

**The Resource Allocation
System (RAS):
A Fair Start for Children
with Disabilities**

**Version 5
January 2017**

Resource Allocation System

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1 Introduction

Bracknell Children and Young People's Partnership aims to:

"Enable all children, young people and families to lead healthy and fulfilled lives, to play an active role within their community and realise their aspirations and potential through the well coordinated provision of support and services" (Creating Opportunities Strategic Plan 2014-2017).

This work supports the Council's vision that children and young people with disabilities have the best start in life and the ongoing support that they and their families need to fulfil their potential; whilst also being in context of the Council's six strategic themes particularly:

- ensuring value for money
- strong, safe, supportive and self resilient communities
- developing life skills and education opportunities needed to thrive
- living active and healthy lifestyles

For more detailed information see <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/council-plan-2015-to-2019.pdf>.

The purpose of this policy is to describe the process for raising aspirations, meeting need and allocating resources within Bracknell Forest Council's, Children's Social Care (CSC). This is to ensure that children with disabilities get a fair start in life and the very best opportunities to succeed alongside their peers.

1.1 Universal Provision and Targeted Provision

Not every child with a disability/additional needs will be eligible for services from CSC and/or a Personal Budget. Social workers will always support families to look first at community resources, targeted services and activities that support the child to access the mainstream services which all children use, alongside the resources that one's own family and friends bring.

The range of services available in Bracknell at all levels can be viewed on the Local Offer, <http://search3.openobjects.com/kb5/bracknell/directory/localoffer.page?familychannel=6> .

The services below are always available to every child in Bracknell Forest, and sometimes there is no need for additional paid support when these services are combined with the support that the family and community can offer. Please follow the links for more information on assessments and activities available to all:

Family Information Service

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/familyinformation>

Short Breaks (formerly Aiming High)

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/shortbreaks> *

* Available to children **with** additional needs / disabilities.

CAF

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/commonassessmentframework>

1.2 Additional Specialist Provision

However some children in Bracknell Forest might need additional support to help them meet the outcomes identified as priorities by the Children's Social Care, Specialist Support Team – i.e.

- To keeping children safe
- To enable access and inclusion

- To have opportunities to achieve and develop for adulthood
- To be cared for wherever possible within their family/community

2 Eligibility for a service from CSST and/ or a Personal Budget

2.1 Children's Specialist Support Team

The Children's Specialist Support Team (CSST), formerly the Disabled Children's Team, is a team that specialises in delivering support to children and young people who have complex and enduring support needs with regard to a disability or complex health conditions. They work specifically to provide a more equal start to children with disabilities and resilience to permanency within a child's family. One aspect of their role includes administering access to Personal Budgets and or Direct Payments.

The eligibility criteria for services are described in the Bracknell Forest Local Safeguarding Children Board Continuum of Help and Support, found by following the link below.

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/bf-lscb-thresholds.pdf>

It should be noted however, that for children meeting the criteria, the Specialist Support Team may first offer a family group conference to explore the resources within the family and wider community, before deciding whether further specialist support is required.

2.2 Personal Budgets

In the past, children with disabilities have had their support organised on their behalf by social workers. This was often in the form of a number of nights at a short break service or a number of hours of paid support from a Personal Assistant or other support provider.

Personal budgets are a way in which the Council shares the decisions about the types of support with children and their families, in the belief that if people themselves have more control and creativity of the resources available to them they will find solutions and support what works best for them.

Eligibility for a **personal budget for social care** will be restricted to children and young people assessed as needing support on a Level 3 or 4 of the thresholds of the Multi-Agency Needs/ Risk Matrix used by Social Care. The four levels are:

- Level 1 – Needs are/ can be met through engagement with universal services
- Level 2 – Emerging needs. Requires assessment and/ or early intervention
- Level 3 – Needs are causing concern and will require a targeted response
- Level 4 – Need is severe. Requires specialist and/ or statutory services

Eligibility for a **personal budget for education** will be restricted to children and young people assessed as eligible for an EHCP.

As a broad guide, if a child has a significant disability and needs one to one support at all times they will usually be entitled to a Personal Budget. If a child has significant needs below one to one support they may still receive funding if it is required to support the child to achieve the priorities set out in the Children and Young People's Plan. Further information on this plan can be found at:

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/cypp-plan-creating-opportunities-2014-to-2017.pdf>

2.1.1 Legal Context

The Children and Families Act 2014 has, for the first time, enshrined in law the right for families to ask for a personal budget in order to manage and commission the support needs that have been assessed by the CSC and other statutory bodies. Bracknell Forest is required, by law, to consider any request for a personal budget that is submitted. The individual circumstances of each case will be examined and a decision taken whether or not a personal budget can be assigned. Decisions must be in line with the legal guidance that defines the eligibility criteria (see Appendix 3). Most young people and families will be able to receive a personal budget if they wish to have one.

How much funding a family receives to pay for support will depend on the needs that are identified and agreed in the child's assessment.

