Welcome to the Early Help in Solihull newsletter

This is the first quarterly update designed to keep partners and families informed about key developments, recent successes, and opportunities around Early Help in Solihull.

To introduce myself, writing to you is Adam Treen, the Operations Manager for Family Hubs and Family Support within Children's Services at Solihull Council.

I've been in post since March 2025 and over this time I've been impressed by the strength of partnership working in Solihull and how we all come together to support children, young people, and families.

We've recently created an **Early Help one-pager** to summarise the support available to professionals and residents across the borough. Please share with your team and people who may benefit from learning more about Early Help services and display it within community areas. This edition includes updates on:

1 **Family Hubs** 2 **Partner spotlight** 3 **Family Helpline**

4 **Early Help Coordinators** 5 **Parent support** 6 **Next steps**

Before we begin, I would also like to take a moment to personally acknowledge the incredible support provided by the education, health, police, community, voluntary, and faith sectors. Your commitment to supporting families has been vital, and it's important to recognise that you are a central part of our offer. Thank you for all that you have done and continue to do.

December 2025 | 1st edition

Working for Children and Families in Solihull

Solihull Family Hubs

An Introduction to Family Hubs

As of September 2025, all four Family Hubs in Solihull have been open for 12 months. To celebrate, the Hub team have produced a video to share testimonies from real parents and to explore the positive difference the Hubs have made in people's lives. Watch the **full video here**.

Riverside's outdoor renovations

I'm delighted to share that Riverside Family Hub in Chelmsley Wood has received grant funding from Severn Trent to enhance its outdoor space. This exciting investment will help create a safe, sensory-based garden for services and families to enjoy. Blueprints for the garden can be viewed to the right.

Some parking spots may be affected as a result of the works, so do keep this in mind when visiting between November 2025 and April 2026. Alternative parking locations may include Asda, Junction, St. Anne's Church, and residential roads.

Growing partnerships
A total of 79 partner organisations are currently operating from one of the Family Hubs to deliver a wide range of services and support. In the last quarter (July-September 2025), an incredible 11,000 visits were made to the Hubs, demonstrating the popularity and value of our community spaces. If any new partners would like to start working with the Hubs, please email **louise.hudson@solihull.gov.uk**.

Government visits
The Hubs welcomed representatives from the Department of Education (DoE) and Local Government Association (LGA) in September to show the strengths of our Early Help approach and local partnerships. The LGA also produced a complimentary **case study about the Family Hubs app**'s inclusivity and accessibility features.

Community engagement
The Hubs team have recently recruited an Outreach and Engagement Officer to connect with various communities in Solihull. The aim is to break down barriers, build trust, raise awareness of support available, and to ensure that families can access the help they need.

Summer activities
Lots of free family fun days took place at the Hubs this summer with support from the **Holiday Activities and Food (HAF)** programme and its providers. The activities were incredibly popular, bringing families together and helping them stay active and engaged over the break. We are also planning more fun days for the festive period - more information to follow on our **Facebook**!

Solihull
Family Hubs

Partner spotlight

ordinary Magic

Thrive Tribe | Bloom & Grow | Ignite | Little Sparks | Roots & Wings

Ordinary Magic is a community group who support children and families in Solihull and surrounding areas to grow, connect, and thrive through every stage of life.

They specialise in mental health and emotional wellbeing support for children at schools and other safe community spaces such as the Family Hubs.

Having recently refreshed their branding, Ordinary Magic have also launched five new groups: Thrive Tribe, Bloom and Grow, Ignite, Little Sparks, and Roots and Wings.

If you are a parent or a group that wishes to refer someone to Ordinary Magic, please complete their online **referral form**. Please note there is an 8-week turnaround for referrals.

For more information, visit their **Facebook page** and **website**, email **info@ordinarymagic.co.uk**, or call **0121 514 8854**.

0121 788 4327

Family Helpline

Mon-Thu - 09:00-16:30 | Fri - 09:00-16:00

The Family Helpline is a phoneline for parents, families, professionals, or anyone involved with supporting parents and children in Solihull. It is to provide advice and point you in the right direction depending on the situation.

Impact
A total of 1,113 contacts have been processed by the Family Support Team between Mar to Sep 2025. In the last quarter (Q2, Jul-Sep) alone, 77 community-led Early Help assessments have been completed by our partners - the highest number ever.

Myth-busting
We're part of Early Help and Family Support, our support is consent based, we are not Children's Social Care. We would really appreciate your help in sharing this message and breaking down any stigma.

