

The Child & Family Assessment [CAF] is a four-step process whereby practitioners can;

- identify a child's or young persons needs early
- assess those needs holistically
- deliver co-ordinated services
- review progress

The CAF is designed to be used when: a practitioner is worried about how well a child or young person is progressing, e.g. concerns about their health, development, welfare, behaviour, progress in learning or any other aspect of their wellbeing

- a child or young person, or their parent/carer, raises a concern with a practitioner
- a child's or young person's needs are unclear, or broader than the practitioner's service can address.
- The process is entirely voluntary and informed consent is mandatory, so families do not have to engage - if they do, they can choose what information they want to share. Children and families should not feel stigmatised by the CAF; they can ask for a CAF to be initiated.

The CAF should be offered to children who have additional needs to those being met by universal services. Unless a child is presenting a need, it is unlikely the CAF will be offered. The practitioner assesses needs using the CAF. The CAF is not a risk assessment.

If a child or young person reveals they are at risk, the practitioner should follow the local safeguarding process immediately.

The Team

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Lead Professionals Network Meetings

- To support all Lead Professionals in their role and offer advice and guidance,
- To provide high support and high challenge to Lead Professionals
- To promote a common understanding of what a good CAF looks like
- To drive and improve the quality of CAF assessments, TAF plans and meetings.
- To prevent escalation to Children's Social Care for Children and Young People who are not at risk of significant harm and ensure a robust offer of Early Help is offered and provided
- Promote Early Help services at a local level
- Support and improve lead professional's knowledge and skill.
- Ensure better outcomes for children achieved in a shorter timescale
- Ensure effective integrated working with partners.