

INFORMATION SHARING WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

Information Sharing Protocol: Children and Young People with Disabilities or Special Needs

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Children and Young People with Disabilities or Special Needs: Document History

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The source of the document will be found in the files of the Information Strategy Team.

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Approvals

This document requires the approval of the following:

| Name | Organisation/Job Title | Date of Approval | Version | Signature |
|------------------------|---|------------------|---------|-----------|
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Information Sharing Protocol: Children and Young People with Disabilities and Special Needs

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It has been compiled in accordance with current legislative requirements and in consultation with signatory agencies.

A list of acknowledgements and contributory documentation is available in Appendix

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Scope

Children with disabilities and special needs receive support and help from people in many agencies and organisations during their childhood. The sum of the collective knowledge held by professionals provides a holistic view of a child's developmental needs, family context, and an understanding of what services the child needs to enter adulthood successfully.

This document specifies the protocols to be used to enable improved information sharing among agencies and professionals who work with children with disabilities and special needs, to enhance the timeliness and quality of the provision of relevant services; and to support local preventative strategy and service development.

The protocol has been written with the understanding that the principles and standards defined in the overarching Community Information Sharing Charter will be applied throughout the processes it describes.

The Integrated Disability Service in Warwickshire supports:

- Children or young people with a long term impairment requiring services to enable them to stay safe, be healthy, enjoy and achieve, to make a positive contribution and ultimately achieve economic well-being.
- Families, carers and staff who support disabled young people in a range of settings which would include: education, health, childcare, work-based learning and community settings.

The age range for the disabled young people supported by the IDS will be birth to 18 *except* in the following circumstances:

- Up to 19 years when the disabled young person has a statement of special education needs and remains in a school setting
- Young adults up to the age of 25 years who are receiving a service from Connexions and who need support in the transition to adult life.

Objectives

To set out a framework for the secure and confidential sharing of information between organisations, enabling them to meet the needs of vulnerable children and young people in accordance with national and local policy and legislative requirements.

To inform members of the community why information about them may need to be shared and how this sharing will be managed.

This Document:

- ◆ Outlines the procedures which will ensure that information is disclosed in line with organisational responsibilities
- ◆ Identifies the reasons why information needs to be shared and who it will need to be shared with
- ◆ Lists the organisations who have agreed to share information as described within this protocol.
- ◆ Describes the structure of supporting documents that will detail the specific arrangements for each identified purpose.

Supporting Documents (Detailed agreements)

- ◆ Will address specific purposes for which information will be shared, and define the information required for that purpose.
- ◆ Will detail the arrangements for which have been agreed for exchanging information.
- ◆ Will identify the specific organisations between which the relevant information will be shared.
- ◆ Will describe the security procedures necessary to ensure that the confidentiality of information exchanged is maintained.
- ◆ Will include a Community focused Privacy statement, outlining the information required for the defined purposes, who will see it and what it will be used for.

Children and Young People with Disabilities and Special Needs Purposes, Partners and Information Requirements.

In this document, the terms “**children**” and “**young people**” are used interchangeably to refer to those in need of, or receiving, services from the various agencies within the Integrated Disability Service until their adulthood.

The Integrated Disability Service will provide specific services for:

Children or young people with a long-term impairment requiring services to enable them to stay safe, be healthy, enjoy and achieve, to make a positive contribution and ultimately achieve economic well-being.

Families, carers and staff who support disabled young people in a range of settings which would include: education, health, childcare, work-based learning and community settings.

As a general rule the service will be provided to children and young people resident within the geographic boundary of Warwickshire. However some services will be provided to those not resident in Warwickshire and who are:

- Educated within the geographic boundary of the county of Warwickshire
- Registered with a Warwickshire GP

and also those who are placed in a out of county residential or family placement by the Children, Young People and Families Service of the County Council.

