

## A Step-by-Step Guide to Portsmouth Early Help Assessment

**ALL FORMS, TOOLKITS AND DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN THIS STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE CAN BE FOUND AT:**

<http://www.portsmouthscb.org.uk/professionals/resources-for-frontline-professional/>

**WE STARTED THIS ASSESSMENT ON:**

- Please write the date the assessment was started.

**WE WILL AIM TO FINISH THIS ASSESSMENT BY:**

- Please write the date that the assessment will be finished (the form should be straightforward to complete so the expectation is that most assessments will be completed within **four** weeks and in many cases within **two** weeks).

**INFORMATION SHARING DISCUSSED WITH FAMILY**

- The workers should have a conversation at this stage about information sharing (see page 3) including:
- That the information will be recorded on the assessment form.
- That the information will be stored securely by the organisation completing the assessment.
- That the assessment form will be shared with Portsmouth Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for monitoring and collation purposes.

**WHO'S IN OUR FAMILY?**

- Please include the details of all of the family members:
- All of the children in the family and living in the household (including unborn children).
- All the adults in the family and living in the household.
- If you are working with one child in particular - please indicate this - you might call them the 'focus child' or simply write 'this is the child who the assessment is focused on'.
- Please identify the adults with parental responsibility (living in the household or not). Please indicate who has parental responsibility and whether permission has been granted to contact them. It is important to note any concerns with regards to contacting/giving information to a parent who has parental responsibility and reasons behind this decision.
- Please include other significant family members who do not live in the household but play a part in looking after the children/supporting the family. Please note their relationship to the family in the appropriate column and the type of support they offer.
- Please include significant non family members (friends, neighbours) who do not live in the household but play a part in looking after the children/supporting the family. Please note their relationship to the family in

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	<p>the appropriate column and the type of support they offer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please state relevant information in the language/ethnicity/religion and disability boxes. Think about how these might affect the assessment process - for example, does the parent need an interpreter or do they have struggle with reading and writing?</li> </ul>
<p><b>OTHER THINGS THAT ARE IMPORTANT FOR PEOPLE TO KNOW WHEN WORKING WITH OUR FAMILY</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is useful to note any practical issues that might be a barrier to communication i.e. how the family prefer to be contacted, times of the day that they are available to take phone calls. Anything in terms of home visits (i.e. pets, how to get access to the house).</li> <li>• Please include any information that a lone worker visiting the family may need to know to keep themselves safe.</li> </ul>
<p><b>FAMILY CONTACT DETAILS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please include home address for the family and contact details.</li> <li>• If children live between parents, please include both addresses and contact details.</li> <li>• It would also be useful to note if the address is temporary or the type of accommodation it is.</li> </ul>
<p><b>WHO IS UNDERTAKING THIS ASSESSMENT WITH THE FAMILY?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please indicate who is undertaking the assessment and contact details.</li> </ul>
<p><b>WHO ELSE IS WORKING WITH OUR FAMILY?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is expected that the details of professionals working in universal services would always be detailed in this box – for example, a child’s nursery/school/college, health visitor and GP.</li> <li>• Any additional services working providing support for the child/ren should be detailed here.</li> <li>• Any additional services working with the adults should also be detailed here.</li> </ul>
<p><b>INFORMATION SHARING AND CONSENT</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The information on this page <b>MUST</b> be clearly and simply communicated to the parent/carer.</li> <li>• Please clearly tick all of the services/organisations listed, except where a family specifically asks for their information not to be shared with a particular service/organisation.</li> <li>• Please note any other service/organisation in the 'Other' box.</li> <li>• This section <b><u>MUST BE SIGNED</u> and dated by the parent/carer or young person</b> in the relevant area.</li> <li>• If consent is refused, please state this clearly and the reasons why.</li> <li>• If consent is refused and information is shared, please state clearly the reason for this. Refusal to complete the early help assessment should also warrant a discussion between the worker and their manager to agree</li> </ul>

