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Social care

This information is about social care for children and young people under the age of 18 and for their parents and carers. It covers what social care is, who is entitled to social care, who provides social care, how social care needs are assessed, how you might benefit from social care and what the law says about social care.

What is social care?

Social care includes help with aspects of day to day living such as personal care and other practical assistance for children and young people and their parents and carers.

Who is entitled to social care?

The law states that any child in need should be provided with social care. This care can extend to the parents and carers of a child in need.

Section 17 of the **Children Act 1989** says:

a child will be considered in need if:

- they are unlikely to achieve or maintain or to have the opportunity to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development without provision of services from the Local Authority;
- their health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision of services from the Local Authority;

A disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term (more than one year) and substantial adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Children in need may be:

- children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- young carers
- children who have committed a crime;
- children whose parents are in prison; or
- asylum seeking children.



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Who provides social care and what does it include?

The Local Authority (Bracknell Forest Council), has a duty to provide social care to all those entitled to social care.

The [**SEND Code of Practice**](#) says that:

There is a statutory duty, under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989, for local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of 'children in need' in their area, including disabled children, by providing appropriate services to them. 10.13

Social services are a part of Bracknell Forest Council and can provide a wide range of support. This can include:

- practical assistance in the home, such as help with personal care
- respite care and short breaks
- leisure facilities, such as outings or a day centre placement
- home adaptations, such as handrails and hoists
- travel and other assistance.

Voluntary sector groups (charities) may also provide social care and include similar support to that listed above.

How can social care be accessed?

If you feel that you, your child or young person may require support from social care, you can ask Bracknell Forest Council to assess your child or young person's social care needs. You can find more information about how to arrange an assessment and what this will involve here: [Get help with care | Bracknell Forest Council \(bracknell-forest.gov.uk\)](#)

The [**SEND Code of Practice**](#) says:

All assessments should be child centred, focused on outcomes, transparent, timely and proportionate to the needs of each child. The maximum timeframe for a social care assessment to conclude that a decision can be taken on next steps is 45 working days from the point of referral. 10.16

If you are considering a needs assessment for a young person who is approaching the age of 18, you may wish to ask for a child's needs assessment to establish what support they may need from adult social services after they turn 18.



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Social care and Education Healthcare needs assessments.

The **SEND Code of Practice** says:

EHC needs assessments should be combined with social care assessments under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 where appropriate. 10.18

EHC plan reviews should be synchronised with social care plan reviews, and **must** always meet the needs of individual children. 10.20

You can request a social care assessment when you are having an EHC needs assessment.

Can aspects of social care be accessed without an assessment?

Children are able to access a wide range of activities without the need for a social care assessment. The Bracknell Forest Local Offer [SEND Local Offer | Bracknell Forest Council \(bracknell-forest.gov.uk\)](https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/SEND-Local-Offer) has details of short breaks and activities, such as social clubs and activity groups, which can be accessed without an assessment and can promote the well being of children and young people with SEND. These fall under the Universal and Targeted settings categories and fees may be applied by the provider.

How could you benefit from social care?

As the parent or carer of a child or young person with SEND, your needs are also considered as part of social care.

Paragraph 3 of the The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011 says:

a local authority must—

- (a) have regard to the needs of those carers who would be unable to continue to provide care unless breaks from caring were given to them; and
- (b) have regard to the needs of those carers who would be able to provide care for their disabled child more effectively if breaks from caring were given to them to allow them to— (i) undertake education, training or any regular leisure activity, (ii) meet the needs of other children in the family more effectively, or (iii) carry out day to day tasks which they must perform in order to run their household.



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You may be eligible for support from Specialist services, including access to a short break unit, short break foster carers, home care and agency support or community childminders. This would be provided following a recommendation by a social care assessment. There are a variety of parent groups and support, which can also be accessed without an assessment. Details of all of these services can be found on the Bracknell Forest Local Offer page:

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

Where to find additional information about social care in Bracknell Forest:

You can get contact with the [Information, Advice and Support Service](#) if you would like more information.