



# **Disabled Children's Service Children's Social Care Threshold and Eligibility Criteria Isle of Wight Council**

**Author: Rob Winfield, Service Manager – Disabled Children and Intensive Support**

All disabled children and young people have the right of access to universal health, education and community based support services. They also have the right of assessment for specialist health, education and social care services. These rights are enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Children Act 1989. They are reinforced by, the Equality Act 2010 and the Children and Families Act 2014

The threshold and eligibility criteria for access to specialist services provided by the Disabled Children Service aims to ensure a fair, transparent and proportionate response to the assessed needs of disabled children, young people and their parents and carers. Eligibility for a specialist service provided by the Disabled Children Service is determined by an appropriate assessment of need under statutory guidance. The general statutory duty to provide services under the Children Act 1989 Part II is triggered by the Local Authority determining that the provision of services is appropriate to the assessed needs of a child. The enforceable duty under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons' Act 1970 (s2) is triggered by the Local Authority being satisfied that services are necessary to safeguard the welfare of a disabled person.

The most appropriate and relevant service for a disabled child or young person are based on what is in the best interests of the child or young person, within the available resources of the Isle of Wight Council . The aim is to ensure that the available resources are targeted to benefit those children in most need, including those at risk of significant harm, and that proper consideration is given to equity of provision underpinned the needs outlined within the assessment.

This document should be read in conjunction with the Isle of Wight Safeguarding Children Board and Children's Trust Thresholds Chart April 2014, where the needs of children and their families are described as a 'continuum of need' which can be differentiated into four levels:

- Universal
- Early Help
- Targeted Early Help
- Children's Social Care



## Isle of Wight Safeguarding Children Board and Children's Trust Thresholds Chart – April 2014

Threshold:	1. Universal	2. Early Help	3. Targeted Early Help	4. Children's Social Care
<b>The child or young person (maybe unborn):</b>	Has needs met within universal provision. May need limited intervention within the setting to avoid needs arising.	Has additional needs identified within the setting that can be met within identified resources through a single agency response and partnership working	Has multiple needs requiring a multi-agency coordinated response.	Has a high level of unmet and complex needs or is in need of protection.
<b>Circumstances and Key Features</b>	<b>The following circumstances and key features are for guidance and should always be considered in respect of the impact on the child or young person</b>			
	<p><b>Developmental Needs</b> Achieving learning targets Good attendance Meeting developmental milestones Has psychological well-being Socially interactive and skilled Ability to protect self and be protected</p> <p><b>Family and environment</b> Supportive relationships Housed, good diet and kept healthy Supportive networks Access to positive activities</p> <p><b>Parents and carers</b> Protected by carers Secure and caring home Receive and act on information, advice and guidance Appropriate boundaries maintained</p>	<p><b>Developmental Needs</b> Absence / truancy from school Incidence of absence / missing from home Use of fixed term exclusions Risk of social exclusion Poor attachments Language and communication difficulties Reduced access to core needs Disability or additional special need Potential for becoming NEET Potential not to attain Slow in meeting developmental milestones Missing health checks/immunisations Minor health problems Early signs of offending / anti-social behaviour Underage sexual activity Early signs of drug/alcohol misuse Poor self-esteem