

Eligibility criteria for assessment by the Children with Disabilities Service

Background

The Children Act 1989 states within its 'Children in Need' definition that disabled children and those with complex health needs are those children:

- who are unlikely to achieve or attain a reasonable standard of health and development without provision of services;
- whose health and development is likely to be significantly impaired without the provision of services;
- who are disabled;

Referral process:

Professionals who believe support from Children with Disabilities service is required would need to complete an Early Help Assessment and submit through Somerset Direct.

Families can self-refer via Somerset Direct.

The Assessment Process

A child is eligible for an assessment from the Children with Disabilities service if he/she:

- Has a medical diagnosis of severe physical impairment, learning impairment or Autism; and
- Has a home address within Somerset; and
- Has needs arising from their impairment that cannot be met by services within universal or targeted children's services.

Depending on the nature of the referral an assessment will be carried out by one of the Children with Disability Teams. This will be a holistic assessment that will include assessment of both the child's and the parents or carers needs.

Where the referral suggests that the child's needs could be met by targeted services, an Early Help Assessment will be carried out by one of the Children with Disabilities Early Support Teams or another agency professional.

Where the referral suggests that the child has more complex needs a Child and Family Assessment will be carried out by a social worker.

Where child protection concerns are identified an investigation will be carried out under s47 of the Children Act 1989 followed by a Child and Family Assessment. Please note: if at the point of referral the disabled child is part of a family group who all require an assessment due to child protection concerns, then this assessment would be led by Children's Social Care Assessment Team supported by a social worker from the Children with Disabilities Team who will provide specific expertise and knowledge in respect of the disabled child's assessment.

The assessment may show a range of outcomes for the child and family. It is important to note that having a disability does not automatically mean that you or your child need to access social care support, but you may want to access 'universal services'. The table below sets out what sort of support may best meet your child's needs.

Level of Need: Level of Intervention

The table below provides information about how professionals match assessed need with available services and gives an indication of the types of services that may be available but it is not exhaustive and should only be used for guidance.

The table is formatted so that the lowest level of need (and the corresponding services available) is detailed at the top of the table with the greatest level of need and possible services available at the bottom.

The first column details the level of need through identification of factors in the child's life such as sleepless nights, the complexity of care needs etc.

The second column details the range of possible services available to meet the assessed needs such as Direct Payments or Short Breaks. Whilst services are named within this column, please bear in mind the following:

- **Universal Services** refers to those services which are deemed open to all (dependent on availability of places) and do not require referral by a social worker or any other professional.
- **Voluntary/community groups** are organisations that are not run by the Council.

There is an overview of the specific services available on Somerset's Local Offer on the Somerset Choices website at <https://www.somersetchoices.org.uk>

NB: Access to hospices has not been included within this table although access to hospice care is available via referral to NHS where assessed as required.

Level of Need	Level of Intervention
<p><i>Factors in the child's life starting with lowest level of need at the top</i></p>	<p><i>Potential services available</i></p>
<p>Level 1 Universal see Effective Support for Children and Families document (http://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/effectivesupport-documents/)</p> <p>Child has low level needs that have little impact on daily life. The family feel well supported in their caring role. The child and family feel well supported and able to meet the child's medical and education needs.</p> <p>No assessment is needed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Resources • School • GP and Health Visitor • Youth Centres • Children's Centres • Citizens Advice • Housing • Short Break Calendar • Voluntary or Community Groups
<p>Level 2 Additional see Effective Support for Children and Families document (http://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/effectivesupport-documents/)</p> <p>The child and their family are isolated in their community.</p> <p>Parents/carers require a break to give:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - their other dependents their uninterrupted time and attention. - uninterrupted time to themselves. <p>The disabled child requires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Substantial assistance to spend time with their friends, peer groups/social activities to provide social inclusion. - Substantial assistance to take part in leisure activities. - Help with setting up access to leisure activities. - Assistance developing independence, choice and control. <p>Parents/carers and siblings require a break or assistance to engage in personal leisure activities/short break that are not appropriate or enjoyable for their disabled child.</p> <p>Early Support Record would be carried out by one of the Children with Disabilities Early Support Teams</p>	<p>All of the above plus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Somerset Supporters Service • Specialist Short Break information • Inclusive play schemes • Occupational Therapy Service

<p>Level 3 Complex see Effective Support for Children and Families document (http://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/effectivesupport-documents/)</p> <p>Parents/carers require a one-off day time short break in an emergency.</p> <p>The child wants to have opportunities to experience extended time away from home.</p> <p>Behavioural difficulties related to the child's disability means that the family are at risk of not being able to continue to provide care at home.</p> <p>Parents/carers require a time-limited break including overnight care because their capacity to care is temporarily exhausted. **</p> <p>Early Support Record would be carried out by one of the Children with Disabilities Early Support Teams</p> <p>** Children and Families Assessment carried out by a Social Worker would be required.</p>	<p>All of the above plus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sessional care provided under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970. • Direct Payments • Short breaks Service • Advice guidance and support with parenting needs. • Short breaks service including overnight care provided under s17 of the Children Act 1989**
<p>Level 4 Acute see Effective Support for Children and Families document (http://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/effectivesupport-documents/)</p> <p>Child has complex needs requiring co-ordination of multi-agency support.</p> <p>Family is at risk of breakdown due to the substantial demands of caring for their child which could include</p>	<p>All of the above plus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individualised packages of support jointly funded by CSC health and education • Reception into care via Section

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disturbed nights• Persistent challenging behaviour• Supervision of the child's complex health care needs• Complex manual handling tasks <p>Child is/ or may be at risk of significant harm.</p> <p>Children and Family Assessment carried out by a Social Worker.</p>	<p>20 or 31 of Children Act 1989.</p> <p>Investigation under s47 of Children Act 1989</p>
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