



**MANCHESTER**  
CITY COUNCIL

**JOINT CHILDRENS UNIT**  
**WOODHOUSE PARK CAF PILOT EVALUATION**  
**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



*November 2006*

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION:**

### **1.1 Background:**

1.1.1 The Common Assessment Framework is a key element in the delivery of integrated front line services as outlined in the Children Act 2004. It is a national initiative that includes a common assessment tool for use in children's services to allow the early identification of needs and a process through which a multi-agency programme of support can be coordinated and delivered effectively.

1.1.2 DfES guidance states that CAF should be embedded by 2008, in line with Children's Trust arrangements. Locally successful implementation of CAF will be critical to the working of Children & Young Peoples Multi-Agency Teams.

### **1.2 Woodhouse Park Pilot:**

1.2.1 In order to test the implementation of CAF a pilot was established in Woodhouse Park, which ran from April to September 2006. The pilot was evaluated throughout its inception, set-up and delivery to ensure that any rollout of CAF across the city would be informed and effective.

1.2.2 The pilot was coordinated by two project managers from the Multi-Agency Teams Implementation Programme Team and supported by a multi-agency Steering Group, a Practitioner Working Group and Barnardos.

### **1.3 Evaluation:**

1.3.1 The evaluation of the CAF pilot aimed to:

- (i) Assess whether the right people had been involved to inform wider stakeholder engagement.
- (ii) Assess existing knowledge and skill levels to inform training requirements for citywide CAF rollout.
- (iii) Assess whether the training equipped practitioners with the knowledge and skills to undertake common assessments
- (iv) Assess the quality and utility of the training materials
- (v) Inform training and support requirements for the citywide rollout of CAF

- 1.3.2 A range of information relating to these aims was collected and analysed. This was considered alongside the experience and learning of the Steering Group and Practitioner Working Group and informed a series of recommendations that outlined the requirements and process for successful implementation of CAF across the city.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS:**

### **2.1 Introduction:**

The recommendations have been grouped under three headings:

- (i) Stakeholder engagement and partnership working
- (ii) Training and support requirements
- (iii) Infrastructure to support CAF implementation

These headings have been used to in order to facilitate understanding of what is required for successful implementation and ease of presentation.

### **2.2 Stakeholder Engagement and Partnership Working:**

- 2.2.1 Allow for more detailed preparation work with schools and key agencies in other localities/districts where engagement with schools and multi-agency working is not as advanced.
- 2.2.2 Establish CAF leads within key agencies, including schools, to facilitate the changes in practice required by, and accrue the intended benefits from CAF within each agency.
- 2.2.3 Establish a transitional citywide CAF Steering Group comprised of agency leads in order to ensure the effective implementation of CAF city wide with the intention that its functions will be taken on by the most appropriate MSCB sub group.
- 2.2.4 The membership and terms of reference of the Woodhouse Park Steering Group are revised so that it becomes the Wythenshawe District CAF Steering group to oversee and drive through the implementation of CAF in the Wythenshawe District, until a District Panel is established in Wythenshawe to take on these tasks.
- 2.2.5 A lead for the implementation of CAF within a district is identified, from an agency represented on the District Panels and who will be a member of the District Panel.

**2.3 Training and Support:**

- 2.3.1 Establish a multi-agency pool of trainers and make links to existing multi-agency training provision to deliver the training requirements for the rollout of CAF and Lead Professional across the city. An additional "Train the Trainers" function may be necessary to ensure consistency of delivery.
- 2.3.2 Use DfES training materials to support training
- 2.3.3 Devise and deliver an awareness raising programme for the District Panels and managers in key agencies, along with other practitioners identified as requiring awareness raising, to ensure consistent implementation across the city. The existing Steering Group in woodhouse Park is in the best position to identify the requisite range of practitioners and managers.
- 2.3.4 Define training and support requirements for service managers and supervisors, especially in terms of managing and supporting their staff in a Lead Professional context.
- 2.3.5 Establish Practitioner Groups in each district to support CAF implementation with a clearly defined and regular reporting relationship to District Panels.

**2.4 Infrastructure to Support CAF Implementation:**

- 2.4.1 Appointment of CAF Project Manager.
- 2.4.2 District Panels oversee the implementation and embedding of CAF, with an agency lead (as identified under 2.3.5) sitting on each panel, as they become established. This lead member will be key in ensuring the District Panels have a shared understanding of CAF.
- 2.4.3 Phase implementation of CAF to mirror the implementation of the Multi-Agency Teams if this is achievable by the DfES implementation deadline of the end of 2008.
- 2.4.4 Wythenshawe District to "go live " with CAF by end of January 2007, overseen by a Wythenshawe District Steering Group until the establishment of the Wythenshawe District Panel. Requisite training to be delivered by the Project managers who have co-ordinated the pilot.
- 2.4.5 Each agency identify a CAF lead with responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation of CAF within their own agency and shared responsibility with other agency leads to ensure effective linkages, systems and processes exist between agencies.

2.4.6 Define linkages between the CAF and the following areas:

- District Collaboration and Integrated Commissioning
- Area Casework Panels and the ASB agenda,
- Other services and agencies, e.g. CAMHS and adult services
- Existing assessment and case planning processes and procedures
- Other city wide initiatives such as Early Support, Extended Schools, Parenting Strategy, Children & Young People's Engagement

2.4.7 In order to resolve issues around clerical support, dedicated support must be identified; from each agency for the longer term and for the implementation phase.

2.4.8 Define and agree the Lead Professional role and the systems, processes and structures required to support it.

2.4.9 Develop an activity database to track what circumstances lead to a CAF. This will support learning around the triggers to a common assessment and thus a shared understanding of children with additional needs. It will also track the outcome of the common assessment to map out met and unmet need, the appointment of LPs, and services co-ordinated to meet the need.