

Children Leeds

**Aiming High for Disabled Children
and Young People in Leeds**

Disabled Children's Allocation Panel

Procedures

Approved

August 2009

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Through the Aiming High for Disabled Children programme, the Government is seeking a transformation in short break provision for disabled children and young people. It has set out in guidance its expectations on Local Authorities and Primary Care Trusts in delivering this transformation. The evidence on the importance of short breaks is clear. Many parents and carers are reliant on them for breaks from their caring responsibilities.
- 1.2 Disabled children's needs should be met wherever possible within their communities, the same as their non disabled peers. They should have consistency of care and as few carers as possible involved in their lives.
- 1.3 Some children may need additional support to access universal services and others may need to access targeted or preventative services, for example, specialist play scheme/play and leisure provision, specialist youth provision. Some disabled children and their families will need specialist (health and social care) short break provision including overnight short breaks.
- 1.4 This procedure explains the co-ordinated multi-agency approach that should be taken for allocation of short break provision and shared\ full time care to disabled children and young people and their families. This is to ensure that gate keeping to services is transparent, appropriate, equitable and in keeping with the available resources.
- 1.5 This approach should enable disabled children and young people and their families to receive high quality child and family-centred services based on their clearly identified assessed needs, outcomes to be achieved, promote social inclusion, and, where possible, enable them to live ordinary lives.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 This procedure relates to children and young people who are disabled and / or those with complex health needs where the disability has a significant impact on their lives. This includes children and young people with learning disabilities, autistic spectrum disorders, sensory impairments and physical impairments.

3.0 Statutory and Policy Context

- 3.1 The Government recognises that disabled children and young people are among the most vulnerable groups in society: It is committed to offering better life chances to disabled children and their families.
- 3.2 There has been a raft of legislation and policies reinforcing this commitment. Such policies include, Every Child Matters (2003), The Children's Act (2004), The Children's National Service Framework (NSF) Standard 8, The Children's Plan (2007), and Aiming High for Disabled Children (2007).
- 3.3 In the NSF Standard 8, which relates to disabled children and young people and those with complex health needs: The vision is to ensure that

children and young people who are disabled or who have complex health needs receive co-ordinated, high quality child and family-centred services which are based on assessed needs, which promote social inclusion and, where possible, which enable them and their families to live ordinary lives.

3.4 In May 2007, the government published Aiming High for Disabled Children, which builds on the NSF 8 standards, and sets out how services should be working together to improve outcomes for disabled children, by providing better and timely support to families. Additional funding has been made available to support a range of improvements; this includes better and more short breaks, access to child care for working parents of disabled children, participation through parents groups and forums and improved transition for disabled young people to adult services. Three priority areas are:

- Access and empowerment
- Responsive services and timely support
- Improving quality and capacity

