Seven Minute Guide
to Children in Need in Oxfordshire
for families and professionals

Oxfordshire’s practice principles for working with children in need

- We offer intensive family support and specialist services before things reach crisis point.
- We work in partnership with you and other agencies to improve outcomes for your child and help you to achieve positive long-term change for your family.
- Relationships are important to us and where we can we will provide you with one worker to support you through the plan.
- We are strengths based, which means we support you to find out and build on what is working well in your family.

What are children in need?
Children who are eligible for statutory services under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 and whose identified needs cannot be met within the child’s immediate or extended family or through a “Team Around the Family” Early Help approach.

What is a child in need plan?
A child in need plan is agreed with you, and outlines actions and timescales that you and others should undertake to improve specific outcomes for your child.

What is a child in need meeting?
A meeting which is usually held every 6-8 weeks to review how things are going for your child and how the child in need plan is progressing. For children with disabilities who require longer term support, meetings may be held less often.

Who else is involved?
Only agencies and individuals who we consider can help and support the wellbeing of your child are involved. They will also attend meetings.

What can you expect?
- Managers or a senior/lead practitioner will attend the initial child in need meeting to meet with you and help to agree the plan of what needs to change.
- Your views and wishes will be heard throughout.
- Unless a child has long term needs, a child in need plan should last between six to nine months.

Who leads on the child in need plan?
We will find the worker who will best support your family. This could be an early help practitioner, a family support worker or a social worker. They will also be doing the work with you between meetings. A social work manager will always oversee the plan and provide direction.

What happens next?
As soon as a statutory plan is no longer needed we will provide a ‘team around the family’ or signpost you to further community support as soon as possible. If things are not progressing well we will talk to you about what will happen next.

Oxfordshire County Council Family Solutions Service 7 Minute Guides - 2019