

Helping your family get

the right support

We want to work with you to make sure you get the right support at the right time for your family.



OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL

Finding support when you need it

We understand that it can be a really hard time for a family with lots of uncertainty. We will make sure you understand and are involved in what is happening.

You may be finding things hard right now. All children and families need a bit of extra support from time to time – and when that happens, it's ok to ask for help. Early help is there to make sure worries don't become bigger.

Getting early help means we can bring together all the relevant services in Oxfordshire, so they are working in a coordinated way to support you and your children.

You may have found out about what is available from a teacher, your doctor, CAMHS worker, school, health visitor or another trusted professional already working with you.

You might have asked for help, or they may have suggested it would be an option for you.

You'll get the support you need by being on one of our pathways. Each one gives families different levels of support and help.

To help with this, a strengths and needs form will be completed when you have that first conversation with a trusted professional. It is a record of what you talked about. It helps us identify the strengths and positives within your family.

We use it to make a more informed plan of support that everyone follows.

Please speak to a practitioner or professional who knows you well if you have any worries about the process.

Pathway 1

Early help in the community

How to get help

It might be the support you need can be organised quite easily. In this case, and with your agreement, your child's teacher, family doctor or another trusted professional might suggest pathway 1.

What support might look like

The person you spoke to will contact LCSS (Locality Community Support Service). LCSS knows about different kinds of local support and can recommend the best options for your family's needs.

They will let you know what was suggested.

One suggested option might be a team around the family meeting. This means everyone working with your family - like your child's school or health professionals - will meet together.

This helps everyone share ideas and plan with you, to make sure your family gets the best support possible.

Ending or changing support

With the extra support, life may start to feel more manageable, helping you feel more in control. If the support is helping, it will continue for as long as it is needed.

If the support has not helped or is not enough, a more targeted plan might be needed (see pathway 2).

Please speak to a practitioner or professional who knows you well if you have any worries about the process.

Pathway 2

MASH family help

How to get help

On this pathway, a referral is made to the MASH (multi-agency safeguarding hub). The MASH is a group of professionals from family help, children's social care, the police, and health. When there are needs or worries about you and your family, they will work together and talk to you, to understand what support is required.

What support might look like

Everything will be tailored to your family's needs and may include:

- Visiting you in your home
- 1:1 work with you or your children
- Specific work with the whole family
- Group or self-led programmes, such as parenting support
- Advice and guidance

There will usually be a team around the family, so that you and the involved professionals can meet regularly together to see what's been achieved, and what else might be helpful.

Ending or changing support

If the support is making a difference, you might not need any more help, or you might continue to receive support through pathway 1.

If the support has not helped or is not enough, you may benefit from more targeted support in pathway 3.

Please speak to a practitioner or professional who knows you well if you have any worries about the process.

Pathway 3

Family focus

(up to 16 weeks)

How to get help

Your family might need more support than is available through pathways 1 and 2. If so, family help may speak to you about pathway 3.

What support might look like

You will be allocated a family help worker. They will join any existing team around the family meetings. If there isn't one but one is required, they will set one up, so that all professionals are working from the same plan of support with you and your family.

The family help worker will support you through a 16-week programme which includes:

- Two weeks of getting to know you and your family, to understand your needs, and what support would be helpful.
- Two weeks to review and reflect on the progress you've made and how to keep it going.
- 12 weeks of specific support to help you and your family make changes (see next page).

Please speak to a practitioner or professional who knows you well if you have any worries about the process.

Pathway 3

Family focus

(up to 16 weeks)

Support will be tailored to your family's needs. The programme will always include regular home visiting, focused on helping you and your family to make the changes that are needed.

These visits will help introduce new skills and ways of doing things and may include both practical and emotional support.

Alongside home visiting, you may be offered groups (such as parenting or relationship programmes) and/or a family meeting if this possible for you.

This is where family, and sometimes friends, come together to share ideas about how the whole family can work together to provide the help you need.

Ending or changing support

When the 16-week programme is finished, you will hopefully have the skills and knowledge you need to go it alone, without professional support. If you do, great!

If not, your family help worker will make sure the right support is in place to help you after the programme finishes.

Please speak to a practitioner or professional who knows you well if you have any worries about the process.

Pathway 4

Family life

(up to 12 months)

How to get help

If you need more help than can be provided in pathways 1-3, your family help worker will offer you pathway 4.

What support might look like

This pathway offers support for longer – up to 12 months. Your family help worker will visit you regularly in your home, offering practical and emotional support to help your family make the changes that are needed.

You will be offered a family meeting, to share ideas about how the whole family can work together to support you.

You may be offered group programmes.

Your family help worker takes the lead on team around the family meetings on pathway 4, or sets them up if you don't have them.

That means they will take responsibility for making sure meetings happen regularly.

Ending or changing support

With the right support in place, you and your family will hopefully be able to make the changes that are needed and keep things going yourself.

Whatever happens, your family help key worker will make sure the right support is in place for you once family support ends. More targeted support might be available to suit your family's needs, and your family help key worker will make sure it is set up once family support ends.

Please speak to a practitioner or professional who knows you well if you have any worries about the process.

Working together

By working together, we can make this less stressful. We want to move things forward quickly for you and your child so you know what the plan is and so that together we can start making the changes needed.

We're committed to giving you the best possible advice and support, treating you with respect and listening to your views.

There are many individuals and organisations across the county who help us with this – but we know sometimes you may not get the experience you expect.

During the time we are working with you, we will be honest with you from the start and be open on the next steps if changes are not maintained and your children are impacted.

What happens to the info that is collected about me?

Any information about you can be shared with all those working with you, with your agreement.

We will treat your information as confidential and won't share it with any other organisation unless we are required by law, or if you or any person will come to some harm if we do not.

In this case we will only ever share the minimum information needed. All personal information will be processed and stored in compliance with the Data Protection Act.

For further information contact
commentsandcomplaints@oxfordshire.gov.uk



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