

## **Questions practitioners should ask themselves prior to making the decision to undertake a Common Assessment and examples of situations where a Common Assessment might be appropriate.**

Is this child/young person likely fail in achieving one or more of the 5 outcomes?

1. Am I sure what this child needs or do I need further information to help me decide?
2. Does this child/young person or their parents need extra support that I or my agency is unable to provide?
3. Might this child/young person need input from more than one agency to achieve the 5 outcomes?
4. Does the child, young person or their parents want a common assessment?

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, a common assessment should be considered.

### **Examples of situations where a common assessment might be appropriate include:**

- where a routine ante natal visit or previous history causes concerns for the practitioner;
- where a routine post-natal visit causes the practitioner to be concerned about the living circumstances of a newborn baby;
- where there are concerns that a baby has significant developmental delay or a child is not progressing in learning as expected, this includes children with disabilities;
- where a practitioner believes a child may have additional needs and wants to understand better what they are and what the appropriate response is, for example, where a school or early years setting perceives a child is being affected by elements such as domestic situations or health which are not necessarily related to special educational needs(SEN);
- where a practitioner is considering a referral to another agency (e.g. to local authority Children and Young People's Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health services or a youth service); (note that if the child is at risk of harm an immediate referral should be made to either Children and Young People's Social Care or the Police);
- to provide more holistic information to augment decision-making at School Action or School Action Plus in cases where needs are not such as to require a statutory SEN assessment;
- as the basis for integrated case-working within multi-agency teams or targeted support in universal services, e.g. within extended schools or

children's centres and other early years providers;

- to support lead professionals by enabling them to build up and maintain an overview of needs and strengths; or where it is likely that several agencies are or need to be involved in supporting the child;
- where a child is displaying aggressive behaviour, e.g. carrying a knife, or in relation to bullying, truancy, withdrawal or other behavioural and emotional issues;
- where a child is exhibiting problematic or anti-social behaviour and where the underlying cause may be hidden (e.g. substance abuse/misuse<sup>1</sup>);
- Where a parent is struggling with child behaviour or parenting and requires support from more than one agency.

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<sup>1</sup> Substance abuse/misuse includes alcohol and volatile substances as well as illegal drugs.