3 Level of Funding for a Personal Budget

Since September 2014 Bracknell Forest will be using a Resource Allocation System (RAS) for all service requests which translates need into an indicative/ personal budget from which agreed services can be provided. The RAS enables the CSST to work on an indicative budget based on five bands of needs for support. These bands are:

- No support*
- Small support
- Some support
- Lots of support
- Exceptional support
- Crisis**

*Although 'No Support' is a category, it does not count towards need, as a child assessed as having no support needs in a certain area, will either need no support to achieve this, or the question will not be applicable to them, and again, will not need support in this area.

** 'Crisis' is an extension of Exceptional Support.

The bands describe how resources and or funding is awarded for levels of support. The financial bands, what they mean and how they are evaluated is described in full on page 4 and 5. More detailed examples of needs within the bands are given in Appendix 1.

3.1 Families who had funding in place before September 2014

Special arrangements have been agreed for these families, guaranteeing that any personal budget allocated will not be less than 25% of their current cost or 4% above their current cost. These arrangements will remain in place for two years from the renewal of the family's next assessment.

4 Process for allocating a Personal Budget

A workflow explaining how a child or their family can access support from the Children's Specialist Support Team (CSST), including accessing a personal budget, is found in Appendix 2.

4.1 Assessment

4.1.1 Single Assessment

A social worker will work with children and their families to carry out a Single Assessment. If the child has a social worker the assessment will be undertaken by that worker. If the child does not have a social worker then it will be a member of the Duty and Assessment Team.

This assessment will look in detail at:

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- Who the child is, their skills, talents and interests
- The support they need
- Building up a picture of the child's life including aspirations
- Parenting and family capacity
- Beginning to identify the community links that could work well for the child

If the outcome of an assessment is that the child is eligible for a service from the CSST and/ or for funding for a support plan, the CSST will help the child and their family to fill in a Resource Allocation Questionnaire.

4.1.2 Resource Allocation Questionnaire

The Resource Allocation Questionnaire is used to support the assessment and helps understand how much funding and or resources are allocated.

Both aspects of the assessment process should be carried out with parent/carers and their child in co production. It is important that the social worker seeks the views, needs and aspirations of the child and other family members. The full form can be seen using a link in Appendix 6 of this document.

4.1.3 Financial Bands of Support

Bracknell Forest are using financial 'bands of support' to work out what a child's individual budget will be. The bands are listed on Page 6. However, these bands are guidelines and a child will be given an assessed amount based on the "pounds per point" formula used to reach an indicative budget.

Appendix 1 gives worked examples of need and levels of support using the Financial Bands of Support. Note: this is not an exhaustive list nor is it meant to prescribe what we assess as need, it is simply an example to illustrate the process.

Financial Bands of Support

<p>No Support*</p> <p>Less than 70 points</p>	<p>No Support (Universal)</p>	<p>Indicates that the child or young person needs no additional support or that this statement is not applicable to the individual child or young person.</p> <p>(e.g. close and loving relationships will not apply to a 2 year old.)</p>
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*If there is no support needed, the child will be assessed as either age appropriately able and referred to universal services or the question is not applicable to the child. Children scoring under 70 points will not usually be eligible for support from the CSST. The five categories of support needs are outlined below:

<p>Low / small Support Needs</p> <p>70 to 100 points</p>	<p>Minimal Support (Universal/ Targeted)</p>	<p>Indicates that the child or young person needs a small amount of support, but the support needed is not at a level where there is a need for significant adjustments to be made.</p>
<p>Medium to High Support Needs</p> <p>101 to 150 points</p>	<p>Additional Support (Targeted)</p>	<p>Indicates that the child or young person needs some additional support.</p>
<p>High Support Needs</p> <p>151 to 200 points</p>	<p>Specialist Support (Specialist)</p>	<p>Indicates that the child needs specialist support.</p>
<p>Exceptional Support Needs</p> <p>201 to 259 points</p>	<p>Exceptional Support (Crisis)</p>	<p>Indicates that the child needs more than 1:1 support.</p>
<p>Crisis**</p> <p>(an extension of Exceptional Support Needs)</p> <p>More than 260 points</p>	<p>Family in complete breakdown or child in care for their safety</p>	<p>Indicates that there is a total breakdown of the family unit due to the stress/ complexity of the care needed or a child has been taken into care due to their vulnerability.</p>

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4.1.4 How the Single Assessment and RAS Questionnaire work together

The analysis section of the Single Assessment brings together the social workers conclusions about the child's level of needs, family resilience and capacity. This, coupled with the Resource Allocation Questionnaire, will show clearly a band of support, which coincides with a points total that has been discussed and agreed with the young person and/or their parents / carers. This will inform how much funding will be offered as an 'indicative' allocation.

4.1.5 The Indicative Allocation

The indicative allocation is the Council's view, after assessment of the child and family, of how much funding/ support/ resources should be provided to meet the child or young person's needs and is a fair share of the money available for all children who live in Bracknell Forest with disabilities and who have additional need. It is important to be aware that this is a "starting point" for discussions around the support package needed to be put together. The assessed statutory needs of a child or young person will be met irrespective of an indicative allocation. However, we will look to the young people and their families to tell us their preferences and we will work with them to realise the package of support they want to have.

