

## Guidance notes on EIP Referral pathway

Barnet has invested in a range of early intervention and prevention services. This is in response to current government research and policy on the impact of early identification and help to children, young people and families. The process has been stream lined through the use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) as an assessment process and referral tool.

### A staged approach to identification of needs and service delivery

- 1. Earliest Identification of need through Universal Services.**  
Children, young people and families should be first identified as requiring additional help through contact with universal services such as health visitors, children's centres, schools, GPs, community organisations and youth services. This additional help may be provided by the universal service as a 'single agency response'.
- 2. Early Intervention CAF**  
When a single agency response is not sufficient to meet the child and families needs the practitioner working with the families may raise concerns. This may be in a professional's forum, such as a Team Around the Setting or Targeted Youth Panel or through the completion of the pre CAF checklist.
- 3. CAF as Assessment Tool**  
Once a practitioner has established through the discussion forum or the use of the checklist, that the child or family require support from additional agencies, then a CAF is initiated to assess need and scope action. A Lead Professional is appointed from the services involved at this point and a 'Team Around the Child' is set up to agree the action plan and coordinate the services supporting the child and family. Support provided from the agencies based within the community or universal service.
- 4. Role of Multi- Agency Coordinator (MAC) and CAF Duty Desk**  
The CAF duty desk is staffed by the Multi-Agency Coordinators and the CAF Social Workers. It operates Monday to Friday 9.00am-5.00pm and can be contacted on 020 8359 4405 or email [e-caf@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:e-caf@barnet.gov.uk)  
The Multi-Agency Coordinator will continue to support practitioners in the field in all aspects of using the CAF process. The new role of the CAF duty desk will be to:
  - Support practitioners in the use of CAF as a referral tool to a range of services
  - Advise on thresholds
  - To process the referral to the appropriate team for allocation to the service for the child / young person / family

## 5. CAF as Referral Tool

- **Family Focus Team.** Where a family has multiple needs for support and/or may be resistant to receiving help, a referral should be made to the Family Focus Team using the CAF as a referral. The Family Focus Team will use a persistent and non-judgemental approach to engage children, young people and families and may take on the role of the Lead Professional.
- **Where a family are reluctant to engage** and a CAF cannot be initiated the practitioner should contact the CAF duty desk or the Multi-Agency Coordinator for their locality. The practitioner will be advised to complete a CAF pre-assessment checklist and discussions will follow to mediate a referral to the Family Focus Team. In these exceptional circumstances the Family Focus Team can complete the CAF when the family have agreed to receive this service.
- **Youth Support Services.** As from April 2012 referrals for 'higher'\* level Targeted Youth Support Services from practitioners from other agencies will be made via the use of a CAF. Access to brief contact with Youth Support Workers for general guidance and information however may not require a CAF \* *(Further information about the thresholds of the 'higher' level of Youth Support services and around the referral pathway for this service will be made available to practitioners by April 2012)*
- **CAMHS.** Children and Families requiring mental health services based within the CAMHS clinics (Tier Three) and with needs below the threshold of Social Care or Youth Offending Service require a CAF to be used as a referral. Once completed these CAFs should be faxed or securely sent to the CAMHS ACCESS with a copy sent to the CAF Duty Team, as from February 2012 (details of where to send these can be found on the Barnet CAF Form). CAMHS intend to use the CAF process as an information sharing/assessment tool to promote good interagency working where required, as well it being used as a referral process.
- **Early Years Vulnerable Children.** Funded childcare places within Children's Centres for children or families with additional or complex needs, below the threshold for social care, will be accessed through the completion of a CAF (referrals from social workers will be accepted using an initial assessment). The childcare applies to children requiring a three or four-old free entitlement place for additional hours over and above the entitlement (15 hours per week, term time only). In addition, children between two – three years of age with identified special educational needs or who have a statement can also access a vulnerable childcare place. For children accessing a Two Year Old scheme childcare place, if the family support component is required a pre-CAF will need to be completed.

- **Intensive Family Focus.** The Intensive Family Focus Team (Formally FIP) work with families where there are multiple and complex needs of offending and anti-social behaviour, substance misuse, mental health, domestic violence, risk of eviction and on the cusp of care. The majority of these referrals will be already known to statutory services such as probation, social care, police, youth offending service and housing and are referred using their specialist assessment. On occasion the CAF may be used to refer into this service where cases significantly escalate and step up.

## 6. **Interface with Social Care**

The Multi-Agency Co-ordinator and the CAF Social Worker on the duty desk screen all CAF's to ensure any safeguarding issues are identified and passed on appropriately to Social Care. A clear protocol is in place between the Multi-Agency Support Team and Children's Social Care. CAF Social Workers are the links with social care teams to ensure the smooth transition of cases between social care and the CAF arena - up, down and across thresholds. There is a CAF Social Worker based with the Police Public Protection desk. They screen all police reports which raise concerns about a child or young person, known as a Merlin. All CAF Social Workers will assist in the running of the CAF duty desk and will enable referrals to be made through the CAF referral pathway. Families receiving support from Children's Social Care may only be referred to the Family Focus Team as part of the step down or step across process. A clear protocol is in place between the Family Focus Team and Children's Social Care.

## 7. **Parenting Programmes**

Parents referred by Social Care and only requiring attendance at an evidenced based parenting programme delivered by the Family Focus Team do not require a CAF. Social Care may make these referrals through the use of the current parenting programme referral form. Parents referred through the CAF to the Family Focus Team will be offered an appropriate parenting programme. Other parents wishing to attend a parenting programme will be signposted to Children's Centres and the CommUNITY Barnet parenting consortium.

## 8. **Interface with SEN Services**

Children who have a statement of special educational needs who are identified with wider, additional social/family needs may also require a CAF. The purpose of the CAF for these children is to assess and co-ordinate the appropriate additional services. The CAF can also be used as a referral to other targeted Early Intervention and Prevention services, such as the Family Focus Team and the Early Years childcare packages. Existing links between the Multi-Agency Coordinators, the Complex Needs Panel and the Multi-Agency Intake Panel will be further developed and strengthened. A clear protocol between special needs services and the Family Focus Team is in development.