Good to know
The Helpline is staffed by Family Support Workers who help people find the right services for them, whether that be signposting to Family Hub sessions, facilitating Early Help assessments and referrals, or offering bespoke advice on next steps. The team have experience with the Early Help offer and what support services are available in Solihull to best suit a person's unique situation, allowing for more targeted and effective referrals depending on their needs. They also:

- Process Multi-Agency Referral Forms (MARFs)
- Manage internal transfers from the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
- Process all community-led Early Help assessments submitted by partner organisations

For safeguarding concerns, such as if a child is at risk of being harmed, please continue to call MASH on 0121 788 4300.

We acknowledge that not everyone will be able to access the Helpline. All are welcome to visit the Hubs in-person or email **familyhubs@solihull.gov.uk** to be directed to the right support service for them.

Early Help Coordinators

Early Help Coordinators work closely with schools to identify needs early and connect families to the right support. Their role is central to ensuring that help is timely, coordinated, and accessible. I would like to say a huge thank you to Kara Evans who supported the roll-out and work of our coordinators across the borough.

Borough-wide coverage
We now have Early Help Coordinators linked to every school setting in Solihull, including primary, secondary, colleges and SEN schools.

Collaborative working
Coordinators hold termly network meetings with schools to discuss emerging themes, share good practice, and strengthen partnership working. They also offer individual case clinics with schools, providing tailored advice and guidance on specific situations.

Training offer
Throughout the year, we are delivering training sessions for all new Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) and pastoral support staff in schools. These sessions ensure that staff are fully aware of the Early Help offer, referral processes, and how to access support for families.

Improved processes
We've recently amended our internal systems so that all **Community-led Early Help assessments** submitted by partners are sent directly to the linked Early Help Coordinator. These assessments are now reviewed every 12 weeks, ensuring consistent oversight, progress tracking, and timely updates for families and professionals.

Impact
Over the past 12 months, 170 Community-led Early Help assessments have been completed, reflecting growing confidence and collaboration across the partnership.

Need to get in touch?
If you're unsure who your Early Help Coordinator is, please email **earlyhelpcoordinators@solihull.gov.uk** and we'll connect you with the right person.

Parent support

Solihull's Early Help offer includes a range of support for parents and carers, whether you're looking for advice, reassurance, or practical strategies.

Drop-in sessions
Across our Family Hubs, we run regular parent drop-in sessions where parents and carers can speak directly with a Family Support Worker. Families do not need to be open to any service or have a referral. Contact your Early Help Coordinator or call the Family Helpline on 0121 788 4327 to find out more.

Bespoke sessions
We offer bespoke support sessions in our Family Hubs tailored to specific needs on a variety of topics such as rules and boundaries, sleep hygiene, teenagers, routines, and mental health.

Online offer
Togetherness, formerly known as Solihull Approach, offers over 16 free online courses to residents in Solihull. Families can access the courses on the **Togetherness website** using the code **APPLEJACKS**.

In September 2025, Solihull was ranked 1st out of 82 areas for the number of registered learners on Togetherness programmes. Overall we are currently ranked 8th out of 82 for total number of registered learners.

We have an above-average number of male learners registered, a positive sign of inclusive engagement. Many parents and carers are choosing to access more than one course, showing strong commitment to personal growth and family wellbeing.

Please continue to promote this valuable resource to families we work with and across your networks. We have licenses for all Solihull residents up to July 2026.

TOGETHERNESS

Bringing the Solihull Approach to the world

Next steps

Solihull's Early Help offer continues to evolve in response to local needs, national priorities, and sector-wide reforms. What's next:

Ofsted inspection
Ofsted have recently completed a full ILACS (Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services). We are proud of the progress made across our Early Help services and our efforts in continuing to strengthen the Early Help offer. Comments from the last monitoring visit highlight progress:

"New arrangements to support families through Early Help are leading to them receiving the right support at the earliest opportunity".

We look forward to hearing the outcome expected in early January 2026.

Expanding our parenting offer
We are actively working with partners to develop a multi-agency parenting support offer that brings together health, education, and community services to provide consistent, accessible help for families. We are in the process of securing funding to provide training in evidence-based parenting interventions, which is expected to become available in the New Year.

Preparing for reform
Social care reforms are coming. By 2027, all local authorities are expected to start implementing the reforms. These reforms will introduce a new 'Family Help' model, merging Early Help and child-in-need services to ensure families receive support earlier and more effectively. For more information, here's the Department for Education's **Families First Partnership (FFP)** programme guide.

Best Start in Life strategy
We are committed to delivering on the government's **Best Start in Life (BSiL) strategy** which aims to ensure that 75% of children reach a good level of development by age five by 2028. Our Family Hubs are of course central to this vision. We are awaiting further government guidance on funding and requirements for BSiL going forward. More information to follow soon!

BEST START IN LIFE

Thank you for taking the time to read the Early Help in Solihull newsletter.