## **A Parent’s Guide to the Early Help Process**

### **What is Early Help?**

Early Help is support that is offered to children, young people, and their families as soon as difficulties begin to emerge. The aim is to provide the right support at the right time to stop small problems from becoming bigger problems.

Early Help is voluntary — it is completed with you, not to you. It’s designed to help families stay strong, find solutions, be happy and safe.

Early Help Assessments are completed when universal services cannot meet need or a muti agency approach is required. Examples of universal services may include school health, counselling support, SEN assessments, support from local family hubs.

### **When might Early Help be useful?**

You might want Early Help if:

* Your child is struggling at school or with learning
* You’re worried about your child’s behaviour
* There are challenges at home — for example, illness, separation, or financial stress
* Your child’s emotional wellbeing or mental health needs support
* You want advice on parenting, housing, benefits, or accessing local services

### **What happens in the Early Help process?**

### **You share your worries** You can ask for Early Help yourself, or a professional (like a teacher, health visitor or GP) might suggest it. They will listen to you about what’s going well and what you’d like help with.

### **An Early Help Assessment (if you agree)** Together, you and a professional fill out a simple form to understand what’s going on in your family — your strengths, your worries, and what support might help. This is called an *Early Help Assessment*. Y*ou will always be asked for your consent before an assessment happens.*

**A plan is made**
 You and the people supporting you agree on a plan of action. This could include linking you to services like parenting groups, counselling, or practical support.

**A Team Around the Family (TAF) meeting**
 If needed, a small team of professionals will meet with you (and your child if appropriate) to review the plan and check how things are going.

**Regular reviews**
 The plan is reviewed regularly. When things improve, Early Help support will end — but you can always ask for more help in the future if you need it.

### **Key points to remember**

**Your voice matters** — You and your family are at the heart of the process.
 **It’s about working together** — Early Help is not about judging you; it’s about helping you find solutions.

 **It’s confidential** — Information is only shared with your agreement, unless someone is worried about the safety of a child.
 **The sooner, the better** — Getting help early can prevent small problems from becoming bigger.

### **Who can I talk to about Early Help?**

You can speak to:

* The safeguarding Team at school – Safeguarding@ben.srscmat.co.uk
* Your health visitor (if you have one)
* Your GP
* A local family support worker (if you have one) or your local children’s centre

They can explain more and help you start the process.