

Social care support for children and families

Children's social care support can provide help to children and their parents if the child:

- needs support with maintaining their health or development
- has a disability
- is in need of protection
- is fostered, adopted or lives in residential care

A social care professional can provide practical advice and information that help the family. They might:

- do an assessment of your child's and family's needs
- provide immediate help
- give you information about other support organisations that could help
- involve other professionals when assessing the help your child or you may need

How to ask for support

Call **0300 123 6720** or out of hours 0300 123 6722.

Your child's health visitor, doctor or school staff may also suggest a referral or may refer to social care, with your permission.

The team will ask you about the difficulty you're having and how it's affecting your child and family. They'll offer immediate advice about which services might be able to help you.

In some cases, a social care worker needs to support you and other times they'll do an assessment so that we can look at what your child and family needs.

If your child has special educational needs or a disability (SEND)

Disabled children are considered 'children in need' under the Children Act 1989. If your child has a disability you are entitled to an assessment of need by children's services. Your child's social care needs will be considered as part of a [education, health and care needs assessment](#) by the [Inclusion Service](#) and you may wish to ask for a social care assessment of your child's needs as part of this.

An assessment of your child should take into account your needs as a parent carer as well as the needs of your whole family. However parent carers of disabled children also have a right to ask for a [parent carer needs assessment](#) which focuses on your needs as a parent carer.

More information about assessments of disabled children and their families is available on the [SEND local offer](#) or the website, [Contact](#) - the charity for families with disabled children.

Assessment and support

An assessment is a way of finding out about you and your family and to identify the support that you may need.

A social worker will complete an assessment. The assessment involves collecting information about your child and family. We may ask other professionals who know you and your child well, for information about your child and family. This may include:

- teachers
- doctors
- health visitors

After an assessment

The assessment needs to be carried out within 45 days from the point of referral.

The social worker will, with your help, agree a plan of action. This may be:

- providing some advice
- recommending other services
- agreeing a plan of support

The child in need plan

The social worker will arrange a family meeting, which includes you, your child and any other professionals that need to be involved. Everyone involved with your family agrees a Child in Need plan, which gives details of:

- what services will be provided
- how long the services are needed
- what we hope to achieve by providing the services
- the date the plan will be reviewed

Early help

If needs can be met through providing support without a social worker involved then early help will be offered. This may be through the [Children and Family Wellbeing Service](#), a school or other local organisation.

When self referring to Children's Social Care, LCC

- You can do this via their call centre Help Line **-0300 123 6720**.
- Be aware you will be talking to a call centre member of staff who will collect information from you that will then be shared with a Social worker.
- Name all of your child's diagnoses or difficulties – almost all pupils at Hillside have additional learning disabilities. Remember to tell them that your child has learning disabilities as well as autism. If they have other difficulties such as ADHD, incontinence, challenging behaviour or epilepsy make sure they know about these too.
- All pupils at Hillside have an EHCP (education, health care plan) – make sure they know that you tell them that your child/ren has one.
- Make sure they know that your child attends a special school.
- Remember that you are legally entitled to an assessment due to your child having an EHCP. It is not legal to be refused for an assessment.
- The assessment should look at the needs of each person in the family, not just the child with autism. It should show what problems you have accessing an ordinary life, and look at how this could be helped.