



London Borough
of Hounslow

Hounslow's Early Help Strategy

2024-2026

This strategy has been co-produced by Hounslow Early Help Partnership



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National Context

Early help can prevent children from coming to harm. When families face problems, getting the right support, at the right time, is essential. It can be what stops a minor problem becoming a crisis (Action for Children, 2024)

Early help can:

- Protect children from harm
- Reduce the need for a referral to child protection services
- Improve children's long-term outcomes
- Improve children's home and family life
- Support children to develop strengths and skills to prepare them for adult life. (NSPCC,2024)



There has been a recent government steer emphasising the need to provide Early Help following the findings from The Independent Review Of Children's Social Care (2022). Following this, the government provided additional funding for Early Help including investment to create Family Hubs and testing of the new reforms with the Families first pathfinder programme. The government have now committed further funding to deliver the reforms nationally, this is referred to as 'The Families First Partnership programme' (March,2025)

Local context



The resident population of Hounslow is 288,181. Hounslow is an ethnically diverse borough, especially when compared with England; Hounslow has a majority Asian/Black/Mixed/Other population of 56% (and 44% White ethnic groups) compared with England's 19% and ranks the 9th highest BAME population (all ethnicities included other than 'White British'). The highest Non- white population is Asian which accounts for 36.7%)



Since 2012, Hounslow has had a lower First-time entry into Youth Justice System than London and England. With a rate of under half the rate of London



Hounslow has higher levels of teeth decay for under 5's than London and England. Hounslow has higher obesity levels than London and England for children in year 6. There is a higher conception rate for under 18's than London but lower than England.



There is a 76% student population in Hounslow with children achieving a good level of attainment with higher averages than England for Key stage 2,4 and 5. There is also a higher percentage of degree holders, compared to the average for England. In early years development, Hounslow is slightly lower than England. Hounslow has a slightly lower NEET population than London and England.



The highest average of accommodation tenure is private rented (28.7%)



Hospital admissions for mental health conditions (<18 yrs) has increased since 2021/22.



Hounslow has a higher population of students receiving SEND support compared to averages for London and England (15.3% primary, 11.5% secondary, 3.5% special school)



Hounslow has a higher percentage than England's average of children under 16 living on an absolute low income. (12.7%). And a higher number of families receiving benefits than the average of England and London (19.8%). Over 10% of households have gross incomes under £10,000 per year. The latest Index of Deprivation score, Hounslow scored 6 (meaning it was slightly more than midway between the most and least deprived. This overall score consists of some very high-income areas and some very high deprivation areas).



Hounslow has a higher employment rate than London and England at 81% and ranks 16 in London for economic activity but is the 2nd lowest in London for the resident median income average (£26,821)

What do we mean by Early Help?

Early Help provides support to babies, children, young people and their families at an early stage to prevent difficulties from escalating, at any point in a child's life from early years through to entry into adulthood.



Thresholds can serve as a guide however; it is more important to focus on the **support** we can provide for families than it is on reaching a threshold.

Thresholds of need

Category	Description
Level 1 - Universal	These are children with no additional needs; all their health and developmental needs will be met by universal services.
Level 2- Early Help	These are children with additional needs , who may be vulnerable and showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect; their needs are not clear, not known or not being met. This is the threshold for a multi-agency early help assessment to begin. These are children who require a lead professional for a co-ordinated approach to the provision of additional services
Level 3- Complex needs	These children require specialist services to achieve or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development or to prevent significant impairment of their health and development and/or who are disabled. This is the threshold for an assessment led by children's social care under Section 17, Children Act 1989
Level 4 - Acute needs	These children are suffering or are likely to suffer significant harm. This is the threshold for child protection. This is likely to mean that they may be referred to children's social care under section 20, 47 or 31 of the Children Act 1989

[Hounslow follow The London PAN thresholds \(Click me\)](#)

Pathways of support



Early Help is shown in tier 2. It is noted that Early Help can be a combination of Universal and targeted interventions. Targeted Early Help from the LA is now referred to as Family Help, featured in The government's strategy, *The Families First Partnership programme (2025)*. These are examples of some of the services within each pathway; however, it is not an exhausted list.

