

Supporting Families Offer 2025-26

At Carnforth School we recognise the challenges that families face in bringing up children and there may be times when you need extra help and support. If you do need extra support please come and talk to us, there are many ways in which we can help as outlined in this offer of early help.

The diagram below shows the range of needs at different levels. We use this graduated approach to make sure we provide the best support for different families' individual situations:



Providing early help to our pupils and families at Carnforth School means we are more effective in promoting support as soon as we can. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, beginning with the foundation stage. We have a safeguarding culture that promotes trust between all adults and children so that all children have a trusted adult that they can speak to about any of their worries or concerns. At Carnforth School, we believe that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and promote this accountability with all staff.

At Carnforth School, we believe that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and promote this accountability with all staff. In school we have a safeguarding team that staff can liaise with and take overall responsibility and they are:

Keren Finnegan DSL 	Paul Prigg DSL and Head teacher 	Vicky Smith DDSL and SENDCO 	Lauren Richardson DDSL 	Megan Smith DDSL 
kfinnegan@blackpearltrust.org	ppriigg@carnforthschool.org	vsmith@carnforthschool.org	lrichardson@carnforthschool.org	msmith@carnforthschool.org
Aoife Ferguson DDSL 	Emily Arrowsmith DDSL 			
aferguson@carnforthschool.org	earrowsmith@carnforthschool.org			

The nominated safeguarding Trustee is: Julia Page, Email: jpage@blackpearltrust.org

The nominated safeguarding Governor is: Paul Edwards, Email: PEdwards@blackpearltrust.org

The Chair of Governors: Mrs Gill Ellis, Email: Gellis@blackpearltrust.org



Early Help Pathway Early Help is a pathway to supporting you and your child as they grow up when you or they may need further support or guidance. Providing early help to our pupils and families at Carnforth School means we can improve outcomes for children, families, and communities, providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the early years through to teenage years.

Early help relies upon local groups and people in the community, sometimes we work together to help children, young people, and their families. Everyone needs help at some time in their lives and therefore an ethos of early help is important for any school.

Early Help can support children and their families who may be struggling with:

- Routines and family rules
- Families who may be not be eating healthy food or who are trying to keep to a healthy lifestyle
- Children who are caring for a family member
- Children who may not want to go to school for different reasons
- Disability within the family, including children being a young carer
- Children in the family have special educational needs (SEND)
- Children who may becoming involved in anti-social or criminal behaviour
- Children who go missing from home
- Children or parents / carers misusing drugs or alcohol
- Children at risk of being tricked, forced, or made to work in the criminal world
- Children who may need support because they may live in a home and see drug or alcohol abuse or adult mental health problems.
- Children who have parents who argue a lot (and sometimes might hurt each other) whether the parents live together or apart.
- Children at risk of being groomed to join groups which support illegal views
- A privately fostered child (a child from another family living within your family home)

*We are Here
to Help You!*



What is an Early help Assessment?

It is a tool we use to support our work with families and helps us to identify what families need help with and inform how we can work with families to make the changes they need.

We work with families using the 'Circle of Support'. It helps to guide our conversations and find out what is working well, and what additional support may benefit your family.

We focus on all those living in your family home and wider family connections to develop a clear picture of what day to day life is like. The Circle of Support has a set of question prompts for parents and carers, and another set of questions that are specifically for children and young people. These tools help us to get the views of everyone in your family.



Within the Circle of Support is the Readiness to Change model, and the family will be asked to score themselves on each area of the assessment criteria.

The early help assessment isn't a referral form for other professionals to complete in order to receive another service to support the family. The purpose of the assessment is to identify the help that's needed, and to inform a family plan of support which will identify who may be able to best support you.

The assessment can be shared with other services, who can offer additional support. It helps everyone to work together, to make sure you get the right help at the right time, and to strengthen community connections. It's a shared document so that you only tell your story once. This document is stored safely in our case management system.

When we use a restorative approach in the assessment, we focus on asking key questions to understand why there are challenges or concerns. The idea is to uncover the root causes, address any harm, and improve things for children, young people and families. These questions are open-ended and don't blame anyone.

The goal is to work together to find solutions.

The early help assessment process - step by step

1. When completing an assessment, we'll work with family members to build relationships and involve them in every part of the process.
2. We'll work with each child to understand what's important to them and place them at the centre of the assessment.
3. We'll use different activities to help gather information, and with families' agreement we'll speak with other professionals who have more information that's important to include. This could include school, nursery, or health visitors.
4. We'll talk about family history as this informs us of each child's life experience, and include strengths and achievements.
5. We'll focus on all members of the family and how their lives are, or have the possibility of, impacting on other household members.
6. We may use other types of assessment tools, such as an exploitation risk assessment, if we're worried about the safety of a family member.
7. We'll include any other assessment that has already been completed, such as the information contained in [an education, health and care plan](#), or information collected in reports from an education, health and care needs assessment, to avoid duplication.
8. We'll always include factual information in the assessment, and where professional judgement or opinion is included this will be clearly noted.
9. Assessments will be clear, informative, and not overly descriptive to ensure that we can identify what each part means for the child/ren.
10. We'll use the assessment to inform a family plan which everyone will work towards, and where continued or more help is needed we may need to revisit the assessment.



