**Essex Childrens Partnership – Agencies and Practitioners**

**Launch of Children & Families Hub Effective Support website and Request for Support Portal**

The way Requests for Support are made to the Children & Families Hub is changing. Some practitioners call Requests for Support ‘the FORS form’ or a ‘PP57’.

Later this year, all non-urgent Requests for Support and written follow-ups of Priority phone calls to the Children & Families Hub can be made by completing and submitting an online form accessed through the Essex Effective Support website.

The Essex Effective Support website will also bring together into one place the Directory of Service and guidance, tools and templates to support children and families across Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the Effective Support Windscreen.

These changes will happen in two phases. Phase One will introduce the Essex Effective Support website and a basic online form for submission of Requests for Support. Our aspirations are that Phase Two will build on these functions enabling practitioners to access their submissions and outcomes.

The reasons we are making these changes are:

1. Many of our partners do not have secure email systems. Completing and submitting the online Request for Support form is a secure way of sending confidential information to the Children & Families Hub.
2. Requests for Support can be completed and submitted on mobile working devices whilst practitioners are with families or working away from their office base.
3. The Effective Support website pulls together all the guidance, resources and tools into one place so that you can quickly find what you need to support children and their families across Levels 1, 2 3 and 4.
4. The Children & Families Hub’s email account foh@essex.gcsx.gov.uk will stop working soon because the technology it uses is no longer supported.

The other arrangements for Phone Consultations, the Priority phone line and making Requests for Information to the Children & Families Hub are staying the same.

Access to the Consultation and Priority phone lines is through calling Contact Essex on 0345 603 7627 and asking for either the ‘Consultation Line’ or ‘Priority Line’.

Enquiries and Requests for Information about children, previous social care involvement or the outcome of Requests for Support remains through [www.essex.gov.uk/FamilyOpsEnquiries](http://www.essex.gov.uk/FamilyOpsEnquiries) and a link to this will be available on the new Effective Support website.

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 7627 (Mon – Thurs 5.00pm – 8.45am, Fri 4.30pm – Mon 8.45am Inc Bank Holidays)**.

To support agencies and practitioners with these changes, Children & Families managers and Leads for Partnership Delivery will be delivering presentations at a range of partnership forums and workshops across Essex.

Practitioners and partner agencies will also be invited to take part in testing and commenting on the website and Request for Support portal. This is so that we can iron out things that don’t work before the launch. The flow chart below sets out what will happen and when.

After the testing and feedback has been completed we will write to all our partners to confirm the date for Phase One of the website and online Request for Support form launch.

The Effective Support website and Request for Support portal have minimum operating system requirements. These are:

For internet browsers:
 Internet Explorer - 8 +
 Chrome – v40+
 Safari – v9+
 Firefox – v38+

And for Mobile Devices:
 Apple - iOS 8+
 Android - Lollipop onwards

If you have any technical or system compatibility queries you can email our IT Project Team at TechnicalHelpEffectiveSupportPortal@essex.gov.uk for advice and clarification.

If you have any queries or require clarification about the forthcoming changes you can contact the following Leads for Partnership Delivery in your area:

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