ST. PHILIP HOWARD
CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY

Lead	*Headteacher*
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SINGLE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Introduction

As a result of changes outlined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013, and stemming from the Munro Review of Child Protection, Derbyshire's **Single Assessment Process** was developed in conjunction with Derby City.

Derbyshire's Single Assessment Process encompasses both Early Help and Social Care Assessments and replaces the previously referred to Common Assessment (CAF), Initial and Core Assessments.

A Single Assessment Process in Derbyshire will help to:

- Ensure the voice of the child is heard and recorded throughout the assessment process;
- Enable a collaborative assessment where children, young people and their families are encouraged to participate and for use across all children's services in Derbyshire:
- Encourage and promote practitioner analysis;
- Recognise the importance of early, and outcome focused, planning in interventions;
- Aid the creating and sustaining of positive relationships with children and families, where the relationship is seen as the context within which change can take place;
- Ensure clarity for children, their families and other involved professionals in relation to the reason for our involvement;
- Promote sustained improvements to the quality of life for children and their families;
- Ensure the assessment process is accessible for all involved; Promote transparency at all stages.

Through the assessment process the aim is to be more helpful to families by: understanding them more fully, being transparent and honest with them, helping them understand why we feel they and/or their child may need additional support, engaging better with them and encouraging their participation at all stages of the assessment process. This approach is embedded into the forms to be used with the child, young person and family.

Some families can be difficult to engage especially if they are going through a difficult time or feel they are being singled out. Teachers have

excellent interpersonal and professional skills, so families who may initially be resistant can be encouraged to see the benefits of an Early Help Assessment.

All Derbyshire's schools are signed up to use this process alongside Derby City Schools.

In Derbyshire the Single Assessment Process comprises of 3 Parts: A, B and C. Each completed form or forms builds on what has been assessed and the level of need for a child.

Part A provides basic information on a family and their current situation and should be used by Derbyshire schools to make request for support from the Multi-Agency Team (MAT).
Part A also provides the basic information as part of an Early Help Assessment or a Social Care Assessment. Therefore Part A and B completed together form the Early Help Assessment for a child or young person and family.

Part C is completed by Social Workers only. Part A and C are used together to form a Social Care Assessment and are completed by a Social Worker having received a referral into social care through the current process or via Derbyshire's step up process from MAT.

The Single Assessment Process does not replace existing safeguarding procedures. There is a useful section in the Local Safeguarding Procedures which fully outline this and how Single Assessment Process works with these procedures and this can be found at http://www.derbyshirescb.org.uk

If it becomes evident at any time during the course of the completing any part of the forms and assessment, that a child has been harmed or abused, or is at risk of being harmed and abused you must follow the Local Safeguarding Procedures.

When to use the forms:

Schools are uniquely placed to identify the emerging needs of a child and their family and would be expected to do an Early Help Assessment where it becomes apparent that the support required for a child, young person and the family cannot be provided through support and services offered by schools and requires more intervention. Schools should then complete Part A and B.

If this process has been started Schools are able to complete Part A only if having gone onto Part B it is assessed a request for support from MAT is the right intervention. Part A can then be used as a request for support form for MATs. Part A, or A and B is sent to your local MAT.
The Local Authority captures data from all Early Help assessments on behalf of the Local Safeguarding Children Board who has a responsibility for the effectiveness of early help support and uses the form A and B to do this. Please ensure these are then sent to MAT to trigger a service and capture this data.

Part A, B, C Explained:

PART A

The aim of **PART A** is to gather information relating to the family which will then be available for use in any subsequent assessments; ensuring that all details recorded are accurate and correct is therefore very important.

In all cases Families should be aware that you are completing this form and the reasons why.

PART A is designed to be filled in with a parent/carer present or when that is not possible, with their knowledge and agreement.

SECTION 1 – Your Family Household

- Ensure you include each family member's details as fully as possible.
- It is also important to capture information on other significant family or friends who do not live in the household (e.g. absent fathers / mum's partner / supportive relatives or friends).

- Knowing who has Parental Responsibility (PR) for a child is of paramount importance and should be established from the outset
- Are there any issues/needs important for anyone working with this child or family to know? These may relate to communication, a family's situation or risk. They may be key to ensure workers engage in the best way and are kept safe.

