

WORKING WELL WITH CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN LANCASHIRE

Part Three – Information about Services and Support in Lancashire County Council Area

How to support children, young people and families
who experience challenge



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SECTION 1 SUMMARY AND OVERVIEW

Purpose

This guidance is for everyone who works with children and young people and their families who live in Lancashire with the exception of unitary authorities Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen who have developed their own part 3 guides. It should not be read in isolation – it sits alongside Parts 1 and 2 of the Working Well with Children and Families Guide which is for everyone working in Lancashire.

It is publicly available for anyone to access including the children and families of Lancashire, and is particularly key for organisations including:

- Health
- The Police
- Local Authorities
- Schools
- Colleges
- Nurseries & Childminders
- Voluntary and peer group organisations working with children, young people and families
- Providers of support for children, young people and families.

This guidance details support available to children, young people and families and is equally relevant to all professionals working in a wide range of adult service areas including Adult Social Care, Mental Health Services, Substance Misuse Services, Probation, Community Health, Community Safety, Housing and Leisure.

This guidance describes how we work with families in Lancashire to build on their strengths and how agencies come together to put the child/young person at the centre of our work and keep families together where it is safe to do so.



Lancashire Children, Young People and Families' Partnership Vision

Our shared vision for children, young people and families in Lancashire is that **'Children, young people and their families are safe, healthy and achieve their full potential'**

Five outcomes:

- Vulnerable children and young people are safe from harm and build resilience.
- Children and young people achieve their full potential in education, learning and future employment.
- Children and young people enjoy healthy lifestyles and know how to help others.
- Children, young people and families have a voice in shaping the support they receive.
- Children and young people live in Lancashire where they can enjoy a good quality of life, be happy and want to stay.

Five partnership priorities:

- Improve the environment in which children and young people live, learn and work.
- Support children, young people and their parents/carers to make healthy lifestyle choices and to build strong families, friendships and healthy relationships.
- Provide children and young people with a good quality education and learning opportunity which matches their talents, ambitions and aims and enables a positive transition to adulthood.
- Prevent the need for children and young people to become looked after, and with compassion, step in when necessary to keep children and young people safe from harm.
- Support children and young people to influence decision making and bring about positive change for themselves and others.



Five partnership ways of working:

- We will focus on the children, young people and families who need our support.
- We will focus on strategic priorities which raise aspirations and enable people to work locally to build on the strengths of people and their communities.
- We will build on what works well.
- We will collaborate and share information.
- We will provide critical challenge to improve practice and outcomes.

Five partnership measures of impact against our greatest challenges:

- Improve the healthy life expectancy for children and young people.
- Increase the number of children who achieve a good level of development at the end of the reception year.
- Increase the number of 16-17 year olds in education, employment or training.
- Show clear evidence of improved outcomes as a result of family participation.
- Ensure the right number of children and young people are in the care of Lancashire County Council.





SECTION 2 – WHEN FAMILIES NEED ADDITIONAL HELP

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This section describes what happens when families require intensive or specialist help, either through early help at Level 3 Intensive support, or more Specialist Support at Level 4 through Children's Social Care.

An Early Help Assessment and multi-agency meetings are critical ways of engaging children and their families on a voluntary basis and many needs can be resolved this way.

When you are considering making a request for support to Children's Services, unless there is immediate risk of significant harm, you should consult with the family and tell them that you are making a request, and why. Where there is doubt about the most appropriate service pathway to take, anyone concerned about the welfare of a child/young person should, before they make a request, consult with their own manager and/or designated safeguarding lead and, where they remain unsure, speak to a qualified social worker in the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0300 123 6720.

Completing an Early Help Assessment should not delay making a referral, if a professional is concerned that a child/young person is, or may be, suffering significant impairment to their development or significant harm. In such cases, the professional should make a referral to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub.

If a child/young person is considered to be at IMMEDIATE risk of significant harm professionals should always telephone 999, then contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub 0300 123 6720.

What happens to a request for support?

In the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub in Lancashire, Children's Social Care staff answer phone calls from members of the public and priority phone calls from professionals.

When a contact is received, it is reviewed by the Practice Manager in line with the Levels of Need and redirected into the appropriate pathway. If the case requires Early Help services, the case is either screened by the MASH Early Help workers in order to establish the support and service required or if this is clear, and parental consent is present, sent to the relevant Early Help provision. Where a contact is potentially a child in need, or child protection referral, and threshold is not clear, multi-agency screening will take place whereby a social worker will gather information from the family and relevant partners within MASH and an outcome decision is made within 1 working day (24hrs). On cases where the threshold for Children's Social Care is 'clear' and screening is not required to establish the threshold, a clear rationale is recorded by the Social Worker and Practice Manager and the case is transferred to the Duty and Assessment Team for a swift timely transfer with clear chronology, consideration of history and current referral and rationale of why the threshold is met.

If a Person contacts MASH in regards to a child that is open to Children's Services and the child/young person's allocated worker is not available, this will be recorded on the child/young person's electronic record and passed to the allocated worker and district duty mailbox to provide a response

Outcomes can include:

- No further action
- Advice and information given
- Recommendation to involved services to provide additional support through an Early Help Assessment
- Signposted to other services
- Accepted as a referral and passed on to a social worker in the relevant local Duty and Assessment Team for an assessment
- Accepted as a referral for Children and Family Wellbeing Service Family Intensive Support Team.

The outcome of the request will be fed back to the referrer. When a referral is received in the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub, it will be allocated to a social worker. There are occasions when the manager of the local Assessment Team will decide to close a referral before an assessment is undertaken. This can be because new information about the referral is received or the team knows relevant information from their previous involvement with the child/young person and family. If a referral is closed by the Assessment Team, they will inform the referrer.