4.1.6 Resource Allocation Panel

At the end of the Single Assessment and the Resource Allocation Questionnaires, the social worker will be able to ask the Resource Allocation Panel to provide an indicative budget allocation. This amount will be the starting point for determining the cost of the support that has been assessed for the child or young person.

The indicative allocation can then be shared with the family to enable them to know how much support their child could receive and what money is available to finance that need.

Individual budgets are a new way of allocating Council money fairly, but our legal duties have not changed. Their key responsibility is to meet eligible children's assessed needs and give those families a short break.

4.1.7 Membership of the Panel

The Panel will consist of the people representing the following organisations. Not all will be in attendance at all panel meetings; they will attend only when relevant to the business of the panel.

Flexibility of membership will be required to reflect requests and other representatives may be invited.

- Chair – Head of Service, Specialist Support
- Panel Administrator
- The child's allocated key worker
- Team Manager – Children's Specialist Support Team (CSST)
- Short Break Services Development Manager
- Larchwood Short Break Unit Manager / Senior Practitioner
- SEN – Team Manager
- Representative from Health, Clinical Nurse Manager
- Occupational Therapist – as required
- Family Placement lead for Short Break Foster Care – as required
- Direct Payments worker – as required
- Early Years/ community child minding – as required
- Behaviour Support Specialist – as required
- Other individuals may be invited – as required

4.2 Support Planning

Once a family has their indicative allocation, they can start to work out, with their allocated worker, how that budget could be used. The support plan offers the chance to think about what a really good life for the child would be now and in the future and explains how the family will use the allocation to make some of this happen. The support plan tests that the allocation can meet the child's needs, and with future permanency in mind.

4.2.1 How to develop a support plan

There are a variety of ways a plan can be developed:

- Families can get support and information to make their own plan
- A social worker/ member of the CSST can make a plan with the child/ family
- A family can ask the social worker/ member of the support team to do the plan for them
- A combination of the above

4.2.2 What should be included in a support plan?

However the support plan is developed there are some simple values and necessary information that is required in developing the plan:

Good information about the child

- What is important to the child?
- What are the child's talents and skills?
- What are the child's hobbies and interests?
- What relationships and community resources does the child have which can work alongside the budget?
- What aspirations do the child/ family have.

What's working well in life now and what's not working?

- This gives the chance to work out what's going well and needs to continue and what isn't going so well and needs to change. Then prioritise what the focus of the plan will be.

What are the aspirations for next year?

- This is a really clear statement of what the plan hopes to achieve.

What are the child's support needs and how will they be met?

- The detail of how the child will be supported, by whom and when.

How does the plan help the family to be more in control of their support?

- How was the child involved in the plan?
- How can we help the child be in control of the plan?

4.2.3 The Support Action Plan

The Council need to see that the budget that has been allocated to the child will support them well. The action plan lays out what is going to happen to make sure the child :

- Is kept safe
- Is able to be part of the community / be involved
- Has opportunities to develop for adulthood and
- The plan also needs to show how the family as a whole is supported.

4.3 Agreeing the Plan and Personal Budget Offer

Once the support plan is complete, the child's allocated worker/ social worker will present it at the Resource Allocation Panel for discussion and approval. If the plan meets the four priorities above and provides parent/ carers with a good short break and is within budget then it will be approved. If further work is needed with the plan the Panel will advise the worker who would discuss with the family.

Independent support is available for families which is linked to Bracknell Forest IASS – Information, Advice and Support Service, formerly Parent Partnership. The service is free and confidential. Further information is available at:

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/independentsupport>

4.4 Arrangements

4.4.1 Options for managing the Personal Budget

Personal Budgets have been designed to give children and their families more control of their support; being in control of support doesn't mean that a family has to take control of the money offered. Through the support planning process, a family or a young person will have decided exactly how they want to use the budget; and the options about how to manage the money. The options are:

- **Direct payment** - parents are given the cash to buy and manage the services themselves to meet the outcomes identified in the child's care plan.
- **An organisational arrangement** - no money changes hands. Parents find out how much money is available and with support identify the different ways to spend that money meeting the outcomes of the child's support plan. The services are then arranged on the family's behalf by the Local Authority, Education or Health Service.
- **Third party arrangement/ nominees** – a third party organisation, trust or nominated person holds the money and supports parents to decide the best way to spend the funding, they then buy the services chosen.
- **A combination of the above**

4.4.2 Options for buying support

There is a range of support a family can spend their personal budget on. As part of the Children and Families Act 2014, Bracknell Forest Council have launched a website called the "Local Offer". This site has all the options for young people and families looking to buy in support that has been identified by the Council:

<http://search3.openobjects.com/kb5/bracknell/directory/localoffer.page?familychannel=6>

Although there is a group of support providers working in partnership with the Council, we have included all providers who can deliver support, to increase awareness of the range of providers that may be able to assist in delivering the identified support. Whilst the Council works to make sure this local offer is useful to families; choice of provider is not limited to the providers within this partnership.

