

13. Social Care

13.1. Social Care

Introduction -How we practice in Children's Services.

Read our [Practice Statement](#) for Lancashire County Council's practice approach in Children's Services, March 2019. *Children, young people and their families are safe, healthy and achieve their full potential.*

Lancashire children, young people and families' partnership vision

Five outcomes

- Vulnerable children and young people are safe from harm and build resilience.
- Children and young people achieve their full potential in education, learning and future employment.
- Children and young people enjoy healthy lifestyles and know how to help others.
- Children, young people and families have a voice in shaping the support they receive.
- Children and young people live in Lancashire where they can enjoy a good quality of life, be happy and want to stay.

Five partnership priorities

- Improve the environment in which children and young people live, learn and work.

- Support children, young people and their parents to make healthy lifestyle choices and to build strong families, friendships and healthy relationships.
- Provide children and young people with a good quality education and learning opportunity which matches their talents, ambitions and aims and enables a positive transition to adulthood.
- Prevent the need for children to become looked after, and with compassion, step in when necessary to keep children and young people safe from harm.
- Support children and young people to influence decision making and bring about positive change for themselves and others.

Five partnership ways of working

- We will focus on the children, young people and families who need our support.
- We will focus on strategic priorities which raise aspirations and enable people to work locally to build on the strengths of people and their communities.
- We will build on what works well.
- We will collaborate and share information.
- We will provide critical challenge to improve practice and outcomes.

Five partnership measures of impact against our greatest challenges

- Improve the healthy life expectancy for children and young people.
- Increase the number of children who achieve a good level of development at the end of the reception year.



- Increase the number of 16-17 year olds in education, employment or training.
- Show clear evidence of improved outcomes as a result of family participation.

13.2. Inclusion Service

Children with Disabilities Teams

The aim of the Children with Disabilities Teams is to work in partnership with disabled children and young people, their families and carers to enable them to have the best opportunities in life.