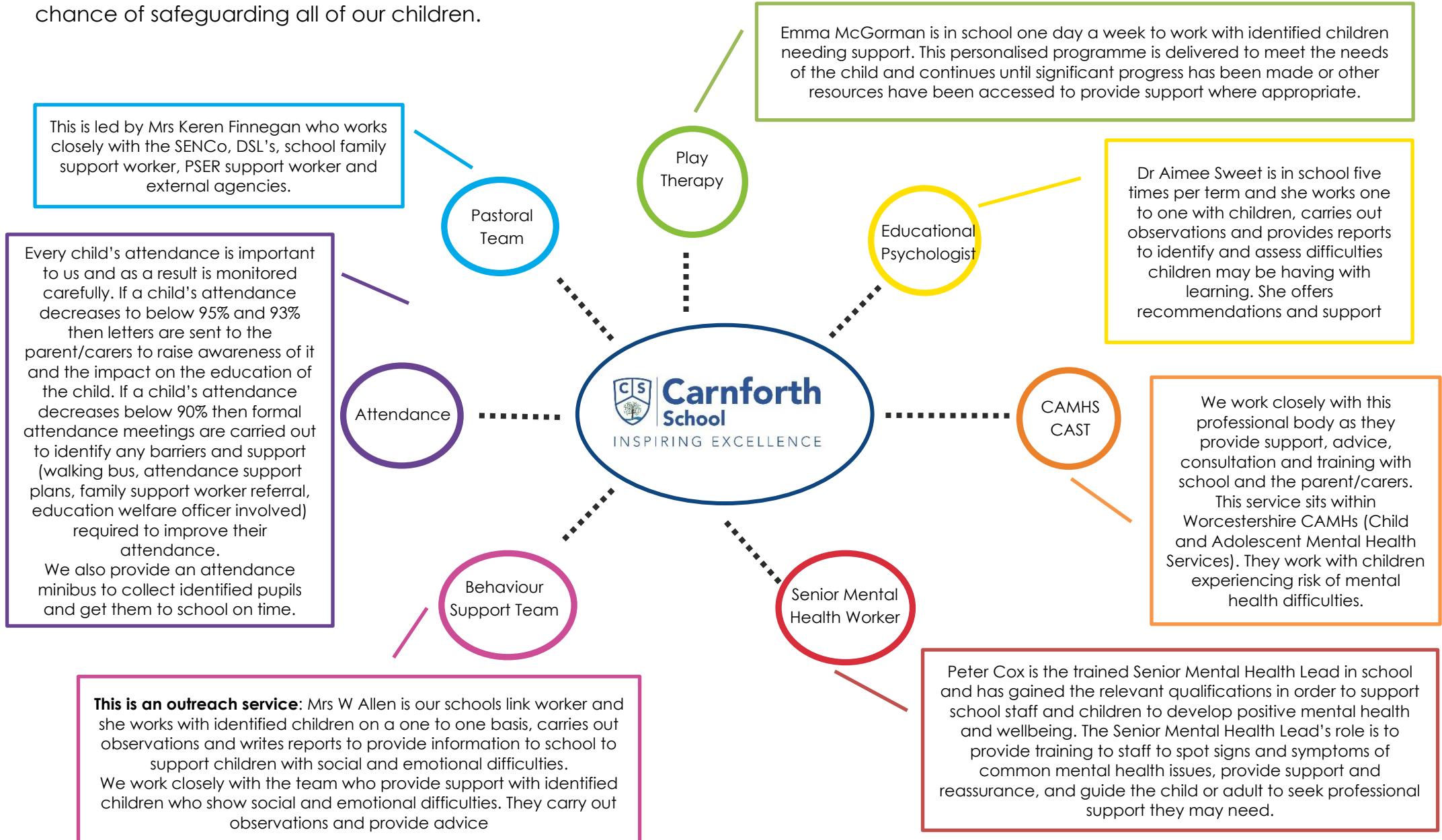
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In **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025** it makes it clear that ALL staff should be aware of their local early help process and understand their role in it. In addition, this statutory document makes it clear that any child may benefit from early help, but all school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- Is disabled and has specific additional needs
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health care plan) Is a young carer
- Is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- Is a risk of being radicalised or exploited
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- Has returned home to their family from care; and is a privately fostered child.
- Is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day
- At risk of honour-based abuse - for example: FGM

All Carnforth School, staff are aware of the offer of early help and at all times staff consider if there is any offer of early help that we can make in order to help a child thrive. We believe that early interventions for children or families, in many cases, will prevent children from experiencing harm. Within school we provide the following early help support for all children, striving to ensure concerns, no matter how small they may seem, are listened to and supported quickly and effectively therefore maximising the chance of safeguarding all of our children.



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