Low level emotional/mental health issues</p> <p><b>Family and environment</b> Young carers Poor parent/child relationships Children of prisoners / parents subject to community orders Bullying Poor housing and poor home environment impacting on child's health Community harassment / discrimination Low income affects achievement Parenting advice needed to prevent needs escalating Poor access to core services Risk of relationship breakdown Concerns about possible domestic abuse</p> <p><b>Parents and carers</b> Inconsistent care arrangements Poor supervision by parent/carer Inconsistent parenting Poor response to emerging needs Historic context of parents/carers own childhood</p>	<p><i>Despite intervention at 2, evidence of continuing....</i></p> <p><b>Developmental Needs</b> Persistent absence from school Missing from school / home regularly with no explanation Permanent exclusions/no school place Social exclusion Poor attachments No access to core services Significant disabilities NEET Developmental milestones not being met due to persistent parental failure/inability Chronic/recurring health problems Regular missed appointments affecting developmental progress Teenage pregnancy Drug/alcohol misuse impacting negatively Risky sexual behaviour (e.g. unprotected sex) Offending / anti-social behaviour resulting in risk of entering Youth Justice System Emotional / mental health issues</p> <p><b>Family and Environment</b> Housing tenancy at risk Community harassment / discrimination Domestic abuse Relationship breakdown Transient families</p> <p><b>Parents and Carers</b> Parental learning or physical disability, substance misuse or mental health impacts on parenting Inconsistent care arrangements Poor supervision by parent/carer Inconsistent parenting Poor response to identified needs Historic context of parents/carers own childhood</p>	<p><i>Persistent/continued/severe...</i></p> <p><b>Developmental Needs</b> Chronic persistent absence, permanent exclusions or no school place that risks entry to the care system Persistent social exclusion Poor attachments Complex / multiple disabilities Complex mental health issues affecting developmental needs, including self harm High level emotional health issues and very low self-esteem Non-organic failure to thrive Sexually inappropriate behaviour Sexually aggressive behaviour Teenage parent/pregnancy under the age of 13 Sexual exploitation / abuse Drug/alcohol use severely impairing development Frequently missing from home resulting in self-neglect Relationship breakdown Offending and in the criminal justice system Unaccompanied minors</p> <p><b>Family and environment</b> Suspicion of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect Domestic abuse resulting in child being at risk of significant harm Homeless child/young person Family intentionally homeless Community harassment/discrimination Extreme poverty affecting child well-being Forced marriage, Honour Based Violence, Female Genital Mutilation</p> <p><b>Parents and carers</b> Edge of care Parental encouragement of abusive/offending behaviour Continuing poor supervision in the home Parental non-compliance / disguised non-compliance or co-operation Inconsistent parenting affects child's developmental progress Private fostering</p>
<b>What do I do next?</b>	Go direct to the family information site <a href="http://www.iwight.com/wightohyps">www.iwight.com/wightohyps</a>	Consider undertaking a CAF checklist. If you believe that a CAF is appropriate contact the Children's Reception Team on 0845 002 0095 who will check against thresholds and if appropriate log that a CAF will be undertaken	Having contacted Children's Reception Team regarding your intention to undertake a CAF assessment you will find information on the CAF process and all relevant documentation here <a href="http://bit.ly/Pdrd1b">http://bit.ly/Pdrd1b</a> . The CAF team can provide information, advice and guidance in undertaking the CAF process	Contact Children's Reception team on 0845 002 0095 or Police 999 if at immediate risk.
<b>Level of Assessment</b>	No formal assessment	CAF checklist/commencement of CAF assessment	CAF assessment and plan	Child and Family assessment and plan