Category	Examples of Services
Universal	GP's, School's, Health Visiting, Children's Centres, Family Hubs, Youth clubs, Police, Housing
Early Help	Family Hubs, Maternal Early Childhood sustained home visiting (MECSH), Mental Health School support team, HYPE, Young carers, Family Help, Adolescent and Support Service, CAMHS
Complex and acute needs (Statutory duties, Children in need and Child protection)	Children's Social Care

Early Help in practice

Hypothetical journey of a child

Various services within the borough including the community and voluntary sector deliver Early Help, to support families to flourish. This page provides a hypothetical journey of a child to illustrate the range of services providing Early Help in Hounslow.

One year

We move to a new area, dad is working. Mum looks for things for us to do together and for us to make new connections.

Children Centres, Family Hubs, Health visiting, Homestart

Pregnancy & birth

Mum and dad welcome me to the world. They are thrilled I've arrived and love me. However, mum is feeling a little anxious as I'm her first child and she wants to ensure she meets all my needs. *PAIRS, Family Hubs, breastfeeding support, midwifery, health visiting*

Four years

Mum and dad are worried about money and having enough food for the week.

Surplus Food, Local Food banks, Job Centre, Community Solutions, Supporting Families employment advisors

Two & three years

Mum, dad and nursery teachers are helping me to get ready for school. I'm having fun exploring my surroundings, learning new things and making friends.

2- & 3-year-old free early education provision

Six years

Some words are hard to pronounce, and I am not always understood.

Speech and Language Therapy

Five years

I start school and I'm feeling excited.

School admissions, children missing education, school support

Seven years

I enjoy fun activities and make new friends over the summer, and this helps mum and dad, as they don't have to worry about the cost.

Holiday and Food programme, Short break activities for children with disabilities

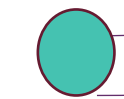
Eight years

My brother is born, and we need to move to a bigger house and our grandma also comes to live with us to help with my brother.

LA Housing department

Early Help in practice

Continued hypothetical journey of a child



Nine years

Grandma passes away and I am sad

School mental health support teams, school counselling, pastoral support teams, Cocoon kids



Ten years

I enjoy going to the youth club near my home, having fun and making new friends.

Hounslow Youth clubs



Eleven years

I'm about to start secondary school, I'm feeling a little anxious about the change.

Transition to secondary programme



Twelve years

Mum and dad's relationship starts to breakdown and home feels difficult.

Family Help team, MHST, School counselling, Kooth, Pastoral support.



Thirteen years

Mum gets sick and dad works late hours, I help to care for her and my younger brother.

Young Carers support



Fourteen years

I start using cannabis and want to stop

HYPE



Fifteen years

I use my voice for good in my community

Hounslow Youth Council.



Seventeen- Eighteen years

I am considering next steps for further education and employment.

Connexions

Sixteen years

I am in a healthy relationship, and we want to make sure we are using contraception properly and keeping ourselves safe.

Young Hounslow Sexual Health

Early Help in practice – Hounslow Case studies

Parent and Infant Relationship Service (PAIRS)



This is an example of how a mother's and baby's (6m) interaction was strengthened through Video Interaction Guidance (VIG). Mother felt in her words felt that she "wasn't being a good mum". After seven VIG sessions, the relationship between Mother and baby had dramatically improved as well as her self-perception as a mother. She described the relationship between her and baby before the intervention as 'Rubbish, sad and boring, he was bored of me' and now described their relationship as 'Playful, loud and energetic' and described herself as a parent as "Happy, Playful and Attentive".

1,2,3 magic parenting course, Families First Intensive Service



The following feedback was received from a parent for a recent cohort: "I feel that the course has really helped me to deal with challenging behaviour and to form a more positive relationship with my son. Other people have also noticed a big improvement in my son's behaviour. I have learnt different techniques that have made challenging situations more manageable. The facilitators ideas of using a special box to encourage start behaviours and discourage stop behaviours has made a big difference. I have learnt that my response to challenging behaviours is really important and not having too much emotion and talking can make a big difference during a challenging situation. Thank you!"

