

The Early Help Team

Together making a difference

Westmorland
& Furness
**Family
Help**



Together making a difference



Aims and objectives:

The Early Help Team is unique in that we cover the whole of Westmorland and Furness supporting all schools and settings working directly with children aged from 0-19 years. We sit firmly within the Family Help Service working alongside our partners in the community to identify and support children and young people who require more than universal services and support to meet their potential.

We promote early intervention and prevention work with children and young people using Early Help Assessments (EHA) and solution focused action plans. We are also part of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub team who complete assessments for children and families who do not require a Social Worker but do require family help.

We have built on the work of Cumbria Early Help Officers with a growing team of EHOs in the last 12 months in order to deliver our vision for Family Help in W&F to be inclusive, solution focused, timely and effective.



How we can support

Consultation

EHOs are available to discuss when and how to open an Early Help Assessment and offer support with the process. This includes; parental consent; identifying an Early Help Coordinator; TAF membership; voice of the child work; EH planning and reviews.

MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub)

We have an EHTM and two EHOs who are part of WAF MASH. They carry out assessments and offer guidance for children and families who may require additional and targeted Family Help supports. The EHTM also manages EH work via daily Multi Agency Triage meetings which are led by our Police colleagues.

TAS (Team Around the Settings) and TAF (Team Around the Family) work

We have named EHOs linked into all of our WAF schools. As part of our EH offer, EHOs convene TAS meetings in collaboration with schools and settings to review and support all children with open EH plans. This plan, do, review approach mirrors the TAF meeting purpose and format. EHOs can attend and support TAF meetings where EH coordinators and/or parents feel the plans are stuck or not making progress as planned. From November 2024 EHOs will be linked into all of our Early Years settings to offer a TAS approach.

Early Help Training

We offer training both in person or on line. The training is available to any partner agency working with 0-19 year old children in WAF. We currently offer - An Introduction to EHA, and; A Comprehensive guide to EHA. We have developed bitesize modules in ; Identifying Neglect in Early Help; TAF Scaling; Voice of The Child work, and; in collaboration with the Domestic Abuse Team and Police – DA & Operation Encompass Awareness training for schools.

DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) Supervision

We offer reflective supervision to all practitioners working directly with children and young people and this includes our DSL colleagues. The supervision can be accessed 1:1 or in a group with DDSL colleagues. We aim to support the well being and practice of our DSLs whilst focusing on achieving positive outcomes for every child. The supervision is accessible via the EHTMs.

Family Help Panels

In WAF we have two Family Help Panels supported by EHOs and chaired by EHTMs. The panels are a collaborative way of working, made up of multi-agency membership who meet once each month. The panels are for those children who have an open EHA but their plan has become 'stuck' or it requires a more targeted approach and/or a new EH Coordinator. Referral forms for FH panels are available via the CSCP Website follow the link through WAF Early Help.

EHO SEMH (Social Emotional Mental Health) work

In partnership with Public Health we have a specialist Social Emotional and Mental Health EHO who was tasked to better understand and develop services for children and their families who are affected by anxiety related absences. As part of the EH team John is able to offer consultancy and support to Secondary schools with their emotional well being and MH offer and offer direct work and support to families via the Family Help Panel and TAS model and approach. He is currently working on setting up a network of support for parents and carers.

Contact details

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Early Help | Cumbria Safeguarding Children Partnership



Meet the Team

Early Help Team Manager Lisa Gledson

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As EHTM for Westmorland and Furness I manage a team of 6 Area EHOs and the SEMH EHO. We are the community team working in partnership with our schools and settings providing direct work to 0-19 year old children and young people who require more than Universal Services. We work collaboratively as part of the Family Help Service.

I started working in Cumbria in May 2022 offering reflective supervision to DSLs in Schools, which I continue to enjoy as part of my role as EHTM in W&F since September 2023. I qualified as a Social Worker 30 years ago and have worked mainly in the North-East. Previous roles have included setting up Parenting Projects and Programmes, SW Team Manager and IRO. I am a firm believer in relational based work, open and transparent practice. I am still working on being a good listener. Those who know me know that my practice is child centred and I am very proud of the EH Team, every EHO is fully committed to early intervention and prevention work and training to help and empower our children and families in W&F.



Area Early Help Officer Nicola Jackson

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I have worked as an Early Help Officer since January 2021. My role is to support practitioners working with children and young people to navigate the Early Help process and initiate Early Help Assessments. I have worked on and off in Childrens Services since 2009, firstly in Extended Services which was a programme supporting schools and then in Workforce Development, Focus Family and more recently in the Refugee Resettlement Team. I have also worked with volunteers in the Fire Service and was a Community Support Worker in Trading Standards.

I work in a fast paced and evolving team and enjoy working with like minded colleagues who are also passionate about getting it right for children and families first time. I pride myself in my knowledge of the area that I work in and the relationships I have built with practitioners over the years. I enjoy development opportunities and applying learning to my practice.



Area Early Help Officer Kerry Major

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Prior to joining the Early Help Team I spent 18 years working within education. I've had the opportunity to work with age groups from 5-19 in different roles, as a teacher, mentor and in pastoral and safeguarding roles. A lot of my work centred around understanding the barriers and difficulties children and young people faced in thriving and supporting them in finding success.

In my current role as Early Help Area Officer, I work with families directly and with schools and other settings in a holistic way. I have been able to utilise my previous experience in schools and colleges in this role and enjoy working as a linked in Officer with our education partners. I believe that having earlier interventions and the right support at the right time can empower families and lead to successful outcomes for children. I work collaboratively with settings in a solution focussed way, using the Early Help processes building stronger teams around families. I work with settings collaboratively for consultation and in joint work with their families, which is both a positive and rewarding approach.



