

## Child In Need

If a referral is made to the local authority regarding the safety of a child, the local authority is obliged to acknowledge receipt of such referral and decide the way forward within 1 working day of that referral.

If, following the referral, the local authority considers the child may be a child in need, the local authority must undertake an assessment under s17 Children Act 1989.

A Child in Need is classed as a child who:

- Is unlikely to maintain or achieve a satisfactory level of development or health unless they receive assistance from the local authority;
- Will suffer from significantly impaired development or health unless they receive assistance from the local authority;
- Is disabled.

An assessment, if required, will focus on whether the child is in fact a Child in Need and if so, what assistance can be offered to improve that child's circumstances.

If the child is deemed to be in need a Child in Need Plan will be drafted. This is to include what support is to be put in place, who is to provide such support and how the local authority intends to review the plan to ensure the welfare of the child is improving. The services provided can be for either the child or the parent.

Parents will be required to attend Child in Need Meetings and it is imperative that they attend and engage fully in the process.

Disclaimer: The material contained in this fact sheet is for general guidance only. It is specific to the law of England and Wales, and represents a brief outline of the law current as at the date of the fact sheet. It is not intended to constitute, or to be a substitute for, legal advice specific to your case. Information up to date as at 13 May 2019.

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