Children's Reception Team: 0845 002 0095

Out of Hours: 0845 600 4555

Emergencies: 999

Children move between these levels of need according to their particular circumstances and the positive impact of advice, help and support. Service responses need to be flexible to address the changing needs of children and their families. The different levels of need trigger different assessments and service responses. Assessments make the best use of inter-disciplinary and multi-agency consultation to ensure that appropriate services are put in place.

### **Level 1 – Low**

Children are supported by their families with the involvement of local friends, the community and universal services. For these children and young people and their families the appropriate support services are universal services that do not require a specialist assessment. Short breaks would be available as part of the universal provision to meet the need on the Isle of Wight.

### **Level 2 – Medium**

Children and/or their families have additional needs that cannot be met by universal services alone. This can include a child or young person where their needs are not clear; not known; or are not yet being met. This may require additional help from a single agency or a co-ordinated response from more than one agency. If a multi-agency response is considered appropriate then this should trigger a common assessment Framework process (CAF) and Team around the Family (TAF) approach with support being delivered through the short break programme. The CAF may conclude that a combination of universal and targeted services is required to meet the child's needs.

### **Level 3 – Substantial**

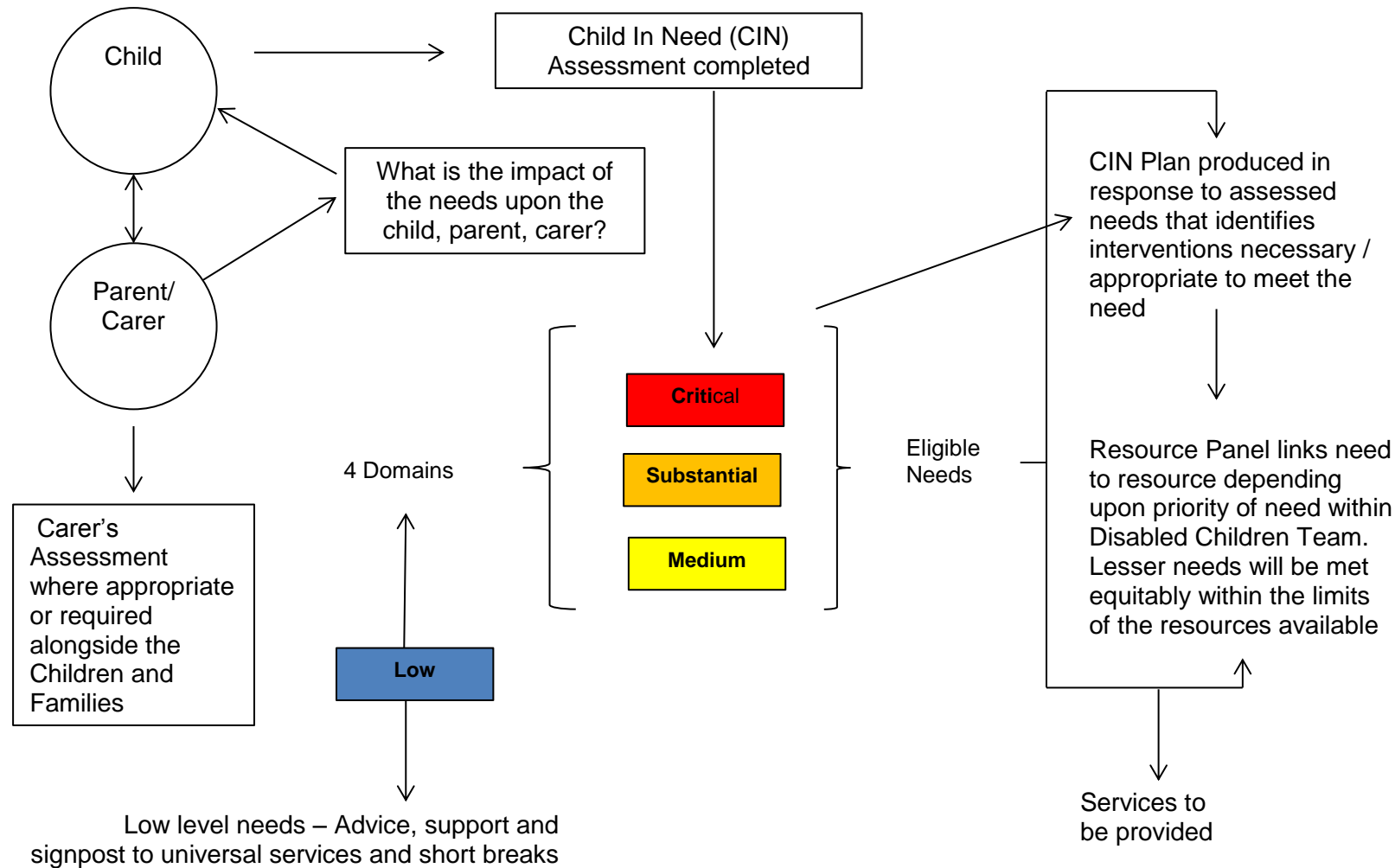
Children with complex needs are likely to require a specialist assessment for longer term intervention from statutory and/or specialist services. High level, additional needs that remain unmet despite support from targeted services may require an integrated response that will usually include a specialist or statutory service. This is the basis of the threshold for a child in need under the terms of the Children Act 1989 (Section 17) which may result in statutory social work intervention and can include children in need of protection (Section 47).

### **Level 4 – Critical**

Children with acute needs may require intensive, statutory support from health and/or social care services. This includes inpatient treatment or care and the threshold for providing children with protection that requires a placement outside of their birth family. Assessment for a care

placement requires a statutory social work assessment and care planning under the Children Act 1989 (Sections 20 and 31) and Care Planning Regulations 2011.

## Disabled Children's Service Eligibility Criteria



The Disabled Children Service is a specialist and statutory social care service that undertakes assessments and provides services at the critical, substantial and when appropriate medium (which is normally delivered via the short break programme) level of needs.