Involve the parent/carer; this will help to ensure you have all the correct information. **If a family is engaging with you as you complete this form, their engagement is considered consent to the assessment being undertaken. The name of the family member completing the form with you is entered in section 2.**

SECTION 2 - Reasons and Understanding about your Assessment

- Date the assessment started can also signify the date the request for support was made if PART A only is completed.

- Enter the professional's details (name, school address and contact number) as the one completing the form.

- The family member that has been involved and (where appropriate) they are giving consent for the Part A to be used as a request for service from a MAT, state this in box for 'Family members who have contributed to the assessment'.

- Under "What are your reasons for starting this assessment" -It is extremely important to outline clearly and succinctly why you decided to begin an Assessment, what specific support is being requested and by whom (you or the family) if Part A is to be used as a request for service, what you and/or the family feel needs to happen and what you and/or the family are worried could happen if nothing changes. If your reason for beginning to fill in this form was based on information you have received which is hearsay (e.g. from another parent) you should try to confirm the truth of that information (and record your findings in this section) before making a request for support.

- If the information received constitutes a potential Child Protection Concern (e.g. it is alleged a child has been injured or harmed) you should NOT delay and follow the Local Safeguarding Procedures and ring Call Derbyshire in the usual way.

- Ensure the family understands why you are recording the information and requesting support. Check they are aware of what the process will involve and who will be contacting them.

SECTION 3 – Your Family Support, History and Safety

Throughout this section you will need to get most of this information from the family member who is filling in the form with you.

Services working with your family

Record any details about services currently working with the family. They might have important information to help clarify / alleviate your worries now and / or if you (or anyone else) goes on to complete PARTS B or C. Remember to include GP details in this section.

Significant events and their impact

What do you know about this family's history or what is the family willing to share? These events may be a contributory factor to this assessment or request for service.

Relevant previous assessment

Have there been any other previous assessments undertaken with the family that you are aware of or the family are willing to tell you about which might prove important to build up a fuller picture of this family?

Your Family's Safety (Advice)

These questions have been compiled from lessons learned from serious case reviews.

Within your role at school you may feel you are not the best person to highlight this advice to a family particularly if Part A only is being filled in. If this is the case tick 'No' and then in the next section clarify why you have not felt able or the best person to do this and your proposed actions (if you feel someone else is in a better position with the family to give this advice either now or in the future. NB It will not be considered appropriate to request support from MAT purely to give this advice.

Next Steps

This is where you highlight what you intend to do next :

- Continue with the Early Help Assessment by completing part B
- Other
  - Nothing further is considered necessary – in completing the form and discussing issue with the family member any issue or concerns have been alleviated. o Support is to be put in place by yourself **You may wish to develop an action plan (see Section7) which you can then review**
  - Issues have been identified which warrant a request for support from a MAT **– Send your completed Section A to them (keeping a copy yourself)**
  - The need to request support from another agency/ professional has been identified **– You need to make that referral to that agency / professional using their usual referral processes include the Part A** It will not be considered appropriate to request support from MAT to make that referral.

If your next step is anything other than completing the Early Help Assessment through Part B you must give your reasons for your decision.

If at the end of Part A you have identified a number of needs which will require the involvement of more than one agency you should complete part B and develop a Plan through a TAF identifying a lead professional so that support can be reviewed.

PART B

This part of the Early Help Assessment, as with Part A is designed to be completed alongside family members where at all possible.

Part B concerns the whole family – each child, young person and parent/carer can be recorded on the same assessment document; if only one child is known to you try to give some minimum information on any siblings e.g. how old are they, are they full siblings to the child you know?, do they attend a school?, do they have any particular needs that you know about?

SECTION 4 – Your Family's Profile and Story

You should explore areas around the immediate concerns but in order to give a holistic view explore all of a child's/young person's circumstances.

Wherever possible you should base your findings on evidence not just opinion, although professional judgement is valid.

Child's profile and story

This is your opportunity to make each child 'come alive', become real to whoever reads the assessment– Are they are young carer / do they have any specific health or learning needs? It is important that both strengths and needs are highlighted

Parents and Carers profile and how they look after the children.