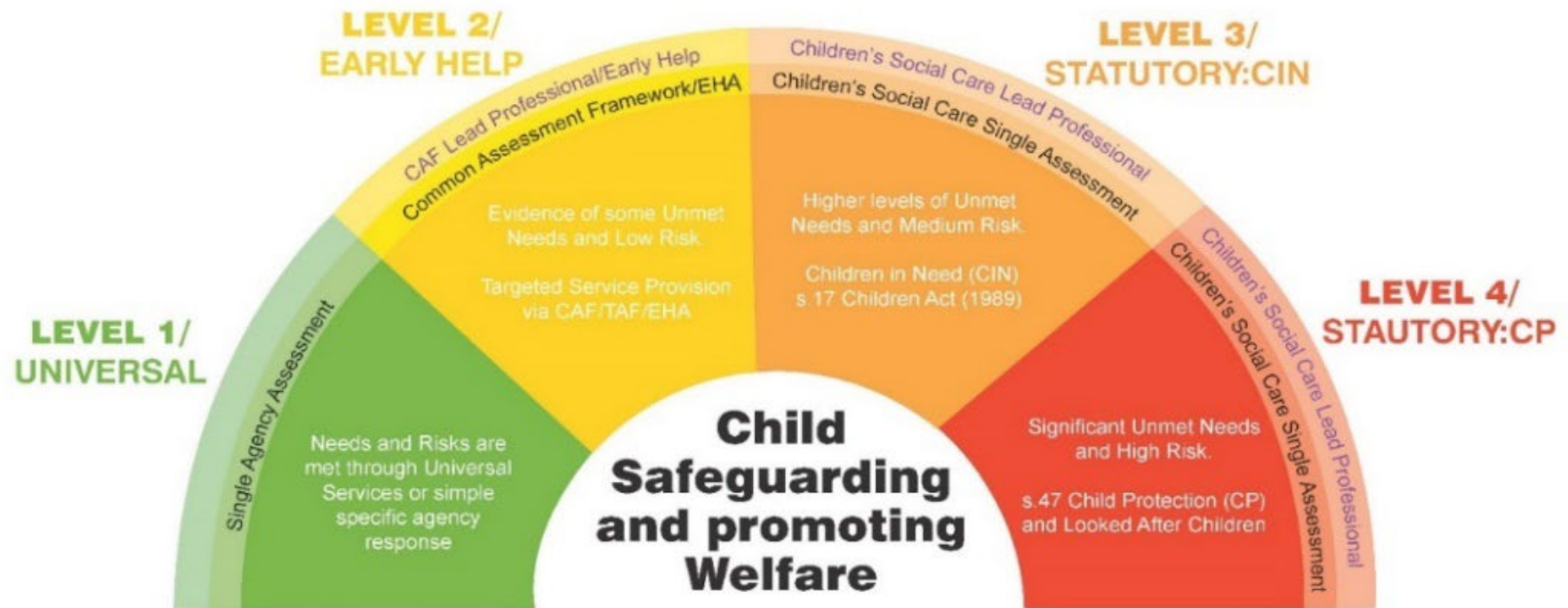
About our teams

The Children with Disabilities Teams are specialist social work teams responsible for the assessment, provision of information and packages of support to meet the assessed need of disabled children and young people up to the age of 18 or in a small number of circumstances up to the age of 25.

This service is over and above that provided as part of universal or targeted services. The majority of families do not need a social worker and their needs are met by receiving support through universal or targeted services such as Lancashire Break Time and the Child and Family Wellbeing Service.



Pan - Lancashire Continuum of Need



Information Sharing

Go straight to Level 4 as soon as risk of significant harm is suspected

If in doubt, consult with agency safeguarding leads, or the Duty Social Worker in your area:
Lancashire 0300 123 6720; Blackpool 01253 477299; Blackburn with Darwen 01254 666400



July 2017



13.3. Lancashire Break Time

Lancashire Break Time provides short breaks to give the primary carer of a child a break from their caring role whilst the child or young person attends a fun group activity. The break is for a period of at least two hours.

The criteria to qualify for Lancashire Break Time short breaks is to be the unpaid primary carer of a child or young person with special educational needs and/or disabilities, aged 4 to 18 years and living in Lancashire (excluding Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool). The child or young person will find it difficult to access universal services due to sensory issues, learning difficulties, physical mobility problems, etc. They will **not** be in receipt of an assessed social care outreach package; those with a higher level of need will receive services through their package of care.

Lancashire Break Time activities take place across Lancashire during term time and school holidays and will continue in their current form until the review of how short breaks are to be delivered is completed. There is a minimum charge of £1 per hour for the activities.

If you think a child or young person meets the criteria and would benefit from a short break please see further information at:

www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/special-educational-needs-and-disabilities/things-to-do/lancashire-break-time

Alternatively, you could also encourage parents to sign up to the Lancashire FIND Newsletter. The [FIND newsletter](#) is a free and useful resource for professionals and parent/carers of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. The newsletter is

published every 3 months providing information and advice, signposting, services and support; local and national regarding a range of SEND needs and issues. Parent/carers can register to receive this newsletter by registering on the FIND database through [Lancashire's Local Offer](#).

For professionals supporting families with children and young people who have SEND, this newsletter can be a useful reference for them and to share with parent/carers.

13.4. The Child and Family Wellbeing Service

The Children and Family Wellbeing Service (CFW) offers early help and support to children, young people age 0-19+yrs (0 -25yrs for SEND) and their families across Lancashire. The service responds as early as possible when a child, young person or family needs support, helping them to access services to meet their needs and working with them to ensure the support offered is right for them, is offered in the right place, and at the right time.

The main focus of the service is to provide an enhanced level of support which is prioritised towards those groups or individuals who have more complex or intensive needs or who are at risk and particularly where we think that providing early help will make a positive difference. Children and Family Wellbeing staff are skilled, committed and recognise that every family has different needs. The service approach is to listen, understand and work alongside individuals and families to make the changes that will help them get to where they need to be.



