

Index No...../.....

Falkland Islands Government

Department of Health and Social Services



Child in Need Policy

Author: Nikki Murphy

Issue Date: 21 June 2023

Version No: 1.0

Review date: 21 June 2026

Amendment History:

Version	Status	Summary of changes	Date of issue
V1.0	Draft	Policy approved by FISCBS	21/06/2023

Contents

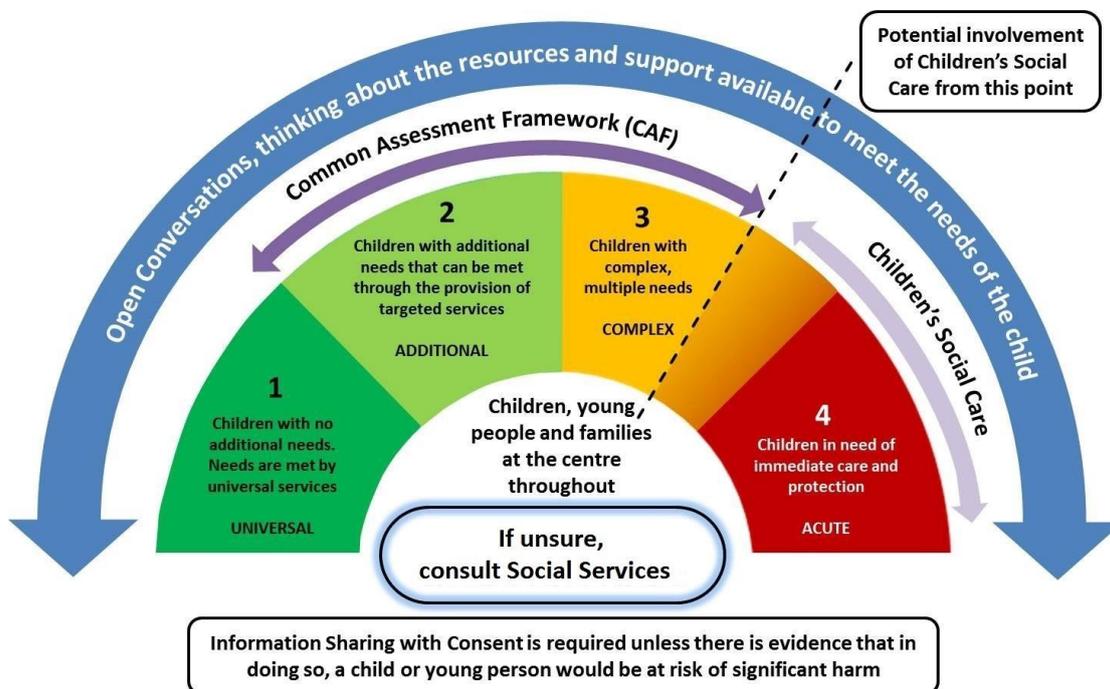
1. Continuum of Need
2. Legal Duties
3. Referrals
4. Information Sharing and Consent
5. Children in Need at the Mount Pleasant Complex
6. Assessment of a Child in Need
7. The Purpose of a Child in Need Meeting
8. Timing for Child in Need Meetings
9. Chairing of Child in Need Meetings
10. Attendees of the Child in Need Meeting
11. The Child in Need Plan
12. Management Ratification of Recommendations
13. Complaints
14. Administration
15. Monitoring
16. Effectiveness of Child in Need Meetings
17. Eligibility for funds

Child in Need Policy

This document sets out the policy, plans and review procedures in the Falkland Islands where services are delivered to a child/children who have been assessed as a Child in Need.

This does not apply to children who are the subject of a Child Protection Plan.

1. Falkland Islands Safeguarding Children Board Continuum of Need



2. Legal Duties

The Falkland Island Government has a duty safeguard and promote the welfare of a Child in Need and insofar as it is able, to promote the upbringing of such children by their families. To do this it must work with the family to provide support services that will enable children to be brought up within their own families.

The Children Ordinance 2014 defines a Child in Need as children who are aged under 18 and:-

- The child is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for the child of services by the Crown.

Item 7.1

- the child's health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for the child of such services; or
- the child has a disability (as defined in S22 (12) of the Children Ordinance 2014)

While all children have basic needs which should be met through universal services such as education, nursery provision, leisure and health services, Social Services provide additional services to any child who is assessed as a Child in Need. We determine if a child is in need through a process of assessment.