Area Early Help Officer Chrissie Chambers

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I became an Early Help Officer for Westmorland and Furness Council in February 2024. This role enables me to support and signpost schools and other settings regarding Early Help assessments, Family Help Panels and as part of this, I work in a consultancy role for these contacts. I am also able to attend Team around the Family meetings and encourage the Team around the Setting model. As part of the Family Help Team, I am also a trained facilitator for the Invest in Play parenting programme ran through Westmorland and Furness council and delivery to all our areas began in September 2024.

I have worked within Children, Families and Adult teams for the last 17 years. My roles have been varied and have given me an insight into the support families need and how we need to work alongside them to ensure their voices are heard.

My current role grants me the privilege to work as part of such a strength-based team and to have the ability to collaborate with the NHS, third sector and all other agencies supporting children and Families.



Area Early Help Officer Dawn Lockwood

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I have been part of the Family Help Team since March 2024 as an Area Early Help Officer for the South Lakes footprint. Prior to starting this role I worked for over 18 years in various family support roles starting with working in an Early Years setting and then within the 0-19 services provided through the Children's Centres here in the South Lakes this being with Barnardo's and then Action for children.

This role has allowed me to support many children, Young People and their families across the South Lakes in individual trauma informed support or with group family or parenting courses. This experience has also led me to working in partnership with many support services to help ensure that the right support has been identified for the family as early as possible. Becoming a Early Help Area Officer is allowing me to work alongside and support our partners in education and healthcare to identify and access the support for our families at the earliest opportunity.



Area Early Help Officer Bryony Symes

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I joined the Family Help Team in August 2024 as an Area Early Help Officer for the South Lakeland footprint. Prior to this, I spent three years working for Lancashire and South Cumbria Foundation Trust as an Assistant Psychologist for specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), after completing a master's degree in psychology.

I have also worked in safeguarding and pastoral roles across school and university settings and completed voluntary work as a mental health advocate for adult's organisations, supporting individuals struggling with their mental health to understand their rights and make informed decisions about their care. As part of my early career, I undertook an undergraduate degree in Criminology. During which, I worked across forensic settings, including secure and community services to support young adults to reconnect with support and access meaningful occupation. My experience of working with individuals across the tiers of service involvement is what inspired me to join the Early Help Team. I am passionate about supporting families to access support at the earliest opportunity, and I'm keen to work and learn alongside our education and healthcare providers within Westmorland and Furness towards that shared goal.



Social Emotional Mental Health Early help Officer John Harrington

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The Early Help Officer role for Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) is a relatively new position within the Early Help Team. Initially, this role focused on researching and developing a deeper understanding of SEMH needs in collaboration with stakeholders, as well as the children and families we support. Since starting in the position, my responsibilities have expanded to include assisting Early Help colleagues in understanding SEMH needs and identifying suitable services, offering advice and signposting to schools, conducting ongoing research into SEMH services, and networking with providers and other professionals to stay informed on the latest developments.

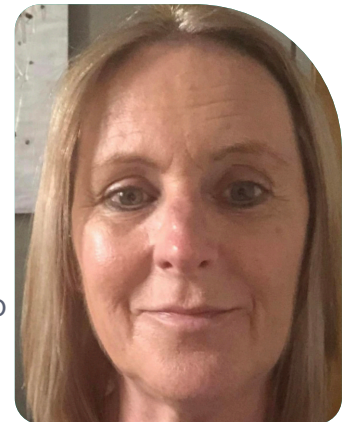
With a background in Teaching, Outdoor Education, Forest School, and SEMH intervention provision, I find the role immensely rewarding. It allows me to apply my experience, skills, and qualifications to provide the best possible support to children, families, and the professionals I work with.



Early Help Team Manager MASH Amanda Casey

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I am new to this role and it is a role that is still developing. I have worked as a qualified social worker and Team Manager in Children and Families Teams in Cumbria for 22 years. My current role is based in the Westmorland and Furness Children's Safeguarding Hub and I line manage and oversee the work completed by the two Early Help Officers who are also based in the Hub. I also offer supervision to DSL's based in Westmorland and Furness schools. I am passionate about early intervention and wish for every child and their family to receive the right support at the earliest opportunity.



Early Help Officer MASH Steve Kemp

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I have been part of the Early Help Team for over ten years based in the safeguarding hub. I complete MASH assessments screen as Early Help by a Hub manager. I support families and professionals with their understanding of Early Help/Family Help to ensure good quality Early Help Assessments so that children & families have good lives. I work closely with the safeguarding hub Multi-Agency Team and my colleagues in the Area Early Help Team to get the right help & support for families first time.

My work in social care started in children's homes. I developed an interest in children living within their families when safe so have since developed my career to support people in working together with family and professional expertise. I believe that a plan owned by those who are making changes for the better will have the best opportunity to succeed and be maintained. My solution focused approach along with many other training courses fits naturally with the principles of Family & Early Help.



Early Help Officer MASH Diane Ackley

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Diane has 17 years experience with children and families working in children's centres and in social care. Diane has worked with Universal services, Early help, Child protection and Children on the edge of care throughout her employment with sure start / Barnardo's and Cumbria county council before becoming the Registered manager of four private children's homes. She has recently returned to Early help in the safeguarding hub and is also a volunteer for NYAS as an independent visitor.

Diane is passionate that children and families are supported so that they have choices, this way they can reach their best potential. Diane has studied and worked with ACES and in a trauma informed way and likes to think creatively about how we work to engage children and parents who may be struggling, she works in a solution focused way with positivity and hope.



The PROCESS Diagram

At a high level the process can be described in these simple steps:



*settings refers to school, early years providers and further education settings



Translation Services

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