

Parent Carers

What is the definition of a Parent Carer?

A 'parent carer' is defined as an adult who provides or intends to provide care for a disabled child for whom the person has parental responsibility.

How does a Parent Carer have their needs assessed?

By requesting the responsible Local Authority completes a parent carers assessment. Often a parent carers assessment is combined with a child in need assessment.

Are all Parent Carers entitled to a Parent Carers assessment?

Yes. A Local Authority has a duty to assess parent carers on the 'appearance of need' – i.e. if it appears to a Local Authority that a parent carer may have a need for support.

What should a Parent Carers assessment consider?

Parent carers assessments must include:

- An assessment of whether it is appropriate for the parent carer to provide, or to continue to provide, care for the disabled child, in light of the parent carer's needs for support.
- Consideration of the parent carers other needs and wishes.

The well-being of the parent carer and the need to safeguard or promote the welfare of the disabled child should be placed at the heart of the assessment process.

What does 'well-being' mean?

'Well-being' in this context requires the Local Authority to consider the factors listed in Section 1 Care Act 2014.

These factors include:

- Personal dignity.
- Physical, mental and emotional well-being.
- Control by the individual over day-to-day life.
- Participation in work, education training or recreation.

Can a Parent Carers assessment be combined with a child in need assessment?

Yes. Guidance promotes a 'whole family approach' should be adopted whereby the needs of children or young persons and parent carers are assessed simultaneously on the proviso that any assessment specifically specifies and addresses the needs of parent carers.

Is support for Parent Carers means tested?

Yes. A Local Authority has the power to charge for services provided however it is rare they do so in practice.

The right to a copy of the assessment

A parent carer has a right to be provided with a copy of the needs assessment which specifically specifies and addresses the needs of parent carers, along with a copy of their care and support plan.

Support services

If it is determined that the parent has needs for support, it must be determined if these can be provided under Section 17 Children Act 1989 or Section 2 CSDPA 1970 to ensure the carer is supported directly or indirectly.

Childcare

Section 6 Childcare Act 2006 requires Local Authorities to secure as far as is reasonably practicable, sufficient childcare to meet the requirements of parents with a disabled child in their area who require childcare in order to work or to undertake training or education to prepare for work.

How can Lester Aldridge assist?

At Lester Aldridge we have significant experience in relation to all aspects of Local Authority funded care. We can provide:

- An initial, free consultation to discuss the circumstances of the case and whether you may be eligible for support as a parent carer.
- Assistance to secure a parent carers assessment from your Local Authority.
- Advocacy at needs assessment, care & support planning meetings, and resolution meetings if support which has been provided to assist with your caring responsibilities has broken down.
- Needs checklists to support advocacy at parent carers assessments and ensure that your needs as a parent carer are clearly articulated as part of the assessment process.
- On-going support to negotiate support to assist you with your caring responsibilities.
- Support to challenge or appeal decisions made by a Local Authority to refuse to provide support to parent carers.
- Advice at each key stage.