We aim to provide services that:

- Prevent family breakdown;
- Avoid children being separated from their families and communities;
- Promote the health, education and social development of children within their own families;
- Prevent children from suffering significant harm;
- Support the family when children and young people are at risk of becoming looked after.

3. Referrals

Individuals/families can ask for support in person, via phone or by using the Referrals.social@kemh.gov.fk email address.

Professionals can refer children for an assessment of need by completing the referral form and sending it to Referrals.social@kemh.gov.fk

Professionals making a referral for an assessment of need should always have the consent of a child (if they are old enough/of sufficient understanding to consent) and the parent(s) and should have discussed this with them prior to making the referral.

4. Information Sharing and Consent

The consent of parents and young people of sufficient age and understanding must be sought before sharing information or making a referral to Children's Social Care under Child in Need.

It is accepted that in some cases it may not always be possible to obtain written consent before making a referral to Children's Social Care. In such cases, explicit verbal consent of those with parental responsibility should be sought by the referring agency at the earliest opportunity and formally recorded that this has been given. Professionals should make parents and young people aware that in order to

Item 7.1

undertake an assessment and provide appropriate services, agencies need to share information with one another and that consent to do this is required.

When seeking consent, the referring department should explain to parents and the young person the nature of the issues/concerns and outline the duties and responsibilities of agencies towards children in need.

If consent is withheld by parents and/or the young person, the department holding the information has to consider the potential risk to the child if the information is not shared. If it is believed that to not share the information would place the child at risk of significant harm, information sharing may proceed without parental consent.

5. Children in Need at the Mount Pleasant Complex

Children living on the military base at Mount Pleasant will generally be referred to the British Forces Social Work Service (BFSWS) for an assessment of need.

The BFSWS Social Worker will undertake the assessment and identify the services required to support the child and their family.

The BFSWS Social Worker may discuss this with the Team Manager of the Falkland Islands Government Social Services department. This discussion will be recorded by the Team Manager and sent to the BFSWS Social Worker by email. The work will be recorded on the MOD system. It will not be recorded on Azeus unless it is decided that the service needs to be provided by the Falkland Islands Government Social Services Department.

6. Assessment of a Child in need

An assessment should be undertaken in order to decide what services should be provided to a child assessed as being a Child in Need.

An assessment must take into account all the child's needs, an assessment and consideration of the child's wishes and feelings (including accommodation) and be kept up-to-date when the child's circumstances change. It is best practice that assessments should be informed by the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families and use the Signs of Safety approach.

The Assessment should be completed within 45 working days of its commencement and should be regularly reviewed and updated. In exceptional circumstances an assessment may take longer than 45 working days and this should be identified in the half-way review and agreed with the Team Manager.

The concerns for possible significant harm may include:

- Significant parental difficulties such as:

Item 7.1

- Domestic abuse
- Parental mental health, learning disabilities or substance misuse that results in difficulty in providing adequate care for the child;
- Chronic/significant neglect;
- Parental lifestyle which impacts significantly on the child (Inability of parent to provide appropriate boundaries for the child's behaviour);
- Evidence of attachment issues for the child;
- Risk of sexual exploitation;
- Repeated incidents of going missing;
- Serious substance or alcohol misuse by the young person;
- Those at risk of becoming looked after.

In addition to the above criteria circumstances where:

- The child(ren) are being discharged from Care and or/the child(ren) are being stepped down from a Child Protection Plan;
- Where there is professional disagreement about the Child in Need Plan.

7. The Purpose of a Child in Need Meeting

This is a family meeting, including the child (where appropriate), parent(s)/carers and professionals to meet together to share information, identify need, and agree the most effective inter-agency plan to meet those needs with measurable outcomes for the child identified within stated timescales.

8. Timing for Child in Need Meetings

- The first Child in Need meeting will be held within 10 working days of the completion of the assessment that identifies the child as being a Child in Need.
- Child in Need meetings will take place every 6 weeks as a minimum and more frequently if required. They serve the function of bringing the whole network together to review the progress of the Child in Need Plan.

9. Chairing of Child in Need Meetings

Child in Need meetings are generally chaired by the responsible Social Worker as they are classed as medium to high risk in the Falkland Island Government Safeguarding Continuum of Need Matrix.

