

STOCKTON CHILDREN'S TRUST BOARD AND LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD



POLICY

Name Common Assessment Framework (CAF)

Purpose This joint policy sets out principles that underpin the introduction and operation of the Common Assessment Framework in Stockton Borough by the organisations of the Children's Trust Board and Stockton Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Policy

Member organisations of the Children's Trust Board and Stockton Local Safeguarding Children Board are committed to the implementation of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) to improve outcomes for children and young people. CAF is:

A national standard process for assessing any additional/unmet needs that a child or young person may have, and planning how any such needs should be met. CAF is intended as a straightforward, holistic assessment of a child's needs; which explores the child's development, behaviour, their parenting, family circumstances and activity in their community.

Commitment to this policy by organisations of the Children's Trust Board and Local Safeguarding Children Board in Stockton will be demonstrated through their use of the Common Assessment Framework to:

- Support earlier intervention where additional, or unmet, needs are identified
- Reduce the number of assessment processes that children and young people undergo
- Embed a common language about the needs of children and young people
- Support the appropriate sharing of information
- Encourage and support their staff to become Lead Professionals

In the Borough, Lead Professionals will be members of the children's workforce who have responsibility for collaborating with professionals from their own and other services to co-ordinate and monitor the delivery of a coherent programme of services for children and young people with additional needs and their family. Workers performing this role may come from different agencies - depending on the particular identified, or unmet, needs of the child. Commitment to this policy by organisations of the Children's Trust Board and Local Safeguarding Children Board will be demonstrated by:

- Ensuring arrangements are in place for the effective line management and casework supervision of staff who will take on the lead professional role and associated responsibilities,
- Ensuring those staff taking on the role have protected time and space within their workloads and caseloads to enable them to effectively undertake the role.

Members of the Children's Trust Board and Local Safeguarding Children Board in Stockton will ensure members of the children's workforce employed, or working as volunteers, in their organisation are enabled to effectively undertake Common Assessments and be Lead Professionals by:

- Members of the children's workforce having access to the CAF Project Manager to enable them to carry out effective common assessments and make effective decisions about the appropriateness of common assessments' in specific cases.
- New members joining the children's workforce being made aware of the Common Assessment Framework – and receiving additional support from their line manager and the CAF Project Manager.
- Working with the CAF Project Manager on regular audits of the compliance by organisations with this policy and identify areas for development.

Background documents

- Children Act 2004
- Statutory guidance on the role and responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and Lead Member for Children's Services
- Guidance on the duty to co-operate and on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under Sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004
- CAF: Implementation Guidance for Directors of Children's Services in Local Areas
- CAF: Guide for Service Managers and for Practitioners
<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/deliveringservices/caf>
- Lead Professional Good Practice Guidance, DfES, July 2005