If you think a child or young person and their family would benefit from the involvement of the Child and Family Wellbeing Service then please see referral information for professionals at the following link:

<http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/practitioners/supporting-children-and-families/children-and-family-wellbeing-service/>

Level 3 Pan-Lancashire Continuum of Need – Statutory Intervention

13.5. Children with Disabilities Team

At times, these universal and targeted provisions may not be sufficient to meet a child or young person’s complex needs and additional support may be required from a social worker. In these circumstances the aim of the Children with Disabilities Teams is to work in partnership with children, young people, their parents and carers and other professionals to provide support when it is needed. Children with Disabilities teams work in partnership with Education, Health, other Social Work teams and Short Break providers to ensure good outcomes for children and young people are delivered.

Please note that in order to maximize the inclusion of children, and to avoid labelling and any unnecessary dependence upon specialist services, there is a threshold criteria for support from the Children with Disabilities Teams. They will **only** work with work with children with severe and profound disabilities.

Children with Disability Criteria:

- **MILD** – an older child, some limitation present but able to function independently. A younger child functioning slightly behind the level of expected for age.
- **MODERATE** – an older child where aids and/or assistance may be required to perform tasks. A younger child functioning around 2/3 the level of expected for age
- **SEVERE** – an older child who is unable to perform tasks without aids and assistance most of the time. A young child is functioning ½ the level of age expectation
- **PROFOUND** - Older child completely dependent upon carer to perform tasks

If a child falls within the Mild or Moderate categories then you are still entitled to request an assessment of the child's needs or a parents needs as a carer, however, these assessments will be carried out by practitioners within mainstream Children's Social Care teams and not by the Children with Disabilities Teams. Where mainstream social workers hold cases of children who might be considered to be disabled, appropriate advice and support can be made available from the specialist Children with Disabilities Teams.

Where there are disabilities which fall into the Severe and Profound categories which particularly call for specialist intervention, these cases should be referred to the Inclusion Service Children with Disabilities Social Work Team.



How to access support from the service?

In terms of requesting an assessment of need families can self-refer, or ask someone, such as, school or health visitor or even family member, to get in touch on their behalf. In other cases if you are a professional who is concerned about a child or children from a safeguarding point of view then you should contact us to make a referral.

You can make a referral or contact us for a discussion and information on: 0300 123 6720 or out of hours 0300 123 6722.

You can also access the following information:

<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/>

Once a referral has been received what can you expect to happen?

All children have a right to develop in a healthy and safe way. Parents and families want to do their best for their children, but sometimes they need some extra help or support. We know that with a little help most families can resolve their own problems, and our aim is to help them to do that.

When a child is first referred to us, we will work with the family to see what help and support the family might need, and who could best provide them with this support. Sometimes when a family is referred to us, an assessment is not undertaken because other services are more able to meet their needs, for example, Lancashire Break Time or the Child and Family Wellbeing Service, as outlined above.

As we have a team that looks at all the referrals that come to us, initial enquiries will be undertaken in order to see where the child and young

person's needs fall in relation to our threshold criteria. This may require you or other professionals involved with the child and young person providing information in order to enable us to ensure that they are supported by the correct team to meet the child and family's needs.

Assessment process

If it is felt that the child or young person does require an assessment from the Children with Disabilities Social Work Team then we will progress their case to this stage. The assessment process is carried out by a social worker. When completing an assessment the social worker will look at a number of issues that may be affecting the child (or children) and family. The worker will find out about the strengths and difficulties in the family by asking questions about:

- The nature of the child's disability and how it impacts on both their life and their family or carer.
- How the child is doing in terms of education, health and learning about how they are getting on with other people.
- What issues, if any, are affecting the child or children.
- What support the parent is able to give the child or children.
- What other things may be helping the parent with bringing up their child, or may be making their life more difficult.
- The care of the child - including how well parent(s) or carer(s) are offering basic care, keeping the child safe, helping them learn, offering guidance and a stable home.
- The child's wishes and feelings.
- Depending on the age of the child, any needs to prepare for adulthood or the transition to Adult Services



Although we recognise that some families find the assessment process difficult, we also know that many families do find that life starts to improve as a result of the assessment and the support it brings.

