

Aiming High for Disabled Children

Delivering the core offer standard

In Aiming high for disabled children: better support for families the government made a commitment to establish a core offer for disabled children and their families.

The core offer sets out minimum standards on information, transparency, assessment, participation and feedback. These standards make it clear what entitlements and services disabled children, young people and their families can expect, and how they should experience those services. This document builds on the Core Offer Implementation Materials developed in May 2008.

Under each of the core offer standards below we have set out delivery milestones in three categories; 'at first stage', 'in development', and 'advanced'. These should give clarity to local areas about what they need to do to meet the core offer standards. Those milestones under 'at first stage' will have been met by local areas just beginning to think about and plan services that deliver on the core offer. Those under 'in development' will relate to local areas who have progressed further and have many of the necessary elements in place. Those under 'advanced' will have been met by local areas who are fully delivering on the core offer standards with families firmly at the heart of their service planning and delivery.

Where text is underlined there is a link to an example of this kind of practice, or some materials developed by an area that others may find helpful. This document will continue to be updated as practice develops.

1 – Information

Summary of expectations⁽¹⁾

Disabled children, young people and their families can expect information that is:

- Accessible
- Available
- Relevant and Accurate
- Joined-up
- User-focused

Disabled children, young people and families can expect information that covers:

- Access to services
- All providers
- All services
- Key transition points

⁽¹⁾ For those wanting a more detailed explanation of the expectations these can be found at http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/_files/8C6C272B2B76A4E6FE6E8408DED7A2EC.pdf

Delivery milestones

<p>at first stage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual agencies produce <u>accurate and up to date information</u> for families with disabled children - Individual agencies meet their statutory duties with regard to the provision of information to all parents and include <u>information for parents of disabled children</u> - A parent partnership service is in place and is widely publicised - Information services such as CIS/FIS routinely include up to date information for parents of disabled children - Contact a Family produce a range of <u>briefing papers</u> on the problems families with disabled children face, and a <u>guide for professionals</u> that outlines the type of information families might need
<p>in development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are elements of an integrated system, e.g. a newsletter, a website, etc - Each agency is confident about its own information service and knows what is available - <u>Some ages or impairment groups have comprehensive</u> information, e.g. through the Early Support Programme - Clear integrated protocols are in development for the provision of information at the point of diagnosis/identification
<p>advanced</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An integrated information system is in place in compliance with the duty to provide information, assistance and guidance (Childcare Act 2006) - Families are able to access timely and relevant information that meets their needs - Information is available at all key ages and stages of a child's journey - Agencies all hold the same impartial information and are confident about providing a holistic picture - All families are routinely offered a benefits check - Information on all services, specialist, targeted and universal is available, and widely publicised, this includes appropriate wider information, e.g. Family Fund grant, benefits, national helplines, etc - Information is accessible to parents with a range of needs and in appropriate community languages

- Parents can be confident that information on services will be relevant to the needs of their child, whatever their level of impairment, and that it will be impartial and up to date
- Parents and young people are assessors of information and it is consistently reviewed and amended by them
- There is clear accountability for information provision and a recognised reviewing process and schedule
- Clear integrated protocols are in place for the provision of information at the point of diagnosis/identification and at key transition (or other) points

2 – Transparency

Summary of expectations^[2]

Disabled children, young people and their families can expect transparency about:

- How overall resources are decided and allocated
- The purpose, process, timescales and possible outcomes of an assessment
- How services work together to promote good outcomes
- How services are commissioned
- How the local authority, the PCT and their partners work together
- How the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) is produced and how communities can influence the plan
- How the CYPP delivers the statutory requirements regarding disability equality
- How feedback is sought
- The quality of local services
- How their legal entitlements are being met and how to complain if necessary

Delivery milestones

at first stage

- Families know how to access services and are told if they are eligible
- Individual professionals are able to signpost families to national websites and organisations for information and advice

in development

- There is an eligibility process in place that enables professionals to share information and judgements about how decisions on services are reached

^[2] For those wanting a more detailed explanation of the expectations these can be found at http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/_files/8C6C272B2B76A4E6FE6E8408DED7A2EC.pdf

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local authorities meet their statutory duties to provide information about Special Educational Needs (SEN) processes and policies - Families have information on the differing assessment processes and know about direct payments and what support is available to help families manage direct payments - Within health, Child Development Services coordinate assessments and families are clear about how these fit together - Multi-agency care pathways are available for children with specific conditions - Information on SEN statementing processes is available, and families know how to access the Parent Partnership Service - Parents are aware of the choices available and able to make choices and decisions about care for own child
advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are agreed eligibility criteria shared between agencies and with parents and families are clear how to access services and what they are entitled to - Families have ready access to information about the extent of local needs, how resources are allocated and what expansion has taken place with Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC) programme - Families have ready access to information about quality of service and any inspections made of them