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	<p>the next steps to be taken to meet the needs of the child.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• At this stage of the assessment, it is also important to highlight your organisation's complaint procedure and the child/parent's right to raise any complaints, if necessary.</li></ul>
<b>ASSESSMENT - UNDERSTANDING OUR FAMILY'S NEEDS (PAGES 4 - 8)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Complete the questionnaire with the family to get a sense of the needs in relation to the headline outcome areas. The indicators of need listed below each headline outcome are our local Positive Family Steps (Portsmouth's Troubled Families programme) indicators and are used to identify families with particular needs that we know from the research have an impact on children and families. Families with these types of issues often have multiple and sometimes complex needs and would sit at Tier 3 of the matrix in Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board Thresholds document. This document can be found on Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board website: <a href="http://www.portsmouthscb.org.uk/professionals/resources-for-frontline-professional/">http://www.portsmouthscb.org.uk/professionals/resources-for-frontline-professional/</a></li><li>• Each question must be answered. This questionnaire will be undertaken again at the review meeting.</li><li>• The questionnaire should take account of all the family members who live in the household. Please indicate 'who' the information relates to in the relevant box.</li><li>• Page 6 - if you have ticked an indicator that asks you to '<i>indicate the level of concern below</i>', please select the appropriate level of need from: Making progress - there is an issue, but it has been identified by the family and they are making progress towards sorting it out. Needs to improve - there is an issue; the family might not accept the issue is a concern and may need help understanding its impact. Or the family might accept there is an issue, but need support to think about what changes they need to change. They may need professional support to make the change. Area of concern - there is an issue that the family may or may not accept is an issue. The area of concern needs to be dealt with straight away to prevent further impact on the child and family. The family need support to think through what needs to change and what support they need to make the changes in the necessary timescale. The areas of concern are the priority areas to explore in the next bit of the assessment 'what's going on for our family' and focus on in the plan of support.</li><li>• When you send your Early Help Assessment to Portsmouth MASH, this questionnaire will be looked at. If</li></ul>

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	<p>the family has needs in two or more of the headline outcome areas, they meet the criteria for the Positive Family Steps programme and you will receive an email informing you of this. One of the Early Help team/Think Family Mentors in Portsmouth MASH will contact you to talk through the assessment, offering feedback and/or support as required. This will include ensuring that the right services are offered to the family. If the family has been attached to the Positive Family Steps programme, you will also be asked to complete a simple monthly progress monitoring form for this family, which you will be asked to email back to the MASH. This is for government monitoring purposes.</p>
<b>WHAT'S GOING ON IN OUR FAMILY?</b>	<p>From the assessment so far and further conversation with family members, use the following 'affective questions' (please see Appendix 1 for further understanding of 'affective' statements and questions) provide a summary of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Our family story - what has happened in the past (that has affected our family) and what is happening now?</li><li>• Key events in our family's life - how have they affected where they are now?</li><li>• What is our family good at?</li><li>• What have we tried in the past, what worked, what didn't help and who helped us?</li><li>• Is there anything that means there is a risk of harm to ourselves or others?</li></ul> <p>Please provide further detail about every indicator that has been identified as 'area of concern' or 'needs to improve' or where you have ticked an indicator that asks you to "<i>Record details in 'What's going on in our family?'</i>".</p> <p>Please provide further detail on <b>each headline outcome</b> which has been identified as an 'area of concern' or 'needs to improve'.</p> <p>Please see detailed guidance on the My World Triangle and related questions in Appendix 1. Please use Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board toolkits (which can be found at <a href="http://www.portsmouthscb.org.uk/professionals/resources-for-frontline-professional/">http://www.portsmouthscb.org.uk/professionals/resources-for-frontline-professional/</a>) to support your assessment with regards to the following issues:</p>