The age range for the disabled young people supported by the IDS will be birth to 18 except in the following circumstances:

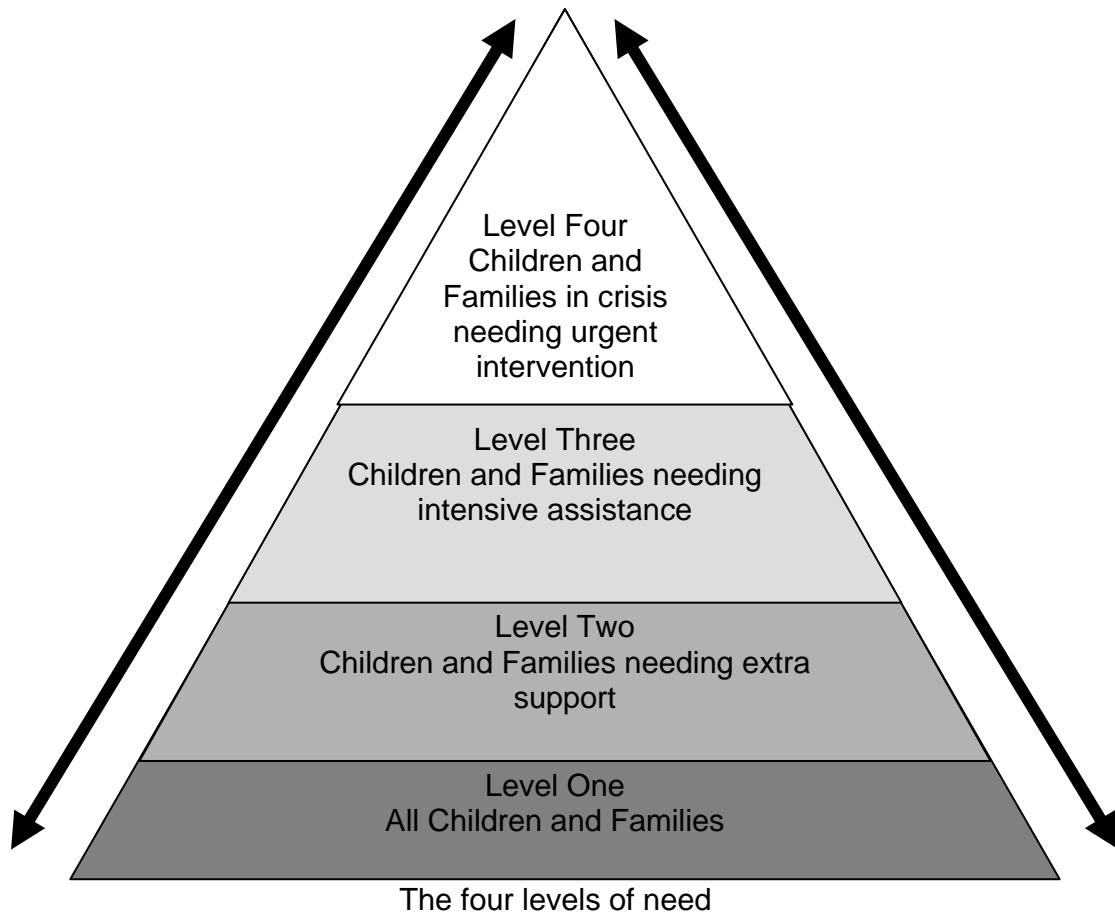
- Up to 19 years when the disabled young person has a statement of special educational needs and remains in a school setting.
- Young adults up to the age of 25 years who are receiving a service from Connexions and who need support in the transition to adult life.

Only those professionals with a relationship with the child will join the information sharing network for the purpose of sharing information about that child.

Only information that a fellow professional ‘needs to know’ will be shared, therefore there will be different levels of access operating in respect of each child, with minimal information accessed centrally.

The levels of information sharing will be based on the following levels of need.

