

Section : Early Help Unit

Threshold for the Family Service

The thresholds for the Family Service relate directly to those in the latest version of the Pathway to provision (P2P)
[Pathway to provision](#)

Referral Process

In relation to agencies, the need to make a referral to the Family Service for assessment and support must first be discussed with the family and consent gained and evidenced in the referral.

Only an online referral will be accepted in the Early help Unit. This can be supported by a completed EHAF but an EHAF alone will not be accepted as a referral.

Parent/carer's and Young people can also self-refer by phoning the EHU who will complete an online referral on their behalf, or by self-referring to a Children Centre.

All referrals will be screened within 5 days of receipt into the EHU team incoming work, with urgent referrals flagged by the EHU or MASH being screened within 24 hours. Where there is capacity families will be allocated an Early help Officer immediately.

The key functions of the Early Help Unit are to:

- *Improve front door arrangements to ensure children and families receive timely and proportionate support. We aim to build resilience in families, not dependence.*
- *Act as a direct contact point for professionals and families wanting to access early help services or requesting information, advice and guidance regarding early help services*
- *Advise on the completion of Early Help Assessment Framework (EHAF) assessments and to hold a register of completed EHAFs*
- *Provide information packages to the MASH to support decision making and to identify where Family Service or youth justice are already involved with children and young people*
- *Analyse cases that the MASH has assessed as not meeting the Children's Social Care threshold as set out in Nottinghamshire's Pathway to Provision to determine whether an early help service can be offered*
- *A key priority is to focus on ensuring the number of MASH referrals, that do not meet the threshold for Children's Social Care, are signposted into the Early Help Unit to enable family's needs to be identified earlier to avoid repeat referrals into MASH*
- *Helping schools to access the right support and referral routes, particularly where children and young people do not meet sufficient thresholds*
- *Supporting schools to implement their own intervention strategies*
- *Acting as a conduit between schools and other professional networks*
- *Promoting an understanding of risks and vulnerabilities that children may face including raising awareness of tackling emerging threats for children*
- *Helping to move "stuck" cases forward*

	<p>Role of the Rapid Assessment Worker (RAW)</p>
	<p>The team of Rapid Assessment Workers will be based within the Early Help Unit but will be located within the North, West and South localities. When not deployed to undertake assessments, return interviews etc these workers will be used flexibly to cover leave and help manage cases on waiting lists. Rapid Assessment Workers can be called upon to deliver programmes of work within the interventions and parenting team if required for up to 50% of their time.</p> <p>Rapid Assessments are likely to fall into these main categories</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Follow up of children Missing from home, 2. Emergency referral for homeless 16/17 yr olds, 3. Unauthorised encampments, 4. Home visits to children missing education, 5. Home visits for families on EHCM waiting lists, 6. Undertaking missing return interviews for LAC if requested, 7. Supporting homeless young people open to the assessment team moving into temporary accommodation for a period of 3 weeks. <p>There may be other circumstances when a rapid assessment or urgent visit is deemed necessary by the Team Manager.</p>
	<p>Missing Return Interviews</p>
	<p>Requests for follow up interviews for children who have gone missing from home will be passed to the lead professional via the Children Missing Officer. If the young person does not currently have a lead professional, then a referral will be sent to the EHU manager for allocation to a RAW.</p> <p>In times of work pressure, it has been agreed RAW's can be asked to undertake Missing Return Interviews for the Looked After Service. This will be dependent upon capacity</p> <p>Follow up interviews with children who have gone missing from home must be completed within 72 hours of their return. Follow up interviews should be completed using the online form on Mosaic. If, after assessment, there is a need for early help case management the worker will inform their manager.</p> <p>If escalation to Children's Social Care (via the MASH) is required, as there are child protection concerns, the RAW will make this referral, following discussion with the EHU or Duty Team Manager.</p> <p>Related document: "NSCB Missing Children Guidance" http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/EasysiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?=451356</p>
	<p>Children Missing Education</p>
	<p>Requests for a home visit where there is a possible child Missing Education (a school aged young person without a known school place) will be made by the Child Missing Officer directly to the EHU Team manager or Duty Manager.</p>