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	<p>Child Sexual Exploitation Missing Children Neglect Domestic Abuse</p> <p>Please attached any completed tools to the assessment form and provide a summary of the findings in this section.</p>
<b>CHILD'S COMMENTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Please use the 'affective statements' (please see Appendix 1 for further understanding of 'affective' statements and questions) to help capture a summary of the child's views and what needs to happen to make things okay for them.</li></ul> <p>The 'All About Me' booklet includes lots of quick and easy exercises to use with children and young people to help professionals capture their views. The booklet can be found on the Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board website at <a href="http://www.portsmouthscb.org.uk/professionals/resources-for-frontline-professional/">http://www.portsmouthscb.org.uk/professionals/resources-for-frontline-professional/</a>.</p>
<b>PARENT'S /CARER'S COMMENTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Please use the 'affective statements' (please see Appendix 1 for further understanding of 'affective' statements and questions) to help capture a summary of the parent's views and what needs to happen to make things okay.</li><li>• The scaling question about confidence should be asked to get a general sense of how confident the parent/s feels to make the changes identified. It is important at this stage to capture this as it will influence the type and amount of wider family/professional support that is needed. It also allows the parent to talk about anything that might get in the way of making the changes (that we have not explored yet) - which can be noted under the next question 'What will be the hardest thing in making change?'. Practitioners can ask further questions such as 'You say you feel you are at a 5, what is it that puts you at a 5'? This further questioning can help practitioners understand why/what helps the parent/s feel confident and what they might need to increase their confidence, another further question could be 'What type of thing would help you move to a 6 or 7 on the confidence scale'?</li></ul>

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<b>SUMMARY/ ANALYSIS/ IDENTIFIED RISKS</b>	<p>After gathering the information within the assessment process, please record:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What are the main things our family want to change, improve and strength? These should be clearly linked to the headline outcomes identified in the checklist.</li><li>• How do we do this and overcome any barriers? Some thoughts about changes that need to be made by the family and any issues that could get in the way. This should also include how confident parents feel in making these changes and the hardest things that they need to overcome.</li><li>• This analysis should help the family and practitioners in developing an effective plan to address the current concerns that have been identified and the level of support required by the family.</li></ul>
<b>THE PLAN</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use this page to develop a single multi-agency plan with the family.</li><li>• The plan should be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely).</li><li>• Details on the plan should:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ What are we going to change/ improve and strengthen? The areas outlined should be linked to the headline outcomes identified in the questionnaire page 6. Identify what needs to change to meet the child/family needs.</li><li>○ What are we going to do to make this happen? Identify what activities need to take place to make meet the needs. The focus should be on the parent and family members undertaking activities with professional support if necessary.</li><li>○ Who in our family needs to do this and what support will we need? Clearly state which family members. Clearly state what support from workers will help the family members do what they need to do.</li><li>○ By when? State the specific date that the support will start and the date when the family and workers expect to see changes made.</li><li>○ Outcomes for the family. State clearly how the family and the team around the family will know when the things outlined have improved and how this will be measured.</li></ul></li></ul>

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<b>WHEN SHOULD WE GET BACK TOGETHER TO REVIEW THE PLAN AND THE PROGRESS?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• State the date for the meeting to review the plan. If known, also state where the meeting will be held.</li></ul>
<b>DATES AND SIGNATURES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The assessment must be signed by all and dated.</li></ul>
<b>SEND THE EARLY HELP ASSESSMENT TO MASH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>THE COMPLETED EARLY HELP ASSESSMENT SHOULD BE EMAILED FROM A SECURE EMAIL ACCOUNT TO PORTSMOUTH MULTI-AGENCY SAFEGUARDING HUB (MASH) - <a href="mailto:pccraduty@portsmouthcc.gcsx.gov.uk">pccraduty@portsmouthcc.gcsx.gov.uk</a></b></li><li>• A copy should be retained by the organisation completing the assessment.</li><li>• Portsmouth MASH will identify the families that meet the Positive Family Steps/Troubled Families criteria and inform the person who has sent the Early Help Assessment in.</li><li>• For families who are attached to the Positive Family Steps/Troubled Families programme, the Lead Professional is expected to complete the monthly progress monitoring form and email it to Portsmouth MASH.</li></ul>
<b>OFFICE USE ONLY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do not complete this section. This box will be completed once the document is received by Portsmouth MASH.</li></ul>

