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Getting help for children with disabilities

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Blackpool Council provides support and activities for children with disabilities and their families.

The children with a disability team (CWDT) is a specialist team who work with families who have a child/young person with a moderate to severe learning disability and/or physical disabilities, or sensory impairment.

Services

The team offers a wide range of services which aim to provide comprehensive information and advice, to support the development of disabled children, and to assist children and their families to lead lives which are as fulfilling as possible

Before the team can work with a child, that child must have an assessment of their needs.

Criteria

Blackpool Council's children with a disability team criteria is:

- All children with a disability are as defined under the Children Act 1989 “Children in need”, as such they may request a Needs Assessment
- The Disability Discrimination Act ... regards a person as having a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse affect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Physical or mental impairments can include sensory impairments and learning difficulties
- The framework for the inspection of Children’s Services uses the term “learning difficulties and/or disabilities”. This encompasses disabled children and children with SEN. The term is different, as SEN is not a legally defined concept past the age of 16, and the framework includes young people up to the age of 25 years, where appropriate, who are defined as having learning difficulties or disabilities under the Learning and Skills Act

Criteria for access to the services:

- Be 17 years or under (an exception being to include up to 19 considering SEN legislation and guidance)
- Be ordinarily resident in Blackpool Council area
- Have a severe disability, which may be physical, mental, learning or sensory
- Is experiencing substantial developmental impairments or delays in one or more areas of cognitive development, sensory or physical development and this has a substantial long term effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities (Substantial is defined as lasting more than 12 months)
- Has a condition, which has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay
- Has a life threatening illness
- Has Cancer, Multiple Sclerosis, HIV/AIDS or severe disfigurement
- Has two or more specialist services involved (not universal services such as GP or HV)
- Has an Autistic Spectrum Condition which significantly impairs the child/young persons educational and social life which without support services may lead to the breakdown of family life – this must follow a joint needs assessment, undertaken with the Complex Difficulties Team.
- Attends a Residential school for children with Learning Difficulties (not BESD – behavioural, emotional, social difficulties) and is returning to the area (Blackpool)

- Has moderate Learning Difficulty plus another significant Disability
- Has a combination of diagnosed conditions, which will have severe, complex and substantial adverse impacts on the child's development

Referral pathway to services

Referrals to the children with disability team will only be accepted if there has been a CAF completed.

The exception to this will be when there is substantial evidence that there is a need to safeguard the child or children who may be at significant risk of harm.

Within other CWAN services such as PSC and early years it is essential that a CAF has been done so that it can be clearly identified that universal services have been engaged and that this targeted service is therefore appropriate.

This would ensure within these parts of targeted services only those children whose needs indicate a specialist service are offered this service.

If a CAF has not been completed and there is no evidenced significant risk to the child or children, referrers must be advised that they or a professional who has identified services that a family may need, must ensure a CAF is completed.

Contact

Children with disability team

Blackpool Technology Management Centre, Unit 18, Faraday Way, Blackpool, FY2 0JW

Telephone 01253 477672

Email childrenwithdisabilities@blackpool.gov.uk

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