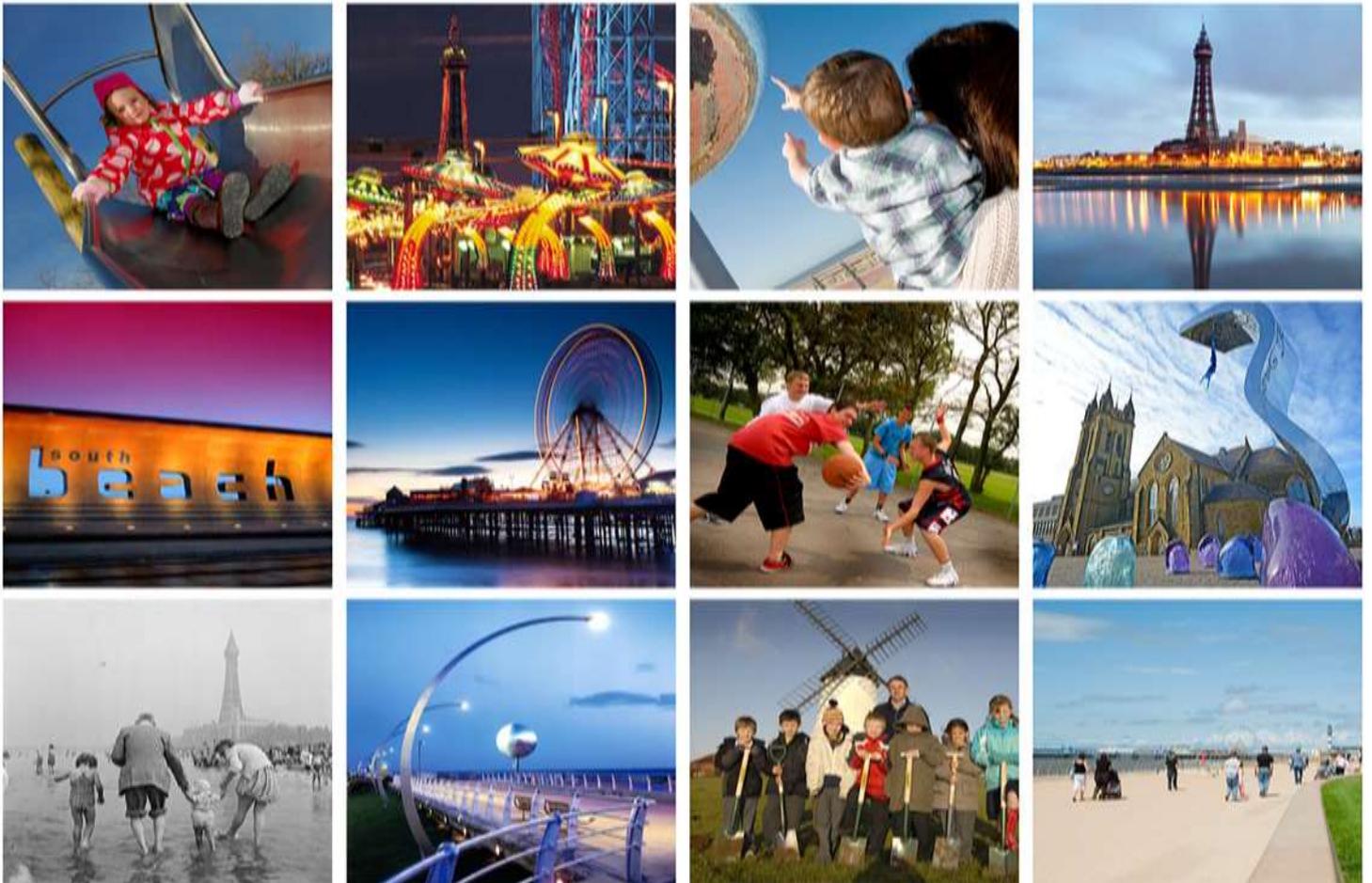




# Criteria for assessment and support from Children's Social Care (Supporting Children with Complex Needs) regarding disabled children in Blackpool

Blackpool Council





## **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.

### **The eligibility criteria for the Supporting Children with Complex Needs Team (Social Care) in Blackpool are:**

- 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.**

**and**

- 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)



## What can the Supporting Children with Complex Needs Team do to help?

### Care and short breaks services

Many parents and carers need a regular break from their caring role. Short breaks can also help children and young people to meet others, do activities they enjoy and increase their independence. We can arrange support with registered private and voluntary sector organisations. Some families prefer to have a direct payment and employ care staff.