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	<b>APPENDIX 1</b>
<b>RESTORATIVE COMMUNICATION</b>	<p><b>How do we do it?</b> Restorative communication techniques such as 'affective' statements and questions are used to help people express their feelings, think about their behaviour, make amends and change their behaviour in the future.</p> <p><b>Affective statements</b> are statements that express feelings. They are often described as personal expressions of feelings in response to others' positive or negative behaviours. The idea is for speaker to connect with listener with how their behaviour is "affecting" or impacting self or others, so the affective statements are often 'I...' statements that express a feeling.</p> <p>Example of an affective statement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "I feel..."</li></ul> <p><b>Affective questions</b> can be used to process a situation or incident. When a situation/ incident has occurred, the person(s) who is involved in the situation/incident takes some time and answers questions which focus on the situation/ incident and allow them to think about how his/her actions affected others and how to put things right. It encourages empathy, accountability, expression of feelings and thoughts, and problem solving. We can also use restorative questions with those who were impacted by the incident, to help them process their feelings and determine what they need to make things right.</p> <p>Affective questions are often used in the following sequence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What happened?</li><li>• What were you thinking at the time? What have you thought about since?</li><li>• Who has been affected by this?</li><li>• In what way have they been affected</li><li>• How could things have been done differently?</li></ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What needs to happen now to make things right?</li> </ul>
<p><b>ASSESSMENT - MY WORLD TRIANGLE</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>My World Triangle</b> is a simple, visual tool to aid assessment and can be shown to children, young people and parents/carers to enable them to understand how we undertake a 'holistic' assessment of the child and the areas of the child's life we will need to explore together. It allows practitioners to empathically understand the child's world.</li> <li>• Using the <b>My World Triangle</b> allows practitioners to consider from the point of view of the child:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The child or young person's wider world of family, friends and community.</li> <li>○ What the child or young person needs from the people who look after him or her.</li> <li>○ How the child or young person is growing and developing, according to their age, stage of development and taking into account the impact of any impairment, disability or complex health need.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Single Assessment Form gives scope for free narrative, but you must be mindful of the following headings in your structured approach in assessing need.</li> <li>• There may be some overlap between the three domains. Some health issues, for example, will have an impact on a child's achievement at school. In these cases, practitioners should opt for whichever domain seems relevant from their perspective, using more than one domain for information if issues are interconnected.</li> <li>• The important thing is that the information is recorded. It is less important where it is recorded.</li> </ul>
<p><b>MY WIDER WORLD</b></p>	<p><b>Support from family, friends and other people</b></p> <p>You should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who in the family provides support and the level and frequency of this support?</li> <li>• Whether there are any significant deficits in the wider support network, for example, no grandparents.</li> <li>• The quality of the social network that exists for the parents/carers</li> </ul>

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- Relationships with grandparents, aunts and uncles, extended family and friends - what support can they offer and do they provide?
- Any reliable network of support that the child or family can draw upon?
- Who are the significant people in the child's life?
- The involvement of wider family in decision making about children
- Positive relationships for the child/young person
- The child's friendship group - include on-line 'friends'
- Any conflictual/burdensome relationships
- Any problems of lost contact or isolation?
- The history of the family – are there positive patterns of behaviour? Or entrenched negative attitudes, values and behaviour?
- The functioning of the family – how do the family function? Are there things or times that impact on this?

### **School**

You should consider:

- Link to Learning and Achieving on How I grow and develop.
- Does school play a key role in the child's life?
- What are the child's experiences of school, peer networks and relationships?
- What aspects of the learning environment and opportunities for learning are important for the child and young person?
- Does the child have access to study support, out of school learning and special interests?
- Can the school provide what is needed to meet the particular educational and social needs of the child?

