

Short breaks for Disabled Children

Eligibility Criteria

BASED ON THE INTEGRATED WORKING THRESHOLD DOCUMENT

	Level 1- Universal Services	Level 2 – Additional Needs	Level 3 – For children whose needs cannot be met by mainstream or universal services
Assessment: Assessments will include the child and family's needs.	No assessment is required to access universal services	The assessments which are accepted include: Common Assessment framework (CAF) Initial Assessment (IA) Education statement (buddy service only) Assessment from specialist health team.	Assessments accepted include Common Assessment framework (CAF) Core assessment Assessment from specialist health team.
Who completes the assessment?		Assessment can be completed by members of the locality teams /social care/ school / health	Health professional / Disabled Children's team / locality / social care team
What is my child's core offer		Services offered will be dependent on individual assessed need and can be taken as: a direct payment (a cash payment made in lieu of services made to individuals	Services offered will be dependent on individual assessed need and can be taken as: Overnight short break residential or professional carer or

		<p>who have been assessed as needing service)</p> <p>Or Family link scheme</p> <p>Or Sitting Service</p> <p>Or Buddy service</p> <p>and Saturday Club and or play schemes (charges apply)</p> <p>and Young carers (run by Crossroads)</p>	<p>Family link scheme up to 24 overnights as an initial offer</p> <p>and either Sitting Service</p> <p>Or Direct Payment</p> <p>and Saturday Club and or play schemes (charges apply)</p> <p>and Young carers (run by Crossroads)</p>
<p>Resources which are available within the community & specialist resources</p>	<p>Youth Clubs</p> <p>Sport & leisure centres</p> <p>Children's Centres</p> <p>After School Clubs</p> <p>Mainstream 'uniformed organisations' e.g.</p>	<p>Locality -Family support team.</p> <p>Occupational therapy service.</p> <p>Springboard for pre-school children.</p> <p>Children's centres</p> <p>School nurses</p>	<p>Disabled Children's Team (DCT)</p> <p>Occupational therapy service</p> <p>Health Visitors</p> <p>Personal School Advisors</p> <p>Family Support-Disabled Children's team for children with complex needs that require a service which is regulated by the Care Quality</p>

	<p>Cubs, Beavers, Scouts, Guides, Girls Brigade.</p> <p>School nurses</p> <p>Health Visitors</p> <p>Parent Support Advisors (based in schools)</p>	<p>Health Visitors</p> <p>Specialist cubs and beavers (held at the Firs Resource Centre)</p> <p>Personal School Advisors</p> <p>Specialist parent support groups (details from Firs resource centre)</p>	<p>Commission e.g. personal and medical care, physiotherapy, challenging behaviour</p> <p>Specialist School Nurses</p> <p>Specialist Nurse Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service /Learning Disability</p> <p>Specialist cubs and beavers (held at the Firs Resource Centre)</p> <p>Specialist parent support groups (details from Firs Resource Centre)</p>
<p>Further information is available from</p>	<p>Family Information Service</p> <p>Citizens Advice Bureaux</p> <p>Tourist Information Service</p>	<p>The Firs resource centre (Drove Rd)</p> <p>Firs (North) @ St. Barnabas</p> <p>Family Information Service</p> <p>The 'We Can' directory</p> <p>Children's centres</p> <p>Locality teams</p> <p>North Somerset Mencap</p>	<p>The Firs Resource Centre</p> <p>Family information service</p> <p>Disabled Children's team</p>

		National Autistic Society Downs Syndrome Association	
Decision maker: How are decisions made?	The Child & Family make their own decisions	Direct Payments- resource panel Direct Payments review- Deputy Team Manager (DCT) Occupational therapy – resource panel Buddy service – Team Manager Sitting service – Team Manager Family link – Team Manager	Direct Payments- resource panel Occupational therapy – resource panel Solutions panel

ASSESSMENTS

Who is entitled to an assessment?

Under s17. Children Act 1989 all disabled children are children in need and therefore are entitled to an assessment.

Under the Carers (Recognition & Services) Act 1995 and the Carers & Disabled Children Act 2000 parents and carers have a right to a carer's assessment.

What is an assessment?

The purpose of an assessment is to identify the child's needs within their family context and to use this understanding to decide how best to address these needs.

There are three types of assessment

- **Common Assessment Framework (CAF) :-** The CAF is a shared assessment and planning framework for use across all children's services and all local areas in England. It aims to help the early identification of children and young people's additional needs and promote co-ordinated service provision to meet them.
- **Initial assessment:-** is a brief assessment of each child referred to social care or health services with a request for services to be provided. and should address the dimensions of the Assessment Framework, determining whether the child is in need, the nature of any services required, from where and within what timescales, and whether a further, more detailed core assessment should be undertaken.
- **Core assessment:-** in complex and serious situations a more in-depth assessment may be required. A core assessment addresses the complexity or severity of the child's needs and the capacity of his or her parents or caregivers to respond appropriately to these needs within the wider family and community context. While this assessment is led by social care services, it will invariably involve other agencies or independent professionals, who will either provide information they hold about the child or parents, contribute specialist knowledge or advice to social care services.

