



Early Help Policy

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1. Our Commitment

St Francis Nursery is dedicated to the welfare and holistic development of every child in our care. We are committed to providing a supportive, nurturing, and inclusive environment where children can thrive. We recognise that from time to time, children and their families may face challenges or require additional support.

This policy is written in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, relevant government guidance including 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', and the policies and procedures of the Tower Hamlets Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) and Tower Hamlets Early Help services. The policy should be read in conjunction with CCS Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

2. Policy Aims

- To promote the welfare of children and ensure they are safeguarded from harm.
- To identify children and families who may benefit from Early Help as soon as emerging needs or difficulties are identified.
- To provide a timely and appropriate response to the identified needs of children and their families.
- To work in partnership with parents/carers, respecting their insights and involving them in any Early Help process.
- To ensure effective multi-agency working with local Tower Hamlets services and other relevant professionals to provide a coordinated support network.
- To foster a culture where seeking help is seen as a positive step and barriers to accessing support are minimised.
- To ensure all staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in the Early Help process and are equipped with the necessary training and knowledge.

3. What is Early Help?

Early Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to teenage years. In Tower Hamlets, Early Help is about working with children, young people, and their families to help them overcome challenges and

build resilience. It aims to prevent issues from escalating and requiring more intensive, statutory interventions.

Early Help can address a wide range of needs, including but not limited to:

- Concerns about a child's development, learning, or behaviour.
- Parenting challenges and a need for additional support or guidance.
- Family stress, relationship difficulties, or changes in circumstances (e.g., bereavement, new sibling, housing issues, financial hardship).
- Attendance or punctuality concerns.
- Health-related issues affecting the child or family members.
- Social isolation or lack of support networks.

4. Our Role in Early Help

As an early years provider, St Francis Nursery plays a crucial role in the Early Help process. We are well-placed to build trusting relationships and work collaboratively with children and their families, identify early signs that help is needed, provide initial support and advice within the nursery setting, and signpost families to relevant local services and support networks in Tower Hamlets and contribute to any support offered.

5. Key Personnel

The **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) / Early Help Lead is Margaret Wilkinson**, she is the first point of contact for staff and parents/carers regarding any Early Help concerns. She will take responsibility for coordinating Early Help interventions, liaising with families and external agencies, and ensuring procedures are followed.

All Staff members have a responsibility to be vigilant, identify potential needs, report concerns in line with this policy, and support children and families.

6. Procedures for Identifying and Supporting Needs

- Staff will use their knowledge of child development and their observations of individual children to identify any emerging concerns.
- Any staff member who has a concern, however small, must report it using the CCS Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures.

- Open and honest communication with parents/carers is paramount. Consent will generally be sought before making a referral to external Early Help services, unless there are overriding safeguarding concerns that require immediate action (see CCS Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedure).
- If the needs cannot be met through universal services or internal nursery support alone, a referral to Tower Hamlets Early Help services may be necessary. Referrals will be made following Tower Hamlets' current referral pathway.

7. Multi-Agency Working

We are committed to working collaboratively with other agencies and professionals involved with a child or family.

We will participate in TAF meetings, share information appropriately, and contribute to the delivery and review of Early Help Plans.

8. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- All information regarding Early Help concerns will be treated with sensitivity and confidentiality.
- Information will be shared on a "need-to-know" basis, in line with UK GDPR, our Data Protection Policy, and the Tower Hamlets LSCP information sharing protocols.
- Consent from parents/carers will be sought before sharing information with external agencies, unless there is a clear safeguarding risk that necessitates sharing without consent. The reasons for sharing information without consent will always be recorded.
- All records relating to Early Help will be stored securely and managed in accordance with our Data Protection Policy and retention schedule.

9. Staff Training and Support

All staff will receive relevant and regular training and regular supervision and support to discuss any concerns and ensure they feel confident in implementing this policy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our other policies, including:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Data Protection Policy

- SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) Policy
- Behavior Management Policy
- LB Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children's Board Multi-Agency Safeguarding Thresholds Guidance