

Oldham Children's Services

Eligibility Criteria:

Children with Disabilities Social Care and Short Break – Intervention and Support Teams

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L. Cooper

The Children with Disabilities service is made up of two teams, a team of dedicated social workers with a professional interest and background within the specialist focus of the team. The team complete statutory assessment of need, child in need and child protection work. They also offer a social work service to disabled children that are looked after by Oldham. The social work offer is supported and complemented by a team of family intervention workers providing an enhanced early help offer focused on the assessment, implementation, and review of short break provisions.

Our Service vision informs everything we do

We will work relentlessly for our children with disabilities, and additional complex needs to ensure that our plans and interventions are aspirational ensuring they achieve the very best outcomes in life – that they are safe, happy and that they achieve highly. Alongside our aspirational planning we will challenge structural barriers to ensure our young people have access to all the community resources available in Oldham and that they influence decisions and contribute as highly valued members of our community.

Not all disabled children in Oldham will require a service from the children with disabilities (CWD) service. The following therefore need to be considered in determining whether a social work or family intervention work offer from the CWD service is required.

A child or young person will be eligible for an assessment from the CWD or the short break team if –

- A. *The child experiences a disability* that impacts in a way that is complicating their ability to achieve their full potential (their progress in being safe, happy, healthy and ability to achieve) and that the child or young person has a substantial and long-term disability which affects their ability to carry out age appropriate day to day activities.*

*The Equality Act 2010 provides a recognised definition of disability. A person has a disability if “you have a physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities”

- B. *Their needs cannot be met solely within the family, wider family/friends support networks or by universal and targeted services.*
- C. *The child attends a specialist educational provision and will have an Education and Health Care Plan.*
- D. *Parents and Carers require specialist interventions and support to meet the needs of their disabled child. The level of support required to the child and family is so significant that there is a risk of family breakdown, or they require a level of intervention that will prevent them escalating to statutory social work processes, and this support is linked to the needs of the disabled child.*
- E. *The CWD service will work with a whole family including siblings. However, the needs of the disabled child must be the presenting issue identified as the primary need requiring support.*

Eligibility to access Children with Additional and Complex Needs Service and Short Breaks (Children Disability Service)

Where it might be considered that a child has a disability, the effects of the disability can be categorised according to the four levels; mild, moderate, severe and profound.

Mild	Older Children; some limitation present but able to function independently
	Young Children; functioning slightly behind the level expected for age
Moderate	Older Children; Where aids and/or assistance may be required to perform tasks
	Young Children; Functioning around 2/3rds the level expected for age

Severe	Older Children; Are unable to perform tasks without aids and assistance most of the time
	School age Children; Functioning around ½ the level expected for age.

Profound	Older Children; Completely dependent upon carer to perform tasks
	School Age Children; Completely dependent upon carer to perform tasks

Autism, ADHD and Emotional Mental Health Needs

Not all children/young people with a diagnosis of Autism or ADHD will require the support of a specialist CWD social worker or short break family intervention worker. The CWD team will complete an assessment where it is deemed the young person's autism is impacting on their ability to successfully carry out age-appropriate day to day activities and is identified as the primary need requiring support at the point of referral to children's services. Young people experiencing ADHD and / or other social emotional mental health difficulties are likely to receive the support they require from Oldham's healthy young minds service, but if they also require an assessment from a social worker and have no other disabilities, it is likely that this assessment will be facilitated by mainstream social work services following triage by the Duty and Advice service within the Multi agency Safeguarding Hub.

Which young people will require a social work assessment of need from the Children with Disabilities Service?

Children and young people whose needs fall within the eligibility outlined above will receive assessment from the CWD or Short Breaks service.

Oldham's continuum of need document provides an overview of how agencies should work together to meet children and young people's needs at the right time, by the right service. Children and young people's circumstances who require an assessment from the CWD service will fall within level three and level four of the continuum of need.

Within Children and Young Peoples Social Care Services, assessing and meeting the needs of those children with mild and moderate levels of disability falls within the responsibilities of Children's Social Care Teams. This is in order to maximise the social inclusion of children and young people, avoid labelling and also avoids unnecessary dependence upon specialist services.