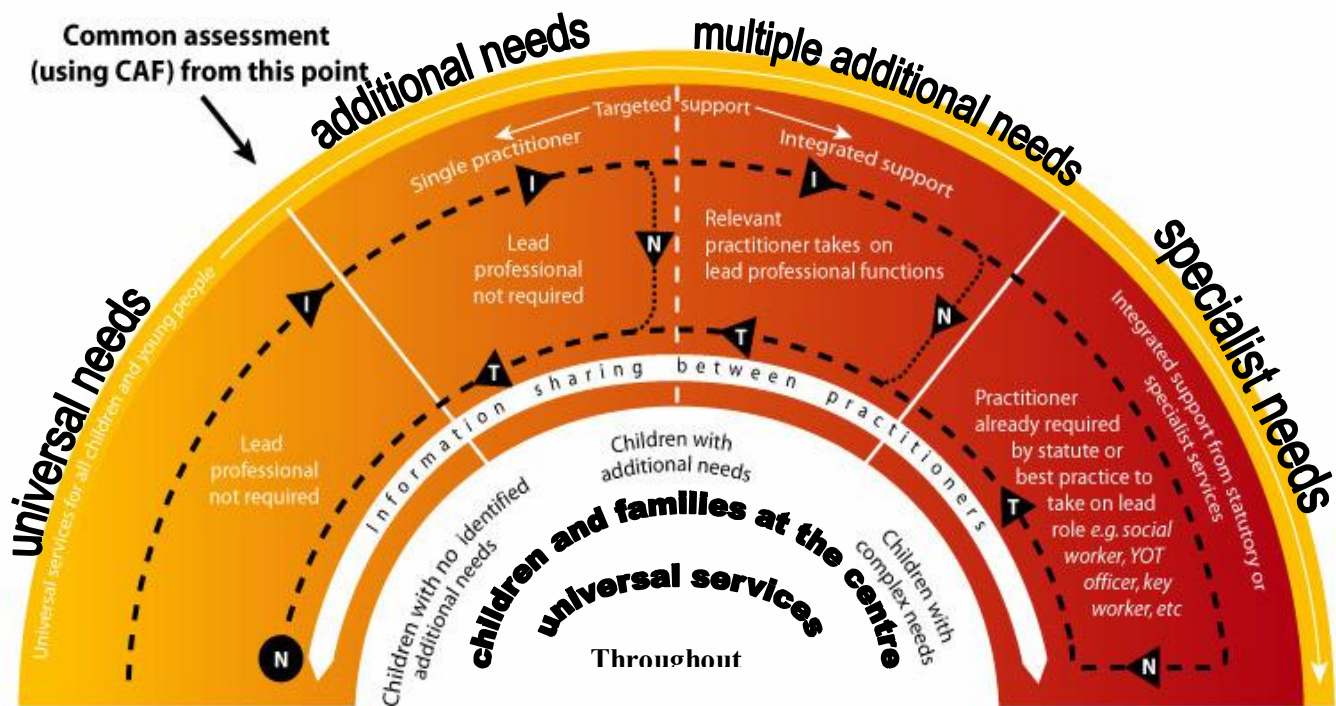
3.5 As part of the Aiming High Programme, the government has introduced the Core Offer. The Core Offer is a national statement of expectations for how disabled children and their families will be informed and involved as their needs are assessed and the necessary services are delivered. The Core Offer covers standards on five elements: information and transparency, assessment, participation and feedback and a national indicator is being developed to assess performance against this.

3.6 Appendix 1 illustrates the judgements that service commissioners need to consider to ensure that short breaks support disabled children and young people to achieve the five Every Child Matters outcomes.

4.0 Levels of need

4.1 Need is defined as “the ability to benefit from a service or that provision of a service would prevent deterioration of the child / young persons / family’s quality of life” This is more clearly described in the ‘Windscreen’ model which supports understanding of a child or young person’s needs, and the services required to meet those needs, whatever their individual circumstances.

4.2 The model demonstrates the capacity for the child or young person’s levels of need to change throughout childhood. Those changes may be as a result of factors relating to the child, the family or the environment. For example, a child /young person may need a communication aid at home but not at school as the equipment they need is provided for them in that context.



5.0 Eligibility

5.1 Eligibility for services to meet the needs of disabled children and young people, such as short breaks, are established by an assessment of need identified through one of the following types of assessment :

- Common Assessment
- Core Assessment.

5.2 The type of assessment should be determined by the level of needs presented in respect of the child and/ or families' situation.

5.3 Assessments should consider:

- the child's developmental needs,
- parenting capacity
- family and environmental factors.
- child and family's wishes, feelings, views and
- the child's best interests

