

Derbyshire County Council Early Help and Safeguarding Children's Services Disabled Children's Service terms of reference

Abby Maspero, Head of Service

Autumn 2022

Organisational structure:

Derbyshire County Council Children's services vision 2020/2021 is 'Working creatively together to inspire and empower children, young people and their families and communities to be the best they can be: safe, healthy, happy, learning and working'.

Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership threshold document provides a vision is to ensure that unborn babies, children and young people access the right service at the right time, at the lowest appropriate level of intervention.

Children's Social Care (CSC) provides support to any child in need.

Disabled Children's Service (DCS) provides expertise and experience to help and support children in need with complex health that has been diagnosed as a disability and/or learning disability. The Disabled Children's Service can provide information, advice, signposting to other services, a route to assessment and, if needed, services for disabled children and young people and their carers. DCS is committed to ensuring children and young people and parents / carers receive the best possible service within available resources.

The diagram below illustrates the range of support services available to disabled children and their families. Universal services for example, includes schools, doctors, health visitors and direct access partner agencies. Early help services are accessed through early help assessment, team around the child and partner agencies. Mainstream services include child in need statutory duty, social workers, care proceedings or child protection and safeguarding. The specialist disabled children's service team delivers mainstream services as well as supporting children with the most complex health needs, complex learning disabilities, education health care plan. This team is able to advise and support services from early help and mainstream.



** Disabled Children's Service (DCS)

Purpose

The Disabled Children's Service provides specialist advice and support to disabled children and families either through working directly with the child and family or provision of advice and support to early help and mainstream services. This aligns to the vision of the Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership which is to ensure people access the right service at the right time, at the lowest appropriate level of intervention.

The team is made up of Social Workers and Community Care Workers who are responsible for assessment, care planning and safeguarding. They work alongside a Pediatric Occupational Therapy team. They work closely with Health and Education as well as a range of specialist in-house services.

The team principally works with children with complex health need with a disability including a learning disability.

How do I access a service?

To access any intensive or specialist services you need to ask a professional who knows your child to first complete an Early Help Assessment. This starts the process of identifying what support is needed and how it can be provided. A professional may be:

- School teacher
- Community nurse
- Health visitor
- Pediatrician
- Occupational therapist
- Physiotherapist
- Doctor (GP)

To access this service your child will be aged between 0-17 years and have a diagnosed moderate to severe learning disability. In addition to this, they may have a physical disability and / or complex health needs.

When assessed you MUST provide written evidence of diagnoses, from a qualified health professional, by including at least one of the following along with the Early Help Assessment:

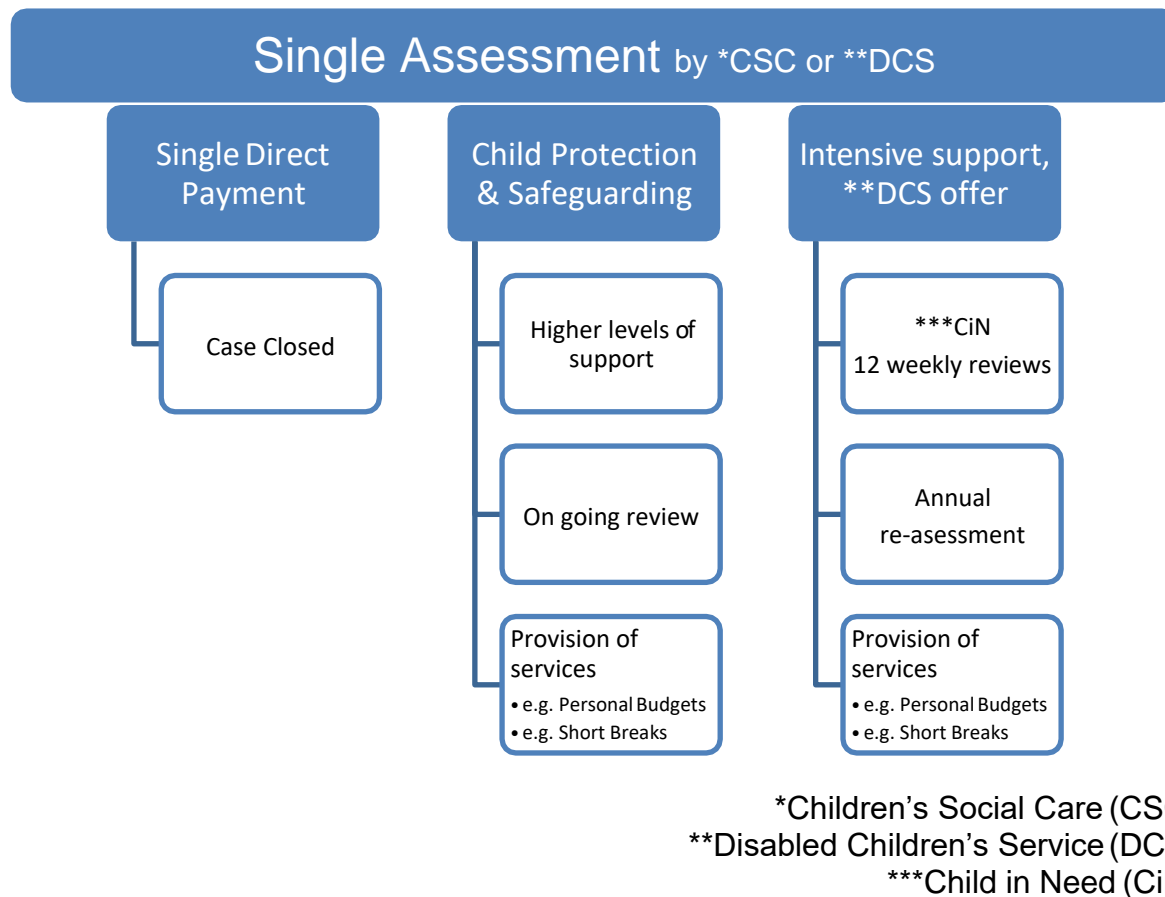
- Psychiatrist report
- Psychologist report
- Letter from a pediatrician
- Completed Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP).