In most cases, a Child and Family Assessment will be undertaken; this will include seeing the child/young person alone (where age appropriate), meeting parent/carers and discussing concerns and gathering current and historical information from all relevant professionals to form a judgment about needs and risks in order to develop a plan or agree further actions to support the child/young person. The outcome may be:

- The provision of advice
- Referral to relevant provision in the community
- A Child in Need plan (CIN)
- Support provided by intensive Early Help Service
- Support provided by services to provide additional support using a Team Around the Family and Early Help Plan
- A Section 47 child protection investigation
- No further action

The Children and Family assessment should take up to 20 working days to complete and may lead to a Child in Need plan or, if the situation is complex, the Children and Family assessment may be extended up to 45 working days to enable more detailed information from other agencies and detailed exploration into family background and dynamics and the needs of the children/young people.

Whenever there are concerns a child/young person has, or is likely to suffer significant harm, a Strategy Meeting will take place. This will involve liaison with Police, health Education and other relevant agencies involved with the child and family. This will be either a virtual meeting or a physical meeting dependent on the circumstances. The aim of this meeting is to share full information and decide whether the child is at risk of significant harm and thus whether a Section 47 Child Protection enquiry is undertaken and to plan the actions needed.

This may lead to a decision that:

- Concerns not substantiated
- Concerns substantiated but child is not at ongoing risk of harm
- Concerns substantiated and is at risk of ongoing harm and further statutory intervention, often through an initial child protection conference is required
- A voluntary Child in Need plan will support the child/young person and family

If an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) is required, this is held within 15 days of the strategy meeting. If the conference agrees that the risk to the child is significant a Child Protection plan is put in place. The Child Protection plan will make clear to the parent/carers what changes they have to make to ensure the child/young person does not continue to suffer significant harm. Should the circumstances of the child/young person not improve or where further serious incidents occur, a decision may be made to apply to the court for care proceedings. The first step in this process is usually to have a legal planning meeting and issue parent/carers with a formal Public Law Outline (PLO) letter stating what must improve to avoid care proceedings this should take into account the Child Protection Plan. Once Children's Social Care and other specialist intervention has successfully reduced the level of need for the child or young person, universal or targeted services will be expected to continue to support the child/young person and family through the 'Working well with Children and Families in Lancashire' processes described earlier in this guidance.



Consulting with Professionals to Support a Family

Consultation is the act of sharing information to obtain the perspective of another practitioner. It is not a referral to another service unless, during the consultation, it is decided that a referral would be the best course of action. Consultation helps to bring context to a set of circumstances that may be concerning to professionals. Consultation may take different forms, from a telephone call to a series of meetings between two or more practitioners.

Consultation is best undertaken by speaking to each other and not just by email. Whenever consultation takes place, it is important that practitioners follow the principles of information sharing, consent and confidentiality.

If the consultation is internal (between practitioners in the same organisation) practitioners should ensure that they follow their own agency's procedures for information sharing. If the consultation is external (between practitioners from different organisations) you should use the [Pan Lancashire Information Sharing Guidance](#) to decide whether information should be shared. In most cases, unless the child/young person would be at significant risk, before personally identifiable details are shared, the child/young person and their family should give consent to the consultation taking place and where appropriate, be given the opportunity to be involved.

Principles of Consultation

- Should be accessible to all agencies who work with children, young people and their families
- Should take place when there is a clear benefit to the child or young person and their family
- An important tool in helping agencies and practitioners work together to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and young people
- A two-way process that demonstrates an acknowledgement of different but equally valid knowledge and expertise
- Be able to explain to the family why you feel it would be helpful to consult with other agencies. Families should whenever possible be aware of, give consent to, and be involved in consultations and also be informed of outcomes and decisions taken as a result
- Information should be shared in the spirit of openness, transparency and honesty between practitioners, the child/young person and their family; however, it is important that you have due regard for the principles of confidentiality and consent

All consultations should be recorded by the practitioner who has initiated the consultation to ensure clarity and allow you to evidence any decisions that have been made as a result of other professionals input.



SECTION 3 – SERVICES IN LANCASHIRE

Early Help Support for Children, Young People and Families

From pre-pregnancy and throughout childhood, situations can occur that may affect a child/ young person's health, development, attainment and wellbeing, which can in turn, impact their later life.

Through the delivery of Lancashire's multi-agency Early Help Strategy, we will ensure a countywide approach in the way partners coordinate, prioritise and maximise their collective efforts to enable families to achieve success, cope with stress, manage change and uncertainty and make safe decisions about their future. The strategy provides a framework to support partners to work together more effectively, avoid duplication to secure better outcomes for families and manage the demand for and avoiding unnecessary statutory interventions.

We will achieve our aim as a partnership by ensuring that children, young people and families are at the heart of our collective efforts. We will ensure that families are supported to have a strong sense of responsibility for their children, are confident and capable to be "good enough" parents/carers and that families are supported to care for their children so that they thrive within a family environment.

Our aim is to build a culture together where children, young people and families engage in conversations when things are not going well, or where there may be a risk of needs arising. We work alongside those families in a relationship-centred way and will empower them to find and co-produce their own solutions to the challenges they face. These conversations can happen at any time, in any setting, and may involve one or a number of services and partners. The help that is offered will range from information and advice-giving to direct work with families. This will require strong commitment, a common purpose and common ways of working across our partnerships and will make Lancashire ["the best place to live, work, visit and prosper"](#).

Lancashire has a strong approach to Early Help and has an excellent Early Help Offer which is shaped by children, young people and families themselves and is delivered by a wide range of partners, throughout a variety of settings. Our partnerships work together delivering Early Help to ensure that we continue to build on Lancashire's strengths and assets, ensuring that there is a consistent approach across Lancashire communities, shared culture and clear set of principles which are at the heart of everything that we do.

We are committed to strengthening our relationships and sharing information across our partnerships so that children, young people and families are able to access the right support, at the right time, and in the right way, for them. Children, young people and families can expect a person-centred, holistic approach to Early Help Support, which will help them to build on their own strengths, co-produce their own solutions and improve connections with their communities.

Lancashire's Early Help Offer is aligned to Part 1 and 2 of Lancashire Working Well with Children and Families Guidance, to ensure that everyone who works with children and young people are able to assess the needs of families and provide appropriate support to improve outcomes for children and young people.

