

## **Children with Disabilities Social Work Team Criteria**

The services provided are to support children in need and their families who have **severe** or **substantial** disabilities, specifically:-

- **A severe or profound learning disability**
- **A severe physical disability.**
- **A complex Autistic Spectrum Condition with severe learning difficulty,** (a diagnosis of Autism or Autism Spectrum Condition does not of itself meet the criteria for the service).
- **A complex medical health condition,** (for the youngest children with complex health needs or technological dependence there will usually be involvement from the Continuing Care Co-ordinator).

The service works to the definition of disability defined by the Equality Act 2010 – a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out day to day activities.

The Children with Disabilities Team do not work with children whose primary identified needs are emotional and behavioural difficulties, or children/young people with mental health problems, attention deficit disorder (ADD) or attention hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) .

**Referrals to the Children with Disabilities Team are made through Integrated Front Door via the online referral form.**

### **Children with Moderate Disabilities and Special Educational needs.**

The specialist social work and support services for children with disabilities are prioritised for children with substantial levels of disability only. Children with more moderate disabilities will only be supported through this service where the family's circumstances or the multiple nature of the child's condition present real obstacles to their receiving appropriate services through other children in need services.

Children with moderate conditions, albeit ones which present families with challenging behaviours to manage, should be viewed as children in need of 'mainstream' support available on a preventative basis through Targeted Services. Use of inhouse and commissioned specialist disability services can only be provided for children with **severe** and **substantial** disabilities.

Following the Children's Act 1989 principles of providing for children with disabilities as children first and foremost, services are focused on meeting usual childhood needs in normal ways. This involves using specialist provision only where it is necessary to support continued care within the family and essential developmental opportunities.

Children with special educational needs arising from conditions diagnosed as learning disorders of a mild/moderate nature are unlikely to be viewed as fitting the criteria if their difficulties are related to limited communication/behaviour management needs alone without accompanying severe learning difficulties:-

- Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder are not eligible for specialist short break support unless they present extra ordinary management challenges to their families such as to need quite specialist and structured support.
- Children with Attention Deficit Disorder would not be seen as meeting the overall criteria for specialist Disabled Children's services.

**1 Does the child/ young person have a recognised disability as described above?**

Yes       No

**If yes what is it and who made diagnosis?**

**2 Is the young person in receipt of the care component of DLA at high or middle rate?**

Yes    High        
         Middle   

**3 Does young person have an Education, Health and Care Plan that provides support for 15 plus hours per week?**

Yes                      No

**4. Have universal /targeted services been unable to support the child? If so please explore what the barriers were?**

If No of the  to any

above, the referral should be redirected to appropriate alternative service/ universal/targeted provision.

If Yes to all of the above, the following further screening should also be applied :

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**IMPACT**

What impact does impairment have on young person / family in relation to:

Health /Mobility/ physical ability:

Child needs support with their health/mobility at all times and often will require more than one person to assist them because of their complex physical health needs.

Child is an essential wheelchair user or uses equipment essential to their wellbeing.

Child requires assistance with their health every day. As a result of impaired mobility, posture and balance the child needs frequent support from an adult throughout the day.

Child has a particular health condition that impacts on the child's daily life and requires ongoing specialist advice, support and regular intervention from medical professionals/paediatrician.

Child/young person's physical health/mobility is more or less typical of young person of similar age.

Perception of risk:

Child is unable to self-assess danger as a result of their disability (as opposed to their age or mental health status) and needs adult attention in all situations to keep safe

Child/young person is over 10 and has little/no road awareness or awareness of personal safety due to a learning disability (as opposed to their mental health status)

Child is more or less typical of child/ young person of similar age

Communication/ understanding:

Child finds it difficult to express their needs as a result of their disability and needs intensive support with communication.

Child does not use any form of recognised language like speech, signing or technology and whose communication is interpreted mainly through their behaviour.

As a result of their disability, the child experiences significant difficulty in understanding others and or being understood by non-family members or people very familiar with their needs.

Child's communication is more or less typical of young person of his age.

**Emotional wellbeing (arising from learning disability as opposed to their mental health):**

**A child's distress continually affects their wellbeing due to the impact of their learning needs and their ability to interpret and manage the world around them. As a result of this their behaviour disrupts family life and has the potential to result in harm to themselves or others.**

**Child is over two years old and parents sleep is significantly disrupted every night in order to meet needs arising from their disability**

**Child is frequently distressed due to the impact of their learning needs and their ability to interpret and manage the world around them.**

**Child is over two years old and parents sleep is disrupted regularly in order to meet needs arising from their disability**

**Child's behaviour /sleep pattern is more or less typical of young person of a similar age**

**Independence:**

**Child is over 5 and fully dependent on family members or other adults to meet their personal care needs, including personal care over and above that is expected of a child of a similar way**

**Child is over 10 years old and has no road safety awareness or becomes highly distressed while travelling and therefore cannot travel without being constantly supervised**

**Child is over 5 and needs support /prompts with all / most daily living over and above that is expected of a child of a similar way**

**More or less typical of young person of a similar age**

**Ability to socialise:**

**Child is over 10 and is unable to participate in any social activity without significant adult support beyond that which is expected of a child of a similar age.**

**Child/ young person is at risk of being socially isolated due universal/ targeted services being unable to meet the needs arising from their disability despite reasonable adjustments being made.**

**Child has social experiences that are more or less typical of young person of a similar age**

**Specialist services for disabled children are likely to be needed for those children who are in the 'red' areas of any of these domains and /or 'amber' in two or more**

**areas. However every child's needs are different and this serves as a guide to ensure that children have the right support at the right time.**

**Specialist services from the Children with Disabilities Team can be provided via Targeted Help or through Statutory Help.**

### **Targeted Help / Short Break Assessments**

Where there are no concerns regarding the overall welfare of a disabled child (as determined by above) their short break needs can be considered alongside an Early Help assessment coordinated by a lead professional. The CWDT will offer support to the lead professional in identifying appropriate short breaks through provision of advice/signposting or where appropriate completion of a short break assessment (RAS). In some circumstances a Social Worker from the Children with Disabilities Team will act as lead professional and coordinate an Early Help Assessment for a time-limited period of intervention.

Where short breaks are provided by the Local Authority, the Children with Disabilities Team will review these as per statutory requirements.

### **Statutory Help**

Child and Family assessments will be undertaken by the Children with Disabilities Team for disabled children (as defined above) for:

- Those disabled young people where there are potential risk factors in safeguarding the child's welfare due to the impact of their impairment or the need for 'more than good enough' parenting
- Those disabled young people where there is indication that their outcomes are not being met as a result of additional needs arising from their impairments;
- Those disabled young people where there are significant concerns about the emotional and physical health of the parents and their ongoing capacity to care;
- Those disabled young people whose impairments and family circumstances indicate the potential for a complex package of multi-agency support which needs regular co-ordination and review;
- Those disabled children and their families who choose to have their support provided by a direct payment.
- Those disabled young people who might need to be **Looked After** away from home as part of a support package or are at risk of needing to be Looked After full time due to factors above.