Tiered Model Of Need



Under the terms of this protocol, information will *only* be shared for the following purposes:

- **To support the needs of Children and Young People with disabilities and special needs, their families and their carers**
- **To enhance the capacity within schools and other child care settings to manage the needs of Children and Young People with Disabilities and special needs**
- **To enhance the opportunities available for Children and Young People with Special needs to achieve the five outcomes for children**
- **To monitor the effectiveness of service and the appropriateness of delivery**
- **To enable the development and commissioning of effective services to meet identified needs**
- **To enable the delivery of specific services commissioned for Children and Young People with Disabilities and Special Needs**

Whenever possible, consent from the person concerned will be sought prior to sharing information within or between agencies. However, if consent to share is refused and there is a concern that failure to do so may create a risk of harm, the information may still need to be shared. In such cases, the following steps will always be taken.

- ◆ The person concerned will be given a full explanation as to why the information needs to be shared and who will have access to it. (Providing there is no risk of further harm by doing so. Where a risk is judged to exist, this step may be waived.)
- ◆ A record will be made of the refusal to consent and the reasons for exchanging data without it.

When sharing information with another agency it should be made clear who has or will be informed.

Clear and accurate records will be kept listing all details of information sharing and the reason for this.

All requests for anonymity by the referrer will be fully respected. It cannot however be guaranteed, especially if the referrer's information becomes an essential element in any subsequent legal proceedings.

Information shared for the purpose of:

Supporting the needs of Children and Young People with disabilities and special needs, their families and their carers

Will be:

- ◆ Particular to an individual child and the needs of that child.
- ◆ Defined to include information about family members where appropriate, subject to relevant safeguards
- ◆ Only to a level of detail required in order to support the identified need(s).
- ◆ Shared in detail only with those agencies with a responsibility to provide the service to support the delivery of the outcomes
- ◆ Stored securely within each relevant agency.
- ◆ Accessed only by officers and staff involved with the specified child.
- ◆ Disclosed to/shared with a relevant agency only as necessary.
- ◆ Recorded as having been shared/disclosed along with the reason for that disclosure and whom it has been disclosed to.
- ◆ Made available to the relevant subject on request, providing there is no risk of harm or prejudice to the investigation by doing so.
- ◆ Retained according to statutory requirements concerning Children and Young Persons' records.

Enhancing the capacity within schools and other child care settings to manage the needs of Children and Young People with Disabilities and special needs

Enhancing the opportunities available for Children and Young People with Special needs to achieve the five outcomes for children

Will be:

- Independent of any specific child or family member
- Only involved anonymised case studies as necessary
- Relevant to those needs identified as being undersupported

Monitoring the effectiveness of service and the appropriateness of delivery

Enabling the development and commissioning of effective services to meet identified needs

Enabling the delivery of specific services commissioned for Children and Young People with Disabilities and Special Needs

Will be:

- ◆ Summarised and Anonymised (or pseudoanonymised) in all cases

The information identified as being required to meet these purposes is outlined in Appendix 1.

The Partners subject to this protocol are:

Warwickshire County Council, Children, Young People and Families Directorate

Warwickshire County Council, Adult Health and Community Services Directorate

Coventry and Warwickshire Connexions Service

Warwickshire PCT


Other organisations involved in the delivery of relevant services through commission by the above named partners will be required to meet the content and standards defined in this Protocol under formal contractual arrangements.

Geographical area covered

The protocol applies to all Children and Young People resident within the geographic boundary of Warwickshire. However, some services will be provided to those not resident in Warwickshire and who are:

- Educated within the geographic boundary of the county of Warwickshire
- Registered with a Warwickshire GP

And also those who are placed in an out of county residential or family placement by the Children, Young People and Families service of the County Council.



