

Questions to help you to complete the CAF Form

This document aims to provide practitioners with example questions to help when completing a CAF. The example questions are NOT intended to be a script for assessment and can be adapted to meet individual need. Not all questions will need to be asked but may initiate and generate discussion.

CAF assessment summary: strengths and needs

Consider each of the elements to the extent they are appropriate in the circumstances. You do not need to comment on every element. Wherever possible, base comments on evidence, not just opinion, and indicate what your evidence is. However, if there are any major differences of view, these should be recorded too.

1. Development of unborn baby, infant, child or young person

Health

General health

Conditions and impairments; access to and use of dentist, GP, optician; immunisations, developmental checks, hospital admissions, accidents, health advice and information

How far the baby, child or young person appears healthy and well, is growing and developing normally and is accessing health services (eg GP, dentist or optician).

General Questions

- When did you last see the doctor/dentist?
- Are all your immunisations and health checks up to date?
- How is your appetite, what food do you like/dislike?
- Do you usually feel well?
- Are you taking any medication?
- Do you feel you are the right weight for your height?

Younger Children

- *Are you seeing your midwife/health visitor regularly?*
- *Does anything concern you about the general health of your baby?*

Physical development

Nourishment; activity; relaxation; vision and hearing; fine motor skills (drawing etc.); gross motor skills (mobility, playing games and sport etc.)

How far the baby, child or young person's physical skills seem to be developing normally for their age, for example whether they are crawling, walking and running as expected and whether their vision and hearing seems normal.

General Questions

- Do you do any physical activities like walking, swimming, running or playing?
- What activities do you like doing best?
- Do you need to wear glasses/hearing aids etc. If so do you have them?
- Do you think you are a similar weight and height to others of your age?

Younger Children

- *Does your baby, toddler, child have access to a play group or play facilities, for example a mother and*

toddler group or play area?

- *What types of physical skills has your baby acquired?*
- *If your child has any form of developmental delay have any referrals been made so far?*

Speech, language and communication

Preferred communication, language, conversation, expression, questioning; games; stories and songs; listening; responding; understanding

How far for their age the baby, child or young person seems able and willing to speak, communicate, read and write, and express their feelings.

General Questions

- How is your reading and writing?
- How are you at filling in forms?
- Do you sometimes find it hard to talk to people?
- Do you have enough support with speech, language and communication? If not, what would help you?

Younger Children

- *How does the child communicate? Do they cry when unhappy? Are they making noises or words yet?*
- *How do you communicate with your child?*
- *If your child has a visual or hearing impairment or possible developmental delay difficulties have any referrals been made so far?*

Emotional and social development

Feeling special; early attachments; risking/actual self-harm; phobias; psychological difficulties; coping with stress; motivation, positive attitudes; confidence; relationships with peers; feeling isolated and solitary; fears; often unhappy

How well the baby, child or young person copes with everyday life, e.g. their disposition, attitudes and temperament, any phobias or psychological difficulties.

General questions

- What makes you happy or sad? If you were unhappy about something who would you ask to help?
- When you are frustrated, angry or upset, how would people around you know that something was wrong?
- Do you ever do things because they are exciting without thinking about what might happen or that it might get you into trouble?
- Do you find it easy to talk to people about how you feel? How do you feel?
- Have you ever been bullied?
- Who do you spend most of your time with?
- What sort of things do you do with other people?
- What do you like doing best?
- How much time do you spend on your own?
- Who do you feel close to?

Younger Children

- *What types of sounds and facial expressions does your baby make in response to your attention?*
- *In what ways does your baby express their feelings?*

Behavioural development

Lifestyle, self-control, reckless or impulsive activity; behaviour with peers; substance misuse; anti-social behaviour; sexual behaviour; offending; violence and aggression; restless and overactive; easily distracted, attention span/concentration

How well behaved the baby, child or young person is and, for example, any anti-social or aggressive behaviour.

General Questions

- How would you describe your behaviour today/usually?
- How do you think other people would describe your behaviour today/usually?
- If you sometimes get into trouble because of your behaviour, tell me what happened last time.
- Can you tell me about a time when you helped somebody?

Younger Children

- *How do you know what your baby likes and dislikes?*
- *Are you worried about any aspect of your baby or child's behaviour?*

1. Development of unborn baby, infant, child or young person (continued)

Identity, self-esteem, self-image and social presentation

Perceptions of self; knowledge of personal/family history; sense of belonging; experiences of discrimination due to race, religion, age, gender, sexuality and disability

How far the baby, child or young person seems to be developing the right measure of confidence and self-assurance, and how far they have a sense of belonging.

