

Appendix 10: Social Work Assessments

Social Work assessments focus on the needs of the child including particular vulnerabilities including communicating method, and parenting capacity to meet the child's identified needs. Assessments look at the current support provision, including the length of time away from the home, and how it is meeting need and are an effective way of promoting the welfare of and safeguarding children. The assessment will include the views of parents and carers and with children and young people to identify how the current provision is experienced, including observation of the child during or immediately after a short break. The assessment will also encompass the views of all professionals involved in the child's life to give a holistic view of the child's needs. Social work assessments concentrate on social care needs but will include consultation with health professionals such as GPs, school nurses, health visitors, CAMHS etc and education professionals (including teaching staff, Personal Assistant's and/or the SEND team).

The assessment will include a visit to the child at home and it is good practice to visit the child in different environments to gain a holistic view of how the child's experience of different environments and the impact of this on them, including any short break provision outside the family home as detailed above.

An assessment is reviewed on an annual basis to review the support package and the needs of the child. If a significant event occurs a Social Work Assessment should be completed at the time of the significant event and not wait for the annual review period. A social work assessment is also required if there is a significant change in the support package to ensure the identified need is fully assessed and a rationale for the change. There are occasions when a family will require a change in support on an emergency basis for a short /temporary period of time. This will include, for example, hospitalisation of a child for an operation who needs extra support following discharge with consultation with social care and health to identify the health need and social care need or a parent becomes unwell and requires emergency provision to support their child on a short term basis. This type of change does not require an assessment unless it is felt necessary due to the change being long term.

Short break provision, where provided, will form part of an Education, Health and Care Plan therefore an annual review of the short break package is needed to feed into the annual EHCP review process.