3 – Assessment

Summary of expectations⁽³⁾

Disabled children, young people and their families can expect assessments that are:

- Holistic
- Proportionate to apparent need
- Based on the necessary consent to share information and an understanding of the purpose and possible outcomes of the assessment
- Based on shared information
- Focused on promoting the welfare of the child in the family
- Undertaken by staff with the right skills

Disabled children, young people and families can expect assessments to include:

- Consideration of all options – mainstream, specialist and direct payments

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- Family support plan in Early Support for 0–4, and person-centred transition planning for young people from 14 years
- Consideration of the need for a key worker or lead professional

Delivery milestones

at first stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are a range of assessments in place that are coordinated and have a clear purpose, and professionals check with families which assessments they have already had before each one proceeds - Assessments are clearly focused on the needs of the child and family rather than on 'fit' to existing services
in development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each agency understands its own range of <u>assessment processes</u> and that of others - There are clear records as to what assessments have been undertaken on each child - Families hold copies of the assessments and understand what actions arise from each of them - Families of younger children hold an early support file
advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is written information for families explaining all of the assessment processes - Information builds on core knowledge so that families do not have to repeat their story - Action plans arising from assessments are understood by all parties and acted upon - The purpose and likely outcomes of each assessment is explained to families and children - There is a key worker service available to families

4 – Participation

Summary of expectations^[4]

Disabled children, young people and their families can expect participation through:

- Choice over the support provided and full involvement in assessment and design of their packages of care
- The opportunity to contribute to decisions about local service development

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Arrangements to facilitate such contributions ■ Tailor-made opportunities for disabled children and young people to participate in service planning and development ■ Involvement in drawing up and monitoring the disability equality scheme
Delivery milestones	
at first stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents and children have <u>input into their own assessments</u> and plans - There are opportunities for parents to meet
in development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents have access to sustainable methods of inputting their views on a wide range of topics; and it is recognised that disabled children and young people have something valuable to say and engagement at some level happens - There is a children and young peoples strategy in place to ensure meaningful participation - Parents are aware of the local mechanisms for parent participation and know how to get involved or how to feed in their views and experiences - There is training and support (expenses etc) to enable parents to get involved - There is communication and participation training for professionals
advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents are engaged at a number of levels and through a number of routes - <u>Clear reporting channels</u> are in place and two-way feedback is regularly sought and received on a 'you said, we did' basis - There is evidence of the effects of an <u>active strategy to ensure that the widest number of parents</u> are encouraged to participate in ways that meet their needs including families seen as hard to reach - Parents are recognised as equal stakeholders and treated as such - <u>Support and advocacy is available</u> to enable disabled children and young people to participate in decisions about their own care and about the design of local services - There are a range of opportunities and mechanisms to encourage and support parents to get involved in service planning and decision-making - There is a large and varied group of parents involved in representing the views and experiences of parents (including age range, condition, hard to reach and families not in receipt of services)

⁴ For those wanting a more detailed explanation of the expectations these can be found at http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/_files/8C6C272B2B76A4E6FE6E8408DED7A2EC.pdf

- Parents know how the local forum feeds into and influences local decision-making processes
- There is regular two-way communication with the wider population of families to inform them about the activities and outcomes resulting from the parent participation work
- The local authority and PCT value the input of parents (and young people) to service planning and their involvement is central to all planning and decision-making
- Participation is coordinated at a strategic level to avoid duplication and ensure services work together on similar issues

5 – Feedback

Summary of expectations^[5]

Disabled children, young people and their families can expect:

- Feedback to be routinely and systematically
 - Sought from all children and families
 - Analysed by socio-demographic factors and by nature of impairment
 - Reported in everyday language
 - Acted upon
- Support to be available to enable disabled children and young people to provide feedback
- A clear and well-publicised complaints procedure
- Complaints to be promptly addressed

at first stage

- There is a complaints system in place, which families know how to access

in development

- There are a number of established routes to listen to the views of parents and children
- Parents are clear what routes are available if they wish to challenge decisions about their child's own care

advanced

- There is an active dialogue between all services and families and children including opportunities to feedback on what works, which feeds into system reviews and planning
- The authority acts on satisfaction as identified in disabled children's services national indicator
- Families report that complaints are dealt with promptly, fairly and in full
- Access to appeals processes are transparent if necessary

^[5] For those wanting a more detailed explanation of the expectations these can be found at http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/_files/8C6C272B2B76A4E6FE6E8408DED7A2EC.pdf