### **Belonging**

You should consider:

- Does the child feel accepted in the community, feeling included and valued?
- Potential support, including nature and quality, available from out with the family and ability to access the

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support.

- Informal caring networks, for example, the role of neighbours in 'watching out' for other people's children.
- Any frequent changes of accommodation and the impact this has had on the family's ability to maintain good social supports.
- Sources of support and advice that is available locally.
- The importance given to continuity of school and relationships with teachers.
- The importance given to friendships at school and in the community.
- The extent of bullying and harassment at school.
- The child's sense of belonging in the community and of feeling safe.

### **Comfortable and safe housing**

You should consider:

- The level of maintenance of the house and how safe and secure the environment is for the child (consideration should be given to the responsibilities of the housing provider if the property is rented/leased).
- Is the accommodation suitable for the needs of the child and family, including any adaptations to meet special needs?
- Factual description of the internal conditions of the home should be provided.
- Whether the appropriate council tax and housing forms have been completed.
- The length of occupancy at the current home
- Impact of any periods of homelessness, including the effect on support networks and sources of support.
- Any history of regular changes of address, anti-social behaviour and problems obtaining accommodation.
- The adequacy of the housing for young children and children with a disability.
- The child/young person's experience of location of the accommodation, including issues of race and racial harassment.
- Is the accommodation in a safe, well maintained, resourced and child friendly neighbourhood?

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### **Work opportunities for my family**

You should consider:

- History of parental/carer employment/unemployment.
- Level of training and skills.
- Influence of employment status on availability for children.
- Potential for enhancing education, training opportunities and work.
- Effects of disability/chronic illness on employment opportunities.
- Influence of social factors, for example, geographical location, gender, ethnicity and social class on employment.
- How is work/absence from work viewed by the family/child? Consider cultural expectations.
- What effects are there on the child/young person?
- The child/young person's experience of work and its impact on them
- Support for young person's career aspirations and opportunities

### **Enough money**

You should consider:

- Has the family or young person got an adequate income to meet their day to day needs and any special needs?
- Whether the family is in receipt of all benefits to which they are entitled.
- Current income and outgoings, including outstanding debts, pressures to repay them and penalties incurred for late/non-payment.
- Management of finances and difficulties experienced.
- Does poverty affect the child's opportunities?
- The effects of the lack of income on the physical quality of the home environment.
- Sufficiency of income to meet the needs of the family and child.
- Whether the child is able to participate in activities similar to that of their peers.
- Financial support available from family and friends.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Are the resources available to the family used effectively?</li><li>• Are there financial difficulties which affect the child?</li></ul> <p><b>Local Resources</b></p> <p>You should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Positive environmental circumstances, for example, good housing conditions and low criminality.</li><li>• Negative environmental conditions, for example, high levels of poverty, drug abuse and poor housing.</li><li>• Impact of environmental circumstances on family stress and coping ability</li><li>• Formal and informal sources of support, consider needs of child and individual parents/carers - access to local information about health, child care and specialist services.</li><li>• Levels of advice available on financial/practical matters.</li><li>• Anti-poverty initiatives, for example, food co-operatives.</li><li>• The accessibility of affordable, quality childcare provision locally.</li><li>• The family's perception of resources available locally and their ability to access them.</li><li>• Access to neighbourhood play/activities provision.</li><li>• Access to health care/schools/transport/places of worship and shops.</li></ul>
<p><b>WHAT I NEED FROM THE PEOPLE THAT LOOK AFTER ME</b></p>	<p><b>Basic Care</b></p> <p>You should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Parental knowledge of child developmental needs.</li><li>• Parent(s)/carer(s) strengths/weaknesses.</li><li>• Any health (including mental health) issues that impact on parenting ability.</li><li>• Any learning disability that impacts on parenting ability.</li><li>• Other factors that may affect parenting capacity, for example, drug use/excessive alcohol use and low self-esteem.</li><li>• Relationship between child and birth parent(s).</li><li>• Child/young person's diet and developmental progress.</li><li>• Child/young person's attendance for health surveillance, immunisations and developmental checks.</li></ul>

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- Parental willingness/ability to co-operate with treatment.
- Child/young person's attendance for medical/dental treatment.
- Provision of care including emotional care.
- The ill-health or disability of other family members that impact on the child.
- Any caring responsibilities of the child/young person.