Specific Agreements

The following agreements detail the procedures to be followed when sharing information within the scope of this protocol:

- ◆ ‘Rules of engagement’ for Multi-agency case conferences and incident strategy discussions/meetings.
- ◆ Processes for contact, referral and decision making
- ◆ Information requirements for monitoring the effectiveness of service to Children and Young People.
- ◆ Procedures for assessing, agreeing and disseminating identified risks to others
- ◆ Procedures for monitoring the Health of Looked After Children.
- ◆ Further detailed agreements to be developed

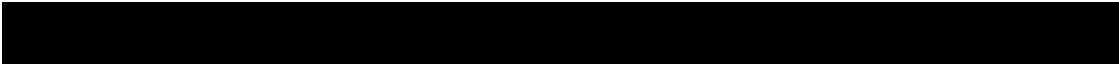
Implementation, Monitoring and Review

The Protocol has been developed by Warwickshire County Council on behalf of the Children and Young People’s Strategic Partnership. The intention has been to develop a purpose specific protocol, adopting the principals and standards set out in the Community Information Sharing Charter as a base line. This protocol sets out the specific arrangements and designated responsibilities for sharing information relating to vulnerable children, and will be further supported by service specific agreements detailing the information to be shared.

This protocol will be reviewed on an annual basis, taking any changes in practise, relevant legislation or organisational structure into account

Issues, incidents and complaints resulting from failures in the specific agreements will be fed into the review processes.

Breeches of this protocol will be seen as a matter of serious concern and partner agencies will take immediate action should such any such breach occur.



Appendix 1:

The 'Disabilities and Special Needs' Child Data Set

Data will be collected and held concerning:

Names, dates of birth, addresses, and personal details (including needs, health and risk issues) concerning Children and Young people supported by the services covered by this protocol.

Names, addresses and some personal details of individuals with parental responsibility for relevant Children and Young people.

Names, address and some personal details of siblings, relatives and associates of relevant Children and Young people, where a need to do so has been identified.

The Information Exchange Charter: Summary

This Charter sets out standards and principles to be applied whenever personal information is shared or exchanged. The organisations signed up to this Charter are fully committed to ensuring that these standards and principals are adhered to at all times.

The principles established by this Charter are:

- Information about individuals will only be shared when and where it is needed.
- Information will be shared in accordance with statutory duties.
- Information that is provided in confidence will be treated as confidential.
- Information will only be used for the purposes for which it was collected and shared.
- Individuals will be fully informed about the way their personal information is used and shared.
- Consent to share information will always be sought from the appropriate individual.
- Considerations of confidentiality and privacy will not automatically cease on death.
- The information rights of individuals will be respected and observed.
- Agency's collecting personal information will publish service-specific Privacy Statements:

Service-specific Privacy Statements

Wherever personal information is collected, the agency responsible will publish a Privacy Statement for that service which will set out clearly:

- ◆ who will see it;
- ◆ why they need it;
- ◆ what they will do with it; and
- ◆ when they will delete it.

They will also state:

- ◆ how that personal information is safeguarded;
- ◆ how an individual can check and correct the information that is being held;
- ◆ how to pursue a query or complaint; and
- ◆ where to get more information.

The detailed version of this Charter is also available

Appendix 3: Acknowledgements

The Charter, the Structured Model and its Supporting documents have been developed in line with recognised good practice and draws on documents and work already undertaken to address these issues in other areas of the country.

These documents include:

The Data Protection Act 1998 and associated Guidance from the Office of the Information Commissioner
The Human Rights Act 1998
The Caldicott Manual – Guidance for Guardians
Department of Health Guidance on the Development of Information Sharing protocols

‘Establishing a Framework for Information sharing’ DfES: Every Child Matters website

The Scottish E-Care ‘General Protocol for Sharing Information’
Policy and Innovations Unit – Privacy and Data Sharing. April 2002
Assessments of Children and Families: Information sharing protocol for partner agencies in Leeds. Published by the Leeds Children’s Strategic Planning Group December 2000
CONNEXIONS CORNWALL AND DEVON: Code of Practice for Information Sharing and Exchange
Durham Interagency Policy – Sharing Information and Confidentiality
North East Lincolnshire Information Sharing Framework: community Charter and Protocol for Children and Young People.