

Assessment Quick Guide

What is the purpose of an assessment?

- Gather information about the child, family, and extended network
- Analyse needs and nature/level of risk and harm
- Analyse child, family, and network strengths in relation to concerns
- Determine if the child is a child in need or is at risk of significant harm and a child in need of protection
- Develop a plan of support **with** the family/carers/network that will address *who will do what in the child's day to day life to help them be safe, well, and achieve*

What does a good assessment look like?

- It is child focused and their voice is clear throughout the assessment. **It must include the impact of adult behaviours and external factors on the child**
- It is **wholistic** including meaningful consideration of gender, ethnicity, faith, disability, language, sexuality, and class
- There are **specific** details about worries and risks rather than generic statements about “significant harm” or “inappropriate behaviours”. There are also specific details about strengths and safety which mitigate the worries
- **The language is clear, simple, and jargon free.** It is written for the parents/carers (and possibly the young person)
- Information is gathered from various sources (family/friend network, multi-agency professionals, observation, historical records) to support a clear analysis
- Includes danger/worry statements and safety/wellbeing goals to sharpen analysis
- Must include a review of the family history to understand patterns and impact of significant events. This will help avoid “start again syndrome”. A clear, concise, and accurate chronology is an essential tool for analysis
- Tools such as the Graded Care Profile (neglect), DASH Risk Assessment (domestic abuse), and the Signs of Safety Harm Matrix are used to evidence and analyse
- The assessment is shared with the family/carers with opportunity for them to correct any information and give their view (which should be documented)
- It is focused on action and outcomes for children

The Plan

- The plan/intervention does not wait until the end of the assessment if there are concerns that must be addressed during assessment
- **The plan is made with the family and their network, using their best ideas and solutions to address the worries**
- The plan gets into the specific details of *who will do what in the child's day to day life to keep them safe, well, and thriving*. This is not a list of services nor of tasks for the adults
- The family and support network have a copy of the plan; there is a child friendly “stick on the fridge” version for the child