Home-Start Richmond, Kingston and Hounslow (local charity partner)



A trained volunteer supported a mother and her 3-month-old baby who were isolated after recently arriving in the UK and abandoned by the father. The volunteer supported emotionally and practically, building the mother's parenting skills and confidence, encouraging her to go out and accompanying her to local shops and parks. After 6 months of weekly volunteer visits, the family were thriving: the child is meeting all developmental milestones and is happy, healthy and active. The mum has a wider support network, and friends locally and regularly attends the local Children's Centre.

Family Navigators, Family Hubs



A Family Navigator supported a family with their housing needs. The family were previously living in a refuge after fleeing domestic abuse but now the placement had ended, and the family were staying with a friend. The Family Navigator supported the parent with liaising with housing and advocating on her behalf. The family have now been allocated housing and due to move into their new home.

Specialist Home Engagement Leads (In schools)



SHEL supported a family with food provision from a local organisation. This is feedback from a parent. "Coming on a Friday knowing there is a bag of food for me has made it easier, we like to explore the surplus bag when we get home and plan how to use the food with no waste. Money is tight. We both work and don't get help from benefits, so help with shopping is appreciated".

Adolescent Support Team, HYPE, Connexions

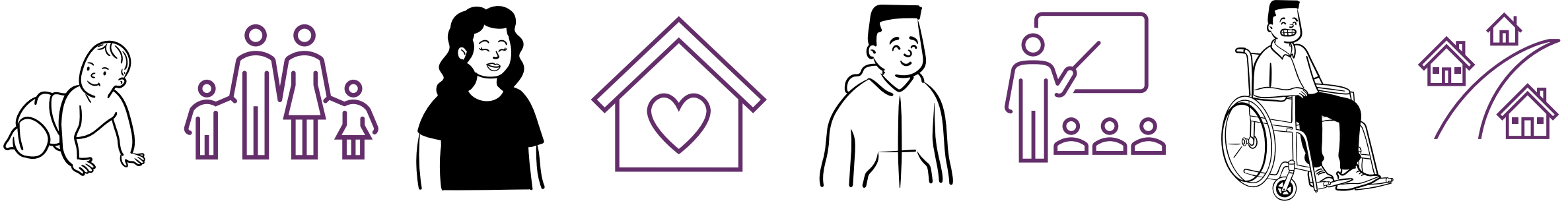


A 17-year-old young person (YP) presented as homeless, not in education, training or employment and using substances. The Adolescent support team worked with the YP, they completed rehabilitation work with YP and his mother, he is now back living at home, received support from HYPE for substance misuse, he was supported by connexions with employment and is now working.

Early Help vision

Vision: In Hounslow, we see **every baby, child and young person** being **safe, healthy**, actively engaged in **learning** and **thriving** within a **supportive community**.

Mission: We are committed to fostering **resilience**, **supporting** families, and creating **positive** and **accessible** experiences for **all babies, children and young people**



Early Help Framework

In Hounslow Early Help is delivered through a strength-based approach with six fundamentals

[Early Help Framework \(click me\)](#)



Relationship first



Whole family working



Team around the family



Lead professional



Family voice & One family plan



Empowering resilience

Our 3 principles



Our Early Help offer is based on and responsive to local need



Families remain the driver of their progress wherever possible



Multi-agency practitioners work in a co-ordinated way for the whole family

Our 3 priorities

H.A.S

1. **Healthy lives** 
2. **Aspiration to achieve** 
3. **Safety** 

Outcomes

H – Babies, children and young people have good physical, emotional health and lead healthy lifestyles

A – Children and young people are supported to achieve with access to education, employment and training opportunities

S – Babies, children and young people are safe at home and in the community



Priority 1- Healthy lives

Babies, Children and young people have good physical, emotional health, and lead healthy lifestyles.

This will encompass:



Providing targeted services at The Family Hub with an emphasis on learning readiness, speech and language, parent and infant relationships, home learning and infant feeding to support babies and the youngest children (0-5) to receive the best start possible



Strengthening parental relationships through the delivery of reducing parental conflict interventions for parents who are living together or apart



Delivering a rapid response to Domestic Abuse (DA) through a multi-agency approach



Promoting healthy lifestyles including healthy diets and physical activities to prevent and reduce childhood obesity and improve oral health



Commissioning services for Children's Emotional and mental wellbeing to combat CAMHS waiting lists as part of the waiting well offer



Promoting the benefit of regular health checks to young people with SEND

Priority 2 - Aspiration to achieve

Children and Young people are supported to achieve with access to education, employment and training opportunities.