General Questions

- Who is the most important person in your life?
- If you had to name one special thing about yourself, what would that be?
- Is there anything about yourself that you don't like?
- What do you think other people most like about you?
- Do you feel you are different from other people?
- Do you feel you "fit in" with family and friends?

Younger Children

- *Can the child point to family on a picture or respond to their own name?*
- *Does the child respond differently to different family members or siblings?*
- *How does your baby demonstrate individual preferences?*

Family and social relationships

Building stable relationships with family, peers and wider community; helping others; friendships; levels of association for negative relationships

How far the baby, child or young person is building stable and affectionate relationships with others, including family, peers and the wider community.

General Questions

- Who do you call family? How often you see them?
- What do you enjoy doing with your family?
- How important are your friends to you?
- Do you have a 'best friend'? If so, who is that and why are they so special for you?
- Do you have to help to look after anyone?

Younger Children

- *Does the child respond to their name?*
- *Can the child identify its mother's and/or father's voice?*

Self-care skills and independence

Becoming independent; boundaries, rules, asking for help, decision-making; changes to body; washing, dressing, feeding; positive separation from family

How independent the baby, child or young person is for their age – how far they can do routine tasks for themselves and make their own decisions.

General Questions

- How independent are you? What can you do for yourself?
- Do you need any help with day to day living? How do you feel about the help you receive?
- Who will help you learn to be more independent as you grow up?
- Do you get to do what you like to do?
- How do you cope with big changes in your life?

Younger Children

- *How does your baby express their feelings or preferences?*

Learning

Understanding, reasoning and problem solving

Organising, making connections; being creative, exploring, experimenting; imaginative play and interaction

How well for their age the baby, child or young person is able to understand and organise information, reason and solve problems.

General Questions

- Tell me what you did yesterday?
- Are your friends mostly the same age as you, or are they mostly younger or older than you?
- Imagine someone treated you unfairly, what would you do?
- Do you like reading, if so what do you like to read?
- How are you at sorting out day to day problems?

Younger Children

- *What types of resources/toys are provided for your baby?*
- *How does your baby respond to the environment around them?*

Participation in learning, education and employment

Access and engagement; attendance, participation; adult support; access to appropriate resources

How far the baby, child or young person is engaged in and attending learning appropriate to their age, whether through play, early year's settings, school or college/employment.

General Questions

- What school or college do you go to? How regularly do you attend?
- Do you enjoy school/college/training?
- What might stop you going to school/college?
- If you don't go to school/college at all, why is that, and how long have you been out of school/college?
- What are you studying?
- What do you think you are good at doing?
- Who can you ask for help and advice about education and learning?
- If you are working, what is your job? Do you enjoy your job?
- What do you want to do long term?

Younger Children

- *Does the child attend a nursery or play group?*
- *How does your baby interact with others of a similar age?*

Progress and achievement in learning
Progress in basic and key skills; available opportunities; support with disruption to education; level of adult interest

The baby, child or young person's educational achievements and progress, including ability to read and write, compared with what would normally be expected from someone of their age.

General Questions

- How well do you think you are doing at school/college/with your learning?
- What is your favourite subject and why?
- Is English your first language?
- Do you have any qualifications in maths or English?
- If you lack qualifications or confidence with reading, writing or maths, do you think that this is holding you back?
- If you think you need additional help, how would you like to get this?

Younger Children

- *What learning opportunities does the child have?*
- *Do they have a favourite game or book?*
- *Does anyone read books to the baby/child?*

Aspirations

Ambition; pupil's confidence and view of progress; motivation, perseverance

The ambition of the child or young person, whether their aspirations are realistic and they are able to plan how to meet them. Note there may be barriers to a child or young person's achievement of their aspirations, for example the child or young person's other responsibilities in the home.

General Questions

- What do you hope that learning will help you do?
- What help do you need with learning to make sure you do your best?
- Do you give up easily if you find something hard?
- What are your goals for the future?

Younger Children

- *What do you want for your baby/child?*

2. Parents and carers

Basic care, ensuring safety and protection

Provision of food, drink, warmth, shelter, appropriate clothing; personal, dental hygiene; engagement with services; safe and healthy environment

How far the baby, child or young person is safe from harm or sexual exploitation, well-fed and cared for, and living in a safe, warm and clean home.

General Questions

- Is the place where you live warm enough for you not to need to wear outdoor clothes (like coats and hats) when

you are inside?