A young person or family can choose support for their child through employing personal assistants with their Personal Budget. The Direct Payments Team will provide advice as necessary about how to employ a Personal Assistant.

Information on the local offer will be updated on a regular basis.

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/socialcaresdirectpayments>

The budget can be used for a wide range of activities that benefit the child. For example, to support youth and community groups to welcome the child into the activity they want to take part in. This may involve funding training for staff, paying for an additional staff member or paying volunteers expenses or for equipment to ensure that the child can take part in activities and fully participate.

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Support can also include transport for activities, accommodation, day trips, short breaks, equipment or small adaptations. What a family can and cannot buy is covered in greater detail in Appendix 3 “Guidance to Audit”.

4.5 Review

Whilst a family are in receipt of support that is funded by the Council a member of the Specialist Support Team or another lead professional will visit regularly (usually at least every six weeks). The first review will take place three months after a child’s plan ‘goes live’, so there is a chance to look back on how things have gone/ are going. The review will be organised by the lead professional/ social worker and will be held in a way which makes it comfortable and easy for children to get involved.

The review will be based on how the support plan is working and how it is helping the child stay safe, be included, achieve and support the family. The review may be held with a big poster on the wall or around a table, however the meeting takes place it will follow the format outlined below:

- What are the child’s needs?
- Are they being met?
- What is going well?
- What are we concerned about?
- What’s been achieved?
- What will I do next?

The first review after 3 months will help to get a really good start and iron out any difficulties early on. After the first review there will be a review every 6 months or at agreed regular intervals. In between reviews, a further review can be called if there are any serious issues, problems or significant changes.

4.6 Audit

The audit process for Personal Budgets (PB) allocated through the RAS will be identical to the Audit process currently used for Direct Payments. If a request for a personal budget is made, we will have to assess the person asking to ensure they meet the criteria of having a PB (see Appendix 3). A separate bank account will have to be opened for the funds to be deposited in and used to pay out invoices and this account will be audited regularly to satisfy ourselves that public money paid in is being used appropriately.

The person receiving personal budgets will be given advice, guidance and assistance to ensure they understand and follow the process laid out.

4.7 Approve the following year’s budget

At the first annual review, and following an audit, the budget will be set again for the next review period, usually 6 months. Families will not have to do a new support plan but might have to update the previous one with any changes.

5 Planning for the Future

Every child’s needs will be re assessed if there is a change of circumstances, family needs or if their needs change. Your support plan should change as your child’s needs change and/ or grows older. This may mean several new Single Assessments and/or re doing the Resource Allocation Questionnaire to ensure the support needs and resources are right.

6 Contingencies, Additional Burdens and Exceptional Circumstances

6.1 Contingency Funds

In order for the Council to meet its duty, it will hold a contingency fund in reserve that can be used to address fluctuations in needs. This will ensure that if there is an increase in needs presented by a child or young person, this can be provided for without a negative financial impact.

The use of the contingency funds will be monitored by the Council to ensure that it is being used for the appropriate purposes. In addition, there is a process by which an individual's budget can be supplemented if this is determined to be necessary through the support planning, validation and panel process.

6.2 Additional Burdens

If there are temporary changes in a child's needs we may temporarily increase the amount of money received by the child. This is done through a process of signatory authorities and should not adversely affect the support plan or the payments for providing support.

6.3 Exceptional Circumstances

Where the RAS identifies extremely high support needs, or the child/ young person's needs exceed the highest amount the RAS can allocate, we will work with the service user and family/ support circle to find the best solution for their individual needs.

7 Annex A: Key National and Local Policy Documents

Legislation

Primary Legislation	The Children & Families Act 2014 The Care Act 2014
Secondary Legislation	The Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014
Statutory Guidance	Special Educational Needs & Disability Code of Practice: 0 - 25 (2014, Department of Education)

Additional sources of information with regard to the legal framework, related relevant legislation and guidance:

- The National Health Act 2006
- The Children Act 1989
- The Chronically Sick & Disabled Persons Act 1970
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005

8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1 Worked examples of Financial Bands and Needs