Delivering Early Help in Lancashire

Lancashire's Early Help Offer and our Partnership Model for delivering Early Help across the County are both built upon a number of key principles which fall under 4 main principles;

- Child Centred Practice
- Positive Approach & Building Responsibility and Resilience
- Joined Up Working at a Local Level
- Evidenced Based Practice and Continuous Improvement

We monitor and measure the impact of our Early Help Support through our Outcomes Framework, which enables us to understand and demonstrate the impact of our collective efforts in delivering early help support.

We monitor and measure our performance in a clear and meaningful way, through clear accountabilities and governance structures, which we regularly report on through the Children Young People and Families Partnership Board governance arrangements. These also meet the requirements of any national and local inspections.



Lancashire County Council's Early Help Offer

Lancashire's Children and Family Wellbeing Service (CFW) offers practical support to children, young people, parents/carers and families. This support can be provided on a whole range of issues which may be affecting individuals or the family and is offered through a network of centres as well as in the community or in the family home.

The main focus of the service is to provide an enhanced level of support which is prioritised towards those groups or individuals who have more complex or intensive needs or who are at risk and particularly where we think that providing early help will make a positive difference.

We work with children, young people, parents/carers (and parents to be) through groups and by giving one to one support to individuals. Our Children and Family Wellbeing staff are skilled, committed and recognise that every family has different needs. The service approach is to listen, understand and work alongside individuals and families to make the changes that will help them get to where they need to be.

CFW delivers support in four key areas:

- Family Intensive Support – Intensive one to one support for families with more complex needs
- Neighbourhood Support – A range of group-based programmes and services which can be accessed through local neighbourhood centres
- Community Support – Working with multi-agency partners to respond to needs identified for families through universal settings as part of a Team around the School
- Targeted Youth Support – One to one and group-based youth work support, targeted at young people aged 12-19yrs+ who are more vulnerable.

CFW provide services that are personally bespoke to the identified needs of each family. This means that our support covers an extremely wide range of issues affecting the lives of individuals in very different circumstances and can be about anything that is of concern to them. CFW work with the whole family to complete a full early help assessment of their needs. Together with the family, then agree a unique action plan which they work through with the family, often as part of a (multi agency) Team around the Family.

You can find more information about Lancashire County Council's Early Help Offer and where the nearest Neighbourhood Centre is and details of how to make a request for support following the link below.

- <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/early-years-childcare-and-family-support/family-support/children-and-family-wellbeing-service/>

Lancashire Multiagency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Lancashire MASH is a team of safeguarding partners, with access to partner agency's electronic data. The MASH Team search, interpret and determine appropriate information sharing in relation to the safeguarding of children and young people and vulnerable adults. Adult safeguarding workers are co-located within MASH to support the timely gathering and sharing of information in relation to vulnerable adults.

Within Lancashire MASH Children's Social Care, Health, Police, Education, Probation, Children and Family Wellbeing Service (CFW Early Help Workers) and Adult Safeguarding work together on a locality footprint (North, Central and East). Other partners including Fire and Rescue, Children and Youth Justice Service Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) work together within MASH so they can be accessed easily. A consistent group of professionals manage the work in each of the three geographical areas, creating effective working relationships with partners both inside and outside of MASH. Partners are able to share and gather information in a timely way which is less process driven, supports consistent and timely decision making enables the team to focus on providing support at the lowest level with the least amount of intervention. Appropriate early support can be identified and provided to families at an early opportunity to ensure families get the right support at the right time.

Where this is not possible due to the level of need being high, or there being a concern that a child/young person is at risk of or suspected to be at risk of significant harm, an assessment may be needed to be undertaken by Children's Social Care. After initial enquiries have been made the MASH team will pass the case to the most appropriate team e.g. Duty and Assessment or Complex Safeguarding. The values underpinning the teams is working in a consent-based way respecting the rights of children, young people and families, and using a multi-agency approach to gain a full picture of the needs and support required for that child/young person and that family.

If you would like to request support from Children's Social Care you should read Part 1 and 2 of the Working Well with Children and Families Guidance and discuss your concerns with the Safeguarding Lead in your organisation. If you need further advice after doing this you and/or your safeguarding representative may contact a Social Worker in MASH who can provide advice and guidance on whether a referral is appropriate and the information that is required to support good decision making.

The initial point of contact for Education is the Education Safeguarding Leads within MASH via the School Safeguarding Advice Line, or by contacting the MASH Education Advisors directly.

- Telephone: 01772 531196
- Email: mash.education@lancashire.gov.uk

Members of the public can refer into Children's Social Care or seek advice and guidance on: 0300 123 6720.

You can find more information about referring into Lancashire's Children Social Care and the Multi Agency Referral by following the link below.

- <http://www.lancshiresafeguarding.org.uk/resources/assessment-and-referral.aspx>

If a child/young person is considered to be at IMMEDIATE risk of significant harm professionals should always telephone 999, then contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub 0300 123 6720.

Children's Social Care

If a case is assessed by MASH to sit at Level 4 the case will be progressed for a Child and Family Assessment. However, Child In Need Section 17 support requires consent. A statutory assessment under the Children Act (1989) will be undertaken by a Social Worker to inform decisions relating to the child/young person and family's needs. The assessment will advise if the needs can be met through universal services or early help or requires statutory intervention as a Child in Need or is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm as defined in Section 17 and 31 of the Act. Whatever the outcome, a multi-agency plan of support will be co-produced with the family and appropriate support provided.

You can find more information about what happens when a child/young person is referred into Lancashire's Children Social by following the link below.

