

## Child and Family Assessment

### *What is it ?*

The Child and Family Assessment is the assessment tool that is used for all children's assessments by Coventry Children's Social Work Service.

The Child and Family Assessment should be used as one assessment to ensure all information is in one place, making this easier for families to read, and enable a clear picture and understanding of the needs to enable support to be tailored to meet the needs of all families. The assessment tool enables all information to be held in one place to support decision making and next steps.

### *Purpose of Assessment ?*

Whatever legislation the child is assessed under, the purpose of the assessment is always:

- To gather important information about a child and family;
- To analyse their needs and/or the nature and level of any risk and harm being suffered by the child;
- To decide whether the child is a child in need (Children Act 1989 Section 17) or is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm (Children Act 1989 Section 47);
- To provide support to address those needs to improve the child's outcomes and welfare and where necessary to make them safe.

### *The Assessment will look at*

- The developmental needs of the children being assessed
- The capacities of parents or caregivers to respond appropriately to those needs
- The impact of wider family and environmental factors on parenting capacity and children
- The child's welfare and safety;
- Whether, and if so how, to provide help to children and family members.
- What form of help will bring about the best possible outcomes for the child
- What needs to happen to enable the children to achieve their best.

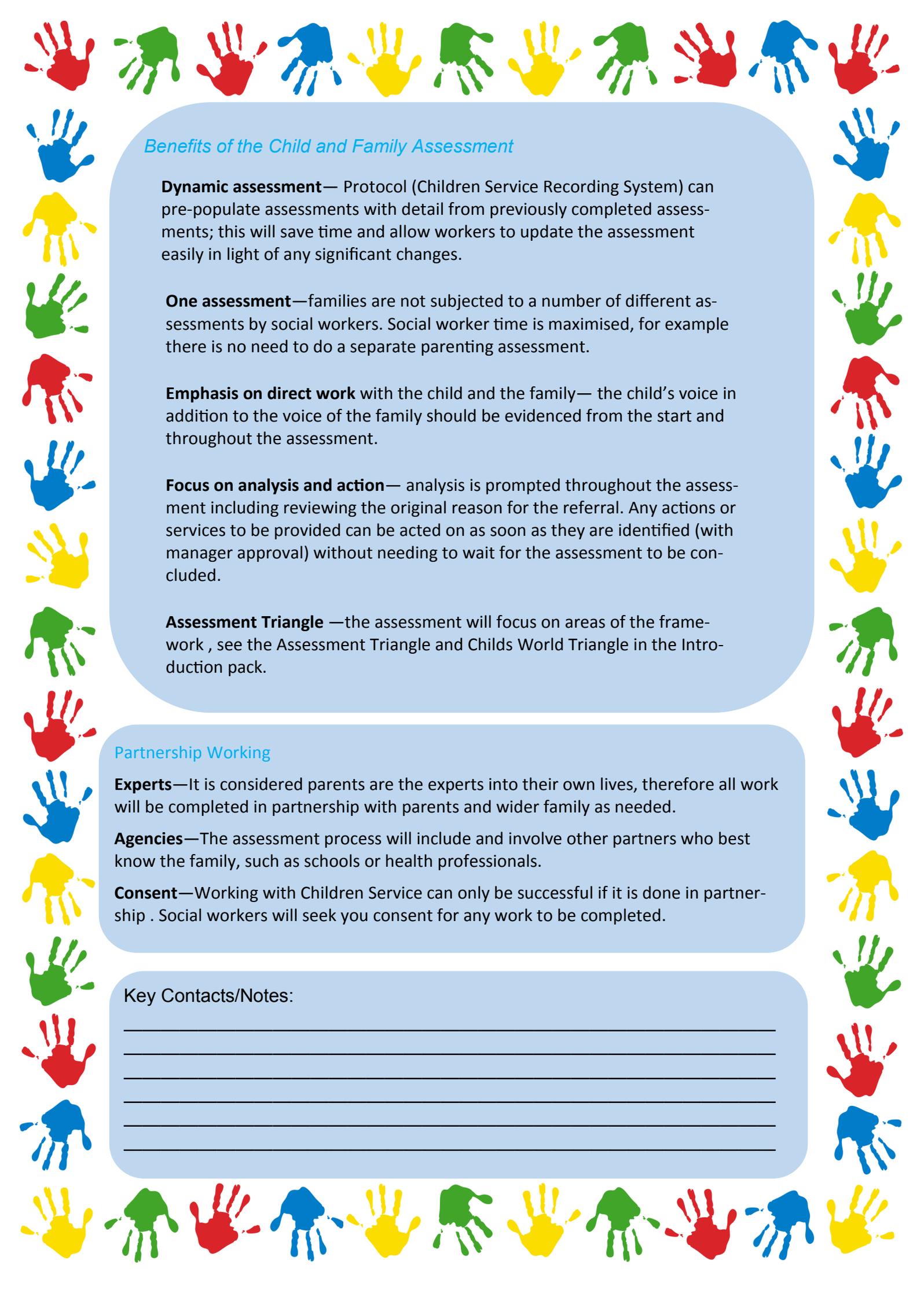
**See My World Triangle in the pack**

### *Timescales for decisions*

Once a decision has been made that an assessment will be carried out, the decision points are at:

- 10 days maximum to consider initial referral and timescales
- 35 days maximum for the Child and Family Assessment

Child and Family Assessment should be concluded within 45 days maximum.



## Benefits of the Child and Family Assessment

**Dynamic assessment**— Protocol (Children Service Recording System) can pre-populate assessments with detail from previously completed assessments; this will save time and allow workers to update the assessment easily in light of any significant changes.

**One assessment**—families are not subjected to a number of different assessments by social workers. Social worker time is maximised, for example there is no need to do a separate parenting assessment.

**Emphasis on direct work** with the child and the family— the child's voice in addition to the voice of the family should be evidenced from the start and throughout the assessment.

**Focus on analysis and action**— analysis is prompted throughout the assessment including reviewing the original reason for the referral. Any actions or services to be provided can be acted on as soon as they are identified (with manager approval) without needing to wait for the assessment to be concluded.

**Assessment Triangle** —the assessment will focus on areas of the framework , see the Assessment Triangle and Childs World Triangle in the Introduction pack.

## Partnership Working

**Experts**—It is considered parents are the experts into their own lives, therefore all work will be completed in partnership with parents and wider family as needed.

**Agencies**—The assessment process will include and involve other partners who best know the family, such as schools or health professionals.

**Consent**—Working with Children Service can only be successful if it is done in partnership . Social workers will seek you consent for any work to be completed.

Key Contacts/Notes:

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