Keeping children safe

No Support	Small Support	Some Support	Lots of Support	Exceptional Support
Independent mobility	Requires occasional assistance with mobility	Needs some, regular support with mobility	Uses a wheelchair and can assist with transfers	Requires 2:1 support for mobility and transfers
Age appropriate understanding and awareness of danger	Age appropriate understanding and awareness of danger, but may need initial encouragement to engage	Comfortable in familiar surroundings, but would need some supervision in new environments / activities	Very limited understanding of risk and danger. Would need 1:1 support	Cannot be left alone at any time and requires 2:1 support to stay safe
Not bullied or in need of supervision	Child may need to have issues explained more than others of a similar age	Some support is needed to cope with issues of vulnerability or perpetration	Requires lots of care and support due to vulnerability. Minimal insight into how their actions can affect others. 1:1 support needed most of the time	Child is so vulnerable, they need a minimum of 1:1 support at all times. And may require more. No insight into actions and will need 2:1 care to maintain safety
Child poses no threat or danger to carer or others in their environment	Child poses no significant level of risk to others, but may require more explanation/ support than others of a similar age	Low level of risk posed to carers / others. The environment has had to be altered to ensure risks are kept minimal	Parents / carers feel at risk. The child poses significant risk to others in their environment. often 1:1 support is required to ensure safety	Severe behavioural issues that are not easily controlled. There is frequent lashing out / outbursts that result in injuries to self and others. 2:1 care is required
Young person is aware of personal relationships and needs no special support	Child / young person may need slightly more support or guidance than others of a similar age. They are otherwise age appropriately aware of risks	Child / young person will need more support to understand and come to terms with personal relationships. They will require some additional support to ensure safety	Child / young person will not be aware of personal relationships and would be vulnerable to being exploited. They would require close supervision or 1:1 support	Child / young person is very vulnerable and may be in a position where safeguarding protocols need to be enacted. A child may require 2:1 care to stay safe
Child is too young to have this arise as an issue and is not in a vulnerable position				

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Physical and emotional well-being

No support	Small Support	Some Support	Lots of Support	Exceptional Support
Requires no nursing support	Requires occasional nursing support	Requires some nursing support	Regular nursing support is needed (more than one a week, but less than daily)	Requires daily specialist medical or nursing support
Routine medical checks only (e.g. annual check ups); nil medication or treatment	More visits to the GP than a child of a similar age; minimal medication or treatment	Increased attendance at GP or nursing services; medication or treatment needed	Regular advice and guidance from a consultant to manage a health condition; complex medication which needs careful management / specialised or trained staff	Regular admissions to hospital or specialist treatment centre as a result of disability; unstable health which impacts adversely on the child / young person and family. Medication requiring constant review and change
Sleeps well, child and family well rested	Wakes occasionally (a couple of times each week for periods of more than half an hour)	Wakes frequently (several times each week for periods of more than half an hour)	Wakes frequently (once or twice per night, most nights, for periods of more than half an hour)	Wakes several times throughout the night every night for periods of more than half an hour at a time
No therapy involved with disability	Occasional therapy requires due to disability	Some / regular treatment with disability	Planned programme of therapy required to manage disability	Intensive programme of therapies which needs delivery by therapist many partners and usually on a daily basis
No specialist equipment needed	May need some small equipment that does not require assistance	Uses specialist equipment but does not require assistance	Uses specialist equipment that requires operational assistance	Daily use of complex specialist equipment and requires 2 or more people. Life limiting condition requires intensive programme
No complex medical condition present which requires specialist care	Has a complex medical condition but is well managed and requires only regular medical review	Has a complex medical condition present which requires specialist medical care	Medical condition requires constant medical attention to maintain health	Medical condition requires 2 trained carers to be involved in the delivery of care in order to maintain health

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Opportunities to develop for adulthood

No support	Small Support	Some Support	Lots of Support	Exceptional Support
Child / young person is learning at an age appropriate rate	May need occasional assistance in learning, but is not usual nor a specialist need	Will need some support to understand and learn. This may take the form of additional input from school or parents	Child will require lots of support. They have a limited understanding and will require specialist support to achieve	A child will have little awareness of their environment or social interactions. They will need intensive and specialist support to achieve
Child / young person is able to go places and meet friends / new people	A child may need occasional support to initiate activities or meet others, but is able to do so with very little support	May need some support in order to participate in activities. They may need initial support or have a familiar person with them	Children needing lots of support will need 1:1 care in order to participate in any activities	A child who finds it almost impossible to go to new places or meet others. They would need a lot of prep and 2:1 support to achieve this
Child lives in a house appropriate to their needs and abilities	Some small changes to the living environment may have to be made in order to maintain the child's safety	Some minor modifications have to be made to the home in order for the child to live safely. They may require some supervision over and above that of others	Significant modifications would need to be made to the living environment to allow the child to move about unassisted. The child would need 1:1 support	Major modifications would need to be made to the home to allow specialist equipment in. the child would need 2:1 care or specialist support of nursing care
Family finances are not restricting child/young person's ability to access extra curricular activities	There may be some small support needed to allow a child or young person to access activities	The family put their income toward the care and support of children but would benefit from some additional assistance to allow kids access to activities	The family has no spare income and would find it very difficult to find additional money to put toward social activities for their child	There are major financial issues and the family has no income or the family misuse what money they receive. Children do not even have basics

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Being part of the community / being involved