6.0 Short Breaks

- 6.1 Short Break provision forms part of a continuum of services, which support disabled children and their families. Short breaks should meet both the parent/carers assessed need for a break and promote the child's welfare.
- 6.2 Short breaks are provided to give:
 - a) disabled children and young people enjoyable experiences away from their primary carers, thereby contributing to their personal and social development and reducing social isolation;
 - b) parents and families a necessary and valuable break from caring responsibilities.
- 6.3 Short breaks come in a variety of formats and each one can last from just a few hours to a few days, and occasionally longer, depending on the type of provision and the needs of the child and their family.
- 6.4 Short breaks can include; day, evening, overnight and weekend activities and can take place in the child's own home, the home of an approved carer, a residential or community setting.
- 6.5 Leeds City Council and Leeds Primary Care Trust support the provision of short breaks in a variety of ways through a range of service provision. This includes:
 - a) Support to access play and leisure through Leeds Inclusion support Service
 - b) Overnight provision at Children and Young People's Social Care and National Health Service (NHS) resource.
 - c) Home and community based provision provided through the Children Trust, Voluntary, Community and Faith Service, providing weekend community based play schemes for children with substantial and permanent disabilities and contracted/spot purchased agency services
 - d) Direct Payments to employ personal assistants (See Children and Young People's Social Care Direct Payments Procedure)
 - e) Specialist out of city services.
- 6.6 Short break provision should be reliable, to enable carers to plan around the breaks provided. If families receive a level of service in a timely manner which is appropriate to their needs, the need for shared care and full time care due to family breakdown should reduce.
- 6.7 The future development of self directed services will be a further way in which assessed needs for short breaks can be met.

7.0 Allocation of Short Breaks

7.1 Universal Needs/Additional Needs

7.1.1 Universal services are those services that are provided to, or are routinely available to, **all** children and their families. Some children may have a range of additional needs that require a range of services and support that, under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Providers should make reasonable adjustments to support.

7.1.2 The provision of some universal services may act in a preventative way, by reducing the demand for specialist short break and other services. For example, the provision of play schemes during school holidays is likely to reduce the demand for costly overnight short break services.

7.1.3 Universal services such as youth clubs, extended school activities, Children's Centres and play schemes are key in ensuring disabled children have fun and enjoy the same things as other children and young people. ("The Hub Directory" should provide a starting point for finding a range of activities available for children, young people).

7.1.4 Some children may need additional support to access universal and occasionally targeted play and leisure activities.

- a) If a child needs support to access a universal, play and leisure service such as brownies, cubs, youth club and they are not accessing any other similar type of service then, two hours a week support should be available to support their access.
- b) In addition five hours per week activities could be provided during school holidays.

7.1.5 Support to access the above can be through self referral to Leeds Inclusion Support Service, who will be aware of the eligibility criteria for service allocation and alternatively can refer families to locality based services that may be appropriate.

7.1.6 The need for support to access universal play and leisure services should be evidenced and subject to review by the Inclusion Support Service, within an agreed period, to identify if support is still needed and appropriate.

7.1.7 Families requesting a home/community based short break service up to two hours a week can request this directly but the referrals will come to the panel. This will ensure there is a need for the service, it is recorded and to identify which provider is most able to meet the need. The service will be subject to review by the service provider within an agreed period, to identify if support is still needed and appropriate.

7.2 Multiple Additional needs

7.2.1 Children and young people with multiple additional needs are those that require more services than that offered by universal services or two hours support a week. Concentrating on a more specific group of children should lead to greater flexibility in service provision.

7.2.2 Children and young people assessed as needing short break provision as follows will be defined as having multiple additional needs.

- a) Up to four hours a week or 16 hours a month (not health nursing short breaks)
- b) In addition, five hours per week support could be provided in school holidays.

7.2.3 Examples of targeted or preventative services that could meet this level of need are:

- a) weekend community based play schemes for children with substantial and permanent disabilities
- b) home/community based family placement or contracted/spot purchased agency services
- c) additional nursery provision to that provided by early years, childminders etc

7.2.4 Assessment for this level of service can be made via a CAF and presented to the Allocation Panel. A Core Assessment may be needed if the family have other needs in addition to this level of short breaks.

7.2.5 The service will be subject to review by the identified lead professional, within an agreed period, to identify if support is still needed and appropriate.

7.3 Specialist Needs

7.3.1 These services are available to a minority of children for whom the targeted services are not sufficient to promote good outcomes.

7.3.2 Children and young people assessed as needing more than four hours community based short break provision a week, health nursing short break provision and overnight provision, or a combination of services will be defined as having specialist needs.

7.3.3 Assessment for this level of service will be as a result of the completion of a Core Assessment. The allocation panel will allocate this level of service and if necessary ask for reassessments and reviews to come back to the panel.

