

# Your Family Assessment Information for Parents/Carers



This leaflet is to help understand what will happen during your family assessment and how the assessment can help you and your family.

## Why are you having a Family Assessment?

Either you, or someone who knows you, has asked for help or is worried about you and your family. An assessment of your situation will help us to agree with you what help and support you and your family might need and who might be best to help.

## What is a Family Assessment?

To help us in our work with you, a social worker needs to know more about you and your family. They will want to understand more about your family history, any health difficulties, your support network, housing, employment, and parenting. They will ask questions about your child's health and development. They will also speak with your family and other agencies, such as School, Health Visitors, GP, Teachers, Youth Workers, or Support Workers. We call this an 'assessment'.

Children and young people with a disability, aged under 18, could have an assessment to determine their level of need and should have an up-to-date plan if they are receiving a service such as a direct payment, overnight short-break, or a social work intervention.

The CWD Social Work Team works with a range of children and young people, including those with:

- Severe physical disabilities that significantly impact on their wellbeing.
- Severe learning disabilities.
- Multiple or severe disabilities.
- Severe sensory impairment in conjunction with a severe learning disability.
- Complex health needs.

The above list is not exhaustive. Eligibility Criteria needs to be fully developed and will be added to the SEND Local Offer in due course.

A Child and Family Assessment will be completed within 45 days.



## How will this help me?

The assessment will help you and other people talk about any difficulties you and your family are having, what is working well in your family and what support your child/ren may need, so that if you need any extra support, the right people are there to help.

## What if I don't want a Family Assessment?

If you don't consent to a Child and Family Assessment being completed, the social worker will discuss this with their team manager to decide whether there are too many worries to end our involvement. If there are a lot of concerns about your child/ren, the team manager may decide a meeting with all professionals is needed to discuss the worries and decide if child protection enquiries need to be completed. If all professionals agree that child protection enquiries are needed, the social worker will be able to get information about you and your child and see your child without your consent.

