Children's social care, the complex needs team

Last Modified November 15, 2024

What the complex needs team do

The team work with families who are at the specialist level of needs. In exceptional cases families need specialist, statutory support that is designed to maintain or repair relationships and keep families together wherever possible. In some very specificcircumstances, the needs are so great that children need to be away from their family to ensure that they are protected from harm and in these circumstances the local authority becomes their “corporate parent”.

- First the team will identify the best person to work with your child and your family based on the information provided. This could be a qualified social worker or family support worker based on the supporting children with complex needs team
- A Social Worker will visit you at home and carry out a child and family assessment to identify personal outcomes for your child, and you as parents/carers to consider what additional care and support your child needs because of their disability
- They will look at the care and support needs which can be met by the family and those which can’t
- They will assess the circumstances of the family and what support is already available in your wider family and local community
- The worker will work with families to identify strengths and suitable solutions, provide information, advice, and signpost and provide assistance
- The worker will speak to other professionals who know the child, such as teachers, health workers and, where appropriate, supportive family members and friends to inform the assessment
- Solutions may include use of the family network, signposting to community based resources or other agencies for targeted short term intervention, or direct work with members of the supporting children with complex needs team
- Your child may require specialised assessment by an occupational therapist and guidance in alternative techniques to help a child develop, or restore and maintain functional skills. A moving and handling assessment may highlight the need for specialised equipment and advice. This will be completed by colleagues in our community occupational therapy team
- Families will get a copy of the assessment.
- Parents, siblings and carers are eligible for a carer’s assessment in their own right

Universal services

Short breaks packages of care

Overnight respite

How to get support from the team

Call 01253 477299 or complete this online referral form.

Eligibility criteria

1. Children and young people under 18 years with permanent or long term, substantial disabilities, life limiting conditions and/or complex health needs that impact on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities
2. The needs cannot be met by Universal/Universal Plus services alone

It is likely that a disabled child or young person will fit into one or more of the following definitions:

- A significant, permanent and enduring physical disability
- A significant global learning disability

- A severe and enduring communication disorder
- A significant sensory impairment
- A complex autistic spectrum condition
- Multiple disabilities.(being a combination of disabilities - physical, cognitive, communication and sensory in nature)



Criteria for assessment and support from children's social care (Supporting Children with Complex Needs) regarding disabled children in Blackpool

In Blackpool, services for children and young people with a disability have been developed within the context of the Children Act 1989 (2004), the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970, Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004, the Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000 and the Children and Families Act 2014.

The basis of this approach is that children with a disability are regarded as children first and, as children with impairment, second.

Children with a disability are therefore not classified by assessment, according to their physical or mental impairment, but assessed according to the impact any impairment has on their quality of life and that of their family.

The majority of children in Blackpool who require services will receive them through universal provision within their local community. The same should be true of any child with a disability who can also be supported through the Local Offer. Only when it has been identified, via a single agency assessment or Early Help Plan that the impact of the child's impairment on their life is too great to be addressed by universal provision, early help services or the Local Offer, should a referral for an assessment be made to the supporting children with complex needs team.

Children's social care has a responsibility to **children in need** under **Section 17** of the Children Act 1989. That is, children and young people whose development would be significantly impaired if services are not provided. This includes children and young people who have a long lasting and substantial disability, which limits their ability to carry out the tasks of daily living.

The second area of children's social care responsibility is child protection; that is where children's social care must make enquiries under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989, to determine whether a child or young person is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children and young people.

For a child in need, a referral/request for support to children's social care is appropriatewhen more substantial interventions are needed: where a child or young person's development is being significantly impaired because of the impact of complex parental mental ill health, learning disability or substance misuse, or very challenging behaviour in the home.

A social care referral/request for support is also appropriate where parent/carers needpractical support and respite at home because of a disabled child or young person's complexcare needs. In these situations, children's social care will work with families on a voluntary

basis, often in partnership with other professionals, to improve the welfare of the children/young people and to prevent problems escalating to a point that statutory child protection intervention is needed.

↑ Back to top

Blackpool Council

Municipal Buildings
Corporation Street
Blackpool
FY1 1NF

Information and help

Accessibility
Contact us
Privacy and cookies
Terms and conditions
Blackpool Council companies

Find my nearest

Enter your postcode to find your nearest schools, council services and more

Enter postcode search

Stay upto date

Sign up to our regular newsletters

Follow us