



## Threshold Guidance for Children with a Disability

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### **The Children Act 1989 Definition of a Child in Need and Disability**

The Children Act 1989 sets out the duty of every local authority to undertake assessments of children in need, their families and others in order to:

Safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need: and so far as is consistent with that duty, to promote the upbringing of such children by their families, by providing a range and level of services appropriate to those Children's needs.

A child is defined as a child in need if:

- They are 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;
- Their health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision of such services; or
- They are disabled.

The Children Act definition of disability states that:

*A child is disabled if he is blind, deaf or dumb or suffers from mental disorder of any kind or is substantially and permanently handicapped by illness, injury or congenital deformity or such other disability as may be prescribed. (Development means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development; and health means physical or mental health).*

The Disabled Children and Young People's (DCYP) team in Suffolk is a specialist team who work with young people up to the age of 25. There are three DCYP office bases across Suffolk: Ipswich, Lowestoft, and Bury St Edmunds. The DCYP team work with children and young people where their disability is impacting on their ability to have opportunities to be safe, develop skills for life and be part of their local community growing up. The social work team work to the same statutory requirements as all other locality social work teams. Within the CYP Directorate there is criteria for DCYP input due to the capacity of the team.

## Identifying Children and Young People

Appropriate referrals to the team would include:

- Children will have a severe, substantial, and permanent disability or life threatening or life limiting illnesses.
- Children who have severe learning disabilities and attend either a special school for children with severe learning disabilities or are educated therapeutically at home.
- Children with physical disabilities that significantly impact on the child's ability to access the community, that require a high level of personal care support, without which their independence would be significantly restricted.
- Children and young people with severe learning disabilities.
- Children and young people who fall on the severe end of the Autistic spectrum with associated learning disability which has a significant impact on their communication needs, social and behavioural development.
- Children and young people with severe global development delay which seriously impedes daily functioning.

**Children with the following diagnosis can be referred to other appropriate teams or agencies:**

- ADHD
- ADD
- Aspergers syndrome
- Tourette's
- Dyspraxia
- ME
- Dyslexia
- Oppositional defiance disorder
- Social conduct disorder
- Foetal Alcohol Syndrome

Children whose main needs centre around emotional/behavioural development and or mental health can be referred or signposted to other appropriate teams or agencies who can best meet their needs, e.g.

- Activities Unlimited
- Early Help teams
- Other social care teams.
- Other Community Services for example GP, CAMHS, Health support services and voluntary provision.

Children with sensory impairments can be referred to the Sensory and Communication Team via Customer first.

## Referrals to Disabled Children and Young People's Team

Referrals to DCYP are completed via Customer First (0808 800 4005) either by a parent or a professional. The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) screen the referrals and make a decision to undertake a Social Work Assessment or signpost to appropriate services e.g. Activities Unlimited or Early Help team.

## Support and Advice

If you require further clarification or advice and information for a child / family you are working with please contact the DCYP duty Social Worker at Endeavour House (01473 265044), West Suffolk House (01284 758560) or Customer First (0808 800 4005).