

What is the Common Assessment Framework (CAF)?

The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is a new way of working with children and young people. It involves listening to you and your child to find out what their needs are.

Not every child will have a CAF – only those who may need extra help or support. Once the assessment has been carried out an action plan will be agreed with you and your child to make sure they get the help and support they need.

The CAF is voluntary – you and your child can choose whether to be involved.

Do you want to know more?

You can find out more information by contacting your child's school or local children's centre or call 01438 737575.

Further information on the Common Assessment Framework and Lead Professional is available from www.ecm.gov.uk or www.hertsdirect.org.

Every Child Matters

Change for Children

Welcome to a new way of helping children and young people



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This information can be made available on request in other formats, including large print, Braille, audio and in other languages.

A message for parents and carers

If your child needs extra support, we want to find the best way forward as quickly as possible. This leaflet explains a new way of everyone working together which puts your family at the heart of decisions made about your child.

A new way of helping families

How will the CAF help my family?

The CAF is there to help your child get the support they need. It can lead to a quick solution or help to identify extra support if needed.

The CAF will ensure that everyone involved with your child – such as teachers and health visitors – works together in a coordinated way to help and support your family.

The CAF will help your child receive the right support at an early stage before their needs increase. As the CAF is a shared assessment, you and your child will not have to repeat the information you give to different workers.

In Hertfordshire, completing the form and making sure that different workers coordinate the help and support they give to a child is called 'integrated practice'.

When is the CAF used?

The CAF can be used if you or someone who works with your child thinks your child would benefit from extra support. It will help to identify your child's additional needs, and whether other workers are needed to support your family.

How does it work?

If you and your child agree, a worker will ask you and your child some questions to find out what help and support your child might need. This information is recorded on a simple form. You and your child will agree what is written on the form and you will be given a copy of it.

Older children may feel able to discuss their situation on their own with the worker. A young person's wish to keep information confidential from parents may be respected by the worker, where this is in the young person's best interests and welfare.

Confidentiality

As a rule, the information which you and your child provide will only be shared with your family's consent. However, there may be certain times when the people working with you need to share information.

For example:

- When they need to find out urgently if a child is at risk of harm;
- To help a child who is at risk of harm;
- When an adult is at risk of harm; or
- To help prevent or detect a serious crime.



What happens next?

Based on the information you and your child provide, all those who can help your child will work together to provide the support your child needs. Only workers who need to know about your child will share your child's information.

Who is a Lead Professional?

If a number of people are providing support to your child, one of these people may be appointed as a 'Lead Professional'.

This person will keep you informed, listen to your views and support you. The named worker will also coordinate all the services supporting your child.

You and your child will have a say in who should be the Lead Professional.
