EARLY HELP STRATEGY 2014-2017
Wigan Children's Trust and Safeguarding Children's Board

Vision for children and families within the Wigan Borough
• A whole-system approach will be developed for early intervention and prevention services. • Children, young people and families are listened to and supported to help them reach their full potential. • The gap in educational achievement and health and wellbeing of the general population and those most vulnerable groups is narrowed. • All vulnerable children and young people will feel safe and protected and their welfare is promoted.

Defining 'Early Help'
"Intervening early and as soon as possible to tackle problems emerging for children, young people and their families or with a population at risk of developing problems. Effective intervention may occur at any point in a child or young person's life" *(C4EO expert group / North West Children's Improvement Programme Integrated Early Help Strategy)*

Wigan Early Help Outcomes	Wigan Early Help Principles
Children and families have every opportunity: • to feel safe and supported in their homes and communities, • to raise and achieve their aspirations around employment, education and training, • to manage their good health and prevent illness, • to be empowered, self-reliant and decrease their dependency on the public sector.	• A single multi agency assessment, planning and review process is provided and delivered in partnership with children, young people and families. • Children, young people and families are able to make informed choices. • Families are central to defining and addressing the problems they face and are key partners in the process. • Service delivery (universal, targeted and specialist) is holistic, co-ordinated and seamless.

Wigan Vision	NW strategy 'golden thread'	What we will do

Children, young people and families are listened to and supported to help them reach their full potential	Engaging parents / The best start in life	• Offer help when needs and concerns are first identified and lessen the need for targeted services (OFSTED)
		• Seek families' voices at all stages to define and address the problems they face
		   ○ Listen to children and young people and focus practice on their needs and experiences, influenced by their wishes and feelings
		   ○ Where they cannot represent their view themselves, those advocated on their behalf (OFSTED)
		• Improve integrated working and prevent escalation
		• Treat children, young people and families as equals and value their diversity. Help is sensitive and responsive to age, disability, ethnicity, faith or belief, gender, gender identity, language, race and sexual orientation (OFSTED)
		• Build capacity in local communities for children, young people and families to increase their self-reliance
		• Support access to high quality education for all
		• Target early years to maximise the future life chances of vulnerable children
		• Support children, young people and families to understand risky behaviours so they are able to make informed choices
		• Deliver evidence-based parenting programmes (incl. young men / dads)

Narrow the gap	The best start in life / language for life	• Improve the prospects for children and young people at risk of being disadvantaged • Mitigate the effects of poverty and neglect on children and families • Improve children and young people's health and reducing the inequality gap • Targeted support to improve attainment for children and young people in particular vulnerable groups

EARLY HELP STRATEGY 2014-2017
Wigan Children's Trust and Safeguarding Children's Board

Safeguard, protect and promote the welfare of vulnerable children and young adults	The best start in life / language for life	• Safeguarding Board ensuring effective multi-agency child protection and safeguarding arrangements are in place • Revised Early Help Framework (CAF) used effectively across all partners • Undertake assessments informed by research, historical context and significant events for each case and provide help proportionate to risk (OFSTED) • Assessments (including children in need assessments) result in a direct offer of help to address needs, are dynamic and change in the light of emerging issues and risks. (OFSTED) • Identify those in need of help and protection and make appropriate referrals, with a timely and effective response (OFSTED) • Identify and respond to children experiencing neglect, ensuring interventions are timely and effective, providing families with the help they need. • Engage CYP and families in all actions. They understand the intentions of the help they receive (OFSTED) • Where there are concerns about the safety and protection of children and parents do not engage, there is a full risk assessment and urgent involvement of a senior manager in all decisions about next steps (OFSTED) • Thorough and timely child protection enquiries, with clear findings in relation to significant harm and resulting in urgent action (OFSTED) • Clearly record all decisions, actions and engagement with the family and other professionals (OFSTED) • Reduce the number of CYP needing to be looked after by the local authority/requiring intervention by social care • Reduce first time entrants into the criminal justice system, reduce reoffending and numbers in custody

Whole system approach to early intervention	Smarter working / knowledge is power	• Clear understanding of which groups / families / areas / individuals are most in need of / dependent on help (using local dependency index and locality profiles)
		  ○ Data and information-sharing informing effective interventions and taking account of the legal requirements re parental consent and children at risk of harm (OFSTED)
		  ○ Using this to inform how we target our resources
		• Clear workforce strategy for early intervention and help
		  ○ Workforce have appropriate training, skills, knowledge and experience
		  ○ Support time for shared learning and ensuring what we do is based on good evidence of what works
		• Integrated practice
		  ○ No 'wrong front door' for service users
		  ○ Address needs and risks at the lowest level wherever possible
		  ○ Continuity of care is maintained through different stages of a child's life and through their preparation for adulthood
		  ○ Coordinated 0-19 pathway and seamless, effective and timely step up/step down transition arrangements
		  ○ Appropriate thresholds for intervention accord with legal requirements of legislation, are understood by partners, consistently applied, well embedded, reviewed and updated regularly (OFSTED)
		  ○ Clearly and effectively differentiate between early help and statutory child protection work (OFSTED)
		• Seamless approach to supporting Confident Families as a team around the child and family
		• Appropriate tools are used to assess and meet needs in a timely manner
		• Effective and appropriate, outcome-based commissioning of services
		• Engage in positive challenge and hold each other to account for outcomes for families
		• Continuously review and evaluate services
		  ○ Children, young people and families are involved in the design, delivery and evaluation of the services they use
		  ○ Practice is informed by feedback from children and their families about the effectiveness of the help, care or support they receive (OFSTED)

		o Measure financial impact / savings / efficiencies / cost prevention / social return on investment of interventions