- <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/keeping-children-safe/what-happens-when-a-child-is-referred-to-childrens-social-care/>

Duty and Assessment Team

The Duty and Assessment Team will undertake a holistic Child and Family Assessment working with the child/young person and the family, as well as gathering information from other sources such as other professionals that are involved with the child/young person and family. The Child and Family Assessment will explore the needs of the child and family, looking at the strengths within and around the family to mitigate those needs and seeing what additional support can be offered to the family to further mitigate those needs. The principles underlying the approach of the Duty and Assessment Team is to ensure that families are supported quickly at the level of intervention that reflects their needs. Most families can be effectively supported without the need for statutory intervention

The assessment however may identify that the child/young person requires a higher level of support due to a more complex level of need, falling into the category of a Child In Need under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989. If a child is identified as requiring support under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 that support will predominantly be provided by the Family Safeguarding Teams in Lancashire. There may be certain circumstances however where it is provided by the Contextual Safeguarding Team, for example when the issues relate to Extra Familial Harm. At any point in their involvement with Childrens Social Care, children may be identified as being suspected to be at risk of significant harm and may require input from a multi-agency strategy discussion and, if it is felt appropriate, investigation and intervention under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989. If this investigation identifies that the risk is ongoing then an Initial Child Protection Conference will be held, and if appropriate, support will be provided through a Child Protection Plan.

As stated, the values underpinning the Duty and Assessment Teams will be one of respect for, co-operation and co-production with children, young people and families. There is a focus upon the strengths of the child/young person and the family, including factors both internal to the family and external from it.

You can find more information about the Child and Family Assessment by following the link below.

- https://www.proceduresonline.com/lancashirecsc/p_assessment.html

Lancashire Family Safeguarding Team

This team will provide longer term support to children, young people and families who need support either through a Child In Need plan, or a Child Protection Plan. The Family Safeguarding Teams comprise of Social Workers Family Support Workers who work directly with children and families and workers who will provide specialist support to parents around Domestic Abuse, Substance Misuse and Emotional and Mental Health difficulties.

The Family Safeguarding Model is a whole family approach to supporting children and is a way of keeping families together where it is safe to do so. This is achieved through a more collaborative way of working where we motivate parents/carers to identify the changes needed within their own families. This helps achieve better outcomes for children and young people.

Children, young people and their families are safe, healthy and achieve their full potential.

The child/young person's Social Worker will develop a professional and productive relationship with the child/young person and the whole family, using creative and evidence based practice and direct work to help parents/carers understand what needs to change and to support positive change that the family can maintain. The Social Worker will coordinate services and ensure active and effective participation in planning and working with the family from key professionals to ensure that the family is receiving the right support at the right time.

The child/young person's plan will regularly be reviewed with the family and professionals to ensure that the plan of support is right for the family and that positive change is being made. That support will mainly be provided by a Child in Need Plan. Though if the risks are significant it will be provided through a Child Protection Plan.

If this intensive support does not make the positive changes required and the child/young person remains at risk of harm, legal advice may be sought, and Pre-Proceedings commenced. The focus will remain within Pre-Proceedings of keeping the child within their family if it is safe to do so.

Sadly, some children can only be effectively safeguarded through the taking of legal action to protect them. That may be following Pre-Proceedings, or it may occur immediately if the risks are so high that a child cannot remain safely in the family home and requires immediate removal.

The Lancashire Family Safeguarding Team will continue to work with the family during proceedings to attempt a safe rehabilitation back to the immediate or to the wider family where this is possible. Again, for some children that will not be possible and they may either be placed for adoption at the end of proceedings or remain looked after by Lancashire.

For more information regarding Lancashire Family Safeguarding:

- **Visit:** <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/keeping-children-safe/family-safeguarding/>
- **Contact:** LancashireFamilySafeguarding@lancashire.gov.uk

You can find more information about Safeguarding Procedures by following the link below:

- <https://panlancashirescb.proceduresonline.com/index.htm>

Contextual Safeguarding Team (CST)

Lancashire Children's Social Care Contextual Safeguarding Team (CST) are part of a multi-agency response to extra-familial harm comprising of Social Care, Health, Police and other childcare professionals who work together to reduce the risk, prevalence and impact of child exploitation.

Lancashire's Contextual Safeguarding Teams are split into three teams covering the North, Central and East parts of the county. The teams are co-located and based in the North of Lancashire, between South King St and Lancaster Police Station. In Central Lancashire at Preston Police Station and in the East of Lancashire at Greenbank Police Station. These teams are made up of Children's Social Care sitting alongside Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen Unitary Authorities, Lancashire Constabulary, and Health Partners and have close working relationships with Education, Child and Youth Justice Services (formerly Youth Offending Team), the voluntary sector and commissioned services.

The Contextual Safeguarding Teams support locality Social Workers through a timely multi-agency assessment of need and protection to formulate supportive, targeted plans and interventions to keep children and young people safe from exploitation. Once an assessment has been completed and needs identified, the Contextual Safeguarding Social Worker, alongside the Social Worker (locality), will agree a plan in partnership with the child/young person and primary carer to reduce risk and build on positives and strengths in their lives. The plan shall be agreed and reviewed according to statutory procedures.

The Contextual Safeguarding Team will use a range of interventions to engage the child/young person and family to address the areas of need/risk which have been identified. They will use creative and innovative approaches wherever possible and will tailor these interventions towards individual needs. Support and intervention will be timely and consist of therapeutic support and engagement model of support particularly recognising the vulnerability of young people.

The starting point for delivery of interventions will be the building of a relationship with the child/young person and their family through positive activities, understanding the interests, wishes and feelings of the child/young person and the push and pull factors that may be present. Such actions will allow for trust to develop and allow for a more structured and child/young person focused approach of direct work being undertaken.

Partnership working and timely intelligence and information sharing is facilitated through daily meetings where professionals discuss day-to-day business along with the management of risk. Professionals from partner agencies contribute and participate in the meeting ensuring the right services have the right information at the right time to enable effective working together to safeguard young people. Monthly MACE (Multi-Agency Child Exploitation) meetings are held and those considered most vulnerable are discussed. The MACE meeting enables all professionals to share information and support in feeding into the child/young person's plan, along with giving all services working with children and young people in Lancashire improved awareness of current hotspots; addresses of concern and what disruption is in place or needs to be progressed, considering criminal and civil orders so we can Prevent, Protect, Provision and Prosecute.

Missing from Home (MFH)

The reasons why children and young people go missing from home or care are complex and frequently involve a number of 'push' and 'pull' factors, which should not be viewed in isolation from the child/young person's experiences in daily life. A consistent, professional response is required for all missing episodes in order to ensure that measures are put in place to safeguard the child/young person. Research shows that the level of risk to the individual escalates with each missing episode and repeat episodes can be a significant indicator of high risk to the child/young person.