No support	Small Support	Some Support	Lots of Support	Exceptional Support
Able to communicate well and make themselves understood (age appropriate)	Can communicate well, but may struggle at times to convey complex information	Will require support to make themselves understood and will require some support to convey information	Needs lots of support to make themselves understood. May need 1:1 support from people they know in order to be understood	No communication skills. Child needs people they know well to interpret body language to determine needs
Knowing right from wrong (age appropriate)	May need to have some things explained more fully than their peers. Otherwise there is little concern	Will need some support as they could be vulnerable and be led into making poor choices. May need occasional 1:1 support	Will have little knowledge of social norms and interactions. Will need 1:1 support in all social situations	Will not have awareness of social norms and would be vulnerable. Requires 2:1 support to engage in any activities
Learning new skills and engaging with new activities (age appropriately)	Will need a small amount of support to engage with learning compared to their peers	Requires some support to engage and achieve. This may include additional support from school or other provider	Will need 1:1 support to engage and achieve. They will need significant support	Will need intensive support to engage and achieve. This will include 2:1 support and specialist input
Able to conceptualise and grasp abstract ideas and concepts (age appropriate)	May need a small amount of support to grasp ideas or concepts that their peers can grasp	Will need some support to achieve to the level of their peers. May require 1:1 support at times	Will require lots of support to achieve. May not be able to understand complex ideas. Will need 1:1 support to learn	Will understand simple concepts or ideas. Lives in the present. No concept of past or future. May need 2:1 care or support to achieve

Resource Allocation System

Socialising / having friends, activities and experiences

No support	Small Support	Some Support	Lots of Support	Exceptional Support
To be part of a group of friends	May need a small amount of support to make and keep friends	Will need support to make and keep friends. The child may need a known person to stay with them initially	Will need 1:1 support to make and keep friends. Will not engage with others without 1:1 support	Will not have awareness of others and will receive social interaction from family / carers. Would need 2:1 support to engage in activities
Able to take part in their community with no support	May need a small amount of support to initiate taking part in their community	Will require support to safely engage in their community. May require 1:1 at some point	Will need 1:1 support in order to engage within their community	Will need 2:1 support to engage. They may also need lot of preparation and time to reduce anxiety
Child/young person is able to explore their community (age appropriate) without additional support	May require slightly more instruction / supervision than their peers.	Will need support to explore their neighbourhood. Either due to mobility, lack of awareness or danger / vulnerable	Will require 1:1 support in order to be outside the family home. They will require constant supervision	Cannot leave the family home or other familiar setting without long preparation and 2:1 support
To be relaxed and not stressed	May require occasional small support to have things that are stressful to be explained	Will require some routines and other things to keep them calm and may need some thing explained that peers would not	Child will be anxious and will need 1:1 support at times in order to engage. They may be routine bound and these will need to be respected in order to calm the child	Child will be extremely anxious and may become overwhelmed by anxiety. They will need to have 2:1 support and may need frequent "quiet time" to regain calm