### **Keeping the child safe**

You should consider:

- Repeated exposure of child/young person to danger or harm.
- Control and discipline methods used by parent(s)/carer(s).
- The demands made of the child/young person by the parents.
- Level of supervision by the parent both inside and outside of the home.
- Family interactions.
- Support and care offered within the family.
- Level of interaction between family members.
- Conflict resolution within the family (including issues of domestic abuse).
- The general level of safety in the home.
- Identifiable risk factors such as the child/young person staying out late or away from home, involved in anti-social behaviour or substance misuse?
- Is the child/young person knowledgeable about risks and confident about keeping safe?
- Is the parent knowledgeable about risk and confident about keeping the child/young person safe?

### **Being there for the child/young person**

You should consider:

- Parent's description of each child - parent's should be asked their views on each child's needs and strengths. What do they see as positive about their child, what time do they enjoy with their child, what are the difficulties they experience with their child?

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- The child's reaction to the parent - is the parent able to demonstrate love, emotional warmth and attentiveness?
- Whether the child is reliant on parental cues when asked sensitive questions by professionals
- The child's exposure to parental emotional distress
- Levels of praise and encouragement offered to the child
- Opportunities the child is given to learn about his/her culture/tradition and language
- Who are the people with whom the child has a particular bond?
- Who does the child trust?
- Is there sufficient emotional security and responsiveness in the child's current caring environment?'

### **Play, encouragement and fun**

You should consider:

- The parents' interaction with the child i.e. playing with them, reading to them, spending time with them.
- Level of encouragement that is given to the child to explore their environment, to be active, to play and share with others, to do age appropriate activities for themselves.
- Encouragement offered to the child to make choices, be independent, to participate in conversation
- Encouragement offered to the child engage in academic and sporting activities
- Encouragement offered to the child to learn new skills
- Who in the family support the child in learning?
- Who is there to champion and mentor the child?
- Support offered to the aims of the school or nursery.
- Contribution offered by the parents to the Individualised Education Programme/homework/parents' evenings/school events

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### **Guidance and support to make the right choices**

You should consider:

- The boundaries and guidance offered to the child - do parents make it clear to the child what is expected and why?
- The level of consistency in parental approach to discipline and guidance - are there household rules for behaviour that is appropriate to the age and understanding of the child?
- Are the parents modelling the appropriate and expected behaviour?
- Are sanctions constructive and appropriate?
- Child's ability to demonstrate an awareness of the needs of others
- Child's behaviour - including whether the child is aggressive or violent and if so the context, frequency and triggers for this
- The child's exposure to violence in the home
- Any occasions the child has run away from home
- Is the child treated with consideration and respect and encouraged to take responsibility in a safe and protective environment?

### **Knowing what is going to happen and when**

You should consider:

- Information around where the child has lived, who was part of the household who provided primary care to the child
- Reasons for significant changes
- If the child is separated from a parent, the level of contact and any attendant issues
- Is the child's life stable and predictable?
- Are routines/ expectations appropriate and helpful to age and stage of development?
- Are child's needs given priority when appropriate?
- Who are the family members and others who are important to the child?
- Can the people who look after her or him be relied on to be open and honest about family and

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household relationships, about wider influences, needs, decisions and to involve the child/young person in matters which affect him or her?

- Are transition issues must be fully explored for the child or young person during times of change?

