

6 April 2018

Dear Colleague,

Re: ECC Children & Families Hub

Request for Support Portal and Website Launches Monday 16 April 2018

I wrote in February 2018 to let you know that the way in which written Requests for Support are made to the Children & Families Hub is changing.

From **16 April 2018** a new website, Essex Effective Support, <https://www.essexeffectivesupport.org.uk/> will provide access to an online Request for Support portal. The website will also bring together in one place the Essex Directory of Services, guidance and tools to support practitioners in their work with children and families across Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the Windscreen of Need.

The online Request for Support portal will replace the Children and Families Hub current foh@essex.gcsx.gov.uk email route for submitting all non-urgent Requests for Support and written confirmation of urgent safeguarding matters which have been phoned through to the Hub via the Priority Line. The foh@essex.gcsx.gov.uk email route will close at 5pm on Friday 13 April 2018.

Thank you for participating in the test and comment opportunities and for attending the presentations delivered across the county. The feedback and views from our partners have helped to improve Phase One of the website and Request for Support form. After the 'Go Live' date our technical colleagues will continue to make improvements to iron out some of the issues you've told us about. We will also incorporate some of the feedback into the future development of Phase Two.

Please find attached a **"You Said, We Did"** briefing detailing the key issues partners raised, how we've taken those forward and some operational information about the Request for Support portal which I hope you find useful.

These changes are necessary to ensure that the Children & Families Service remain in a position to fulfil our safeguarding and welfare support functions as technology systems change and develop.

Please note, the arrangements for contacting the Emergency Duty Service for immediate safeguarding concerns and urgent out of hours support remain the same. In these circumstances, phone contact should be made with the **Emergency Duty Service on**

0345 606 1212 (Mon – Thurs 5.00pm – 8.45am, Fri 4.30pm – Mon 8.45am Inc Bank Holidays).

During standard office hours on Monday to Friday, the **Children and Families Hub** continue to provide a **Priority Line** for phoning about immediate safeguarding concerns and a **Consultation Line** for practitioners to seek social worker advice and guidance about early help and safeguarding issues. Please call **0345 603 7627** and ask for the Line you require.

I understand that changes in processes and technology can pose challenges for some practitioners. Until 18 May 2018, if practitioners experience any technical problems accessing the website or portal they can email

TechnicalHelpEffectiveSupportPortal@essex.gov.uk for advice and guidance.

I trust that you will join me in supporting the transition to this new approach.

Yours sincerely,



Helen Lincoln

Executive Director Children and Families (DCS)

Essex County Council

Telephone: 033301 33118

Email: Helen.Lincoln@essex.gov.uk

Website: www.essex.gov.uk