

Early Help Gateway Meeting in Localities

Terms of Reference

1. Purpose of the Meeting

The Early Help Gateway Meetings are part of the multi-agency Early Help Framework providing support to families across the City. The meeting therefore provides a locality-based, multi-agency forum and decision-making body for the discussion of children, young people and families that may benefit from a co-ordinated package of support from more than one service (Level 3 on the Threshold of Need).

Practitioners working with families who have an unmet (or new need) identified can (via an Early Help Assessment Form Part 1) refer into the Early Help Gateway Meetings for a discussion to access relevant support for the family.

Where it is agreed further information should be sought from the family an agreed Agency will complete a whole family assessment. This will then progress through screening to the Multi-Agency Complex Case Panel (Level 4 on the Threshold of Need). This EHGM group will serve as a conduit through which local themes or common issues can be identified and reported up to the MACCP.

2. Membership

In order to be flexible to the circumstances in each locality, the Early Help Gateway Meetings will have a quorum, core and an expanded membership. The core and expanded membership of the meeting in each locality, or sub-locality division, will depend on the needs of the area.

2.1 Quorum Membership

The quorum should consist of representatives that are authorised to allocate resources for any agreed package of support including:

- A representative from MAST (Locality Manager or Social Worker for Prevention and Early Intervention) to Chair
- A representative from health (school nursing or health visiting, and midwifery)
- A representative from Community Youth Team

2.2 Core Membership

- A representative from school/s as decided by the head teacher/s
- A representative from Housing
- A representative from South Yorkshire Police

2.3 Expanded Membership

As necessary an expanded membership can be invited to discuss families with particular needs, this may include (but is not limited to):

- A representative from Ryegate Children's Hospital
- A representative from SEND
- A representative from Community Paediatrics
- A representative from Primary Mental Health Services
- A representative from Adult Mental Health Services
- A representative from other provider services within the Locality.

3. Frequency and Location

- As a minimum, a meeting will be held on a regular day and time in each locality once every 2 weeks. This will be responsive to the number of families on the agenda but will last no longer than 3 hours.
- The meeting discussion and information sharing will be brief and focused, based on the information previously circulated. Individual case discussion should last no longer than 10 minutes, but will be dependent on the circumstances of the information/intelligence available.
- The frequency and length of the meetings will be reviewed bi-annually. The aim is to provide an opportunity for the full range of members to discuss cases within a time scale that is reasonable for referrers and families. Any changes to the frequency of Early Help Gateway meetings will be set via agreement between the members based on locality demands.
- The meetings may take place at any suitable venue in the locality including School premises and Local Authority buildings.

4. Consent & Information Sharing:

- The Early Help Framework operates under a consent based system where the family agree to a discussion in order for the appropriate support to be provided.
- Each Locality Early Help meeting will be able to share personal information through Information Sharing Agreements held under the governance framework.
- Consent must be granted by the families through signing the Early Help Form Part 1, or given verbally to the referrer.
- An attendance and confidentiality register will be signed by all participants at each meeting.

5. Format

- The meeting cannot take place without representatives from the quorum members.
- An agenda with Family Names and referral documentation will be sent out to members via email 3 working days prior to the date of the meeting (including all agreed and relevant School Locality representatives).
- If a referrer wants to attend to present from a school and their school does not have a representative present in the meeting they will be given a timeslot on the agenda for their referral.
- Each case will be discussed in turn based on the information provided on the Early Help Form Part 1 and expanded by service intelligence from members.
- The meeting will agree the actions and package of support for the families discussed
- The Chair can give a summary of the discussion as well as action points so that the outcomes have a clear rationale – this may be recorded.
- The Chair will document the outcome so that there is a record of the decisions made
- The Chair will sign off the outcome in the recording system
- MAST Business Support will circulate these outcomes to members within 2 working days of the meeting
- With support from MAST Business Support the Chair will sign off an outcome letter, which will be sent to the family (with a copy to the referrer) to inform them who the Lead Agency is and that they will be contacted by them shortly.
- Members will filter outcomes through to the appropriate workforce within their service and allocate work where required
- Any disagreements regarding a decision made by the group should be reported to the Chair and escalated through each service's management structures until a resolution is agreed upon.

6. Criteria for Discussion at the Meeting

Families will be discussed via the submission of an Early Help Form Part 1.

An Early Help Form Part 1 should be completed and sent to the MAST area office before the meeting identifying work already undertaken with the family, any outstanding key issues that the child, young person and family are experiencing, what the aims are (for offering the family support). These forms should be sent to the area MAST offices:-

EASTMAST@sheffield.gcsx.gov.uk

NorthMast@sheffield.gcsx.gov.uk

WestMast@sheffield.gcsx.gov.uk

7. Recording

- The Early Help Form Part 1 will be recorded on the MAST SharePoint system.
- The outcome and action points from the meeting will be recorded on the MAST SharePoint system.
- No minutes will be recorded of the meeting.

8. Outcomes

- The members are able to decide on the support package and allocate resources accordingly, to support the family and draw up an outcome focussed plan.
- If following the early help meeting the family are judged to be in need of support at level 4 the case should be escalated to the Multi-Agency Complex Case Panel after the completion of an Early Help Assessment.
- The referrals into and the outcomes from the Early Help Gateway Meetings will feed into the Multi-Agency Complex Case Panel to build a locality needs assessment.