10. Attendees of the Child in Need Meeting

- Child
- Parents
- Social Worker
- Social Work Assistant
- Representative from other core departments (Health, Education)
- Other professionals as appropriate
- Should a professional not be able to attend, information should be gathered by the social worker/social work assistant prior to the meeting to share on their behalf.

11. The Child in Need Plan

The Child in Need Plan will be developed/confirmed in the first Child in Need Meeting;

- The Child in Need Plan must identify the **Lead Professional**, any resources or services that will be needed to achieve the planned outcomes within the agreed timescales and who is responsible for which action and the time-scale involved.

In particular, the Child in Need Plan should:

- Describe the identified developmental needs of the child, and any services required;
- Include specific, achievable, child-focused outcomes intended to promote and safeguard the welfare of the child;
- Include realistic strategies and specific actions to achieve the planned outcomes;
- Include a contingency plan to be followed if circumstances change significantly and require prompt action;
- Included timescales that are realistic and achievable;
- Not be dependent on resources which are known to be scarce or unavailable;
- Clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of professionals and family members, including the nature and frequency of contact by professionals with children and family members;
- Lay down points at which progress will be reviewed and the means by which it will be assessed.
- Take into account the wishes and feelings of the child/ren
- The Child in Need Plan can be reviewed prior to the third Child in Need meeting should there be any significant change in circumstances.

12. Management Ratification of Recommendations

The Child in Need Plan will be framed in such a way that identified needs and outcomes are clear. The person responsible for implementing the recommendations and the timescale for implementation will be recorded on the Child in Need Plan.

The recommendations made by the Child in Need Meeting must be approved by the responsible social work line manager within seven working days of receiving the Child in Need Plan. The responsible social work line manager must advise the SW/SWA and all those, who attended the meeting, if they are not able to endorse some aspect of the Plan. If no objections are received the decisions of the Child in Need meeting will be deemed as endorsed and should be implemented within the timescales set out in Child in Need Plan.

In the event that they are challenged within that initial seven-day period, this should be notified in writing to the SW/SWA (via email) and all those who attended the meeting/review. Attempts will be made to resolve the issue by the SW/SWA. However, should agreement not be reached then the matter should be directed to the Team Manager/Head of Social Services. In this way the child and all adults involved in the care and planning for the child can be confident on our commitment in seeking a quick resolution so that a Child in Need Plan can be effectively actioned.

13. Complaints

In the event that an individual wishes to make a complaint regarding the Child in Need process this can be raised with the social worker or directly to the Team Manager/Head of Social Services.

14. Administration

Child in Need meeting minutes will be typed and distributed within 10 days of the Child in Need meeting. A copy of the minutes will be sent to all invited parties and where age-appropriate the child. When it is not possible to send the minutes to the child or the child declines attendance at the meeting the child's views will be sought before and after the meeting.

15. Monitoring

Good communication is essential for promoting the child's safety and ensuring that the Child in Need Plan is effective. In the event of a change/event in the child's life that any child or parent would consider as significant, the social worker must inform the Lead Professional.

Such changes might include:

Item 7.1

- Proposed change of Child in Need Plan;
- Court Care Plans and directions;
- Major change to contact arrangement which affects the safeguarding of the child;
- Changes of allocated social worker;
- Child protection enquires and outcome of Child Protection Conferences;
- Complaints from or on behalf of child, parent or carer.

Additionally, prior to closure of a case the Lead Professional should hold the final Child in Need Meeting, which considers how the step-down process might be implemented and whether there is a need for the child to continue to receive support.

16. Effectiveness of Child in Need Meetings

The Child in Need Social Worker will have responsibility for auditing other Child in Need cases, which they did not chair. It is envisaged that audits will take place on an annual basis and feedback will be given to the Head of Social Services.

17. Eligibility for funds:

Families with a child who has been assessed as being a Child in Need may be eligible for financial assistance. This does not always come as a financial payment but can include, vouchers, payment of necessary bills or invoices, support with childcare amongst others. Financial Assistance must provide the child with increased wellbeing preventing them from significant harm. Before any assistance is provided, consideration must be given to the child's and their parent's means.

Permission will be sought from the parents prior to an application being made for financial assistance and the child will be made aware where possible and appropriate.

Families may be required to undertake a financial assessment for long term financial support.

Funding requests will be submitted by the Social Worker to the Team Manager or the Head of Social Services.