The Service supports disabled children, young people and their families whose main need for service arises from their disability or their intrinsic condition, and where these conditions have a substantial or critical impact on the quality of the child's life or/and the lives of their families.

The Service intervenes where their needs cannot be fully met by universal and targeted services alone.

Children are defined as 'children in need' by the Children Act 1989 because of their disability. Some of those children are also assessed as having substantial or critical needs that may require specialist support from the Disabled Children Service, in addition to universal and targeted services, because they have disabilities or illnesses that are severe and enduring, including;

- physical disabilities that are substantial and permanent; or
- learning disabilities that result in a state of arrested or incomplete development of mind which induces significant impairment of intelligence and social functioning; or
- sensory impairments; or
- an autistic spectrum disorder; or
- a complex health, life limiting or life threatening condition, which significantly impacts on their or their families daily living arrangements.

Other disabled children may have additional needs but the impact of their disability on their day to day living arrangements means that they do not require specialist statutory support and their needs can be met appropriately with additional support from universal services.

Areas of Need	Critical	Example	Substantial	Example	Medium	Example	Low
Child	<p>Chronic or life limiting condition Child has a substantial and permanent disability, requiring 24hr a day assistance to meet their need</p> <p>Complex physical and health needs Severe learning disabilities Significant sensory impairment Persistent sleep deprivation</p>	<p>Child has complex physical needs and is likely/could be requiring continuous physical or medical care At risk of significant harm. Persistent/extreme challenging behaviour</p>	<p>The impairment, chronic health and life limiting condition have a substantial impact on the quality of the child and their family's life Danger of child moving into critical domain</p>	<p>Child likely/could be requiring continuous physical care Provision of services the same as critical but not an immediate intervention required</p>	<p>Less severe impact of impairment upon child and carer/parent Assistance required to enable child to access leisure/community activities necessary for their continued development without parental support</p>	<p>Child wishes to attend peer group social event but needs adult assistance to access it. Child could be independent in self care if adaptations available</p>	<p>Child whose independent living skills are slightly impaired by a level of disability but their needs can be met by advice and support to access universal services. Example signposting to mainstream provision such as leisure activities or other independent organisations.</p>

Areas of Need	Critical	Example	Substantial	Example	Medium	Example	Low
Parenting	In substantial excess of that which would be provided to a child by parent/carer without impairment. Immediate risk of family breakdown without agencies' intervention/ or statutory obligation to provide.	Parent/carer might need a break from the constant supervision of complex health care needs (manual handling). Severe sleep deprivation.	Parent /carer having considerable difficulty in providing physical, emotional care, supervision or communication required due to child's impairment or the relationship with main carer/parent is at risk of breakdown.	Parent/carer managing, but there could be a substantial risk of harm or family breakdown, planned intervention likely to prevent reaching the critical stage.	Carers / parent are however coping with some difficulty. Parent / carers do need a break to spend time with other children in the family or to meet their own social needs.	Carers are showing signs of deteriorating health or stress. The demands of caring for the child with a disability means they cannot provide appropriate care and involvement in other children's lives.	Advice, information and signposting



**Areas of Need**

**Critical**

**Example**

**Substantial**

**Example**

**Medium**

**Example**

**Low**

Family and Environment

Sole parent/carer illness, impairment, bereavement or addiction. Child with extreme levels of challenging behaviour poses a risk to carers and other family members

Carers unable to maintain safe level of care without some personal time  
There is a risk of serious harm to another persons health and safety.



Advice, information and signposting

## **Short Breaks Service – Eligibility Criteria**

The short breaks programme is open to **all** children and young people who:

- have a disability and additional needs and may require support to participate fully in leisure or recreation activities;
- are between 0 and their 19th birthday;
- live on the Isle of Wight and/or attend a school on the Isle of Wight.

We want to enable children and young people with disabilities and additional needs to join in with safe, entertaining and interesting activities, whilst giving their parents or full-time carers an opportunity to have a short break from caring. There is no limit to the number of short breaks activities your child can participate in, and you can mix and match activities to suit your family's needs and the things that your child or young person likes to do.

The short breaks programme funds two main types of activities:

- Specialist activities – run specifically for children and young people with moderate or complex needs.
- Support to attend mainstream activities, play schemes clubs and groups.

We are aware that financial difficulties can be an issue for many families, so we have asked all activity providers to consider this when applying for their Short Break grant.

