

SOCIAL WORK SERVICE

Faith in Families is a voluntary organisation that provides School Social Work Service which is based in the John Paul Centre at All Saints R C School, Mansfield.

The aim of the service is to prevent situations developing to a stage that would necessitate involvement of statutory services. The Social Worker will seek to help the school identify problems at an early stage and provide help and support for young people and their families. When crises do arise and the Local Authority becomes involved, the School Social Worker can link with the local statutory and voluntary services to seek the most appropriate help and support for the young people and their families. The Social Worker offers a flexible service and the school can draw from the service in different ways. The service will be reviewed annually.

The aims of the service

Faith in Families is committed to

directing services and resources to those most in need, primarily children and their families, and has a great deal of experience working in partnership with other faith based organisations. We are committed to standing by the school, its staff and pupils. We extend this commitment to families and carers. We back up our commitment to the school with a written service level agreement that guarantees delivery of our service throughout the life of the contract.

We endeavour to understand the needs of the school and deliver a support package that meets these needs, regularly reviewing with the school the service and demonstrating outcomes that add value.

The overall aims of the service are to:

- Remove barriers to learning and participation
- Ensure early intervention to identify problems and solutions as quickly as possible
- Develop the full potential of individuals within the values and ethos of the school
- Nurture the emotional and spiritual development of individual children and young people within the school and home community



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- Address critical personal, familial and social issues
- Develop and share support through extended school collaboration

The Faith in Families School Social Work Service contributes to the national Every Child Matters agenda that aims to ensure every child has the chance to fulfil their potential by reducing levels of education failure, ill health, substance misuse, teenage pregnancy, abuse and neglect, crime and anti-social behaviour. Key areas to improve children and young people's lives are based on the Children Act 2004 set out in Every Child Matters:

- **Being healthy** - enjoying good physical and mental health and living a healthy lifestyle
- **Staying safe** - being protected from harm and neglect
- **Enjoying and achieving** - getting the most out of life and developing the skills for adulthood
- **Making a positive contribution** - being involved in the community and society and not engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour
- **Economic well-being** - not being prevented by economic disadvantage from achieving their full potential in life.

The following social work service is available:

Direct work with young people

Counselling and group work provides an opportunity for the young person to talk around their concerns and begin to work towards changes that will improve their situation.

- **Individual work** - short term work focusing on a specific problem with an identified aim around a skill or strategy to cope more effectively. Long term work around a range of difficulties which may impact on behaviour and performance at school. This may involve work with families and/or other Agencies
- **Group work** focusing on aspects of behaviour e.g. bullying, peer relationships, anger management, raising self-esteem and confidence etc.

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- **Stress management**
- **Bereavement work** - providing a service to the whole school community
- **Drop-in** service for students

Service to teachers and the wider school

Providing a 'sounding board' and forum for discussion through regular or 'ad hoc' meetings and/or individual discussions as arranged with the school. Augmenting and complementing the skills of teachers.

- Working to identify relevant issues
- Supporting and working alongside teachers
- Sharing knowledge/experience and access to the most suitable help available
- Considering the possible referral of a young person to the service
- Supporting teachers in their referral of child protection issues to the Local Authority
- Highlighting issues of concern about situations that arise around the school's response e.g. behaviour, difficulties in relationships, discipline, emotional issues
- Discussing social issues and values that affect the school community

Working with parents

Supporting parents through various difficulties and helping them to grow with their children.

- Working with the whole family, with parents on their own, with parents and the young person together, seeing the young person on their own, linking parents, as appropriate
- Liaising / mediating with parents, the school and other Agencies
- Parenting skills training and support
- Providing practical help and advice

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Liaison with Local Authority Children's Services, Education Welfare Officers, Health Services and other Voluntary Organisations

To ensure that, where necessary, appropriate information is shared in order that the young person receives the best help and support that is available.

- Contributing to case discussions / case conferences for children 'at risk'
- Exploring the appropriateness / availability of a particular service
- Attending meetings, having telephone contact etc., with individual workers in other services in relation to the work being undertaken with a young person
- Working in co-operation with the Education Welfare Officer
- Updating knowledge of developments of other services in the area
- Training can be provided to develop understanding of particular issues

Liaison with Priests

To involve the community of the church in the service to schools and the work of Faith in Families.

- Contact with priests as requested to keep them informed of the service and work of Faith in Families
- Discuss possible referrals
- Seek support and resources through parish organisations

Confidentiality

The principle of confidentiality applies unless there is a risk of harm to the young person or others.

- The School Social Worker works in co-operation with parents. The school will normally seek parental permission before a young person is seen and with the young person's permission, feedback can be given to parents. Some young people do not want their parents to be aware of the issues discussed and this would be respected
- Where a young person requests to see the Social Worker without the knowledge of the parent(s), they are advised to discuss this with an appropriate staff member who would then liaise with the Social Worker to

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- decide the most appropriate way forward
- Many young people do not want the Social Worker to talk to the teacher about their difficulties. Others ask for matters to remain confidential to the Social Worker. In that situation, a staff member will be made aware that the Social Worker is seeing the young person and the content of the sessions will remain confidential

Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance will be monitored through the implementation of a variety of measures

- Policy and procedures
- Individual supervision and group discussion
- Regular reports on activity
- Annual staff appraisals
- Training
- Comments, compliments and complaints procedure

Other services offered by Faith in Families:

Adoption Service

Adoption Support Service

Children's Bereavement Service - in partnership with Family Care and MacMillan Care

Children's Therapeutic Groups

School Social Work Service

Training & Consultancy

For more information about the School Social Work Service, please contact Gail Jackson, Manager of the School Social Work Service at:

**Faith in Families, 7 Colwick Road,
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for more information on the work of Faith in Families
and details on how to support our work

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**All Saints
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