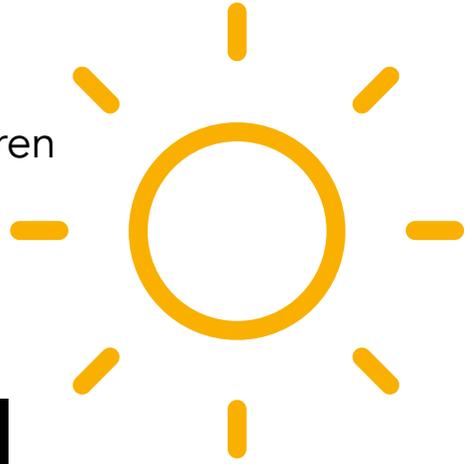


We want all disabled children to get the support and services they need to lead fulfilling lives.



DISABLED CHILDREN'S

Social Care Service

Our Thresholds
Explained



**BIRMINGHAM
CHILDREN'S TRUST**

The basic needs of disabled children are no different from those of any other child.

Disabled children are children first. The basic needs of disabled children are no different from those of any other child. Universal services have a role in meeting the needs of disabled children and children who have additional needs.

We want all disabled children to get the support and services they need to lead fulfilling lives. We know that in order to achieve this we have to be clear about how services are provided and accessed.

How do you define Disability?

We use The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability which states that a person has a disability if:

- They have a physical or mental impairment,
- The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities.

Why do you have a threshold?

The threshold used by the Disabled Children's Social Care Service helps us to prioritise specialist resources for those with the highest needs. We publish these thresholds to provide openness and transparency for parents/carers and all professionals.

How is the threshold decided?

The threshold for access to Disabled Children's Social Care (DCSC) is based on the following principles:

- The need to be fair, clear and unbiased;
- Access to local, inclusive, mainstream services wherever possible;
- Provision of reliable information at the right time about services to enable families to make decisions;
- Access to specialist services where this is needed;
- Reducing the need for additional assessments;
- Making sure we get the best value for money.

How do I know if I meet the threshold?

Disabled children are by definition 'Children in Need' (S17, Children Act 1989). This means that families with disabled children can request an assessment to consider the needs of their child.





How does the assessment process work?

If you are thinking about asking for an assessment, it is important to remember that:

- Many disabled children will never come into contact with Social Services, because their needs can be met through universal and community-based services;
- Some disabled children may require extra support from more than one agency; they therefore may be referred to an Early Help team or a Family Support Team;
- Some disabled children will have higher levels of social need which mean that they need statutory or specialist services. These children will need a family assessment by a Social Worker.

If further assessment is needed, what will this involve?

A Family Assessment will involve:

- Information gathering about you and your family
- An analysis of the needs and circumstances of your child.
- Identification of what help is needed, (if any)
- Creating a Plan which says what services will be provided

- Describing how the plan will meet the needs that have been identified
- Deciding who has responsibility for delivering the plan and a timetable for review

In addition to this, the assessment will promote the fact that disabled children live within a family environment and the issues of parent/carers responsibilities are important.

Parents/carers are also entitled to be offered a Carer's Assessment to identify their own specific needs. This will focus on the parent/carers own wellbeing, relationships and wider responsibilities e.g. employment and training.

Who makes the decision on what resources will be offered?

Decisions about resources are made by the Disabled Children's Social Care Child In Need Resources Panel. This is made up of professionals from Health, Education, Social Care and voluntary sector partners.

The panel works on the basis that:

- It is the parents, not the local authority, who have the main responsibility for looking after their child;

- An assessment of need does not automatically result in the family being offered a specific service or amount of provision;
- Where a child is being assessed for special educational needs (SEN) which will result in an EHC Plan, the decision of the panel will make up the Social Care section of the EHC Plan;
- The giving of resources will take into account all available services in the City and how these can be effectively used to keep the child safe and meet the best outcomes for the child;
- Packages of care are not fixed and may change as the child and family's circumstances change
- Our service will work with you and our partner agencies in Children's Advice & Support Service (CASS) and the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) to make sure your child is safe;
- When there is a child protection issue we will work with you and your family to quickly reduce any immediate risks and work out a longer term plan to improve this for the future.

Following an assessment of need, and in line with Right Help Right Time (RHRT) the following categories will be used to decide who will be given social care resources:

- *Universal Plus*: Requiring a response from within a universal setting and/or signposting to other support means
- *Additional Needs*: Requiring a coordinated response bringing agencies together to support the child and family
- *Substantial/Complex*: Requiring a specialist response
- *Critical*: There will be concern that the child is suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm or impairment.

How do you decide what services or resources are offered?

The threshold criteria are linked with **Right Help Right Time (RHRT)** which means that:

- All services are committed to work together to provide the right service at the right time for you and your family;
- Local services should provide local support wherever that is possible to get the best service near to you;

What level of service can I expect from DCSC?

Disabled Children’s Social Care will focus on children with substantial/ complex and critical needs. Children with Universal Plus and additional needs will be referred to the Children’s Advice and Support Service (CASS) for access to universal and community-based support.

The panel matches assessed needs to resources depending upon priority and availability of services within the city. Where possible, packages of care will consist of both universal and specialist services.

What resources do you have access to?

Our aim is that Disabled Children’s Social Care will work in partnership with you as a family to make sure that best use is made of local and available resources. This often includes:

- Early years
- Early Years Inclusion Support
- Education services / Special Educational Needs Assessment and Review Service (SENAR)/ Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Health, hospitals and community

- Voluntary sector
- Play and leisure
- Youth & Community
- Information Advice & Guidance

What if the needs of my child change?

We know that children’s needs change and may move between the four categories shown above. For example the outcomes for a child who was at first assessed as having ‘critical’ needs may improve due to the support provided.

Changes in need and changes to packages of care will be dealt with through regular review of the child’s support plan and a re-assessment where necessary.



Get in touch

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A full copy of the Threshold document is available from the office address above.

