

## **Young People's Service**

### **Guidance on Eligibility Criteria**

#### **1. Introduction**

All referrals to Safeguarding and Specialist Services (S&SS) are referrals of Children In Need. All new referrals are taken by Social Care Direct (SCD), screened and, if deemed of moderate or serious concern, passed to the appropriate Team Manager.

Broadly speaking, Children In Need referrals are deemed moderate and Children In Need of Protection as serious.

#### **2. Children in Need**

S&SS undertake assessments of children, under their Children In Need Procedures, where a child's health or development is being impaired or there is a high risk of impairment without services (S17 Children Act 1989).

#### **3. Young People's Service**

The Young People's Service will provide a specialist service for young people aged 16 and 17 who have left mainstream school (i.e. completed Year11) where there is an assessed need and will consider the following referrals:

- Homeless young people
- Runaways – Community Support will do the initial assessment and will seek intervention from the Young People's Service if further intervention is required
- Unaccompanied asylum seekers \*
- Young carers with complex needs – where caring responsibilities are having a significant impact of the young person's health, development and well being \*
- Remands into the care of the local authority
- Requests for finance (these would need to be agreed by the Resource Allocation Panel)
- Cases closed by the Young People's Service within the previous 12 weeks
- Joint Protocol Meetings for Homeless young people (e.g. young person is also a parent, has complex needs that are not being met by other agencies)
- Young people with complex needs i.e. whose needs cannot be met by a single agency and co-ordination of services is required)

- Risk of family breakdown e.g. young person is beyond parental control, deteriorating parent/young person relationship \*
- Domestic violence – where an initial assessment is required to identify appropriate support
- A young person who is scapegoated or marginalised within the family unit e.g. the young person constantly seen as the problem, complete lack of emotional warmth \*\*
- Young people who put themselves at risk through their behaviour e.g. homeless, prostitution, chronic substance misuse \*\*
- Children with emotional or behavioural difficulties whose parents require support beyond what is available through universal services, or, those who persistently decline support.\*\* (example - a child whose behaviour may cause them to be at risk through parental over-chastisement) \*\*
- Prolific young offenders, with complex needs, who require a multi agency assessment.

\* The Local authority has particular duties towards this group of children.

\*\* These referrals would be allocated based on assessed priority and the availability of resources

#### **4. Initial Assessment**

The Young People's Service will give appropriate advice/information or signpost to an appropriate service where an initial assessment is not needed.

Where young person's health or development is being impaired or there is a high risk of impairment without services (S17 Children Act 1989) and an assessment is required the Team Manager will allocate this to a YPA.

The aim of the assessment is to:

- establish whether the young person is in need – do they need additional services from S&SS.
- Gather information needed to assess the seriousness of the concerns and the services needed to address them

Where there are *moderate or serious concerns* S&SS will aim to offer an assessment within a 7 working days

The target for completion of initial assessments is seven working days from the date of referral.

## 5. Consent

There is an expectation that consent will be sought as this promotes working in partnership with families, facilitates cooperation and is more likely to lead to positive outcomes for young people.

## 6. Children in Need - Appropriate Referrals

Ensuring that young people's needs are met appropriately is the responsibility of all agencies involved with them and their families. S&SS provide a specialist service for children and young people where there is an assessed need.

Prior to making a referral to S&SS agencies should give consideration to the complexity of the young person's needs and the need for an assessment.

Complex situations requiring co ordination of services and in depth assessment are appropriate referrals under the Children In Need Procedures.

***Referrals should be specific to an individual child and not on sibling groups, unless the referrer believes each one requires an assessment.***

Where there is only one specific issue the identified need may be met within universal services such as Health or Education or it may be more appropriate to refer to another agency/service e.g.:-

- Self harm – Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
- Non engagement in post 16 education, employment or training – Connexions
- Isolated young parents – Children's Centres (previously Sure Start), Parent and Toddlers etc.

Durham County Council also has Service Level Contracts with supports organisations that offer services to young people e.g.

- Young Carers project – DISC/ Barnardos
- Family Support Services
- SHAID, DART and Moving On – homeless young people.

For information about local support groups, activities, charities etc. check out Durham County Council's Community Information Database on our website.

## Young People's Service - ASSESSMENT GRID