

A carers guide to Parent Carers Needs Assessments

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A Guide to for Parents:

Parent Carers Needs Assessments (PCNA) for children and young people with SEND aged 0-18

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Are you a carer?

Many people don't see themselves as carers.

You might see the emotional and practical support that you provide as part of being a parent.

No matter how you see yourself, you are a carer if you provide or arrange care for someone who struggles to cope without your support, for more than 35 hours per week.

If you are a carer, you could be entitled to help and support that makes your life easier

Did you know that the law says that upon request, Local Authorities have a duty to carry out carers assessments if *'it appears to the authority that the parent carer may have needs for support'*

What is a Parent Carer's Needs Assessment?

The aim of a parent carer's needs assessment (PCNA) is to give parents/carers of under 18 year olds a chance to tell the Royal Borough of Greenwich about the things that could make looking after their disabled child easier. If the child is aged 16 or over at the time of the assessment, the carers assessment can take place alongside the child's Moving to Adulthood planning.

The assessment will be completed by a worker from the Family and Adolescent Support Service (FASS) or Children's Social Care, and they will arrange a home visit to meet with you face to face. However, please note that the assessment will only be undertaken by a worker from the FASS, if your child is already open to the service. Where allocated to Children's Social Care for the assessment, you may be supported by the Assessment and Support Service or the Disabled Children Social Work Team depending on the needs of your child with SEND. Whichever service that completes the assessment, the practitioner will follow the same process.

The assessment will consider any worries or challenges that you may face as a carer and the worker will ensure that your views are listened to, taking account of any religious and/or cultural views. In order to ensure a holistic approach to the assessment, with your consent, we may ask to speak to the child you care for, other people in your family and the services supporting you and your family. You have a right to decline this contact. The person undertaking the assessment will speak to you about how the information you feel comfortable sharing can be best obtained, and how this will affect the assessment overall.

It will look at options for support, advice, and assistance across all services in the council and beyond including universal services such as benefits advice, community support groups and on-line resources.

The assessment process will discuss how your caring responsibilities affect you. It will consider the following:

- Any difficulties you may be experiencing with providing care
- Whether your caring responsibilities have any impact on your wellbeing – emotional or physical
- Any support needs you may have
- What you would like to achieve in your daily life, for example, taking part in activities that you enjoy, for example, practicing your religion in their local community
- What caring tasks you do and how you feel about doing them
- Your relationship with the person you care for

- If you get enough time for yourself - for example time to get out and about, meet other people and take part in leisure activities
- How caring is affecting your relationships with others
- How caring is affecting your education and work life
- Whether the person you are caring for is getting enough support
- What are your wishes for the future? Do you see yourself continuing to be the main carer in the foreseeable future? Is this likely to change?
- What support you may find beneficial and if you are currently accessing any wider community-based support

When can I ask for a Parent Carers Needs Assessment?

All parent carers have a right to ask for an assessment of their needs at any time. You can also have your needs re-assessed if you have had a previous PCNA and your needs or circumstances have changed.

However, if your child is having an assessment of their needs, this assessment will consider the needs of the rest of the family members, including parents, carers and siblings. When caring for a disabled child it is difficult to separate caring and parenting and as such, practice is that they are usually considered in one assessment. This means that a separate PCNA is unlikely to be needed as the child and family assessment takes these carer needs into consideration; however, should you wish to have a standalone assessment, then you can request this.

How do I ask for a Parent Carers Needs Assessment?

- If you/your family are currently working with Children's Services, you can ask your worker for an assessment.
- If you are not currently working with Children's Services, you can request an assessment by contacting the Royal Borough of Greenwich Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0208 921 3172. Alternatively, if a professional is completing a referral on your behalf, they can complete an inter-agency referral form, using the link below:

https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/downloads/download/449/inter-agency_referral_form

What happens next?

- Following receipt of a request for a PCNA via the MASH, it may be assessed that the child/parent/carers needs can be met by accessing support outside of Children's Services, such as universal health services, access to benefits advice etc. and that further assessment may not be required based on information shared. This decision will be made in conjunction with you as parents and carers.
- Once it has been established who is going to complete an assessment, a worker will contact you to plan to complete the assessment.

The information you provide will remain confidential unless you share anything that poses a risk to your child/ren, yourself or others. In these instances, the worker will be required to share the

information with the Manager or Senior Worker in the team to discuss concerns and assess if any further action needs to be taken.

Once the assessment has been completed, the worker will discuss any appropriate actions to be completed by them, yourself, or whether there is a need for referrals/signposting to other services.

We should aim to complete PCNA's within a maximum of 45 working days, although this is likely to be sooner, especially if the assessment is a standalone PCNA. The aim of this assessment is to give the carer an opportunity to be heard and to explore community based universal, targeted or specialist support available to the child and family (please see local offer for more details).

What will happen after the PCNA has been completed?

Once the assessment has been completed, services may be identified to support you to better manage your caring responsibilities and /or manage issues which are important to you. For example, you could be signposted to services in the community, these could include:

- Benefits advice
- Local support groups
- Services available in the Family Adolescent Support Service/Children's Social Care
- Relevant health services
- Universal, Targeted or Specialist short-breaks
- Family support including support around routines, behaviour, etc.
- Signposting to services in the local community such as, counselling, play schemes or leisure activities

These might be arranged through your child's support plan (if you are already working with Children's Services) and can be reviewed and updated if your child/ren's needs, your family circumstances or your caring responsibilities change.

Where a specialist service is recommended for you as a result of your assessment, this may require a funding agreement. This agreement may be given by the Social Work Team or may require a decision to be made at the Short Breaks Panel if it includes specialist provision for your child.

Concerns, complaints and compliments

Please tell us if you have any concerns, complaints or compliments. Your experience is important to us. We need to know when we are getting it right and when we need to improve. Please discuss your positive feedback or concerns/ dissatisfaction with the case worker and/or their managers in the first instance. If the concerns remain, you can make a complaint.

Here's some ways to contact us:

You can call 020 8854 8888 or you can fill in a complaints form by visiting

https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/info/200161/complaints/986/complain_about_childrens_services/2

Information, advice, and support services in Greenwich (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Information on what support is available to parent carers is available on the SEND Local Offer



- Greenwich Parent Carer Participation Forum - <https://greenwichpcpf.org/>
- Greenlights Parent Support Group (for parents of children with ASD or ADHD) - <https://www.greenwichmencap.org.uk/events/parent-support-group/>
- Greenwich Carers Centre - <https://www.greenwichcarers.org/>
- Young Greenwich - <https://www.young-greenwich.org.uk/>
- Health Visiting - <http://oxleas.nhs.uk/services/service/childrens-health-visiting-serv/>
- Greenwich Down's Group - <https://www.greenwichcommunitydirectory.org.uk/kb5/greenwich/directory/advice.page?id=Eos27qGt3WU>
- National Autistic Society - https://www.autism.org.uk/?gclid=EAlaIQobChMIxffD0MHQ-AIVoejtCh1NYwKjEAAYASAAEgI1PfD_BwE
- You can also call Carers UK 0808 808 7777 or visit www.carersuk.org

Targeted and specialist support services in Greenwich:

Short Breaks Core Offer -

<https://www.greenwichcommunitydirectory.org.uk/kb5/greenwich/directory/advice.page?id=1YXLOYPJdfQ>

Other useful information:

If your child is over age 18, please follow the attached link to access key information on how you can access support:

https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/info/200274/carers/763/carers_assessments

You can also call Adult Services single point of contact 020 8921 2304 for more information.