Lancashire has a dedicated team which is managed by a Contextual Safeguarding Team Manager, with direct line management oversight provided by the Lancashire's Missing from Home Coordinator. The MFH team complete the majority of return home interviews. When a child/young person is found, in addition to a police 'Safe and Well Check' the child/young person must be offered an Independent Return Home Interview. This applies to all children and young people classed as missing. These interviews provide an opportunity for the professional to understand why the child/young person took this action, to uncover information to try to reduce the likelihood of it happening again and to address the risks. Statutory guidance states this should be completed within 72 hours. Although time is a factor in completing the interview, it is of equal importance to allow space for the child/young person to tell someone what are the reasons they went missing in order to identify what best support can be offered to safeguard them.

If a child/young person or parent/carer refuses to engage with the return home interview, the available details of the missing episode are still captured, and an assessment of future risk and recommendations completed. This ensures that even where children, young people, parents or carers do not engage with a return interview, any concerns are appropriately addressed through data sharing with partners or escalation to the MASH.

Monthly multi-agency panel meetings and case specific intervention meetings take place to ensure intelligence and information sharing from missing episodes takes place and multi-agency action planning occurs when appropriate. Panel and intervention planning meetings feed into the child/young person's plan to ensure there are robust safeguarding practices in place.

You can find more information about complex safeguarding and missing from home by following the link below or contacting the teams directly.

- https://www.proceduresonline.com/lancashirecsc/user_controlled_lcms_area/uploaded_files/Complex%20safeguarding%20protocol%20final%20300620.pdf
- https://panlancashirescb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_child_sex_exp.html
- https://panlancashirescb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_ch_criminal_exp.html
- https://panlancashirescb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_children_missing.html

The Lancashire Complex Safeguarding teams can be contacted for advice and guidance via email to;

North (Lancaster, Fylde & Wyre): cse-north@lancashire.gov.uk

Central (Preston, Chorley, South Ribble & West Lancashire): cse-central@lancashire.gov.uk

East (Hyndburn, Ribble Valley, Rossendale, Burnley & Pendle): cse-east@lancashire.gov.uk

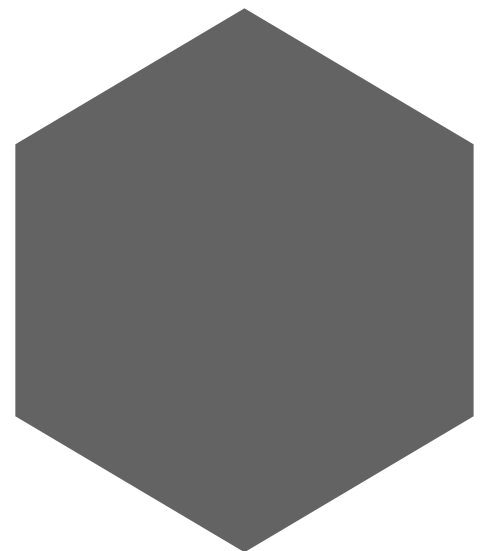
The **Lancashire Missing from Home Co-ordinator** can be contacted for advice and guidance on: 0845 053 0000

13+ Support

In Lancashire we are aware that a lot of children/young people have a high level of need or are at risk of significant harm due to issues which aren't because of the care they are receiving from their parents.

There are a number of services in Lancashire that currently support this age group. These services and teams include our Child and Youth Justice Team that support children/young people who have offended or through the Prevention and Diversion element of this service for those at risk of offending. The Contextual Safeguarding Team support children/young people who are risk of being exploited whether that be criminally, sexually or through Modern Slavery. Our Outreach and Adolescent Support Unit support children/young people who are on the edge of care.

We are developing our approach further to this age group to ensure we are effectively utilising all the resources and support we have for this vulnerable group. The values underpinning this approach are the values based on these children/young people who require support and intervention, it is based on valuing these children in their own right, it is based on them being children in need or at risk of significant harm not as children/young people responsible for that risk or harm.



Children Looked After

Social workers and other key professionals will work closely to support children and young people to remain living with their immediate family. In some situations, it is not possible for our children and young people to remain in their family home, but this is something that we will continuously revisit.

Lancashire County Council are committed to ensuring that together with our partners, we will promote positive outcomes for our children and young people who are unable to live with their family.

For children and young people who need to be cared for by foster carers, residential staff, extended family members, or keyworkers, we want to deliver outstanding and aspirational social work practice working alongside our children and young people.

The focus of the work within the Children in Our Care Service will be on achieving permanence for our children and young people, supporting dreams to become a reality, and preparing our children and young people for their next steps into adulthood.

Underpinning these principles is the belief that positive outcomes will best be achieved when children and young people:

- Are able to attain physical, legal and emotional permanence and wherever this is safe to do so, within their families of origin;
- Have co-produced plans;
- Have a plan to support their positive exit from care;
- Have a plan that supports good preparations for adulthood;
- Have minimum changes of Social Worker;
- Receive a social work service from a social worker whose specialism is Children in Our Care once a plan for permanence has been identified;
- Have a 'service around the child', which is flexible, responsive and able to accommodate individual need.
- Children and young people will be supported in all aspects of their lives, particularly with their health, emotional resilience, and educational achievement.
- Children and young people will be supported to plan and prepare for adulthood and independence.

You can find more information about Children Looked After by following the link below:

- <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/practitioners/supporting-children-and-families/supporting-children-looked-after/education-of-children-looked-after/>

You can find more information about the Corporate Parenting Strategy by following the links below:

- https://www.proceduresonline.com/lancashirecsc/files/corporate_parenting.pdf
- <https://www.proceduresonline.com/lancashirecsc/files/promises.pdf>

Lancashire Inclusion Service

Children and Young People, 0-25 with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

The Children with Disabilities Team within the Inclusion Service works with children, young people and their families through all areas of the care planning process. The team have an inclusive approach to children/young people with complex needs and support them to access the same opportunities and experiences as other children/young people.

