Wyke Primary School

Safeguarding & Early Help Offer for Families

Wyke Primary School is committed to ensuring every child has the best possible start in life. We work in line with **statutory safeguarding guidance (Keeping Children Safe in Education)** and work closely with **Dorset Council Children's Services** and partner agencies where appropriate.

We believe that early support is key. By working together with families, we can identify concerns early and put the right help in place at the right time.

1. Intent – Why We Offer Early Help

At Wyke Primary School, our aim is to:

- Support children to feel safe, happy, and ready to learn
- Promote strong emotional wellbeing and positive mental health
- Ensure every child has access to the right support at the earliest opportunity
- Work in partnership with parents and carers
- Prevent concerns from escalating by acting early.

Early Help is part of our safeguarding responsibility and is designed to support families before concerns become more serious. This is in line with national guidance including **Keeping Children Safe in Education** and **Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government)**.

2. Recognising – When We May Offer Early Help

We may identify that a child or family would benefit from Early Help support where we observe or are made aware of:

Child-related concerns

- Disruptive or anti-social behaviour
- Poor or declining attendance
- Being bullied or bullying others
- Changes or regression in academic progress
- Being involved in or at risk of offending
- Poor general health or hygiene
- Anxiety, low mood, depression or other mental health concerns
- Difficulties with friendships or peer relationships
- Changes in behaviour or emotional presentation.

Family or home-related concerns

- Challenges in relationships between home and school
- Difficulties at home affecting wellbeing

- Financial pressures or housing concerns
- Changes in family circumstances.

Wider safeguarding indicators

- Concerns raised through worry boxes in classrooms
- Staff observations and professional judgement
- Parent or carer concerns
- Pupil voice conversations
- Pupil progress meetings
- Parents' evenings
- Attendance monitoring systems
- Pupil passports and individual support plans.

We follow safeguarding guidance which recognises that concerns may be **single issues or a combination of factors over time** (NSPCC, 2023).

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3. Responding – How We Support Families

If we feel a child would benefit from Early Help, we will:

- Contact parents/carers to discuss concerns sensitively and openly
- Listen to the views of the child and family
- Work collaboratively to agree next steps
- Use a Team Around the Family approach (TAF meetings where appropriate)
- Seek consent before making referrals to external agencies (where required)
- Make referrals to external services including Dorset Council Early Help, Children's Services, or health partners where appropriate
- Put in place in-school support strategies such as:
    - Soft starts and meet-and-greet support
    - Emotional literacy support (ELSA)
    - Stormbreak movement and wellbeing activities
    - Breakfast Club and After School Club provision
    - Nurture room access
    - Time to talk opportunities with trusted adults
    - Small group or 1:1 targeted support
    - Adapted or reduced timetables where appropriate
    - "Round our sofa" restorative conversations
    - Individual Pupil Passports and support plans.

We may also signpost families to community support such as:

- Gillingham Foodbank
- Local family support services
- Health and wellbeing services via Dorset Council.

4. Reviewing – How We Check Progress

Early Help support is regularly reviewed to ensure it is effective.

- Most Early Help plans are reviewed on a 6-week cycle
- Progress is discussed with parents/carers and professionals involved
- Plans are adjusted based on what is working and what needs changing
- We ensure the child's voice is central to all reviews
- If needs increase, we may escalate support to additional services with parental consent.

5. Guidance & Useful Support Links

Families can access further support and advice from:

Dorset Council – Early Help

https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/children-families/early-help

Dorset Council – Children's Services (Safeguarding)

https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/children-families/child-protection

NSPCC Guidance for Parents

https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/

Mental Health Support (Young Minds)

https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/

Family Support and Local Services

https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

6. Our Commitment

Wyke Primary School is committed to working in partnership with families. We believe that early identification, honest communication, and collaborative support give every child the best chance to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

We will always approach Early Help with care, respect, and the aim of supporting positive outcomes for children and families.