targeted-services/teaching-and-support-services>

### **Youth Service**

The Youth Service provides targeted youth support projects across the Borough.

The targeted youth support aspects of the Service are delivered to young people through work in schools and the community on the following areas: Sexual Health and Guidance, Alcohol and Substance Misuse, NRG (supporting young people into work, Supporting young people in school, Youth Engagement.

The Youth Service also delivers the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme

Arts and Accreditations – Offering young people the opportunity to participate in arts

The Youth Service also provides support through Youth Centres

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/youthsupport>

### **Youth Offending Service – Prevention**

The aim of pre-crime prevention is to identify children and young people who are at high risk of offending and help them to avoid entering the youth justice system.

Bracknell Forest Youth Offending Service runs a prevention service working directly with parents and carers of children and young people whose behaviour puts them at risk of offending. Interventions are designed to divert the young person from offending.

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/preventativeservices>

### **Youthline**

**Youthline** provides a free, confidential counselling service for young people attending secondary school, and young adults up to the age of 25. Youthline works across a number of locations across Bracknell Forest including our main base at The Lodge, Coopers Hill, four secondary schools and **The Spot**, Sandhurst.

<http://www.youthlineuk.com/>

### **Young Carers**

A local charity, KIDS is commissioned to provide support to Young carers.

KIDS help us identify young carers, do assessments and act to help reduce families' needs for support. They do this through the provision of information and preventative measures.

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/youngcarers>

## Annex 2

### Indicators of Effective Early Intervention

Performance Measure	Outcomes we are seeking
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of referrals to Children’s Social Care</li> <li>• Number and rate per 10,000 population of children who are made subject to a child protection plan</li> <li>• Number and rate per 10,000 population of children who are made subject to a child protection plan</li> <li>• Number and rate per 10,000 population of children who become looked after by the local authority</li> <li>• Number and rate per 10,000 population of children who are supported by Children’s Social Care under S17 Children Act 1989.</li> <li>• Number of first time entrants to youth Justice system aged 10 – 17</li> </ul>	<p>Overall we are looking to reduce the number of children, young people and families who require support at Tier 3 (statutory intervention).</p> <p>Whilst we are aiming to see a reduction in these numbers it is important to note that there will be a need for Tier 3 intervention when the threshold has been met and there is a risk / significant risk of harm to a child / young person.</p> <p>We want to see young people making positive life choices and fewer young people in the Youth Justice System.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The gap between the lowest achieving 20% in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the rest</li> <li>• Achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers.</li> <li>• Primary Schools persistent absence rate</li> <li>• Secondary schools persistent absence rate</li> <li>• Permanent exclusions from school</li> <li>• Numbers of young people who are not in education, employment or training [NEET]</li> <li>• Children who are supported through an Education, Health Care Plan.</li> </ul>	<p>We are looking to see that the gap in attainment for disadvantaged children and young people is narrowed and that a higher number of disadvantaged pupils are achieving their potential.</p> <p>We want children and young people to attend school regularly and for their educational attainment to benefit from good attendance.</p> <p>We want to see children and young people supported in schools where difficulties and challenges are well managed and ensure minimum exclusions.</p> <p>We want to see fewer young people who are NEET and an increase in the number of young people who are in education, employment and training.</p> <p>We want to see children and young people who have a SEN / Learning Disability provided with the right support to meet their needs and to achieve to their potential.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under 18 conception rate</li> </ul>	<p>We want to see effective sexual health and contraceptive advice for young people and we want to see the rate of teenage conceptions to remain low.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Childhood obesity</li> <li>• Childhood Immunisations</li> <li>• Breast feeding rates</li> <li>• Young people in treatment for drugs and alcohol</li> <li>• Young people accessing CAMHS services</li> </ul>	<p>We want to see childhood obesity reducing and for children and young people to make healthy choices.</p> <p>We want to see children and young people protected from preventable illnesses.</p> <p>We want to see fewer young people choosing to take drugs or drink alcohol.</p> <p>We want to see children and young people being provided with effective emotional health and wellbeing support at the appropriate level of need, and where Tier 3 CAMHS support is needed that this is available in a timely way and</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of referrals to Family Intervention Team</li> <li>• Number of Families “Turned Around” through Family Focus</li> <li>• Children living in poverty</li> </ul>	<p>We want to see families supported at an earlier stage of experiencing difficulties and through early help are supported to address difficulties and reduce the need to escalate to Tier 3 Statutory Intervention.</p> <p>We want to increase the number of families supported through Family Focus and to see families achieving success.</p> <p>We want to reduce the number of children who are living in poverty and ensure that where possible appropriate support, advice is given to alleviate the impact of poverty on the child / young person.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of CAF assessments completed</li> <li>• Number of family CAF’s completed</li> <li>• Number of CAF assessments stepped up to Children’s Social Care</li> <li>• Number of referrals to Early Intervention Hub</li> <li>• Number of cases stepped up to Children’s Social Care</li> <li>• Number of cases stepped down from Children’s Social Care to Hub.</li> </ul>	<p>We want to see the number of CAF’s completed increase and where possible practitioners support families through a team around the child approach.</p> <p>We want to see assessments being undertaken more holistically with whole families where this is relevant.</p> <p>We want to see children, young people and families receiving the right support at the right time and this includes being clear when there is risk of harm / significant harm that this is referred to statutory services. Equally when a statutory intervention is no longer needed we want to see that there is a step down process in place that supports children, young people and families and prevents re-referrals to Tier 3 services.</p>