

Child & Parent Assessment Team Service Summary

Fostering Devon



'Evidenced Based And Research Informed Assessments'

Aims and Objectives

The Service is a Devon County Council children's service provision that is independent of the Children's Social Work teams.

Assessments are undertaken:

- 1) within Parent & Child Arrangements where it is deemed necessary for a parent and child to be in a fostering family based environment for the purpose of assessment
- 2) in a specialist pre-birth or in a community based context both involving a multi-agency approach engaging families within their home environment where the child or unborn is subject to Legal Proceedings or where the Local Authority are considering permanence plans.

Our community based approach to assessment is undertaken in a robust and client-centred manner. We remain focused on ensuring the right outcome for the child or unborn is achieved.

The service endeavours:

- to reduce delay in the achievement of permanency for children
- to enable parents to continue to parent their children in a safe environment with a view to supporting and encouraging them to develop a better understanding of their child's needs and how to adequately meet these independently and on a consistent basis
- to test out parenting ability in a more natural setting
- to avoid repeat assessments being requested or the need for s 38.6 assessments
- to maintain parents and their children close to their local community and families
- to provide an objective level of independence with evidence-based parenting assessments

A supportive environment for parents to continue parenting their child (where appropriate) with a view to support and encourage a better understanding of their child needs whilst informing decisions on how this can be achieved safely within the child's timeframe



Assessment

The **comprehensive assessment** uses a team approach and a number of standardised, specialist and accredited assessment tools. It is informed by a number of practitioners, who have experience and expertise in Childcare Social Work and associated social care settings. The assessment team will include; child care social workers with experience in expert witness/court work and skills in working with adults with learning difficulties, poor mental health and drug and alcohol misuse, Family Based Foster Carers (where appropriate) and Specialist Family practitioners.

Assessment Options

- Attachment Based Assessments and Interventions
- Risk Assessments, including Mental Health, Learning Disability and Substance Misuse.
- Capacity to Change Protect Assessments
- Assessments within a Fostering Based Arrangement
- Competency Based Parenting Skills Assessment
- PAMs and VIG

Assessment request

The potential assessment request must meet one or more of the following **criteria** in order to be considered by the Service:

- The family are in legal proceedings or subject to Public Law Outline processes
- The family has two or more complex needs (e.g. domestic abuse, learning disability, substance abuse, mental health, Care Leaver)
- Previous children have been subject to legal proceedings, child protection processes or have had periods in public care
- Severe concerns for the safety of an unborn infant, where immediate separation is being considered.



Referral Process

Referrals for CPAT Placement Arrangements are accessed via Placement Referral.

Community Based Assessments requests have to present with evidence that a Single Assessment has been undertaken, meet the criteria for a specialist assessment and there is a clear rationale for an independence of the parenting assessment. Please contact the team direct to discuss capacity to undertake community based assessment work. Assessment placements are normally 12-15 weeks duration. Should the assessment end early and the parent leave the expectation is that the baby will be moved to a child only placement.

The service has capacity for a maximum of 17 assessments at any one time.

Child & Parent Assessment Team (CPAT)

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