This section should capture how well parents are able to support their children's development and respond appropriately to their needs. It is important to identify both strengths and needs of the parent's ability to look after the children. Consider if either parent has health issues, physical disability or learning needs/ disability that may impact on parenting. If appropriate consider domestic abuse, parental mental health and substance misuse/dependency and the impact of these on the parent's ability to parent, and the impact on each child.

If they are a carer of a disabled child they may require a specialist carer's assessment. Contact Call Derbyshire for advice.

Family, home, community and support networks.

This section is to consider the impact of wider family and environmental elements on the children's development and on the ability of the parents to look after the children.

SECTION 5 – Child, Family and Practitioner's views Child/Young Persons views / Family Views

Whilst undertaking the assessment the child/young person's wishes and feelings and those of their parents/carers must be sought and included. Their views on what needs to change and what needs to stay the same must be captured in this section and should be considered when developing your action plan (if one is needed) with this family.

Practitioner Views

This is where you offer your perspective of 'what needs to stay the same and what needs to change.

Differences of opinion need to be explored, reflected on and taken into account within the next section.

SECTION 6 – Practitioner's analysis

Information + Analysis = Assessment

By answering the key questions asked in this section, you will have developed an analysis that will lead you into what needs to happen next

SECTION 7 – Identified actions from Early Help Assessment What Needs to Happen Next?

Having undertaken the Early Help Assessment there is likely to be identified actions to put in place.

At this point you will decide whether these actions can be delivered by you without requiring any other agency involvement **(This section can be used to develop an action plan which you can then review)** or whether a Team around the Family (TAF) meeting needs arranging. Please record these actions in this section.

Lead professional

The practitioner completing Part B does not automatically become the lead professional, but is responsible for organising the first TAF where the lead professional is identified.

The Lead professional could be any practitioner working with the child/young person and family. The Lead professional is responsible for coordinating provision and acting as a single point of contact in providing integrated early help services. The Lead professional is not accountable for the actions of other practitioners or services within the TAF.

Information sharing

The assessment aims to support good practice in information sharing about the needs of the families as part of early help services. The early help assessment is a voluntary assessment and consent must be given at the start of the process for the assessment. **If a family is engaging with you as you complete this form, their engagement is considered consent to under the assessment and can be recorded in Part A under "Family members who have contributed to this assessment".**

Once the assessment has been undertaken the parent/carer or young person will be required to sign the document to ensure they understand how the information will be stored and shared **(though it is expected that you will have already discussed this with them)**.

Team around the Family Meeting (TAF)

The team around the family (TAF) is a model of multi-agency service provision and should be arranged within six weeks from the commencement of the Early Help Assessment. The TAF will bring together a range of different practitioners from across both Adults and Children's Services along with the family in order to offer appropriate support. TAF members are jointly responsible for developing and delivering a package of solution focused support to meet identified needs of the family identified through the Early Help Assessment. TAF members should be responsible to deliver the actions they have agreed to carry out as part of the action plan

Should parents / carers not attend the TAF meeting it should continue and the action plan should be reviewed. In such circumstances parents/carers should be informed of the discussion and given details of the updated action plan.

TAF Paperwork

TAF paperwork is to be used to record the TAF discussions and can be found http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/singleassessmentprocedures

It is expected that plans will be reviewed at TAF meetings, in a timely manner (on a 6 weekly basis). The plan should be written clearly in a family friendly language and be clear what needs to be achieved in order to make the necessary changes identified by you and the family. If the local MAT are not part of the TAF then please ensure copies of all TAFs are sent to them so information can be stored with the assessment.

At each TAF meeting a review of the previous action plan must be undertaken considering what has worked well and what has not been achieved. If the TAF membership changes, remember to amend the first page of the TAF paperwork appropriately.

It is important to record on the action plan what might happen if the action plan is not followed.

At each TAF it should be considered can the assessment process be closed?

YES? If all actions have been achieved (and no new ones identified) it can be agreed for the assessment to be closed, with no further TAF meetings

taking place. Make sure this decision is communicated to all TAF members (including the family) and the families is clear of any continued support.

NO? Agree a review date with the TAF members at the meeting

PART C

This is a document completed by Social Workers only and is completed by a Social Worker once it has been accepted as a referral into Social Care. This is where a child's or young person's needs are seen as complex or serious and needs to be referred through to Call Derbyshire in the usual way via Call Derbyshire.

All Forms can be found here:
http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/singleassessmentprocedures