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# Early years portage service

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Blackpool Portage Service is part of the Early Years Quality and Inclusion team and sits within the SEND service.

Portage is an educational service for pre-school children with significant additional needs or disability together with their families.

The aim of portage is to work with parents and carers to support the development of young children's play, communication, relationships and full participation in day to day life within the family, beyond the home, and their inclusion in the wider community.

Support offered through portage is based on the principle that parents and carers are the prime educators in the care and development of their children. Portage aims to help parents and carers to be confident in this role whatever their child's needs may be.

Families are invited to a group, or visited weekly, or fortnightly, at home by their trained portage home visitor who works with individual families to plan targets and deliver appropriate activities to promote the child's development. The activities are based on play, grounded in everyday situations to provide fun and success for the child and include things that can be continued by family members in between groups/home visits.

The emphasis is on the positive, finding out and building on what a child can do. Targets may focus on developing movement, learning, play, communication and participation in the activities of everyday living.

They also work in partnership with other professionals, including speech and language therapists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, educational psychologists, health visitors and paediatricians.

Access to the service is via referral, usually by a health professional. This could be from a health visitor, consultant paediatrician, specialist nurse, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, or speech and language therapist.

For more information email: [send@blackpool.gov.uk](mailto:send@blackpool.gov.uk)

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