7.3.4 If a child or young person is further assessed as needing an increase in service involving an additional provider or an increase of more than two hours a week, 8 hours a month, the case will need to be referred back to the panel.

8.0 Residential/Family Placement

- 8.1 Requests for admissions to residential and family placement services in respect of disabled children will be considered at the panel. These should be only presented after a Core Assessment has been undertaken unless they are crisis or emergency placements.
- 8.2 In crisis or emergency placements due to family breakdown, the panel should be informed of the admission and the placement agreed for a time limited basis if appropriate. Further assessment will then be carried out and the case brought back to panel.
- 8.3 This **will not apply** in cases where children are involved in care proceedings.

9.0 The Disabled Children's Allocation Panel

- 9.1 The Panel will ensure that the allocation of short break services is transparent, coordinated, appropriate to need, equitable and in keeping with the available resources. It will also consider the need for shared /full time provision for disabled children and young people.
- 9.2 The panel will:
 - a) Meet twice monthly
 - b) Consider all new requests for short breaks arising from a CAF, or Core Assessment
 - c) Consider reassessments and reviews of care packages involving short breaks and shared care/ full time provision as requested by the panel or if the increase in service involves an additional provider or an increase of more than two hours a week, 8 hours a month
 - d) Ensure that resources and funding streams are used appropriately for the needs identified
 - e) Ensure care plans are age appropriate, in the best interests of children, involve consistently of care and result in as few carers as possible involved in a child's care
 - f) Ensure care plans meet identified needs and outcomes and are personalised to each family as much as possible
 - g) Monitor access to services by all eligible disabled children and young people (including black and minority ethnic children and young people) and ensure the monitoring requirements of the Aiming High for Disabled Children programme are met
 - h) Identify issues, trends and unmet need to inform future commissioning of services

9.3 Decisions

9.3.1 The allocation panel will not alter the locus of decision-making and responsibility of Team Managers and Service Managers. They will be required to endorse/recommend the care plan before presentation to panel.

9.3.2 Any delay caused by the panel approval process should not hinder temporary service provision to meet the need of the service user. Every effort should be made for interim arrangements which then can be considered further at the next panel meeting

9.3.3 If a request for services is approved, but that service cannot be accessed straight away, plans to meet the needs in the short term should be agreed, and the case brought back to panel in an agreed timescale.

9.4 Submission of Request to Panel

9.4.1 All relevant paperwork (Assessment or Review) should be submitted 5 days prior to the panel date to the coordinating support officer with a copy of the Disabled Children Allocation Panel Authorisation Request Record form **SS483** or, the Disabled Children Allocation Panel Review Record form **SS484**.

9.4.2 An up to date assessment or review can be sent directly to providers for information and to assist with early identification of resources. The decision around allocation of these resources will be made at panel.

9.4.3 The Allocation Panel check list **SS485** provides details of the paperwork that should be submitted to panel this includes:

- Completed Disabled Children Allocation Panel Authorisation Request Record (**SS483**)
- Completed Disabled Children Allocation Panel Review Record (**SS484**)
- Most recent CAF, or Core Assessment and Care Plan and copies of any reviews

10.0 Approval of Decisions

10.1 Following the panel, approval requests will be signed by the chair on the same day. This will prevent delay in implementing an approved request.

10.2 Applications that required further/additional information will be deferred until the requested information is acquired. Deferred items can be presented to the next panel for approval.

10.3 Decisions on unsuccessful requests will be followed by written feedback to the case worker making the referral and their manager, within 2 working days of the panel meeting.

10.4 Families should be informed by the case worker making the referral of the outcome of the panel meeting, in writing, within one week.

11.0 Monitoring

11.1 The case worker should monitor the care plan to ensure that the agreed outcomes are being met

12.0 Review of decisions

12.1 Families can submit a letter with any further information to the panel chair for consideration at the next panel meeting.

12.2 Following this, individual cases will be considered by the appropriate head of service in the appropriate agency.

12.3 Parents, children and young people should be made aware of the Complaints and Compliments Procedure for the service they are accessing and given a copy of any leaflets that further explains their procedure.