Resource Allocation System

The Family

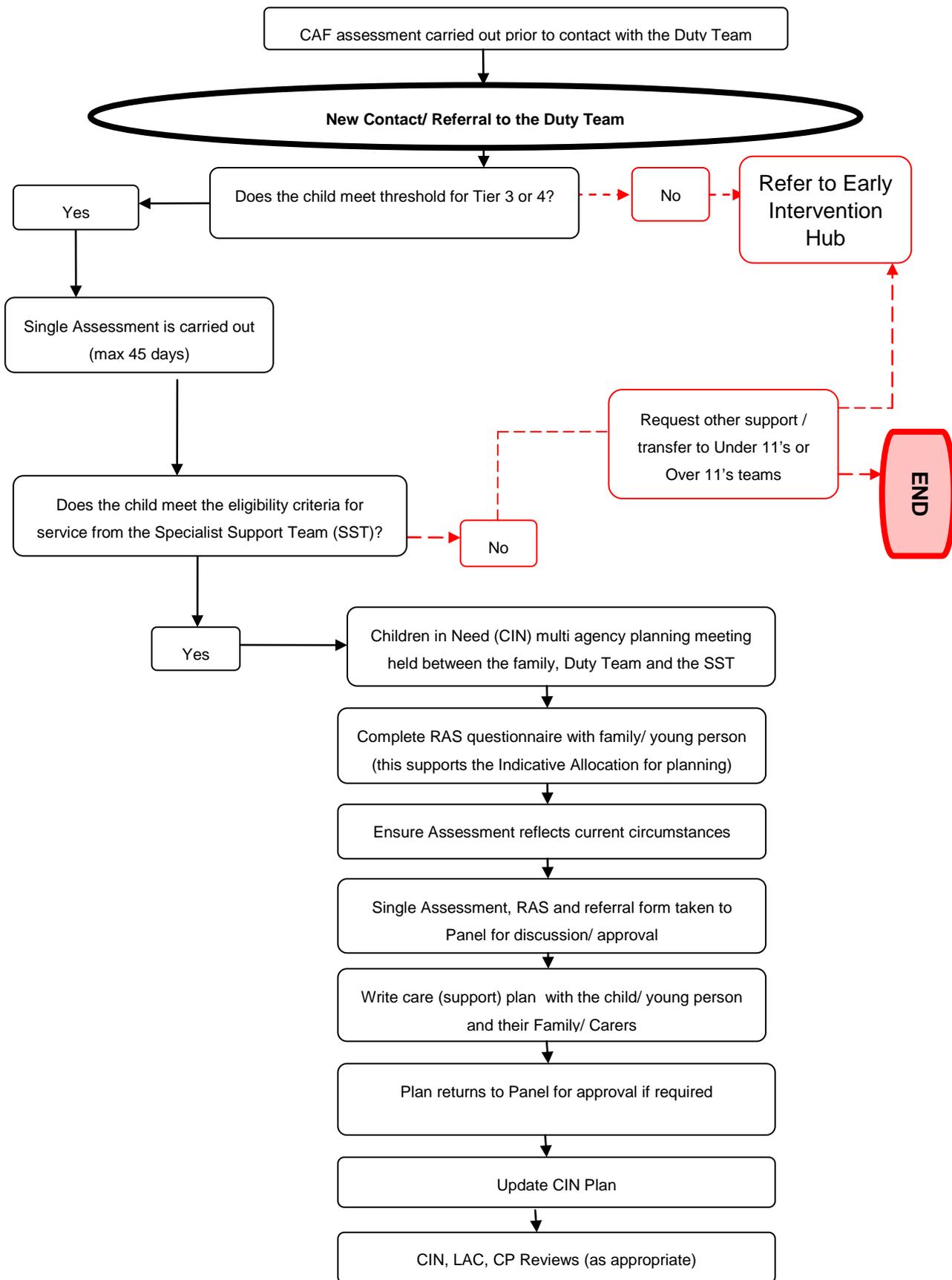
No support	Small Support	Some Support	Lots of Support	Exceptional Support
Parenting capacity is good. No issues or concerns	Parenting capacity is good, but there are occasional times when the family could use a small amount of support	Parents could use some support to continue caring for their child. The parents would benefit from respite support	Parents are not coping and require lots of support in order to prevent a full family breakdown	Family is no longer functioning and will need an exceptional amount of support to rebuild the family and keep them together
Wider family / friend network is available to help family cope in difficult situations	The family has people they can count on to assist in some aspects, but may require a small amount of support from statutory services	The family need some support in order to continue caring for their child. They may require support or training in coping with their child's issues	The family have no one they can rely on outside of paid support. they need practical help and support in coping with their need and situation	The family has broken down. They do not have any support to call upon. They can no longer cope. This family will need exceptional amounts of input and restructuring to function as a unit again
Family recognises the importance of school attendance and makes every effort to ensure attendance	The family realises the importance of school attendance but will need occasional support to achieve this	The family require some support to ensure the child attends school. They may need practical support or training to cope with sending the child to school	The family require lots of support in order to get their child to school. They may not understand the importance of school or cannot get a child to go	The family is broken down and school is seen as a non priority. The child may not have the clothes or equipment to attend and the parents may not understand the need for attendance
Family has enough disposable income to ensure child is engaged in specialist activities	The family has a small amount of disposable income and uses this to help their child engage in activities. They could use a little support in continuing	The family has little or no disposable income and need some support to help their child engage in activities	The family have no income to spare. The family may not see the relevance of engagement. They will need lots of support to turn this around	The family is broken down. There is no income. Any money the family has may be misused. The child may be in a vulnerable position and subject to safeguarding
Family functions as a unit and places their child at the centre of family life	The child is at the centre of the family. They may need occasional support to continue this	The family need some support to continue caring for their child. Working and caring for the child is becoming stressful	The family is a breaking point. They are caring for the child, but the stress they are under is severely impacting their physical and mental health	The family unit is broken down. They family are sick with stress and the child is in a precarious and vulnerable position. Safeguarding is probable

8.2 Appendix 2 Personal Budget Flow Chart

The CSST is a team that specialises in delivering support to children and young people who have complex and enduring support needs with regard to a disability or complex health. A child will have to be referred to the CSST by the Duty & Assessment Team, Under 11's Social Work Team or the Over 11's Social Work Team.

The workflow and time scales used by the CCST are laid out overleaf.

Resource Allocation Policy



8.3 Appendix 3 Guidance to Audit

Who would be excluded from holding a personal budget?

The regulations (the legal guidance for the law relating to personal budgets) state the following:

“The following persons may not receive direct payments

(a) a person who is subject to a drug rehabilitation requirement, as defined by section 209 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003(a), imposed by a community order within the meaning of Section 177 of that Act or by a suspended sentence order within the meaning of section 189 of that Act;

(b) a person who is subject to an alcohol treatment requirement, as defined by section 212 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003, imposed by a community order within the meaning of section 177 of that Act or by a suspended sentence order within the meaning of section 189 of that Act;

(c) a person who is released on licence under Part 2 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991(a), Chapter 6 of Part 12 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 or Chapter 2 of Part 2 of the Crime (Sentences) Act 1997(b) subject to a non-standard licence condition requiring the offender to undertake offending behaviour work to address drug-related or alcohol related behaviour;

(d) a person who is required to submit to treatment for their drug or alcohol dependency by virtue of a community rehabilitation order within the meaning of section 41 of the Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000 or a community punishment and rehabilitation order within the meaning of section 51 of that Act(c);

(e) a person who is subject to a drug treatment and testing order imposed under section 52 of the Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000(d).