## Talking to Children

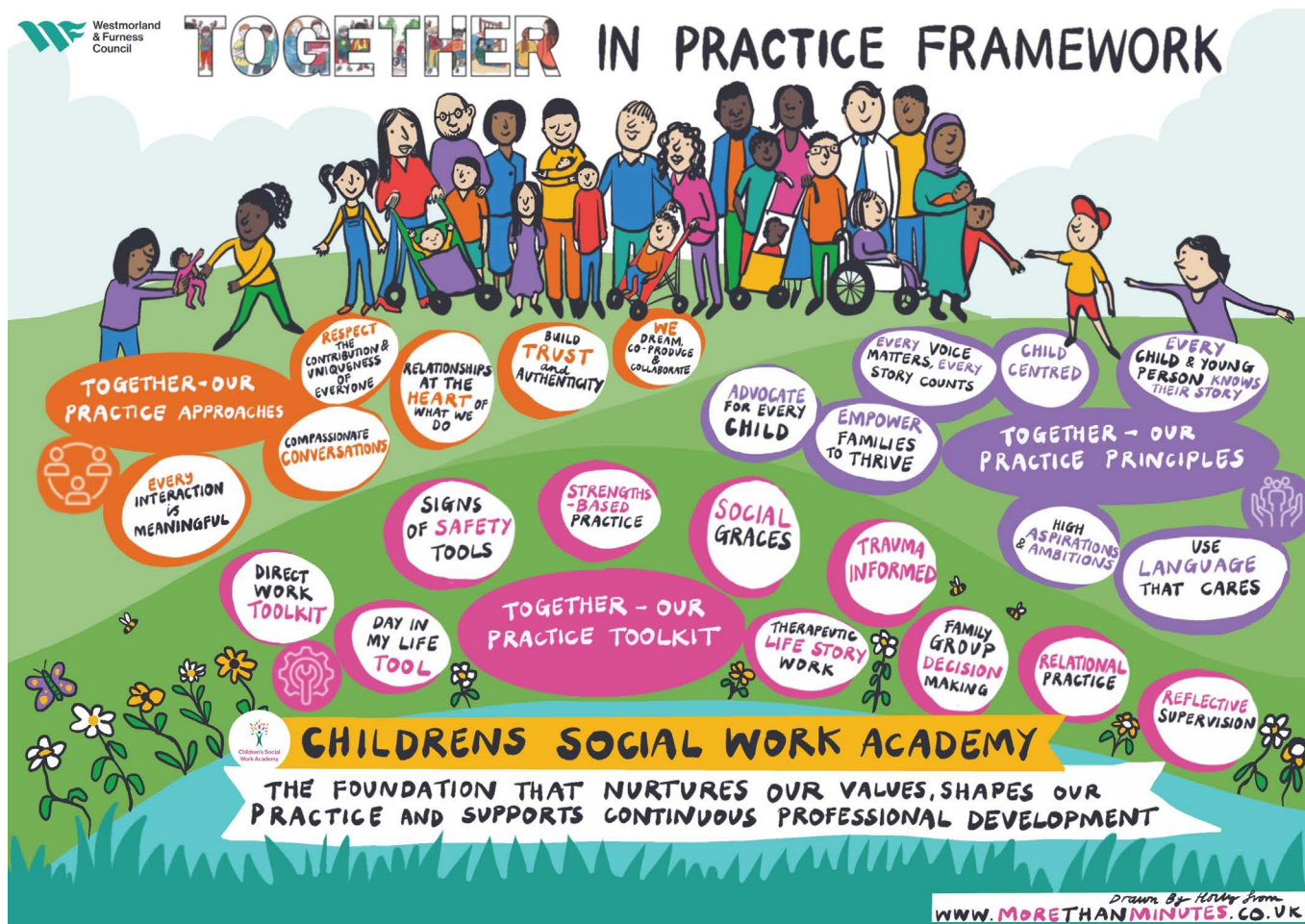
The assessment will always have the views of the child at the 'centre', meaning that their wellbeing sits at the heart of what we do.

Where children are old enough to take part in the assessment, the social worker speak to them in an age-appropriate way about their wishes and feelings. We are required to see children over 4 on their own and with their parents as it helps social workers understand what life is like for them.

If you do not want a social worker to speak to your child alone, you will be told what your rights are in this situation. If it is felt your child is unsafe, our involvement may be escalated.



## What can you expect of us?



Our **'Together in Practice Framework'** has been co-produced with children, young people, families and our workforce.

Our **Practice Approaches** guide how we communicate, support one another, and build positive relationships.

Our **Practice Principles** show us the best ways to help children, young people and families.

Our **Practice Toolkit** is full of creative and helpful ideas and activities to support children, young people and families.

**Relationships are at the heart of what we do:** We will take the time to get to know you and your family, we will listen carefully to what you have to say.

**We have compassionate conversations:** we will understand the challenges that you may have experienced in your life, and the impact they have had on you and your children. We will offer advice and support to help you to deal with the difficulties you and your family may be having.

**We will work alongside you:** we will keep you up-to-date about what we are doing and any worries we have during the assessment and afterwards.

With a little help most, families can sort out their own difficulties and our aim is to help you and your family do that.



## Who will be able to see the information about me?

All information gathered by the social worker will be kept by the organisation, among those needing to know. If information comes to light where the social worker is seriously concerned for your welfare, they will have to tell someone. You will be told what your rights are in this situation.

If you don't agree with what is written in the Child and Family Assessment when it is finished, you will be able to speak to the social worker about this and they can record your views.

## What happens after the Family Assessment?

What happens next is different for every child or young person. After the Family Assessment is completed, the social worker will decide if you need to receive ongoing support. The following may be decided:

### No involvement from the Children's Social Work Team

This will happen if your family is managing well or would benefit from support from a different service (perhaps Family Help). We will discuss with you what services could help. We can refer your family for help from a different service, if you are happy for us to.

