

Children with Disability Service Eligibility Criteria December 2023

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Document Title	Children with Disability Service Eligibility Criteria
Document Description	This protocol sets out the eligibility criteria for support for children and young people who have a diagnosed severe/profound disability or diagnosed chronic health condition resulting in severe and profound disability.
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1. Introduction

The Disability Service offers a range of support services to children and young people in Barnet and is comprised of the following services:

- Children with Disability Team
- Specialist Autism Team
- Short Breaks Team
- The Occupational Therapy Team
- Early intervention Autism Project in partnership with Resources for Autism

The service works with children up to the age of 18 years and their families however transitioning into adulthood is complex and to enable the right support at the right time this service will continue working with some young people into their 19th year to enable smooth transition to adult services and to avoid the hard cut off of services when they turn 18. Please see the Transitions Protocol for more information.

2. Teams and services available

2.1 The Children with Disability Team

The Children with Disability team offers a service to children and young people who have a diagnosed severe/profound disability or diagnosed chronic health condition that has or may result in severe and profound disability.

2.1.1 Eligibility

In order to be eligible for an assessment from the Children with Disability Team there must be reasonable cause to believe that the disability is:

a) Substantial

There is significant impairment or loss of function affecting the child's ability to carry out essential daily living activities.

b) Permanent

The impairment is deemed to be life long and there may be further deterioration, or the condition is terminal.

The child will have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and will be eligible for a Specialist Educational Provision.

An assessment of need will not automatically result in the provision of a social work service if the needs identified can be met through alternative service provision.

2.1.2 Restrictions

The Children with Disability Team does not offer a service to children who only have:

- Emotional and behavioural difficulties
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- Sleep disorders
- Specific Learning Difficulties e.g., Dyslexia
- Mental health problems
- Allergies or skin conditions

- Asperger's Syndrome

unless these are also accompanied by a substantial and permanent disability.

Generally, children and young people with Autism will not be eligible for the Children with Disability Team unless they have an additional condition which does meet the criteria, but they may be able to access support through other means such as universal services or Short Break provision. Young people with complex needs as a result of Autism may receive a service from the Specialist Autism Team .

2.2 Specialist Autism Team

The Specialist Autism Team (SAT) was launched in January 2021 in response to the number of autistic children and young people being referred into statutory safeguarding teams requiring a specialist response due to demonstrating behaviours that challenge and experiencing family breakdown. This social work team is committed to improving the quality and care for autistic children and young people, aged between 0-19 years, through providing specialist social care assessment and intervention with a view to preventing family breakdown and admission into hospital. The Specialist Autism Team works closely with partner organisations such as education providers, SEN, CAMHS, Adult Mental Health Services and specialist Independent Autism providers to provide holistic care and support where it is needed.

2.2.1 Eligibility

- SAT is for children and young people with autism, mild/moderate Learning Disabilities and severe behaviours of concern including those with a mental health condition.
- The diagnosis of Autism, accompanied with co-morbidities such as Anxiety Disorder, ADHD, self-harming behaviours, Oppositional Defiance Disorder (ODD), obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA).
- Presenting behaviours are assessed as creating a risk to self and/or others with the potential of family and/or placement breakdown.
- A number of these children and young people are at risk of hospital admission and are likely to be known to the Adolescent Crisis Team at CAMHS or are hospitalised under Mental Health section, MHA s.2 or s.3, requiring Specialist MDT discharge plans and s117 after care plans and joint commissioning with the relevant ICB.
- The complexity of need requires a multi-disciplinary response and is likely to involve a wide range of agencies/services from Health (e.g., CAMHS, including TCAPS, specialist hospital settings) and Education (SEN, SENDIASS, BEAM, Autism Advisory Teachers and Specialist educational support or provision). There may also be criminal justice involvement and the necessity to involve Family Courts or Courts of Protection.
- Where behaviours and profiles are likely to impact on the ability of autistic children and young people to engage within the community, educational settings, or employment.
- They may attend a specialist education provision, but most of the children and young people in the SAT are in mainstream school and are academically able. They may have an EHCP or be in the process of assessment for an EHCP. However, this is not always the case and nor is it a necessity for SAT support.

2.2.2 Restrictions

- Not all children and young people presenting with autism and behaviours that challenge will be immediately eligible for SAT support. The expectation is that other relevant services are explored. Some families have found that access to the LBB Short Break service, or support via the early intervention project with Resources for Autism (RfA) is sufficient in meeting need. There is also the TCAPS provision linked to CAMHS.
- SAT do not work with children and young people with autism and a 'severe and profound' disability; this is the role of the 0-18 teams within the Disability Service.

2.3 Short Break Provision

Short Break Provision has a wider eligibility criteria and information is available on the Local Offer Website.

Information on the eligibility criteria and how to access the support can be found [here](#).

3. Referrals to the Disability Service

Referrals to access support or to raise safeguarding issues or concerns about disabled children and young people aged under 18 should be directed through the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). Referrals from professionals should be sent to the MASH via the on-line referral form. Referrals from parents can be made to the MASH by telephone.

The MASH will consider the information available at the point of referral and make a decision as to which is the appropriate team to follow up the concerns raised. This could be the 0-18 Disability Service, 0-25 Specialist Autism Team, the Early Help Assessment Team or the Duty and Assessment Team.

Some children will transfer into SAT from other social work team when it is identified that a child in the family meets the criteria and the family would benefit from the interventions within SAT.

4. Assessments

The Disability Service will undertake the appropriate assessment depending on the nature of the referral. This could be:

- Child with Disability (CWD) Assessment
- Child and Family Assessment
- Carers Assessment
- Care Act Assessment

As part of the assessment we will consider the needs of all members of the household.

All assessments will be completed within 45 days and a copy of the assessment will be provided to the family.

5. Planning

If, after assessment, it is decided that the child or young person requires support from the Disability Service then a plan will be put in place – the nature of the plan will depend on the level of support or provision needed.

A copy of the plan will be given to the family.

The plan will detail the services to be offered and any expectations regarding how the child's identified needs will be met.

All plans will be reviewed at least once every 12 months and more when necessary due to changes in the child or young person's circumstances.

The parents or carer may request a review of the plan if additional support is requested.

6. Child Protection

Research indicates that disabled children and young people are at an increased risk of abuse and neglect.

If information is received or concerns are identified regarding a child known to the Disability Service, or a child who meets the criteria for an assessment, which indicate that a child or young person is at risk of significant harm, this will be investigated by the Disability Service according to the Child Protection Procedures or the Adult Safeguarding Procedures.

7. Disability Register

The Disability Register is maintained by the Children's Services but is independent of the work/role of the Disability Service. Registration does not provide any entitlement to services from the Disability Service or for Assisted Travel permits, Blue Badges or Freedom Passes. These requests need to be made to the appropriate departments.

Children and young people receive a registration card.

Information held on the Register is used for service planning.