As part of the assessment process the social worker will:

- Meet with the child or children alone if this is possible, this is often dependent upon their additional needs.
- Meet with the parent and members of their family, maybe a number of times.
- Talk to other people who work with the family, such as the child’s teacher or family doctor. In most cases, we will ask for consent to do this. If we are concerned about a child’s safety this is not required, but we will still explain if this is the case.
- Write down all the information we gather, and use it to help work out what strengths and difficulties the family has.

Putting Children First:

An assessment can take up to 45 working days depending on how complex the situation is. We will always try, where possible, to ensure that an assessment is completed before this timescale however sometimes due to the significant amount of information that has to be gathered from other professionals and family members it is not always possible to complete the assessment prior to the 45 working days.

After the assessment

After the assessment one of two things might happen:

We may decide that there is no need for our support services to meet and in these circumstances we would discuss the most appropriate way of ceasing our involvement with the family. It could at this stage be that we have identified that they would benefit more from our targeted services and we would ask their permission to make referrals on their behalf to those services before then closing the case.

Or it could be that we feel that child and family's needs could be met by the support of school or health professionals involved and we would step down responsibility for supporting child to an Early Help Assessment /TAF process as outlined in Level 2 of the Continuum of Need.

If we identify that there are unmet needs which require the local authority support then a continuing plan called a **Child In Need (CIN) Plan** is drawn up. This takes place under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989. The Child in Need Plan is a written plan including the needs of the child and a coordinated response from services to meet their needs. This plan is shared with parent(s), carer(s) and young people and you are asked to contribute to drawing up of that plan and to engage with the actions in order to achieve the agreed outcomes within that plan.

It is recognised that the needs of a disabled child and their family change from time to time. There will be times when more support is needed, or less, so it is important that the services change according to assessed need. Therefore services are reviewed through a multi-agency Child in Need (CIN) Review Meeting with the child, parent or carer at least every



6 months to ensure that the level of support is right and the child is making progress. Parent(s), carer(s) and young people can also request a review of their plan. Where possible, in order to ensure there is as little duplication as possible, in the process of supporting the child or young person we will seek to combine at least one of these reviews with the annual Education, Health and Care Plan review should that be applicable.

How can we help?

Upon completion of an assessment, if it is identified that there are unmet needs and the child or young person requires support then services can be provided for children and young people with complex needs, such as:

- Social work support, advice and guidance
- Social work assessment and planning to address a particular need arising from the child or young person’s disability
- Advice and guidance on services available in the community to meet the needs of the child concerned, their parents and carers
- Family Support
- Support within the home or community
- Overnight care provision with family carers, residential units or at home
- Short break services
- Domiciliary Care in the home
- Access to direct payments
- Safeguarding Services
- Looked after Children Services

What are Direct Payments?

Direct payments are a resource given to parent(s), carer(s) or young people by the authority to enable them to buy in support. These payments do not affect benefits and are usually paid onto a pre-payment card or as a one off payment.

Through the Child and Family Assessment the social worker will assess if the child or young person is eligible to access direct payments and if the parent or carer (or young person if over 16 years old) is willing and able to administer direct payments with support. The assessment is presented to a Manager with the appropriate delegation to decide if direct payments are the most appropriate option to support the family and how funds should be allocated.

If agreed an agreement will be drawn up and advice given to the parent or carer setting out the responsibilities and obligations of both them and the local authority. The parent or carer will be supported when employing personal assistants, using agencies or any other services to meet the assessed need.

What services are there for parents and carers?

A carer’s assessment can also be completed for parent(s) and carer(s), with this information also forming part of the overall analysis and recommendations within the Child and Family Assessment to determine their needs.