The children and young people supported by this service have severe and profound levels of disability. The service aims to provide support to families so that families can continue to care for children/young people in their own homes. The team support children/young people from the ages of 0-18 (25 in some circumstances), and there is a commitment towards supporting young people into adulthood through a robust transitions planning.

On occasion, families need an increased level of support and advice in order to meet the increased needs of their children and young people, we tailor our involvement to reflect this and we also support families through safeguarding processes. On occasion parents are no longer able to care for their child/young person, and as such we identify alternative families and specialist settings to nurture, care for and assist children and young people's development.

SEND Local Offer

The Local Offer brings together information for children and young people with special education needs and disabilities and their families.

The SEND Local Offer is:

- information, advice, support and services
- provided by education, health, Lancashire County Council (the local authority) and voluntary organisations
- local to Lancashire
- for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) aged 0-25
- in one place on our website at www.lancashire.gov.uk/SEND

Lancashire Break Time

Lancashire Break Time is a county-wide service providing short breaks for parents or carers of children and young people with special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND). The child or young person will attend a fun group activity whilst their parent or carer gets a short break from their caring role. This service can be accessed without a social care assessment of need where the criteria to access this service are met. More information can be found at

<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/special-educational-needs-and-disabilities/things-to-do/lancashire-break-time/>

Lancashire SEND Partnership

The Lancashire SEND Partnership brings together all the agencies in Lancashire which provide special educational needs and disability (SEND) services for children, young people, their parents and carers, with representatives from those who use the service.

The SEND Partnership was formed following the Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) joint inspection of SEND services in our local area.

You can find more information about the SEND service, local offer, Partnership and Support available by following the link below or contacting the teams directly.

- <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/special-educational-needs-and-disabilities/>
- Email: SENDPartnership@lancashire.gov.uk
- Telephone: 01772 532280

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- Telephone: 01772 532280

Out of hours Emergency Duty Team (EDT)

The Emergency Duty Team operates a service outside office hours during the week and continuously over weekends and bank holidays. The team consists of experienced Social Workers who are skilled in both Adult and Child Safeguarding.

The team will deal with immediate safeguarding of adults or children that cannot safely wait until normal working hours. The team prioritise referrals and work within local and national policies and procedures and statutory obligations to promote the safety and wellbeing of service users and carers. The Emergency Duty Team works with partner agencies including police, health and housing to respond to situations which require an immediate response.

If you need to contact EDT telephone: 0300 1236722.

The Family Group Conference Service

Works in partnership with families who are facing difficult situations and/or decisions that need addressing regarding the wellbeing, care and safeguarding of their children and young people.

The aim of a family group conference is to give families and their children/young people a central role in decision making. Every family is unique with its own culture, personalities, and history.

All families come up against challenges from time to time and these can be rectified with help from relatives and friends, supported by the appropriate services.

The primary decision makers at a Family Group Conference are not the professionals, but rather family members/kinship network. Together, they plan how to resolve the situation, empowering families to make the best safe plan possible for their children/young people.

You can find more information about Family Group Conferencing and how to refer into the service by following the link below.

- <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/keeping-children-safe/family-group-conferences/>

Fostering, Adoption, SCAYT, Residential Services, Child and Youth Justice Team (FARY)

Fostering

The Fostering Service manages the short and long-term care arrangements for children and young people in Lancashire in foster care. The service recruits, trains and assesses a diverse range of prospective Foster Carers, carefully matching and placing children/young people with approved carers who can meet their individual needs. The Service also provides ongoing training and support to carers to develop their skills and to successfully maintain placements.

There are a number of functions including; Recruitment and Assessment, Assessment with Family and Friends which assesses Connected Carers for both Special Guardianship Order (SGO) and as Foster Carers and Support to Permanence which is made up of 5 locality support teams which support Foster Carers. There is also an Agency Advisor who advises the Fostering and Adoption panels.

Supporting Carers and Young People Together team (SCAYT)

SCAYT is a service that provides support and information to carers of children looked after and those adopted by the Local Authority. They contribute to the formulation of assessments and provide therapeutic support to children and young people and advice and guidance to professionals. They run a number of therapeutic training programs throughout the year.

You can find more information about SCAYT by following the link below:

- <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/emotional-health-services-for-adopted-and-looked-after-children/>

Regional Adoption Agency Adopt Lancashire and Blackpool (RAA)

The RAA provides adoption services across Lancashire and Blackpool. The service, recruits adoptive parents, family finds for children/young people and matches children to adopters, provides adoption support assessments and interventions and supports Adoptive Carers

The Service also arranges and supports contact arrangements, enables access to birth records, facilitates support groups and counselling.

Residential – Mainstream

There are 11 Residential Homes, plus an Adolescent Support Unit, for children and young people who are looked after by Lancashire County Council.

All homes provide high quality care and support through a team of skilled workers. Each child/young person's care plan will state how that young person will be looked after, what support they require in terms of their health, education, social and family contact. This also includes preparation for independence which is crucial to ensure as far as is practicable that young people have the ability to look after themselves once they reached the age of 18 and are no longer looked after by Lancashire County Council.

Overnight Breaks

The Residential Service also provides packages of short-break residential care to children and young people with disabilities, based on an assessment of need via a Children with Disabilities (CwD) Social Worker. The aims of this service are to provide respite to families, a positive and stimulating periods of care to young people that supports and promotes their wider development and life opportunities.

Outreach

The Residential Service also includes an Outreach Service. The Outreach Service works with children and young people who are at risk of becoming looked after/on the edge of care. The service provides bespoke support to both parents, carers and children/young people. The service can provide a rapid response to families in crisis. The service operates 7 days a week between 8am and 10pm.

Service 6

Provides practical and emotional help to care leavers predominantly in the East of the County. Whilst a very small service it is highly valued by those young people it is able to engage with.

Lancashire Child and Youth Justice Service

Lancashire Child and Youth Justice Service provides support to children/young people, their families, victims and communities working to reduce offending and promote positive outcomes. The principles for effective service delivery are based on a child first, trauma informed and restorative approaches.