### **Understanding my family history, background and beliefs**

You should consider:

- This section links with Support from family, friends and other people in the 'My Wider World' section
- Does the child/young person have a good understanding of their own background - their family and extended family relationships and their origins?
- Is their cultural heritage given due prominence?
- Child's awareness of the family history
- The way secrets are dealt with in the family
- Child's relationship with siblings
- Levels of affection and hostility
- Child's status in relation to other siblings (i.e. scapegoat, favoured, bullied)
- Strengths of the family
- How the family generally functions?
- Physical or intellectual disability of the parents/ carers
- History of mental health
- History of alcohol substance misuse
- History of parental abuse/neglect as a child
- How the family copes under stress
- Conflicts within relationships/stability
- Communication within the family
- History of separations

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### HOW THE CHILD GROWS AND DEVELOPS

#### Being healthy

##### Health

You should consider:

- Child's general physical and mental health
- Use of health services
- Attendance at medical screenings, or failure to attend
- Medical treatment regimes
- Compliance with medical advice and treatment
- Any particular needs of the child that affect the parents' ability to care for them e.g. disability, ADHD, prematurity etc.
- Any significant past medical history
- Past physical injury including fractures/unusual injuries, e.g. burns
- Any known attendance at Accident and Emergency, Out of Hours Service, NHS 24
- Hospital admissions
- Suspected or diagnosed non-accidental injuries
- Any diagnosed mental illness or psychiatric treatment - ongoing problems/current symptoms.
- Alcohol and substance misuse

##### Developmental

You should consider:

- The child's growth and nutrition
- Immunisation record
- Attendance at medical surveillance checks
- Any known vision or hearing problems
- Any use of alcohol or substance use by the child
- Any developmental concerns, gross motor, manipulative skills, communication, social skills, behaviour, height and weight

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- Dental registration and treatment
- Whether the family themselves have any concerns about health issues
- Family guidance and advice to the child on health issues, including sex education.
- Has the child had a comprehensive health assessment since being accommodated

### **Learning and Achieving**

You should consider:

- What is the child's education experience?
- Is the child in a stable school placement or have there been frequent changes of nursery / school/ college?
- Are there problems with attendance/absence from school? Reasons given.
- Has the child/young person been temporarily/persistently excluded from school? If so, reasons
- Is the child/young person achieving their potential?
- Is the child eligible for free school meals or free early pre-school education?
- Is the child/young person engaged in learning (are there any identifiable reasons that are affecting their ability to learn)
- At what level is the child/young person performing e.g. 3-5 Curriculum Framework, 5-14 Assessment, Standard grade, National Qualifications? Assessment (National Test etc.)
- Date of last educational assessment (National Test etc.)
- Has the child been referred to/received support from learning
- Does the child have an Individualised Educational Programme?
- Are educational targets being met?
- What, if any, external teaching support services have been accessed on behalf of the child? E.g. Sensory support service
- What, if any, supports services have been accessed on behalf of the child e.g. SEN auxiliary?
- Has a referral been made to psychological services now or in the past? Reasons
- Does the child have a record of needs/co-ordinated support plan?

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- Factors giving rise to additional support needs?
- Are the child's/young person's needs being met as a result of any of the above (areas of strength and difficulty)?
- Does the child/young person relate well to teachers and other staff?
- Does the child/young person mix well with peers?
- Is the main attraction of the child/young person attending school the social peer group?
- Does the child have access to play and education materials?
- Is the parent interested in the child's education and promoting their learning, hobbies and interests?
- Has the parent been informed of any concerns within the educational establishment? What was their response?
- Does the child/young person participate in any extracurricular activities?