How will this happen?

The person carrying out the assessment will meet with you, your child and members of your family. An assessment cannot be made without seeing your child, however young and whatever the circumstances. We can help you best if you tell us about what you do well in your family and your difficulties. The assessment will be carried out using the DOH framework of assessment. **See diagram below.** This will ensure we take into consideration your child's developmental needs, parenting capacity, and family and environmental factors.



If other people are already helping you and your family e.g. the health visitor, general practitioner, nursery staff or teachers we will ask your permission to talk to them as well. Any information you give to us will be held in confidence and would not normally be disclosed without your consent. However, the law permits the disclosure of confidential information if it is necessary to safeguard a child or children in the public interest. If this is the case, you will be told what your rights are in this new situation.

What happens next?

Families referred to or seeking help from social care services will have differing levels of need, many will be helped by advice or practical services or short term intervention, through making an assessment of your situation, it should be possible to agree with you what help and support you and your family might need, and who could best can give that help in a timely and effective manner. We know that almost all parents want to do their best for their children, and completing the assessment will help the person completing the assessment recognise the strengths you and your family have, as well as your difficulties

North Somerset Partnership has developed four levels of vulnerability and need to assist practitioners to support practitioners making decisions about service thresholds. These levels of need can be used to prioritise and develop a range of support and intervention strategies matched to a child or young person's needs and strengths. The descriptions used to differentiate between the levels are based on the domains and dimensions of The Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families.

Level 1 Universal	Children with no additional needs. Children who make good overall progress in all areas of development and receive appropriate universal services.
Level 2 Additional Needs	Children with additional needs. Children whose health and development may be adversely affected and who would benefit from extra help in order to make the best of their life chances.
Level 3 Complex Additional Needs	Children with complex needs. Children whose health and/or development is being impaired or there is a high risk of impairment.

Level 4 Child in Need of Protection	Children who are experiencing significant harm or where there is a likelihood of significant harm.
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Children's needs rarely fit into neat categories. Their needs often change over time and may cross different levels, i.e. high on one domain and low on another. **The Threshold Matrix** had been developed to inform the early identification of vulnerability and need, and can be used to start the referral and assessment process. The age of the child and protective factors that may enhance resilience also needed to be taken into account. These can be understood by referring to the universal level descriptors. The aim of assessment through the assessment process is to determine:

- * *if* a child is in need
- * her/his *level* of needs
- * which needs must be met as a *priority*; and
- * which is the most appropriate *service* to meet these needs


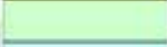
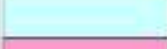

Matrices of Levels of Need

The matrices are designed to assist practitioners and managers think about the needs of children in a holistic and common way. They are indicative rather than definitive, but should help to provide an evidence base for decision-making. The matrices are based on the Common Assessment Framework domains and dimensions and the descriptions given are examples. Professional judgement is always the key: does the child fit the broad initial definition of need, and if so, on which domains?

The matrices cannot reflect sudden changes in a child's needs, but it should be assumed that any rapid deterioration in a child's presentation is a cause for concern. Similarly, the age of a child will have an impact on how the matrices are interpreted. For example, a child aged two without opportunities to play can be seen as more of a concern than a child aged thirteen, as the two year old may not have any opportunities for social contact whereas the thirteen year old will have this need partially met at school.

Finally, a lack of impact as the result of involvement with services should also be noted as a concern. Thus, a child who has received input to meet learning needs and whose needs remain has a higher level of need than a child whose needs have just been identified.

THRESHOLD MATRIX

Child development needs	Health														
	Learning														
	Emotional & Behavioural Development														
	Family & social relationships														
	Social presentation														
	Self-care skills														
Parenting capacity	Basic care														
	Ensuring Safety														
	Emotional warmth														
	Stimulation														
	Guidance & boundaries														
	Stability														
Family & Environmental factors	Family history & functioning														
	Wider family														
	Housing														
	Employment														
	Income														
	Family's social integration														
	Community Resources														
		US	US	US	L	M	H	L	M	H	L	M	H		
Vulnerability assessment															
	Level 1: Children with no additional needs	Level 1 Children with no additional needs			Level 2 Children with additional needs			Level 3 Children with complex needs			Level 4 Need for protection				
	Level 2: Children with additional needs														
	Level 3: Children with complex needs														
	Level 4: Need for protection														

The aim of an assessment is to secure the best outcomes for your child in terms of their health and development and your family. The assessment and decisions will form the basis of a plan of action (including services to be provided) The plan will be reviewed with you and your child on a six monthly basis and refined over time to ensure the agreed outcomes for the child are met and can be measured.

Copies of assessments and plans will be given to you and we will take care to ensure that the meaning and implications of assessments are understood by you and your family.

If you do not agree with what is written in the assessment, there will be an opportunity for you to record your point of view on the assessment record. You may also make a complaint this is made on the first instance to the Team Manager.

NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL WANT THIS TO BE A USEFUL DOCUMENT AND WELCOME ANY SUGGESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE FOR IMPROVING IT.

Please e mail your responses to rosemary.ward@n-somerset.gov.uk or ring on 01934 427669