

Threshold and Eligibility Criteria for the Disabled Children's Team

London Borough of Haringey

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About the Disabled Children's Team

What we do

The Disabled Children's Team (DCT) Team in Haringey is part of Children's Social Care and provides services to disabled children and young people aged 0 to 18 who are ordinarily resident in Haringey and their parents and carers.

The Legal Framework

In Haringey services for children and young people with a disability are being developed within the context of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act (1970), Children Act 1989 (2004), the Equality Act 2010, the Children and Families Act (2014), Every Child Matters and the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Short Breaks Statement 2023-2026.

[Please find the statement on our Short Breaks and Respite webpage.](#)

Principles

The basis of Haringey's approach is that disabled children are regarded as children first and as children with impairment, second. This leads to an important principle, that disabled children should be able to access services that all children access, and such mainstream provision should work to make their services as accessible as possible to disabled children. Only when it is demonstrably not possible to make a mainstream provision accessible to disabled children (e.g. play services, after school clubs, etc.) should specialist services be approached.

Accessing our services

To access specialist services such as the Disabled Children's Team, a child must have a "permanent and substantial" disability. Children with a disability are not classified by assessment, according to their physical or mental impairment, but assessed according to the impact any impairment has on their quality of life and that of their family.

Who is eligible?

Most children in Haringey who require services will receive them through universal-type provision (e.g. schools and GPs) within their local community. The Early Help and Early Years Strategy sets out the range of inclusive services that are available. When it has been identified that the impact of the child's impairment requires social care assessment and support a referral for an assessment should be made to the Disabled Children's Teams.

It is important to note that some children with a disability may be assessed as needing specialist services other than social care, for example a child who needs support from speech and language therapy.

The eligibility criteria for the Disabled Children's Team (Social Care) are:

1. Children and their families whose main need for services arises out of the child's disabilities; **and**
2. These conditions have a substantial or critical impact on the quality of the child/young persons or/and their families lives; **and**
3. The needs cannot be met by Universal/Targeted services alone; **and/or**
4. The child's disability is both permanent and substantial.

Social care and key partner agencies are required to maintain, where possible and appropriate, the child/young person safely within their family and community.

Preparing for Adulthood (PfA)

With the consent of the young person and/or their family, young people who receive services from the Disabled Children's Team can be referred to Adult Services from the age of 14 or before they turn 16 so that Adult Services can assess to see if the young person is eligible for their services when they become 18. If the young person is eligible, Adult Services will work with the young person, their family and other significant services involved (e.g. college, health services, etc.) to plan a transition to Adult Services on the young person's 18th birthday to ensure that this transition happens smoothly.

Young people who are looked after by Haringey outside of their families (see below "Children Requiring Local Authority Care") may be eligible for support from the Leaving Care Team until they are 25.

Understanding Eligibility Criteria to Access the DCT's Services

Illustrative Need

This document is designed to provide a better understanding of set eligibility criteria for accessing a service from the Disabled Children's Team (DCT). It aims to explain the way in which the differing needs of disabled children and young people can be met, so that they may achieve the 'five outcomes of Every Child Matters (ECM); Be Healthy, Stay Safe, Enjoy & Achieve, Make a Positive Contribution & Achieve Economic Wellbeing.

Universal Needs (for all children and young people)

Service examples:

- School
- GP
- Health Visitor
- School nurse
- Children's Centre
- Family Information Service
- Extended School Services
- Play Centre

Children and Young People Needing Additional Help of Targeted Services

Children and young people with disabilities are likely to have a number of additional needs. The response to the identified need may come from a single service provider, consulting with or referring on to other service providers when required. Services that are working with families where there is a disabled child or young person may complete a Multi-Agency Assessment and Referral Form (MARF) where additional needs which are not being met.

Illustrative Need

- Occasionally requires more supervision than children of the same age
- Limited perception of danger to self and others
- With supervision can engage in personal care
- Some behavioural difficulties which may require additional advice, guidance or support.
- General health challenges
- Speech and language challenges

Service examples

- Children with disability short breaks/Local Offer
- Speech & language therapy
- Community Child Health Service
- Education, Health and Care Plan
- Parenting Support

Children and Young People Needing Additional Help of Specialist Services

To meet the needs of disabled children, young people and their families, the Disabled Children's Team have to be as fair and as consistent as we can in assessing and allocating services.

Therefore, judgements and decisions are based on the assessment and take particular account of the following:

1. The impact that caring for a disabled child or young person is having on the family as a whole.
2. The possibility that the child or young person may require an alternative care arrangement or that there may be concerns as to the child's safety and/or welfare.

Key factors in determining needs at this level are:

1. The impact that trying to meet the additional needs of a disabled child or young person is having on the family as a whole.
2. Likelihood of family breakdown resulting from the demands of the care, supervision, or behaviour of the child/young person.
3. The effect of disturbed nights on the carer and their family.
4. Impact of Moving & Handling has on the wellbeing of the carer
5. Health of the carer.
6. Number of children in the household their ages and needs.
7. Disabled children who have severe challenging behaviours which impact on all aspects of the child/young person's functioning or pose a risk to self or others.
8. It is apparent that the family's own resources and/or Universal and Targeted services are unable to provide the required level of support.
9. Disabled children who have recently been subject to a child protection plan, and who remain in need of ongoing specialist services.
10. Disabled children/young people who require support because of their mental health needs.

Children Requiring Local Authority Care

Family breakdown resulting from the additional demands of the care and supervision of the child/young person.

Illustrative Need

- No one is available or able to meet the child or young person's basic needs or safeguard their welfare.
- Families who require intensive multi-agency support in caring for disabled children including those who have additional health needs, or life-limiting conditions.
- Disabled children/young people who require a specialist input because of mental health support needs, e.g. Children, Adolescent, Mental Health Service (CAMHS).

Children in Need of Safeguarding

Illustrative Need

- Children suffering or likely to suffer significant harm whether from abuse or neglect.