

Early Help Procedure – Lincolnshire

At **Illuminate You, Lifelong Learning Lodge**, we are committed to identifying emerging needs early and providing the right support to pupils and families before concerns escalate.

Early Help is central to our **trauma-informed and preventative safeguarding culture**, promoting resilience, positive relationships, and emotional wellbeing.

1. What Is Early Help?

Early Help is support offered to children, young people, and families **as soon as problems start to emerge** — to prevent issues from worsening.

As defined by *Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP)*:

“Early Help is anything that supports children, young people and their families to achieve their potential, by either preventing difficulties, or stopping things from getting worse.”

It is **not a single service**, but a **collaborative, multi-agency approach** involving schools, health, social care, and voluntary organisations.

2. Our Aims

Illuminate You aims to:

- Identify pupils and families who may need Early Help as soon as possible.
- Provide targeted, proportionate support to meet emerging needs.
- Reduce the risk of escalation to statutory intervention.
- Strengthen family capacity and resilience.
- Promote emotional security and positive relationships.

3. Indicators That Early Help May Be Needed

Staff must remain alert to signs that a child or family might benefit from early help, including:

- Persistent absence or lateness.
- Emotional distress, withdrawal, or anxiety.

- Behavioural changes or unexplained deterioration in wellbeing.
- Family conflict, financial stress, or housing issues.
- Mental health concerns (child or parent).
- Unmet additional needs, including **SEND or SEMH**.
- Emerging concerns about parenting or supervision.
- Exposure to domestic abuse, substance misuse, or parental ill-health.

Any member of staff can identify and refer an Early Help concern.

4. Internal Process for Early Help at Illuminate You

Step 1 – Identification

- The class teacher, tutor, or key worker notices a pattern of concern and discusses it with the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**.
- Staff record the concern on the school's safeguarding system, noting factual details and any actions taken.

Step 2 – Initial DSL Discussion

- The DSL assesses whether the child's needs meet **Early Help thresholds** or require a statutory referral.
- Parents/carers are informed and consent is sought to begin Early Help support.

Step 3 – Early Help Assessment (EHA)

- The **DSL or allocated Lead Professional** completes a **Lincolnshire Early Help Assessment** in collaboration with the family.
- This assessment explores strengths, needs, and desired outcomes.
- Where other agencies are involved (e.g., health, youth support, social care), they are invited to contribute.

Step 4 – Team Around the Child (TAC) Meeting

- If multiple services are required, a **TAC meeting** is convened.
- A **Lead Professional** (often the DSL or key worker) coordinates the plan.
- Actions, outcomes, and review dates are agreed collaboratively with the family.

Step 5 – Review and Monitoring

- TAC meetings are reviewed regularly (usually every 6–8 weeks).
- Progress is monitored and recorded by the Lead Professional.
- If risk increases, the case is escalated promptly to **Children's Services**.

5. Escalation or Step-Up to Statutory Services

If a child's situation deteriorates or new safeguarding information emerges:

- The DSL will contact **Lincolnshire Children's Services** via the **Customer Service Centre** on **01522 782111** (or **01522 782333** out of hours).
- A **safeguarding referral** will be made using the *LSCP Referral Form*, and all actions will be recorded.
- The Early Help plan may continue alongside statutory intervention where appropriate.

6. Partnership Working

Illuminate You works closely with:

- **Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP)**
- **Team Around the Child (TAC) Coordinators**
- **Health and Mental Health Services (CAMHS, School Nursing)**
- **Youth Offending and Early Support Teams**
- **Family Support Workers and Educational Psychology Services**

The school participates fully in TAC meetings, information-sharing protocols, and joint decision-making, always guided by the principles of **consent, proportionality, and the child's best interests**.

7. Record Keeping

- All Early Help assessments, TAC minutes, and review notes are securely stored within the pupil's **safeguarding file**.
- Records include details of meetings, actions, progress, and outcomes.
- The DSL ensures confidentiality and GDPR compliance.

- Records are retained in line with the *Information and Records Management Society (IRMS)* retention schedule.

8. Review and Evaluation

- The DSL monitors all open Early Help and TAC cases termly.
- The **Proprietor** receives a summary report (without personal details) in the termly **Safeguarding Oversight Review**.
- Lessons learned are used to improve practice and inform staff training.

9. Useful Links and Documents

- [Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership – Early Help and TAC](#)
- [Lincolnshire TAC Handbook \(2024\)](#)
- [Report a Concern about a Child – Lincolnshire County Council](#)

10. Contact Information

Service	Contact Details
Children’s Services (Early Help / TAC / Safeguarding)	01522 782111 (Mon–Fri 8 am–6 pm)
Out of Hours	01522 782333
Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP)	www.lincolnshirescp.org.uk
LADO (for staff allegations)	01522 554 674

Commitment to Early Intervention

Our approach to Early Help ensures that pupils at **Illuminate You** receive the **right support, at the right time, by the right people**.

By embedding early identification and partnership working, we reduce risk, promote wellbeing, and strengthen family and community resilience.