



**Life Stages Service**  
**Disabled Children and Young Adults Team**  
**Eligibility Criteria for children and young people aged 4 – 17yrs**

The Disabled Children and Young Adults Team within Darlington Borough Council offers support to children and young adults with learning and physical disabilities. To decide what support is appropriate we must undertake an Assessment of Need.

When a referral to the Team is received, a Social Worker will be allocated to undertake the Assessment of Need. Within this assessment the social worker and family will identify the strengths the family already has in meeting the child's needs with the support of any professionals already involved. This helps identify if the child has any unmet needs and who could meet these needs. Needs can be met by the immediate and wider family and support network, professionals already involved or referrals to other professionals and community and universal services.

Following this Assessment of Need and the identification of any unmet needs, a decision will be made as to whether the child or young adult is eligible to receive a service from the Team. To ensure that our services are targeting the appropriate children and young adults, we apply an Eligibility Criteria when looking at eligibility following an Assessment. These criteria are explained in the guidance notes below. The intention of these criteria is to ensure that we do not simply consider the diagnosis that a child or young adult may have; we will also look at the effects their disability has on their day to day life.

To be eligible for a children's service from the Disabled Children and Young Adults Team, children and young adults must meet the following criteria:

1. Be aged between 4 and 17yrs and be ordinarily resident in Darlington. (children aged under 4 years who have a disability can be referred to the Early Help Team, via Children's Initial Advice Team for support in relation to their disability. This is because all very young children usually require a high level of care, support and supervision from a care giver. In exceptional circumstances, Early Help could make a referral to the Disabled Children and Young Adults Team)
2. Have complex needs (in addition to any behavioural problems including ADHD and ADD that may be present) or have a serious or life threatening illness.
3. There must be evidence that the child or young adult's additional needs impact significantly on their ability to enjoy ordinary day to day activities.
4. The child or young adult must require a much greater level of day to day care to meet their needs than would usually be required for a person of that age.
5. They must require a significantly higher level of support in at least three of the following areas than would usually be required for their age;

- a) Personal care and supervision
  - b) Education or employment
  - c) Access to social activities
  - d) Communication
  - e) The physical environment
  - f) Condition management
6. The child or young adult's condition is life limiting or expected to last 6 months or more.

Referral to the Team can be made through the Children's Initial Advice Team at Darlington Borough Council. When making a referral, families and professionals should give as much information as possible about the child's disability and the impact of this, the professionals already involved and the reason for the referral for example what the family want from involvement with the Disabled Children and Young Adults Team. They should provide contact details and professionals should be clear that they have consent from the family to make the referral.

### **Eligibility Criteria Guidance Notes**

These notes are intended to give families and referrers some guidance on the types of things that they should consider in point 5 of the Eligibility Criteria above. Please note that the bullet points below are not an exhaustive list and frequency and intensity are considered in determining whether the child or young adult has unmet eligible needs.

A child or young adult is likely to be regarded as needing a high level of support in these areas if some or all the following points apply.

#### **Personal care and supervision**

- The child or young adult needs lifting or carrying.
- The child or young adult needs help with toileting, bathing and dressing.
- The child or young adult needs assistance with feeding.
- The child's sleeping is interrupted on a regular basis, and they need adult intervention during these waking periods.
- The main carer has very few people apart from themselves who are both able and willing to look after the child or young adult.
- The main carer must be on call to deal with problems arising when the child or young adult is away from the home e.g. in education, employment, day placement etc. This should be over and above what would usually be expected of a carer, when their child is away from home.
- The child or young adult needs constant monitoring and supervision from an adult to ensure their safety, this should be beyond that usually required for a child or young adult of that age.

#### **Education or Employment**

- The child or young adult has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- The child or young adult has a placement in a special school or unit, or within a specialist day placement.
- The child or young adult requires significant support within the school/college/employment environment and would not be able to attend without this.

- The child or young adult is receiving tuition at home because their disability means that they cannot be managed within a school or college environment
- The child or young adult is assessed as requiring specialist education intervention and they are not currently receiving this intervention

#### Access to social activities

- The child or young adult needs physical support to access social, leisure and recreational activities and/or where additional equipment or specialist access is required to facilitate activities.
- The child or young adult requires supervision for safety issues beyond that usually needed for a person of a similar age.
- Support is needed to enable the child or young adult to have appropriate friendships or where family relationships are replacing peer friendships due to their disability.
- The child or young adult's leisure activities are limited to the home environment due to their disability. This may also affect the opportunity of the wider family to enjoy day to day activities and opportunities.

#### Communication

- An alternative or supplemental communication system is needed for the child or young adult to communicate e.g. PECS, sign language, electronic aids.
- The child or young adult's disability means that they are unlikely to develop intelligible verbal communication.
- The child or young adult is unable to understand language used around them without direct support.
- The child or young adult is unable to join in with social activities without direct support with communication.
- The child or young adult may have some processing difficulties which affect their social use of language and ability to understand things in context.

#### The physical environment

- A wheelchair, major buggy or other movement aid is needed.
- Direct supervision is needed to manage safety issues within the home environment beyond that which would usually be expected for a child or young adult of that age.
- A level of direct supervision is needed for all outings outside of the home beyond that which would usually be expected for a child or young adult of that age.
- There is a need for the provision of safety equipment such as gates, locks etc where these would not usually be required for a child or young adult of that age.
- Specialist aids and adaptations are required due to sensory impairment.

#### Condition Management

- The child or young adult needs daily assistance with administering drugs, taking oxygen, giving physiotherapy, giving injections, using medical equipment etc.
- The child or young adult needs to attend frequent appointments and the main carer must attend with them. The main carer must liaise with many professionals.

- The child or young adult is tube fed.
- The child or young adult has had or is about to have major surgery and a lengthy period of recuperation is expected.
- The child or young adult is receiving invasive therapy for conditions such as cancer e.g. chemotherapy, radiotherapy.
- The child or young adult has frequent hospital admissions or needs frequent emergency medical intervention for conditions that are not well controlled by medication e.g. asthma, epilepsy.
- The child or young adult receives daily input of therapy by family members following programmes devised by professionals.
- A child or young adult with autism may require their home environment to be maintained in a specific way e.g. low stimulus, need to follow strict routines.

### **General Notes**

Referral can be made through the Children's Initial Advice Team whose details are below:

Children's Initial Advice Team  
Tel: 01325 406222 (option 2)

The contact details for the Disabled Children and Young Adults Team are:  
Disabled Children and Young Adults Team  
Central House  
Gladstone Street  
Darlington  
DL3 6JX  
Tel: 01325 406125

If, following an Assessment of Needs, a decision is made that the child or young person is not eligible for services, the allocated Social Worker will clearly explain to the family the reasons for this decision. The Social Worker will signpost to other services if appropriate.

Please note, the eligibility criteria must be met in order to receive paid services. The eligibility criteria will be applied, and it is only once this is met that the identified personal budget (direct payment or commissioned services) can be accessed.

Involvement from the Disabled Children and Young Adults Team will be regularly reviewed, and eligibility re-applied to ensure that this is still appropriate. For example, some children or young adults may need temporary support with illnesses such as cancers, that will not be required once their treatment is finished.

Any services provided following an Assessment of Need will be reviewed every 26 weeks to ensure that service provision is still appropriate, and needs are being met. The review may result in no changes, a change to the agreed service, an increase or decrease in the amount of service or the withdrawal of the service, if the need is no longer apparent or eligibility criteria are no longer met.

Disabled Children and Young Adults Team (0-25) - *Updated May 2020*