

## **Children's Services**

### **Standards for Parenting Assessments which includes Pre-birth**

#### **To be used in conjunction with the Parenting Assessment (to include Pre-birth) form on Mosaic**

#### **Purpose**

Parenting Assessments serve to understand and assess the parenting that a child/ren are receiving or are likely to receive (Pre-birth). The impact of this parenting on the physical, emotional, social and educational wellbeing and development of the child/ren. The aspects of parenting that can be built on and those areas that need to change to improve life for the child/ren.

When talking to parents we would want to talk about drawing on their existing strengths (what is going well) and looking at the areas where they feel they could do better (what needs to change/could improve). What they think and we think the parenting at the moment means for the children. Focus on understanding what support they may need and how this can be provided (intervention plan).

#### **Practice Standards**

Parenting Assessments (including Pre-Birth Assessments):

- Are completed by Children's Social Care Social Workers based in their various teams.
- Whether a Parenting Assessment is required remains the discretion of the Team Manager and Social Worker working with the family.
- Decisions about whether to complete a Parenting Assessment or not, should be taken at various points in Children's Social Care involvement with the family. For example; at the end of the Child & Family assessment, in supervision, Line of Sight, Child in Need reviews, Child Protection conferences, during Pre Proceedings, or any other forum where there is opportunity for reflection.
- A brief Child & Family Assessment can be completed if there is clear evidence that a Parenting Assessment is required. The Parenting Assessment should begin immediately on closing the Child and Family Assessment.

- When a parent has not had a Parenting Assessment by a 2<sup>nd</sup> Child Protection review this should be considered by the conference members.
- When a parent is in Pre-Proceedings a Parenting Assessment should be undertaken.
- When there have been repeat episodes of Child Protection and Pre-Proceedings a Parenting Assessment should be undertaken.
- Announced and unannounced visits (where appropriate) to the home to undertake extended observations of the parent/child/sibling interactions should be included in all Parenting Assessments.
- The voice of the child should be included in all Parenting Assessments.
- should include an assessment of the adults and children living in the home.
- should include absent parents and significant others and their impact on parenting.
- should be supported by reflective supervision, where evidence-based research and its application to parenting capacity is discussed. This should include, if relevant, any reference to research by 'PAUSE'.
- should be completed within 12 weeks only be extended beyond 12 weeks in exceptional circumstances.
- Parenting Assessments pre-birth should start as early as possible and be completed 8 weeks before the expected delivery date.
- Following a Parenting Assessment pre-birth, a Parenting Assessment post-birth may be required.
- Where a Parenting Assessment concludes a support plan is required this needs to be progressed and reviewed appropriately.
- Having concluded the support plan an updated Parenting Assessment is likely to be required to assess capacity to change and sustain change.
- Parenting Assessments should be informed by tools specific to the concerns (Neglect tool; Graded Care Profile; Domestic Abuse tool; Impact Chronology; Social History).
- All recommended tools will be located in the Children's hub.

- Parenting Assessments could be used in Court even if completed outside of proceedings. Therefore, they should always be factual, balanced, evidence-based and research informed.
- Parenting Assessments should not be signed off by a manager if they do not meet the above standards.
- Only in exceptional circumstances will Parenting Assessments be commissioned externally. Agreement for any external commissioning is sought through Line of Sight.
- All Parents who have a Learning disability where Parenting is a concern should have a PAMS Parenting Assessment (please refer to PAMS practice standards). These should be sought through Line of Sight and may be commissioned externally in some circumstances.