This will encompass:



Emphasising the impact of good school attendance on health, well-being, development, and progress



Improving learning readiness



Working together with schools to strengthen the team around the family



Embedding the Education lead at The Children's Social Care Front Door for increased partnership working with schools



Establishing clear pathways to engage with young people not in Education, Employment and Training



Supporting Children and young people with SEND to thrive where possible in their local mainstream school



Babies, Children and Young people are safe at home and in the community.

This will encompass:



Building resilience within the immediate and extended family to enable babies, children and young people to be safe at home and remain with their families where possible



Continued focus on engaging young people at risk of extra-familiar harm such as serious youth violence, reported missing/missing from education, substance misuse, exploitation and anti-social behaviour



Working in partnership with the Voluntary and community sector to engage young people in positive activities



Deploying our Safer Community's strategy that brings together agencies who work together to reduce serious youth violence, serious crime and exploitation and provide support to keep young people safe



Working in partnership to address inequalities that lead to racial disproportionality



To support children and young people to be safe online



Understanding the additional vulnerabilities and risks posed to Children and Young people with SEND



To support children and young people affected by abusive relationships

Measures

Indices to measure performance against priorities

Early Help (overall)

- Reduction of contacts to Children's Social Care Front Door
- Reduction in repeat-referrals
- Reduction in Child Protection plans and Children in care
- Number of Early Help audits carried out where the outcome is 'Good'
- Number/ % of families who are satisfied with the support they receive



Measures - Priority 1

Indices to measure performance against priorities

Healthy Lives: *Babies, children and young people have good physical, emotional health and lead healthy lifestyles.*

- Public health population level data including immunisations, obesity, oral health, school nursing school health questionnaires and National child measurement programme findings
- Figures of uptake of children and young people accessing MH services outside of CAMHS, for example Kooth, HYC, Mental health school support teams
- Number of workforce accessing Reducing Parental Conflict training
- Increase uptake of numbers for Domestic Abuse programmes such as Men and Masculinity, Drive, Let's Talk
- The number of families who have entered the MESCH/FNP pathway and those who have completed their MESCH/FNP care package
- Breast feeding rate at 6-8 weeks
- % of eligible families accessing the Healthy Start Scheme
- Number/% of Learning Disability health checks that have been completed



Measures - Priority 2

Indices to measure performance against priorities

Aspiration to achieve: *Children and Young people are supported to achieve with access to education, employment and training opportunities.*

- % of above average attendance across all key phases
- Increase in % of Children and young people engaged in Education, Employment and Training
- Number of 2- and 3-year-olds accessing free early education provision
- % of good attainment for KS2, 4 and 5
- Increase in employment data for 18-25 years
- Increase in the proportion (%) of children and young people with SEND in a mainstream school, in line with other local authority and national benchmarking data



Measures - Priority 3

Indices to measure performance against priorities

Safety : *Babies, Children and Young people are safe at home and in the community*

- Reduction in numbers of children subject to CP plans and Children in care
- Reduction in First Time entry into Youth Justice System
- Reduction in number of children reported missing or missing education
- Number of partners receiving/delivering online safety awareness
- Number of children and young people being supported for exploitation and Serious youth violence
- Number of children accessing domestic abuse support
- Reduction of disproportionate number of BAME children in the YJC and CSC system
- Number of youth services commissioned that are in line with the council's locality model, reflecting the needs of local neighbourhoods



Governance and accountability

This strategy has been co-designed by the Hounslow Early Help Partnership (EHP) and will be in place for a period of two years, with the EHP’s oversight. The EHP report to the Children’s Delivery Group. There will be an annual review to measure progress against the measurements.



Early Help Partnership Membership
Children’s Social Care
Family Hubs
Children Centres
Homestart
Health Visiting and School Nursing
Public Health
Schools
Police
Domestic Abuse Service
Children’s Commissioning
School Attendance Service
Reach Foundation
Housing
CAMHS
Digital and IT
SEND
Community Solutions
Young Carers
Supporting Families
Parent/ Carer champions