The team is county-wide and made up of various operational workers including, Social Workers, Youth Offending Team Workers, an Education, Training and Employment Lead and seconded staff from partner agencies, including Police, Probation and Health. Health staff includes access to a Clinical Psychologist to support the trauma informed practice through leading multi-agency formulation meetings. The Child and Youth Justice Service a multi-agency team, and is funded by contributions from partners which includes, Lancashire County Council, Youth Justice Board, Police, Probation and Health.

Collectively, the service offers support to children/young people and their families in the following ways:

Prevention The Prevention service offer a range of group work and targeted intervention packages for children/young people aged 8-18 at risk of entering the criminal justice system. Referrals for targeted intervention primarily come from the Police, however referrals from Children's Social Care will be considered on a case by case basis. For children/young people already open to Children's Social Care, there will be an initial consultation as to the added value of a referral into the Prevention service and the consideration of the most appropriate practitioner to deliver offence-specific work.

Diversion The Child and Youth Justice Service Diversion service takes referrals exclusively from the Police following the commission of an offence and where the child/young person is suitable for diversion away from formal criminal justice routes. The team screen cases to identify the most appropriate service to support the child/young person and their family whilst also contacting any victims of the offence to ensure their views are taken into account. Following screening, children/young people may be signposted to other services, including Children's Social Care and the Child and Family Wellbeing Service. For those that continue to receive Child and Youth Justice Service support, a full assessment and plan is co-produced with the child/young person and family to try and support desistance by promoting the child/young person's safety, wellbeing and resilience.

Operations The Operational aspect of the service manages statutory orders that children/young people receive following attendance at either the Magistrates Court or Crown Court, this could be via a community-based order or a custodial sentence. The service is represented across five Magistrates Courts within Lancashire and one Court within Greater Manchester. The Operations team attends all hearings at which a child/young person is present, providing support to the child/young person and family and offering information to the Court which would be taken into account when imposing any sentence. Representation is essential to ensuring children/young people receive appropriate outcomes in relation to the offence committed and reduce the potential of a custodial sentence being imposed where appropriate. The team complete detailed assessments from which a plan of intervention is derived to inform direct work with the child/young person – working closely with colleagues across the service to deliver the range of interventions available, including 1:1 work, group work, parenting work and restorative activities to support children/young people and victims of crime to move forward from the offence.

The effectiveness of the service is measured across three national performance factors which are reported to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales; Reducing First Time Entrants, Reducing Reoffending, and Reducing the use of Custody, along with local measures of key service areas.

Safeguarding, Inspection and Audit (SIA) Service

The SIA Service in Lancashire comprises:

- Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) and Child Protection Conference Chairs (joint role)
- Schools Safeguarding Team
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- Child Employment and Entertainment Team

Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) and Conference Chairs

IRO's are responsible for reviewing and quality assuring the corporate parenting and care plan for our Looked after Children through the Child Looked After Review process, in line with the IRO Handbook (2015). They promote the participation of children/young people within decisions about their lives and promote effective practice through informal and formal intervention.

IRO's in Lancashire also fulfil the Child Protection Conference Chair role. This ensures continuity of relationships and family knowledge for those children/young people who become looked after following a Child Protection Plan. The Conference Chair role involves chairing and quality assuring Child Protection Conferences and some complex Strategy Meetings to ensure that good quality decisions to create and step-down Child Protection Plans are made.

The Fostering IRO provides independent chairing and quality assurance of Foster Care Reviews.

IRO's act as Champions for our children who are looked after. They build direct relationships with children/young people and ensure that their Care Plan is aspirational and implemented. They maintain oversight of Care Plans in between Reviews to ensure that progression is evident. They engage with Social Workers and wider professionals to promote good quality support for our children who are looked after.

Conference Chairs ensure that Child Protection processes are based on the best interests of the child/young person and promote strengths based and inclusive plans to reduce harm. They support the participation of parents, carers and children/young people within the Child Protection process and ensure that interventions are based on sound assessments of risk and harm.

Our Foster Carers are a vital resource and independent oversight of their reviews promotes good quality care and support as well as individual and practice development amongst Foster Carers.

Schools Safeguarding Team

The Team provides safeguarding advice, training and practice development to schools across Lancashire on a service level agreement basis. Designated Safeguarding Leads in schools receive regular formal training and safeguarding updates to support their role. Advice line support is available to schools every working day. School based training, group supervision and audit support is also available.

Schools play a vital role in achieving good outcomes and supporting the wellbeing of our valuable children and young people. The Schools Safeguarding Team promotes confident and proactive safeguarding support in schools so that needs are recognised early, and the right support is provided at the right time and the right level. The Team ensures that wider learning and best practice is shared across the schools' network.

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

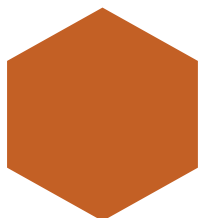
The LADO acts as a single point of consultation, referral and quality assurance for safeguarding concerns about adults in the children's workforce. The LADO team applies statutory thresholds to potential concerns and where appropriate oversees and supports the resolution of these concerns in consultation with Children's Social Care, Police, the employer and regulatory bodies as necessary.

Unsuitable adults within the children's workforce have caused serious harm to children/young people and the LADO provides independent and specialist advice and quality assurance to ensure that any concerns are robustly addressed.

The Child Employment & Entertainment (CEE) Team

The CEE team fulfils the licensing requirements linked to children/young people involved in employment and entertainment. They undertake inspection activity with employers and in the entertainment field. They promote awareness of employment and entertainment regulations and byelaws amongst employers and schools.

Children/young people can gain significant benefits from taking part in employment or entertainment. The CEE team supports the safe and lawful engagement of children/young people in these activities.



Lancashire Support for Children, Young People and their Families

Advocacy and Independent Visitor Services

The National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) provides two support offers to children and young people in Lancashire, based on different criteria. However, if a young person is looked after, subject to a Child Protection Plan or has a special educational need or disability and is transitioning to Adult Services, they are here to help.