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Appendix 1- Outcomes Framework

The aim of this framework is to illustrate the judgements that service commissioners need to consider to ensure that short breaks support disabled children and young people to achieve the five Every Child Matters outcomes.

Be Healthy

Short Break services that support disabled children and young people to be physically, mentally, emotionally and sexually healthy means:

- That disabled children have appropriate access to universal and specialist health care whilst receiving the service
- That short break providers empower and support disabled children to take responsibility for their own health and well being
- That disabled children are supported to achieve maximum mobility and independence through the provision of appropriate equipment and adaptations whilst receiving the service
- That disabled children have access to appropriate advice and support on their emotional well being and mental health

Living a healthy lifestyle whilst receiving the service means:

- That disabled children have the right medicine; that clinical procedures are safely administered and appropriate therapy or behaviour management is carried out by staff and carers who are trained and competent
- That staff and carers are trained and are competent in basic first aid, moving and handling and child resuscitation with regular opportunities to update and refresh their training in these areas
- That the short break environment is appropriately adapted and the necessary equipment is in place
- That families of disabled children receiving short breaks are supported to work in partnership with the service provider concerning their child's development

Stay Safe

Being safe from maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual exploitation within a short break service means:

- That disabled children can recognise and have opportunities to talk about maltreatment and neglect
- ●● That staff and carers are trained specifically in safeguarding disabled children and are given regular opportunities to update and refresh this training
- That services have robust safeguarding procedures to ensure that swift and appropriate action is taken to protect disabled children at the times that short break most usually occur, i.e. weekends
- That maltreated disabled children are subsequently protected
- That families of disabled children receiving short breaks are supported to work in partnership with the service provider concerning safeguarding and protection

Being safe from accidental injury/death means:

- That disabled children have the right medicine; that clinical procedures are safely administered and appropriate therapy and behaviour management is carried out by staff and carers who are trained and competent
- That the short break environment is appropriately adapted and the necessary equipment is in place
- That disabled children have accessible and safe transport to and from their short break service and whilst receiving it
- That disabled children have access to specialist health support whilst in their short break service

Being safe from bullying and discrimination means:

- That disabled children do not feel bullied or discriminated against whilst receiving the service

Having security, stability and appropriate care means:

- That disabled children do not have a multiplicity of carers whilst receiving the service
- That disabled children are cared for by the same staff members or carers who develop an understanding of the child's unique way of communicating

Enjoy and Achieve

Achieving personal and social and recreational development and enjoying recreation within a short break service means:

- That disabled children are happy and have fun in their short break service
- That disabled children have access to activities, organised leisure, sport and outings that are age appropriate and of their choice whilst in their short break service
- That disabled children develop social networks and friendships through their short break service
- That disabled children have appropriate systems and support to enable them to communicate effectively whilst in their short break service
- That parents of disabled children have a real break from their caring responsibilities

Making a positive contribution

Engaging in decision making within a short break service means:

- That disabled children are enabled and supported to communicate their views about their short break service
- That disabled children are supported and enabled to communicate their choices and preferences whilst receiving the service
- That disabled children have the opportunity to participate in planning and decision making about the short break service they receive and that their views, however expressed, are routinely gathered and recorded

Developing positive relationships means:

- That disabled children do not feel bullied or discriminated against whilst receiving their short break service
- That disabled children are happy, have fun and develop friendships in their short break service

Developing self-confidence and successfully dealing with significant life changes and challenges means:

- That a range of methods are used to ensure that disabled children participate in the planning and review of their short break provision
- That disabled children and their families are involved in service design, delivery and development
- That short breaks positively support disabled children and young people through key transitions

Achieve Economic Well-Being

Living in decent homes and sustainable communities means:

- That the short break environment is appropriately adapted
- That disabled children have access to accessible and safe transport, both to and from the short break service, and whilst receiving it

Access to transport and material goods means:

- That appropriate and accessible transport arrangements are made which enable disabled children and young people to maximise opportunities within their short break