



<b>Briefing for:</b>	Children's Safeguarding Policy and Performance Panel
<b>Title:</b>	Common Assessment Framework
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Alison Botham
<b>Date:</b>	September 2010

## **1. Introduction**

This report is to inform the Panel about implementation of the Common Assessment Framework in Haringey.

## **2. Aims**

The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) for children and young people is a standardised approach to conducting an assessment of a child's additional needs. It can be used by practitioners across Children's Services in England, and is essentially a tool for identifying a child's needs and what is working well in their life, then putting in place a plan to make sure they get the support they need. The CAF is voluntary, and both the assessment and the resulting action plan must be agreed by the parent/carer and/or the child or young person.

In Haringey, CAF's can be undertaken by a range of practitioners working with children and young people including teachers and health visitors. As such it is completed by a professional who knows the child well.

CAF assessments aim to support children with some additional needs within their community and using resources available in that community. Some children may require additional resources and these are accessed through the fortnightly CAF Panel meetings.

Resources could include a nursery placement, speech and language therapy or Child and Adolescent Mental Health intervention. In keeping with Haringey



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CYPS agreed thresholds, this intervention will incur a level 2a, 2b and 3 and therefore prior to or subsequent to social work intervention.

### **3. Process:**

Professionals are advised to contact the CAF team before they do a common assessment, in order to check if a common assessment already exists, and find out if the child or young person has a lead professional or other practitioner undertaking the lead role in line with statute or best practice, such as a social worker.

The parent and or the child/young person will meet with an involved professional or practitioner to gather and record onto a CAF form the child and family's strengths and needs before submitting a CAF assessment. Parents are required to give their written consent on a CAF assessment before the form is submitted to the CAF team.

In Haringey all CAF assessments are submitted to the Haringey CAF team. On receipt of the CAF, the information will be uploaded onto the CAF database and cross referenced with Haringey's Social Care case management system. The CAF manager reviews the CAF and any supporting information. Where necessary, the CAF manager will contact the referrer to request any further information or to clarify any aspect of the assessment that is unclear.

If the CAF indicates any need for potential social care involvement, the CAF manager will liaise with the First Response Screening Manager. In a small number of cases, this will result in a recommendation that the case is allocated for a social care assessment. The majority of cases received will be added to the agenda of the next CAF panel.

CAF panels consist of representatives from a range of services including both universal, and those that provide targeted and specialist support for children and young people.

### **4. CAF panel:**

CAF panel occurs every 2 weeks and considers between 30 and 39 requests for services. The panel is chaired by a Network Head and consists of the CAF Manager and senior managers from Speech and Language Therapy, Education Welfare, Education Psychology, Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS), Child Protection Health Visitors, Youth Service, Youth offending Team and children's social care. The benefits of this approach are that each CAF has senior multi agency scrutiny.

The role of the CAF panel is to:



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- endorse and agree CAF action and delivery plans, including agreeing the involvement of additional services
- provide consultation and advice to universal settings and targeted services about the best way to meet a child or young person's needs
- identify where parents, carers and other family members may need additional specific support to meet the child or young person's needs
- ensure effective liaison and communication with agencies and services (including voluntary and community sector organisations) not represented at the forum, but relevant for a particular child or young person
- agree the Team Around the Child
- designate the lead professional
- provide a framework for implementing the CAF Quality Assurance framework
- review the implementation of individual delivery plans

Each case is considered and, if appropriate, resources allocated. Resources include:

- Request for Statutory Assessment of Special Educational Needs
- Educational Psychology Service
- Education Welfare Service
- Early Years Speech and Language Therapy
- Speech, Language and Communication Service
- Behaviour Support Team (Primary)
- Behaviour Support Team (Secondary)
- Supporting Teenage Parents Team
- Drugs Education Vulnerable Young Persons' Worker
- Pupil and Family Mediation
- Family Support Workers
- Child Development Centre
- Occupational Therapy
- On Track (YOS Early Intervention and Prevention)
- Tuition (under medical needs) Service
- Pupil Support Centre(s)
- Child in Need nursery places
- Early Intervention nursery places
- CAMHS

Feedback is given to the professional who undertook the CAF and more information sought if required. For children and young people with complex



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needs the panel may also recommend that a Team Around the Child (TAC) meeting is convened and a Lead Professional identified.

#### **5. Team Around the Child:**

The Team Around the Child consists of parents/ carers, key professionals and the child /young person where appropriate. The aim of the TAC is to alleviate many of the problems and frustrations experienced by children and their families. This includes:

- Numerous lengthy meetings with different professionals where information needs to be repeated.
- Lack of coordination
- Not knowing who to talk to
- Receiving conflicting and confusing advice
- Difficulties in accessing specialist help
- For professionals it aims to ensure that referral information is up to date and information is shared in a timely manner with shared goals and coordinated services.
- Reduce overlap and inconsistency in the services received.

#### **6. Lead Professional:**

A Lead Professional is someone who takes the lead to co – ordinate provision for a child and their family. The person acts as a single point of contact when a range of services are involved with that child and their family and an integrated response is required.

The Lead Professional acts as a single point of contact for the child and their family, who they can trust and who can engage them in making choices, navigating their way through the system and effecting change.

The Lead Professional co – ordinate the delivery of the actions agreed by the practitioners involved to ensure that children and their families receive an effective service which is regularly reviewed. These actions will be based on the outcome of the assessment and recorded on the plan.