Starting Point 01629 533190

Referrals are screened and triaged by [Starting Point](#). They allocate the assessment to the service that best meets the needs of the child. Therefore, if the child meets the criteria detailed below then the referral will be allocated to the Disabled Children's Service duty team who will allocate a Social Worker to complete the assessment.

The chart below illustrates how a single assessment can be completed by either Children's Social Care or the Specialist Disabled Children's Service. The outcomes being similar; either a single direct payment and case closed or ongoing reviews and provision of services through personal budgets and short breaks.



Requests for resources, services, personal budgets and direct payments will be processed through the appropriate systems and can come from either of the two Social Care Services in the Early Help and Safeguarding Services. This is to ensure the assessment is fair and measured and all children have access to services and support to help them and their families.

Examples of children who receive support from the Disabled Children's Service include the below:

- A significant, permanent and enduring physical disability which leads to dependence on aids and adaptations to support daily living.
- A significant sensory impairment that requires significant multi-agency support.
- Children and young people with severe/significant global learning disability that is diagnosed by professionals.

- Children experiencing complex health care needs, which may result in a physical or learning disability and that require significant multi-agency support.
- Autistic spectrum disorders (ASD) that are diagnosed by professionals and require significant and complex multi-agency support plans. In addition, the child may be displaying associated behaviours that challenge and/or have significant communication difficulties.

Autism follows a broad spectrum this could include undiagnosed children and those awaiting diagnosis and as such, there are many children who are managing well within mainstream education and supported by universal and emerging needs services. However, they may require more support and could be identified as a 'child in need' as defined by The Children Act 1989.

Any child who is assessed via a single assessment (completed by a social worker) as a 'child in need' is entitled to a service. To ensure they have the correct support; all services, such as locality teams, schools and health have access to consultation and support from the Disabled Childrens' service.

Context and Legislation

Across Derbyshire, many disabled children, young people and their families are thriving without requiring additional support from Specialist Social Care Services.

However, all families will have different circumstances that require a range of agencies and interventions. Disabled children and their families are entitled to ask for an assessment of their needs which will incorporate the needs of those caring for them. The Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (DDSCP) threshold document details when and how an assessment will be undertaken, either an Early Help Assessment, which is completed by professionals from universal or targeted services, or a Single Assessment completed by a social worker from Children's Services. The type of assessment processes used will depend on the level of need and circumstance for the child and the family.

The principal legislation for care and support services for children, young people and their families is the Children Act, 2004/1989. Under Section 17 of the Children Act, it states that Authorities have a duty to assess children where:

- He/she is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for him of services by a Local Authority under this part;
- His/her health or development is likely to be significantly impaired or further impaired, without the provision for him of such services; or
- He/she is disabled.

The Act places two general duties on local authorities to help and support children in need, these are:

- To safeguard and promote their welfare.
- Promote their upbringing by their families wherever possible.

Further information available at:

- Looking for childcare or free nursery education? Need childcare that can pick up or drop off at your local school? Search the Family Information Service to find out what's near to you.
[Family Information Service](#)
- Our community directory is for children, young people and their families to search for a wide range of services and support on offer.
[Family Community website](#).
- The Derbyshire local offer is an information, support and advice service for children and young people aged 0 to 25 with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).
[Local Offer website](#)
- Derby City and Derbyshire Threshold Document, providing effective multi-agency support.
[Threshold document](#)
- Derbyshire Children's Services Online Procedures
[Procedures home page](#)
- Derbyshire Special Educational Needs and Disabilities services.
[Derbyshire SEND](#)
- Starting Point
[Starting Point contact and referral](#)
Telephone: 01629 533190