



## Assessment—information for parents/carers

[www.hartlepool.gov.uk](http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk)

### What is an Assessment?

You have been given this factsheet because either someone in your family or someone else, is worried about a child or young person and have asked Hartlepool Children's Services for help .

### Why is an Assessment being done?

Before Children's Services can help, we need to know more about your family. By doing an assessment we will try to find out what help and support your family needs and who best could give that help. What we find out will need to be written down.

Although Social Workers and other professionals normally take the lead in doing an assessment, it should always be done with your family and in a way that your family can have a say.

As part of the assessment we may gather and share information with other relevant people. We will ask you for agreement to this and keep your information safe.

Only if we think that there is a serious concern to the welfare of a child will we share what we have found out without agreement or against your wishes. We will tell you what your rights are if this happens.

## **What will happen?**

The social worker will meet with your family to do an assessment.

The social worker will see and talk to the children involved and help them to join in and have their say.

If anyone in your family needs help in making sure we are clear about what they think and feel we can bring in someone to help us talk to each other e.g. An interpreter or signer.

When other people are already helping a family, it is likely that the social worker will want to speak to them. We will discuss this with you.

If someone in your family does not agree with what is said, this will be written down as part of the assessment.

The aim of the assessment is to see where we can help and draw up a plan to help your child or children. You will be given a copy of the plan.

## **What will be expected of you?**

We know that most parents want the best for their children. The more parents and family members are able to share with the social worker, the more likely we will be able to help.

## **What you can expect of us?**

We will listen carefully to what your family has to say, offer advice and, if necessary, other support to help with children and to help with difficulties.

We will let your family know what we are doing and what we are thinking.

We know that often with a little help a family can sort out their own problems and our aim is to help you do that. In a very small number of cases, there are serious concerns about a child's safety. Making sure the child is safe will be our first concern. The social worker will explain if they think this is the case and what will happen.

We will try our best to offer any help as soon as possible. We will make sure that everyone is told what is happening and if there will be any delays.

The social worker will make sure that the Assessment

- Has the child/young person at it's heart;
- Actively involves the child/young person;
- Considers each child individually;
- Is agreed with the family;
- Is done in an open and honest way;
- Is focussed on actions and outcomes;
- Builds on strengths;
- Includes information from all relevant people;
- Takes areas of disagreement seriously;
- Results in a plan for the child and their family.

### **How long will an Assessment take?**

Our aim is to complete assessments as soon as possible but they can take up to 45 working days.

Where an assessment is taking a long time, the social worker will check with the child to make sure they are safe and their wishes and feelings are being listened to.

## Contact us

You can contact the Children's Hub by letter, telephone or email. If English is not your first language, we can provide a translation service.

## Our opening times

We open at 8:30am every weekday. We close at 5:00pm Monday to Thursday. On Fridays we close at 4:30pm.



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