NYAS offers individual advocacy and a range of information, advice and support to ensure that the views, wishes and feelings of children and young people are respected, and their voices are heard when decisions are being made about them.

Advocates are independent and trained to support you to say what children and young people want to say, or they could say it on their behalf. The advocates work for young people so young people are in control.

NYAS also provide the Independent Visitor (IV) Service to children and young people in our care who would benefit from regular and consistent support from an IV.

Lancashire services can seek information and make referrals to NYAS for both the IV service and Advocacy by contacting NYAS using the information below:

- Telephone: 0808 808 1001
- Or by following the link: <https://www.nyas.net/>



Lancashire Participation Services

LINX

Our Children in Care Council is called LINX- Listen, Involve, Negotiate, Express. The group welcomes young people who are currently looked after or who have left care. The Care Leavers Forum meets regularly to provide discuss relevant issues and like, LINX, can positively influence services and policy makers.

POWAR

POWAR is the name of Lancashire County Council's Participation Council Group for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. POWAR stands for Participate, Opportunity, Win, Achieve and Respect

Participation is giving individual children and young people and groups of children and young people the opportunity to:

- Influence policy development, decision-making and service delivery
- Bring about change both locally and nationally.

LINX Children in Care Council, the Care Leaver Forum and POWAR Council for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities are made up of young people who actively work towards changing the lives of young people for the better.

Each forum runs slightly differently, according to the needs and wishes of children and young people. However, all of them offer a nurturing, fun environment and young people are supported to speak to and challenge senior managers on decision making.

Each council has representatives from Central, East and North Lancashire. They meet once a month to discuss issues relevant to their care and support and to share their opinions with professionals about many issues that may affect them.

You can find more information about POWAR by following the link below:

- <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/youthzone/need-to-know/powar-participation-group/>

You can find more information about LINX by following the link below:

- <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/youthzone/need-to-know/linx-children-in-care-council/>

Lancashire Youth Council

Children and young people are encouraged to get involved with the Youth Council to have their say about things that affect you and your friends and be listened to.

We want young people to be involved in all aspects of our work, planning sessions, delivering workshops, facilitating meetings, planning events and much more.

There are locality groups across Lancashire and they would be really pleased to hear from children and young people.

You can find more information about the Youth Zone and Youth Council by following the links below:

- <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/youthzone/>
- <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/youthzone/things-to-do/groups/youth-council/>



Lancashire Young Carers Service

The Lancashire Young Carers Service is delivered on our behalf by Barnardos. The service aims to identify, assess and support young people aged 18 years and under who provide regular and ongoing care and emotional support to a family member who is physically ill, disabled, has mental health issues or is misusing drugs and/ or alcohol. Assessed young people will have access to support, tailored information and advice as well as targeted group activities which focus on the child but also takes a whole family approach, working with partners agencies, including health, third sector organisations and schools. Adult Carers can also continue to access the service up to 25 as they transition to Adult Carers Services.

Referrals are welcomed from across the county by services, schools, health professionals or families themselves.

You can find more information about young carers and how to refer for support by contacting Barnardos:

- Telephone: 01772 432020
- Email: lancashireyoungcarers@barnardos.org.uk
- Following the link: <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/what-we-do/services/lancashire-young-carers>

Lancashire SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIAS)

Lancashire SEND Information, Advice and Support Service is a statutory service which is run at 'arm's length' from the Local Authority and provides free, confidential, impartial advice, guidance and support to parents of children with special educational needs and children and young people with SEND.

Our service will:

- Support parents/carers of children who have or may have special educational needs.
- Support children and young people who have or may have special educational needs.
- Recognise the importance of parents, carers, young people and children's views.
- Help the Local Authority and parent/carers and schools work together to meet the needs of children and young people.
- Offer free impartial advice.

We work with Lancashire children and young people aged up to 25, who have or may have SEND and their parents or carers.

We can help you to gather, understand and interpret information and apply it to your own situation.

We can provide information around the following areas in relation to SEND:

- rights, roles and responsibilities
- health and social care processes, regulations and guidance
- support from other agencies and organisations

We can also support to families in:

- managing mediation appeals, to the First-tier Tribunal
- exclusion from school
- liaising between you, your nursery, school or college and other professionals

Children and Young people can access the service independently from their parents.

We give support around SEND issues at every stage of a child's education, including into further education and adulthood in a variety of ways. This includes:

- signposting
- printed and online information
- email information and advice
- telephone advice and support
- face to face support
- free courses

Contact us:

- Tel: 0300 123 6706 Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm
- Email: information.lineteam@lancashire.gov.uk
- <https://www.lancssendas.org.uk/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/Lancashire-SEND-Information-Advice-and-Support-Team-101447257945808>
- <http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/special-educational-needs-and-disabilities/getting-help/information-advice-and-support/>
- <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/special-educational-needs-and-disabilities/preparing-for-adulthood/making-decisions-and-getting-your-views-heard/>

Lancashire Local Offer for Care Leavers

As well as the Care Leaver Forum, there is a lot of support provided by our care experienced Apprentices who support and coordinate the locality Care Leaver Facebook Groups:

- Central - [Staycentred](#) (Preston, Chorley, South Ribble and West Lancs)
- North - [Northview4U](#) (Lancaster, Wyre and Fylde)
- East - [EastSide4U](#) (Hyndburn, Ribble Valley, Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale)

There is a lot of information to support care leavers on the Local Offer website including information on money matters, accommodation and health and wellbeing support. It also provides important information about Pathway Planning and the ASDAN Living Independently short course which helps looked after young people and care leavers prepare for living independently.

Following the link:

- <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/youthzone/care-leavers-local-offer/>

You can find more information about services available to young people in Lancashire by following the links below:

Lancashire Youth Zone:

- <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/youthzone/>

Lancashire Local Offer for CYP with SEND:

- <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/youthzone/need-to-know/special-educational-needs-and-disabilities-send-local-offer/>



NOTES

WORKING WELL WITH CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN LANCASHIRE

**Part Three – Information about Services
and Support in Lancashire County
Council Area**

How to support children, young people and
families who experience challenge

