

Disability, Early Years & Family Support Services



Social Services Department
Together we do make a difference

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The work of Access and especially Child Care Operations Teams is supported by a range of family support services. These services have established track records in providing targeted and frequently intensive short term support for families. The separate services share an overall aim of avoiding children drifting into long term care by offering immediate and extended family networks every support available to keep or return children at home or within their local community.

Family Support Team

This service is reserved for children (usually teenagers) whose parents are asking for them to be accommodated. Staff in this Team provide intensive support and advice to address the issues which parents and children identify as the major areas of conflict. The Service is successful in diverting approximately 60% of request for accommodation and returning other children home after a brief period of accommodation. The Team has 7 qualified social

workers who provide a service across the County.

Family Aides

This service mirrors the Family Support Team in providing equivalent services for pre and primary school aged children. There is also an increasing emphasis on undertaking parenting assessments where there are concerns about the quality of parenting younger aged children are experiencing. This work is often used in evidence for Court proceedings. Family Aides are child care but not social work qualified. We have 7 Family Aides providing a service across Leicestershire from 2 bases.



Children and Family Centres

We have 3 Children and Family Centres at Coalville, Hinckley and Loughborough. The allocation and review of places is determined by Access and Child Care Operations teams who have sole referral rights to this service, apart from a very limited number of self funded placements. The Centres have received high commendation from Ofsted Inspections. They work to individual service plans for each child referred with an emphasis on assessing child development, early learning issues and parenting capability.

Family Support Workers (Family STEPS Service)

This service is part of Leicestershire's Beacon status CAMHS Service. It operates at Tier 2 of the CAMHS model and is currently established throughout Leicestershire. The Service provides

short term targeted support to improve parent/child interaction for children under 13 years. It has been independently validated as a highly effective service in improving parent/child relationships and giving parents and children positive alternatives to dysfunctional patterns of interaction. The service works closely with allied professionals in Health, Education and non statutory services, and is a very good example of multi-disciplinary working.

Therapeutic Social Work Team

This service is jointly managed with Leicester City Social Services. It provides therapeutic support to children who have experienced trauma and abuse (especially sexual abuse) and require sustained therapeutic help to resolve or address their past experiences. The Service is specifically targeted at children in care, adopted children and children on Leicestershire's Child Protection Register. The service is increasingly working on a collaborative basis



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with Leicester Family Service Unit, and with the CAMHS Young Peoples Team, to improve the level of therapeutic help provided.

Disabled Children's Team

The service supports parents, carers and children with severe learning disabilities, challenging behaviour and complex health conditions. The aim is to enable most children to live at home with a range of respite/support services (homebased, link family and residential services). There are approximately 180 cases managed by the Team. The Team works closely with Health, Education and Voluntary/Independent Sector providers to provide co-ordinated and in some cases multiple funded supportive care packages. The Service has been nationally recognised as a leading edge provider of inter-agency working with close and co-operative involvement with parents and carers in the development of services. The Team comprises of 9 Social Workers (mostly

Social Work qualified) and 3 Occupational Therapists that operate from Coalville but also provide a service across Leicestershire with individual staff linked to different Districts. The Team links very well with the Transitions Team managed within Adult Services which takes disabled children aged 17 years and above from the Disabled Children's Team where ongoing support/services are needed.



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