

To be read alongside our Safeguarding and Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) policies.

Providing Early Help to families is the most effective way of promoting the health and welfare of children. It enables support to be provided as soon as the need for it is recognised, whether this is before or after birth. The earlier help is provided, the more beneficial it is to children and the less chance there are of problems escalating.

Effective Early Help relies on:

- Identifying families who would benefit from the approach
- Completing an assessment of the level of need
- Providing targeted support to address the identified need and to improve the outcomes for the child

For children, successful Early Help means:

- They have the means to learn
- They are healthy and developing well physically and emotionally
- They are safe and have a safe environment in which to grow and learn
- They are supported to thrive

For parents, successful Early Help means:

- They feel supported and know where they can access help
- They have a positive relationship with the nursery and local community
- They are informed and feel confident in supporting their child's learning and development
- They have a wide support network

At Acorns we understand that issues can arise at any time in a child's life and therefore, we remain vigilant for families who could benefit from further support and aim to help them with this. We achieve this by:

- Having an open-door policy where parents/carers can come and talk to us about any concerns they have
- Providing parents with additional information and signposting them to supporting agencies
- Working with parents to complete Early Help assessments
- Following the Graduated Pathway to support children and families with additional needs
- Making referrals where a need for Early Help is recognised, and supporting children and parents through the process
- Putting children and families at the centre of all that we do and the decisions we make
- Listening to children
- Focusing on the strengths of families as well as their area of need

When identifying children and families who could benefit from Early Help, we use the Levels of Intervention guidance to evaluate the level of need; universal, additional, intensive, or specialist. This ensures families receive the right level of support to prevent problems from escalating.