Under the Children Act 1989, it has always been expected that an assessment of a child ‘in need’ under section 17, including all disabled



children, will be ‘holistic’ – so that it will take account of the needs of other family members.

However parent/carers also have rights to stand-alone assessments and new rights to services under the Children and Families Act 2014. Section 97 of the Children & Families Act 2014 requires local authorities to assess parent carers on the appearance of need or where an assessment is requested by the parent. This is called a “parent carers needs assessment”.

The assessment must have regard to the well-being of the parent carer; and the need to safeguard / promote the welfare of the disabled child and any other child for whom the parent carer has parental responsibility.

Following assessment, the local authority must then decide whether the parent has needs for support; whether the disabled child they care for has needs for support; and if so whether those needs could be met (wholly or partly) by services under s.17 of the Children Act 1989.

13.6. Transitions from Children's to Adults' Services

Children's services must continue to be provided until adult provision has started or a decision is made that the young person's needs do not meet the eligibility criteria for adult care and support following a transition assessment.

The transition from children's to adult services should take place at a time that is appropriate for the individual. This is particularly important where young people's assessed needs do not meet eligibility criteria for adult services. Transition to adult services for those with EHC plans

should begin at an appropriate annual review and in many cases should be a staged process over several months or years.

Where young people aged 18 or over continue to have EHC plans under the Children and Families Act 2014, and they make the move to adult care and support, the care and support aspects of the EHC plan will be provided under the Care Act. The statutory care and support plan must form the basis of the 'care' element of the EHC plan.

Under the Care Act 2014 all young people going through the transition process are entitled to independent advocacy.

The Local Offer must include relevant information and advice on local provision and how to receive an assessment for transition to adult care and support.

Local authorities and their partners must work together to ensure effective and well supported transition arrangements are in place; that assessment, planning and review processes for both Care Plans, Transition Plans and Education, Health and Care Plans are aligned; plans are person-centred; that there is effective integration with health services, and that there is a good range of universal provision for inclusion in the Local Offer. Young people and their families should not be expected to repeatedly provide duplicate information to different services, or to attend numerous reviews, or receive support that is not co-ordinated and joined up.

If you are of the view that a young person would benefit from an Adult Social Care Assessment then the young person or family can self-refer, or ask someone, such as, school or even family member, to get in touch on their behalf. In other cases if you are a professional who is concerned about a young person from a safeguarding point of view then you should contact us to make a referral.



You can make a referral or contact us for a discussion and information on: 0300 123 6720 or out of hours 0300 123 6722.

You can also access the following information:
<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/adult-social-care/>

Transition Assessments for adult care or support **must** consider:

- Current needs for care and support;
- Whether the young person is likely to have needs for care and support after they turn 18; and
- What are their desired outcomes?
- If so, what those needs are likely to be and which are likely to be eligible needs.

Having carried out a transition assessment, the local authority must give an indication of which needs are likely to be regarded as eligible needs so the young person understands the care and support they are likely to receive once children's services cease. Where a young person's needs are not eligible for adult services, local authorities must provide information and advice about how those needs may be met and the provision and support that young people can access in their local area.

The local authority and relevant partners should consider building on a transition assessment to create a person-centred transition plan that sets out the information in the assessment, along with a plan for the transition to adult care and support, including key milestones for achieving the young person or carer's desired outcomes.

Where a transition assessment identifies needs that are likely to be eligible, local authorities should consider providing an Indicative

Personal Budget so that young people have an idea of how much their care and support will cost when they enter the adult system. This is particularly important if young people with Education, Health and Care Plans are already exercising their statutory right to a Personal Budget as any adult with eligible needs will have a care and support plan which must include a Personal Budget. Young people with Education, Health and Care Plans may also consider the transition to adult services a good opportunity to start exercising their right to start receiving their Personal Budget as a direct payment.

For further information and guidance regarding the Continuum of Need:

[Thresholds-Guidance-2016.pdf \(lancshiresafeguarding.org.uk\)](https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/adult-social-care/Thresholds-Guidance-2016.pdf)

