

Child in Need Plans

Information for
Parents and Carers



Why does Children's Social Care need to be involved?

If Leicestershire Children's Services is told by someone that your child may be suffering harm or in need of support to reach their full potential and development, the law says that they must look into the matter to make sure that your child is safe. Anyone can contact Children's Services if they are worried about a child. This is in line with the Children Act 1989, section 17.

Who is a 'Child in Need'?

A child in need is a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a healthy and reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled.



What is likely to happen?

Where it has been suggested that there are worries about your child or that your family needs support, you will be spoken to by a social worker. You will be told about the concerns that have been reported about your child. It may not be possible to tell you who reported the concerns.

The social worker will ask you if they can complete a child and family assessment which will help them to understand whether any help or support is needed for your family and to look at who can provide this support.

Consent

We need your permission to do this assessment and so if you do not consent then an assessment cannot be completed. In that situation, the social worker will have to consider if the concerns are serious enough to need a Child Protection process which is not voluntary, or alternatively if other services and organisations could offer you support in a way that you do consent to, such as from school, nursery, health services or Early Help Services.

Child in Need Meetings

Child in Need core groups are held every 6 weeks, and the initial Child in Need review is held 12 weeks from the start of the plan and no longer than every 6 months to make sure that the plan is moving forward and is working to make the situation better.

Home Visits

It is expected that as a minimum your child must be seen every 20 working days. This is so that we can make sure the plan is working, that your child is well and to gather their views and thoughts. Depending on their age and wishes, we may like to complete some direct work with them, or simply spend time with them and discuss things that are going well or things they may need some support with. We would ask to also see your child at school/nursery on their own, again we would need your permission to do this.

What if the concerns get worse?

If during the Child in Need plan we become worried that your child is at risk of significant harm, or that things are not getting better, we may need to consider whether a strategy discussion is needed to look at all the information and decide whether a Child Protection Enquiry is needed. If this is completed and we still have concerns, we may need to look at having a Child Protection plan instead.

Working with others

Throughout the Child in Need plan, it is expected that all professionals keep in contact with each other regularly to share any important information or updates. It would be helpful for you as the parents/carers of the children to have your own network of support too. It will be suggested that a family network meeting be held with those you feel supported by to look at how they can help you through the plan now and also in the future.



Family Networks

As part of the Child in Need plan, it is expected that a family network meeting is held within 10 days of the initial Child in Need meeting. A family network meeting is a meeting where your identified friends and family members come together with you and your social worker to talk about the worries the Local Authority has and think of ways that they can support you. Your social worker will help you to identify who these people can be and once you have your network, they can be part of your safety plan. It is expected that once Childrens Social Care can end their involvement, your network will continue to give you their support.

Safety Planning

If we become involved with your family, we will develop a safety plan with you. A safety plan helps us all to agree what actions will be taken to make sure that the children are kept safe from the things we are worried about. This will involve you as well as your network.

Our Core Values:

Our Core Values across Leicestershire is to ensure that when we work we families we are:

Aspiration - Being aspirational for our children, families and workforce.

Being Curious - Being Curious and paying attention to the detail

Collaboration - Building strong working relationships

Other Useful Links:

For further information and details about the process or if parents want further independent advice please contact Citizens Advice:

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/section/17

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/section/47

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/family/children-and-young-people/child-abuse/local-authority-involvement/local-authority-investigations-of-child-abuse/

Making a complaint:

Speak to the Social Worker and Team Manager:

If a parent is not happy about the service that has been offered or feel they have been treated unfairly, it is important that this is discussed with the Social Worker and/or their Team Manager.

Speak to our Complaints Team:

If the complaint is not resolved a formal complaint can be made by using the following website:

www.leicestershire.gov.uk/about-the-council/contact-us/complaints-and-comments

Links to our Policy and Procedures:

<https://llrscb.proceduresonline.com/index.htm>