Our Involvement will come to an end, the Social Worker will no longer work with your child/ren. However, if your situation changes or you are still worried about your child/ren you can contact us again.

We offer a wide range of groups and activities that are open to all families with children under 18, or under 25 for young people with disabilities, through our Family Hubs.

**More information can be found on The Family Hubs websites:**

Homepage | Westmorland and Furness Family Hubs ([wandffamilyhubs.org.uk](http://wandffamilyhubs.org.uk))



Homepage | Westmorland and Furness Family Help ([www.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/family-help](http://www.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/family-help))



Facebook Page



## Child In Need

This will happen if your family needs more help and support, which you consent to. We will make a Child In Need (CIN) plan with you.

What will be in the Child in Need plan:

- How we and other services will support you to give your child/ren what they need.
- Support that you will receive and what the end goal will look like.

The Social Worker will make sure that an initial Child in Need Meeting is arranged as soon as your child is identified as needing more support. This may be before the completion of the Child and Family Assessment. Good practice suggests that meetings will take place every 6 – 8 weeks, dependant on the level of concern to review the plan and ensure everything that we agreed is being done.

## Child Protection

This will happen if children's services think your child/ren are at risk of significant harm. The child's Social Worker will request an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC). Your child/ren may be supported by a Child Protection (CP) Plan.

What will be in the child protection plan:

- What people are worried about?
- How we and other services will support you to give your child/ren what they need.
- Support that you will receive and what the end goal will look like

Meetings will be held every four weeks to review the plan and ensure everything that we agreed is being done.

Your child's Social Worker will see your children at least once every 4 weeks or more often than this. These visits will be both announced and unannounced.

Most children seen by the Children's Social Work Teams do not 'go into Care'. This will only happen if a child/ren are at serious risk if they stay living with their family.

A Social Worker cannot decide that a child can no longer live with their family; only a Court or the Police can do this. If a Social Worker feels that a child is at risk in your care, they will be open and honest with you, and you will be told what your rights are in this situation.

## Your contacts

Your Social Worker's name and number:

Who to call outside of 9am -5pm (Mon-Thurs and 9am-4:30pm (Friday) - **0300 373 2724**

### Remember:

- You should be involved in all aspects of your assessment.
- It is important that you give your views.
- You have a right to be listened to.
- You should not be afraid to ask if you are unsure about something.
- You will be given a copy of your assessment and agreed plan.



## Comments and Complaints

We would like to hear from you about your experience of using our service, we want to know what support has been helpful and any areas we could improve.

### Contact details:

To make a compliment or complaint about the support you have received from Children and Families Service, there are the following options.

There is an online form at: <https://contactus.digital.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/w/webpage/newrequest>

Email: [complaints@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk)

Telephone: **0300 373 3300**

Post: Complaints Team  
Westmorland and Furness Council  
South Lakeland House  
Lowther Street  
Kendal  
LA9 4DQ





Westmorland  
& Furness  
Council

## Translation Services

If you require this document in another format (e.g. CD, Braille or large type) or in another language, please telephone: **0300 373 3300**.

للوصول إلى هذه المعلومات بلغتك، يرجى الاتصال 0300 373 3300

আপনি যদি এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় পেতে চান তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে 0300 373 3300 নম্বরে টেলিফোন করুন।

如果您希望通过母语了解此信息，  
请致电 0300 373 3300

Jeigu norétumėte gauti šią informaciją savo kalba,  
skambinkite telefonu 0300 373 3300

W celu uzyskania informacji w Państwa języku proszę  
zatelefonować pod numer 0300 373 3300

Se quiser aceder a esta informação na sua língua,  
telefone para o 0300 373 3300

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde görmek istiyorsanız lütfen  
0300 373 3300 numaralı telefonu arayınız