For information about this visit: <https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Residents/Health-and-social-care/Children-and-families/Children-with-disabilities/Short-breaks-care.aspx>

and download the Short Breaks Statement. There is also information about what else is available on the Local Offer area of the Blackpool Council website: <https://www.fyidirectory.co.uk/blackpool-local-offer>

Short break residential accommodation for a disabled child or disabled young person for any single period should not exceed 17 days, and be for more than 75 days in any period of 12 months. If so, short breaks regulations stipulate the child or young person will become a “looked after child”

### Typical care services might include:

Day care in school holidays or at weekends

Overnight or weekend stays with short break carers or in a residential unit

Specialist support to help a child take part in activities

Support workers to care for your child in your own home

## How does the Supporting Children with Complex Needs Team assess need?

Blackpool’s Supporting Children with Complex Needs Team work with Children from Level 3 and 4, according to the Working Well with Families in Lancashire Level of Need Document.

### Level 3 Needs – Intensive Support

**At Level 3, children with disabilities will have a Child and Family Assessment (CAFA) to understand their needs and the needs of their family. The assessments will be undertaken by a social worker based in the Supporting Children with Complex Needs Team.**

The type and level of care service you will be offered depends on the individual needs of your child and your family. You will decide on your own support plan so you will have choice and control over this. We have to be as fair and as consistent as we can in assessing and allocating services. Therefore our judgements and decisions are based on the assessment and take particular account of the following:

1. The impact that caring for a disabled child or young person is having on the family as a whole.
2. The possibility that the child or young person may require an alternative care arrangement or that there may be concerns as to the child’s safety and/or welfare.

Key Factors in determining needs are:-



1. The impact that trying to meet the additional needs of a disabled child or young person is having on the family as a whole.
2. The likelihood of family breakdown resulting from the demands of the care, supervision, or behaviour of the child/young person.
3. The effect of disturbed nights on the carer and their family.
4. The impact moving and handling has on the wellbeing of the carer
5. The health of the carer.
6. The number of children in the household, their ages and needs.
7. Children with disabilities, who have severe challenging behaviours which impact on all aspects of the child/young person's functioning or pose a risk to self or others.
8. Where it is apparent that the family's own resources and/ or Universal and Universal + services are unable to provide the required level of support.
9. Children with disabilities, who have recently been or who are currently subject to a Child Protection Plan, and who remain in need of ongoing specialist services.
10. Children/young people with disabilities, who require support because of their additional mental health needs.

#### **Level 4 – Children in need of Safeguarding or requiring Local Authority Care**

***At level 4 a Child and Family Assessment (CAFA) will need to be completed by a Social Worker to assess a child in need.***

This may be because:

- The child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm
- Family breakdown resulting from the additional demands of the care and supervision of the child/young person
- No one is available or able to meet the child or young person's basic needs
- The family requires intensive multi-agency support in caring for a child with disabilities and/or health needs, or life limiting conditions.

Our social workers are trained in child protection. If a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, we work with families and other agencies to reduce the risk of harm.

We aim to support families so that children can continue living at home. If children or young people can no longer live with their family we arrange for them to be Looked After.



## What do the Supporting Children with Complex Needs Team do?

- 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 and carers

Parents, siblings and carers are eligible for a Carer's Assessment in their own right.

## Your child's Plan

As part of your child's Plan, you may have a short breaks package or receive direct payments.

Once the Support Plan has been agreed, and any funding approved, care and support services can start.

The Supporting Children with Complex Needs Team can arrange services for you. You do not need to manage this yourself but you could receive a direct payment, and arrange support and services yourself.

Plans are reviewed at least every six months, and should be done so alongside your child's Education Health and Care Plan if they have one.



## How can you get support from the Supporting Children with Complex Needs Team?

A child or young person can be referred to the Supporting Children with Complex Needs Team by a professional like a teacher or a doctor, or families can ring up and talk to staff in the “Families Rock” Request for Support Hub at Blackpool Council. They will advise you whether the Supporting Children with Complex Needs Team may be able to carry out an assessment of you and your child’s needs.

You can contact the '**Blackpool Families Rock' Request for Support Hub** on 01253 477299 or visit: <https://selfservice.blackpool.gov.uk/ss/renderform.aspx?t=1207&k=AED2F46D80DC03E13E2752C58EC43C73EA657D07>

## Questions and Complaints

If you have questions, problems with the service, or your circumstances change you can contact your social worker. If your need is urgent ask to speak to a duty social worker if your allocated worker is not available.

To challenge a decision made by the Supporting Children With Complex Needs Team, the Team Manager should be approached in the first instance. If the issue cannot be resolved, a complaint can be made to an independent person. Telephone 01253 477700, email [customerrelations@blackpool.gov.uk](mailto:customerrelations@blackpool.gov.uk) or write to:

Customer Relations Team, Blackpool Council PO Box 4, Blackpool, FY1 INA.

**Eligibility Criteria Devised by:** Tim Littlemore, Head of Service – Strengthening and Supporting Families

**Date:** 27/07/21

**Criteria Reviewed by:**

**Date:**