Where children have disabilities that are considered to be **severe or profound**, it is recognised that a specialist service is likely to be required and these children and young people should be referred to the Children's Disability Service.

The decision around Children Disability Service criteria and whether a child or young person meets the criteria for allocation within the Children Disabilities is accessed through the Duty and Advice team in the Children's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub.

Oldham's Children's Disability Service threshold includes;

- ▶ Must have an Education Health & Care Plan
- ▶ Children/young people with severe or profound learning disabilities;
- ▶ Children/young people with severe or profound physical disability;
- ▶ Children/young people with severe and profound sensory impairment
- ▶ Children/young people with a life limiting illness or complex medical condition;
- ▶ Children/young people with an autistic spectrum disorder with another profound or complex disability.

We work with children and young people considered to be severe or profound.

Those who do not meet our criteria;

- ▶ Diagnosis of ADHD, ADD, ODD
- ▶ Global Developmental Delay with no additional complex needs
- ▶ ASD with no associated learning disability or behavioural issues or specialist school required

Short Breaks – Enhanced Early Help support from the Short Breaks Family Intervention Work Service

Short breaks are essential to ensuring disabled children and their families are able to achieve positive outcomes. Across Oldham, a range of services are provided to support disabled children and young people to develop and achieve and support their parents/ carers to continue to provide the care they need and in line with their Education Health Care Plan.

Some short break services in Oldham are available to all disabled children and families and some can only be accessed through an assessment from the Children with disabilities short break team or the children with disabilities social work team.

In Oldham we aim to provide short break services that support young people to be safe, happy, healthy and achieve highly as valued members of their own community. Short breaks allow disabled children to spend time away from their family supporting them to make new friendships and have fun. Short breaks also allow parents and carers the time to rest and spend time with other children in the family.

Universal Support and the Local Offer

Most disabled children and young people in Oldham will be able to access a short break that meet their needs through the local offer* and / or universal services.

** A local offer is a wide range of information about all the support and facilities which families can expect to find in their area for children and young people who have special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities.*

These children and young people's circumstances will fall within **level one** of the continuum of need.

Targeted Short Break Support

Some children will have more complex needs and may require additional support to access a short break. Where families are finding that universal services and the local offer are not able to meet their needs, they can contact early help to find out what extra support is available.

These children, young people and their families may require some targeted support. They are also likely to potentially benefit from an early help assessment and possibly early help support. In Oldham, targeted support is provided through a range of support services in the community that early help will be able to signpost and refer families toward.

These children and young people's circumstances will fall within **level two** of the continuum of need.

Oldham's Children with Disabilities – Short Break Team

The role of the team is to carry out an assessment of need where information and advice has been provided about access to universal services and, the local offer and targeted services, but these are not sufficiently meeting children's needs.

Where all options have been thoroughly explored and further support is required the children with disabilities family intervention workers within the short break team will complete a specialist Short Breaks and Carers Assessment. If the assessment determines that additional support is required, and short break needs cannot be met by universal or targeted short break services, a request for a specialist short break service can be made to Oldham's short break panel.

There are a number of options that can be explored within the specialist short break offer including daytime care in the young person's home or elsewhere, overnight care, services to help parent carers in school holidays, in the evening and / or on weekends, and personalised budgets to support families and young people to put their own packages of support together.

An assessment will be completed with the family's consent by either a family intervention or social worker within the short break team depending on the level of presenting need. Once that assessment is complete and if it identifies that a specialist short break service is required, the assessment will be presented to the "short break panel". Members of the panel will be asked to consider what kind of support is required based on your family circumstances. The panel will consider whether the proposed support plan put together by your family intervention worker or social worker is reasonable and proportionate in improving your family life. The panel will consider all

options available before agreeing commissioned services from the local authority. All decisions are recorded and will be confirmed to you by your family intervention worker or social worker. If you do not agree with the decision of the panel, an appeal can be submitted via your worker with any additional evidence for the assessment to be represented at panel for further consideration. Most appeals are easily resolved but if you remain unhappy with the outcome of the panel a complaint can be submitted through the council's complaint procedure.

If you receive specialist short break support services, we will complete a review of the support plan once a year to ensure that the services provided meet the need of your family. You can also request a re-assessment or review at any time.