	<p>The child will be allocated to a RAW to undertake a one-off visit to ascertain whether there is a school place or if support is required. Where support can be given on the day, for example in the completion of a school application form, this will be done by the RAW. Where there is a need for early help case management a referral needs to be progressed.</p> <p>RAW's should consider if there is information through sibling schools as to the whereabouts of families where a home address appears difficult to find or is unknown. There should be regular updates to Fair Access/EHE/admissions where they are involved or have requested a RAW visit.</p> <p>Referrals to Vulnerable Children Education Commissioning Group (VCEC) where a return to education has not been achieved.</p> <p>Where a RAW is involved the child should remain open until there is management agreement that all appropriate steps have been taken to locate the CME and relevant teams within NCC have been notified (admissions / Fair Access / EHE.</p> <p>Where these requests come into the EHU they must initially be directed to the children Missing Officer.</p> <p>Children missing education that are from the Gypsy Roma Traveller community may require additional support to apply for school places. Requests can be made by email or phone to the EHU by the family, by professional, or by community members. Where the request for support comes in to NCC elsewhere (directly to staff members, or to a team manager for example) these should be forwarded on to the EHU.</p> <p>Where a return to education has not been achieved the child should be referred to the Vulnerable Children Education Commissioning Group (VCEC).</p>
	<p>16/17 year olds presenting as Homeless</p>
	<p>Requests for a service for 16/17 year olds who present as homeless or at risk of homelessness should be made directly to the Homelessness Team by completing an A1 referral and assessment form on Mosaic.</p> <p>For emergency requests a telephone call should also be made to the Homelessness team on 0115 8041470 to ensure an emergency bed is available. The RAW will support the young person by transporting whilst in the emergency bed. Once the young person moves into core/cluster home unit support from the RAW will end and the provide will become the lead professional.</p> <p>For planned moves into supported accommodation it may be necessary for the young person to be allocated to Early help Case Management, dependant on time factors, whilst the young person is waiting for a bed to be allocated</p>

Case Allocation Quality Standards			
Quality Standard	Descriptor	Timescale	Responsibility
Screening of Early Help referral and feedback to referrer following request	Time taken to screen a referral and feedback to the referrer following receipt from the EHU or another referrer	5 working days	Team Manager or equivalent
Emergency Homelessness Referral Allocation	Time taken to allocate a case to a Rapid Assessment Worker following receipt from the EHU/MASH.	1 hour	Team Manager
Unauthorised Encampment Visit Request Allocation	Time taken to allocate a case to a Rapid Assessment Worker following receipt from the EHU/MASH.	1 working day	
<p>Where there is a likelihood that the service request quality standards are not to be met, due to demand on the service or capacity issues, any relaxation in standards must first be agreed by the group manager/ Children Centre General manager and will subsequently be reviewed on a weekly basis until the issue is resolved.</p>			
3b1.	Financial Responsibility Advisor (FRA)		
	<p>The FRA's will be based within the EHU but located within the North, West and South localities.</p> <p>They will complete Initial Household Income Assessments for Special Guardianship Order applications, where the local authority are in support of the application and are considering funding the placement. Where the referral is made there will be a minimum of two weeks' notice these will be completed the timescales of the court.</p> <p>The FRA will also offer advice and guidance to Kinship Carers in relation to welfare rights.</p> <p>They will also offer advice and guidance to Early Help Officers.</p> <p>No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)</p> <p>These families are allocated to FRA's when there is no role for social care and the family are settled with only monitoring of financial support required. The family are alerted to the EHU Team Manager in an email alerting them to the Children in Need review for handover</p>		

All families ready for stepdown must have a review from social work management or practice consultant and their actions must be fully completed including:

- An up to date Human Rights Assessment. (HRA)
- Confirmation that an application has been made to the home office for leave to remain.
- Full financial arrangements have been completed by the social worker.

The role of the FRA is to oversee financial arrangements. For example, a family transitioning from NFPF to claiming housing benefits or Universal credit or where they have secured employment.

If there are safeguarding concerns that require social care involvement or the case is considered complex in nature then the FRA can escalate back to social care or the Early Help Case Management team