### **Confidence in who I am**

You should consider:

- The child's sense of him or herself as a separate and valued person
- The child's mental well being
- Any attachment difficulties
- Child's view of abilities, self-image, self-esteem
- Positive sense of individuality - issues of race, religion, age, gender, sexuality, disability may contribute to this
- The child's degree of self-confidence
- Any special needs that affect the child's self-esteem
- The child's attitude to praise and response to achievements
- Whether the child feels valued by family and friends
- The child's relationships at home and with extended family members
- The child's relationships at school and socially
- The child's attitude towards others

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- The child's ability to socialise with others e.g. to play with children of a similar age and to initiate and respond to conversation
- Evidence of anti-social behaviour i.e. ASBO, offending, behaviour difficulties at schools and home, risk of or school exclusion, Child Sexual Exploitation and missing from home
- Whether the child is aware of the impact of his/her behaviour on others
- Whether the child is aware of any risks to him or herself of his/her own behaviour
- The child's sense of pride in their appearance
- The child's sense of him or herself as part of a cultural group
- Whether there are any issues that make the child feel stigmatised
- What information is made available to the young person about sexuality and sexual orientation?

### **Learning to be responsible**

You should consider:

- The child's ability to advocate on their own behalf
- The child's ability to make choices
- The child's role as an advocate with their peers, within their school or any organisation to which he/she belongs
- The child's capacity to lead or be led by others
- The child's ability to seek advice about their appearance/presentation
- The child's awareness of his/her own presentation
- Any issues in relation to self-care, hygiene, clothing etc. including appropriateness of dress
- The child's understanding of his/her own and other's emotions
- The child's understanding of the perception of the impact of his/her behaviour on others
- What support is being provided
- Parental advice available about how the child presents in different settings

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### **Belonging**

You should consider:

- Being able to communicate
- Any difficulties in caring for the child e.g. eating, sleeping, crying, demanding behaviour, illness, wetting, soiling, issues of separation and attachment
- Any traumatic events in the child's life e.g. bereavement/loss of parents or siblings?
- Number and duration of breakdowns in main attachment relationship
- The child's general behaviour in different circumstances
- Any indication of anxiety or depression and the triggers for these?
- Any steps that have been taken or interventions currently used to manage the child's behaviour?
- Other behaviour of the child that may be of concern e.g. risk-taking, offending behaviour, personal safety, mental health, substance misuse
- Appropriateness of response demonstrated in feeling and actions of a child to parents/carers and when older to others beyond the family
- Nature and quality of early attachments
- Characteristics of temperament, adaptation to change, response to stress and degree of appropriate self-control

### **Becoming independent, looking after myself**

You should consider:

- Is the child/young person reaching appropriate developmental milestones
- Is the child/young person encouraged to eat/dress/independently?
- Does the child/young person have a disability that affects self-care? How does the young person view this? Deal with support/help?
- Is the young person learning independent living skills? E.g. cooking/handling money (even if still at home)
- Does the child/young person receive pocket money on a regular basis?

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- Importance of money for clothing social activities, music, hobbies, etc.
- How well does the young person manage money? Is it an issue/area of concern?
- Does he/she have income from part-time employment
- What happens when weekly funds have been spent? Are there issues?
- Are there any issues in relation to self-care, hygiene, clothing etc.?
- Do they assist with chores/tidy their own bedroom etc.?
- Do they have opportunities to acquire self-care skills?
- Are there opportunities for involvement in independent activities?

### **Enjoying family and friends**

You should consider:

- Is there a good relationship between the parents/carers and child/young person? Is the child/young person relaxed in the presence of the parent/carer?
- Is there a strong attachment/strong positive relationship between the child/young person and the parents/carers?
- Does the child/young person have a good relationship with siblings/other children in the household?
- Does the child have relationships with people who provide warmth and encouragement?
- Is the young person involved in caring for siblings? Is he/she considerate and caring towards siblings?
- Does the child have a wider family who provide a positive influence?
- Does the child/young person have friends?
- Is the child/young person to be or thought to be involved in bullying?
- Are there any concerns about the child/young person in relation to a lack of empathy or care for others?
- Is there a significant adult in the child/young person's life in whom he/she can confide? Is this a family member? Appropriateness of the relationship?
- Does the child have the skills to make and sustain lasting and healthy relationships?