

About Family Action

Family Action has been a leading provider of services to disadvantaged and socially isolated families for 140 years. We work with over 45,000 families every year providing practical, emotional and financial support through over 100 services based in communities across England. We build on families' strengths, supporting them to fulfil their potential and make a positive contribution to their community. We use this experience to campaign for a society free from disadvantage and social isolation.

Family Action Central Office

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family
action

School-based
Services

supporting families since 1869

School-based Services

Today in the UK, nearly five million children are living in unsafe, unstable homes because their parents or carers have complex health or social problems.

Not all children benefit from a stable and positive family life – though this is vital to a child's ability to learn and achieve. That's why Family Action provides family and student support services to over 130 schools across England.

Family Action's school-based services contribute significantly to supporting schools to meet their Extended School, Every Child Matters and Healthy School requirements and responsibilities. We also support the SEAL and PSHE curriculum. The core extended schools offer comprises:

- a varied range of activities including study support, sport and music clubs, combined with childcare in primary schools
- parenting and family support
- swift and easy access to targeted and specialist services
- community access to facilities including adult and family learning, ICT and sports grounds. (Every Child Matters – Change for Children)

Who Do We Work With?

- Children and families affected by parental mental health problems, substance misuse or domestic abuse.
- Families who have a poor relationship with school, which is affecting a child's ability to learn.
- Children experiencing bereavement and loss.
- Children whose responsibilities at home (caring for a relative, for example) are affecting their ability to learn.
- Children with low self esteem or who appear isolated in school.
- Children being bullied at school.

What Do We Do?

Family Action's work in schools is delivered across four key areas, providing early intervention strategies, which are intended to prevent problems from escalating and requiring statutory services' involvement.

Supporting parents: helping parents and carers to address their emotional, financial and health needs and enabling parents and carers to understand their children's behaviour and needs in relation to child development and to find strategies to deal with difficult behaviour. This can include running recognised parenting programmes, which schools do not have the time, training or staff to deliver.

One-to-one work: supporting children individually in schools and at home on a range of issues including key transition stages, bereavement and loss, self-esteem, social skills and managing difficult feelings.

Family Action has developed "Ourspace", a self-referral service for school students experiencing a wide range of home and school related problems.

Family Action's services are valued for a number of reasons:

They are professional: Family Action staff are trained, experienced and supported well by experienced managers. We are particularly able to engage and work with families with complex needs and are able to support other school staff when appropriate.

They are accessible and visible: services are rooted in the community as a whole and in schools.

They are flexible and responsive: available during lunchtimes, after school and in the holidays, providing individual support as well as group activities and outings.



Outcomes

Family Action's school-based services contribute significantly to positive outcomes: problems are identified at an early stage, children's emotional health and wellbeing is improved and parents and carers are empowered to feel confident in their parenting. All this contributes to children and young people succeeding at school, fulfilling their potential and leading happy, fulfilled lives free from poverty and isolation.

Evaluation

We work to the five Every Child Matters outcomes and are committed to proving the effectiveness of our interventions. Many of our services use clinically based assessment and evaluation tools, developed through our Building Bridges services, which has been independently evaluated.

What our partners say

"Family Action has provided an important link between the school and home, which has benefited everyone concerned. They have helped parents develop their parenting skills and behaviour management strategies, helped them to attend school and medical meetings and set up routines and parameters within the home. For some parents, Family Action has been a tower of strength and

expertise during desperate times. Children have been helped to develop their self-esteem, confidence and a better understanding of socially acceptable behaviour. Family Action have also been involved with the transition to secondary school and this link proved to be invaluable."

Primary School Headteacher.

"At school we have seen improvements in children's self-esteem and behaviour and value highly their [Family Action's] work in contributing to multi-agency support for our most needy children."

Primary School Headteacher.

"Family Action has helped parents, pupils and schools at a time when it felt like there was nowhere else to turn. Family Action workers acted as an intermediary between agencies and the coordinated support really focussed on the needs of the child and parents. A quality addition to any schools provision map."

Primary School, SENCO.

For more details about Family Action's School-based Services please contact:

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Visit our website at www.family-action.org.uk/schools