

Underpinning principles for assessment

These are some of the key principles which underpin engagement to enable effective assessment.

All children, young people and their families:

- are individuals and should be treated as such
- have potential which can be developed
- can be helped in some way to identify their strengths and meet their needs
- have the right to appropriate levels of confidentiality
- have the right to impartiality and to be treated non-judgementally.

The initial engagement should:

- have a clear purpose and focus
- be a two way process which actively engages the child or young person and their family
- be based on trust, honesty and objectivity
- agree the assessment strategy.

These issues should be addressed.

- Make sure that the child or young person and their family is comfortable and at ease.
- Establish an appropriate level of communication, including making sure that the assessor is able to communicate with the child or young person and their family in an appropriate way.
- Check there is understanding of the purpose of the engagement.
- Check that there is understanding of the role of the practitioner.
- Check that there is understanding of, and agreement on, the purpose of the engagement.
- Identify what the child, young person and their parent or carer wants from the interaction.
- Discuss issues of, and limits to, confidentiality.
- Establish acceptable working rules.
- Do not ask too many probing or challenging questions too early on.