(f) subject to a youth rehabilitation order imposed in accordance with paragraph 22 (drug treatment requirement) of Schedule 1 to the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 which requires the person to submit to treatment pursuant to a drug treatment requirement.

(g) subject to a youth rehabilitation order imposed in accordance with paragraph 23 (drug testing requirement) of Schedule 1 to the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 which includes a drug testing requirement.

(h) subject to a youth rehabilitation order imposed in accordance with paragraph 24(intoxicating substance treatment requirement) of Schedule 1 to the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 which requires the person to submit to treatment pursuant to an intoxicating substance treatment requirement.”

Additional circumstances where a personal budget may not be authorised:

- The child is in care. If in long term foster care the foster parents may access a personal budget if there is agreement of this as part of a care plan
- The child has a Child Protection Plan. Any use of a personal budget would have to be part of the plan agreed at the multi professional Core Group meeting. If the use of it was felt not to meet the aims of the plan, and to compromise the safety of the child/ young person, it would not be agreed
- A person subject to a drug or alcohol treatment programme (as in the regulations). If the person wishes to receive a direct payment and may be covered by this, there will be a discussion between the local authority and person involved to explore their particular circumstances in relation to the regulations. If a person has a gambling addiction this also may preclude them from receiving a personal budget
- The young person has a youth rehabilitation order

Accountability

Resource Allocation Policy

As part of our financial and accounting responsibilities, Bracknell Forest Council will need to check how public money has been spent from people's personal budgets. Bracknell Forest needs to strike a balance. We want to make this as easy as possible for families, but we have to justify spend to auditors and to the residents of Bracknell Forest.

How much a family will be involved in the audit depends on how they choose to take their budget. As discussed earlier, families have the option to choose:

- Direct Payments
- A third party organisation
- Allow the Council to manage your budget on your behalf
- A combination of the above

If you choose to allow the Council to manage your personal budget on your behalf, there will be no reason to involve you directly. As the recipients of the support, you may be involved peripherally in the payment process, but we would not necessarily need to speak to you about the financial aspects of support. Your opinion would still be sought in terms of how well you are being supported, but this is not usually a financial aspect.

However, if you choose the other options, we would need to involve you in audits and would need you to provide returns to the Finance Team so that we can be confident you are spending on the agreed support and in the agreed manner and amounts.

Families will be expected to keep receipts for things they buy with money from a personal budget. Similarly for any third party arrangements, we would have to involve the person or agency in the audit process and would want to ensure the money set aside to pay for your, or your child's support is being used to the best possible effect.

The finance officers are required to monitor the return of statements or invoices and how much of the direct payment the individual has spent. The type of spend in the PB account needs to be monitored, and they also need to comply with requirements of HMRC, in particular in relation to paying taxes and keeping appropriate records. By the end of the second month of the quarter the finance officer will alert the appropriate practitioner or team manager of any person who has not yet returned their quarterly returns. By the end of each quarter the finance officer will alert the appropriate practitioner or team manager if there are irregularities in either payments or in providing returns to the Direct Payments Team. .

More information is available on our procedure for direct payments. You can see this on the link below:

<http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/finance-procedures.pdf>

The Lead Professional or your Social Worker will explain this to you, and they will provide you with a file to make this audit as easy as possible for you.

What a family cannot spend the money on

Personal budget restrictions:

You cannot spend your budget on:

- Anything that is illegal
- A service, activity or item that cannot be shown to meet eligible needs
- A service, activity or item that cannot be shown to improve the life of the child or young person who owns the budget
- A service, activity or item that exposes you to serious risk of financial or physical abuse or physical harm
- Gambling, cigarettes or alcohol
- Regular household expenses, bills or food costs
- A personal budget cannot be used to pay for support provided by a family member living in the same house as the person being supported

8.4 Appendix 4 Dispute Resolution Process

If there are any disputes, we will try and resolve them as quickly and informally as possible. We want the best support we can give your child, but will balance this with looking at the needs of the other children using our services within the Council's boundaries and responsibilities.

If there is a formal grievance or dispute, we will follow the Bracknell Forest Complaints and Resolution Dispute Policy which can be found on our public website. We have included a link to our complaints process below:

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/statutory-complaint-procedures-childrens-services.pdf>

8.5 Appendix 5 FAQ

There is a list of frequently asked questions (FAQ's) on our website. If you have any questions about Personal Budgets, please click on the link below:

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/disabledchildrenandyoungpeople>

8.6 Appendix 6 RAS Questionnaire

The RAS Questionnaire has been designed to differentiate between no support and small support as well as some, lots and exceptional amounts of support. We have also rewritten the questions so that they are easier to understand. A copy of the form can be obtained by contacting short.breaks@bracknell-forest.gov.uk.