- Can you make warm food and drinks where you live?
- Can you keep yourself clean where you live?
- Do you have at least one other set of clothes, which are the right size for you, and suitable for this time of year?
- Is there anything about the place you live that makes you feel unsafe?
- If you share the place you live with others, can you be in private when you need to be?
- In an emergency how would you call the services you need?

Younger Children

- *Do you feel able to look after your baby, toddler, child and make sure it's safe?*
- *Do you feel your home is in good repair and a safe place to bring up children? If not, what would make your home a better place to live?*

Emotional warmth and stability

Stable, affectionate, stimulating family environment; praise and encouragement; secure attachments; frequency of house, school, employment moves

How far the baby, child or young person is loved, in a stable environment, and in contact with those who are important to him/her.

General Questions

- Who lives with you at home? How long have they lived there?
- Who cares for you and takes responsibility for you?
- If you were upset or frightened who would look after you, and make sure you were all right?
- If you do something well, who would be proud, and praise you?
- How long have you lived where you do now, and how many times have you moved home in the last year or so?

Younger Children

- *How often do you give your baby, toddler a cuddle?*
- *How are you coping/managing at the moment?*
- *How are you coping with looking after your baby/toddler?*
- *Does the child respond to NO?*
- *What rules or boundaries do you think are important for young children?*

Guidance, boundaries and stimulation

Encouraging self-control; modelling positive behaviour; effective and appropriate discipline; avoiding over-protection; support for positive activities

Enabling the baby, child or young person to regulate their own emotions and behaviour while promoting the baby's, child's or young person's learning and intellectual development through encouragement and stimulation and promoting social opportunities.

How far the baby, child or young person is subject to and provided with appropriate guidance and discipline at home and elsewhere, and helped to learn.

General Questions

- In general are your parents/carers interested in you and involved in what you do?
- Do your parents/carers usually encourage you with your learning; for example, giving you the space and time you need to complete school or college work?
- Do you have a quiet place where you can do your college or school work?
- Do you think your parents/carers sometimes overprotect you, and treat you as younger and as less able than you are?
- If you do something wrong, what happens, and how do the people around you respond?
- How do you react when people ask you to do the things that you don't want to do?

Younger Children

- *Does the child respond to NO?*
- *What rules do you think are important for a child?*
- *Who plays with the child?*
- *Do you enjoy playing with the child? If so what do you play?*
- *What do you do to communicate with your unborn baby?*
- *Does your unborn baby respond to different music or noises or voices?*

3. Family and environmental

Family history, functioning and well-being

Illness, bereavement, violence, parental substance misuse, criminality, anti-social behaviour; culture, size and composition of household; absent parents, relationship breakdown; physical disability and mental health; abusive behaviour

The impact of family situations and experiences.

Who lives in the household and how they relate to the baby, child, including any changes since the child's birth; family routines; and anything about the family history, such as family breakdown, illnesses (physical or mental) or problems with alcohol or other substances that are having an impact on the child's development.

General Questions

- When you want to know something about your family, whom might you ask?
- Is there some predictable routine to your family life at home, for example, in relation to meal times, bed times and who will be at home when?
- Tell me what you did for your last birthday?
- Think about a really good time you enjoyed with your family. What was it, and what made it so special for you?
- Is there someone in your family that you know and trust that you could turn to for help if you needed to?
- Is there someone in your family that your parents/carers know and trust that they could turn to for help if they needed to?

Younger Children

- How does your baby indicate what he/she needs?
- How does your baby respond to different family members?

Wider family

Formal and informal support networks from extended family and others; wider caring and employment roles and responsibilities

The family's relationships with relatives and non-relatives. Whether there is an appropriate level of help for the baby, child, young person or parents/carers from relatives and others.

General Questions

- Other than your family, who is important to you in your life?
- Are there people in your neighbourhood or community that you know and trust that you could turn to for help if you needed to?
- Are there people in your neighbourhood or community that your carers know and trust that they could turn to for help if they needed to?
- Can someone who is not really a member of your family, feel like family and be just as important, and do you have anyone like that in your family?

Housing, employment and financial considerations

Water/heating/sanitation facilities, sleeping arrangements; reason for homelessness; work and shifts; employment; income/benefits; effects of hardship

Whether the accommodation has everything needed for living safely and healthily, and the effect on the baby, child or young person of the work and financial situation of the family or household.

General Questions

- What is it like to live in the area you do?
- At home, who is working and what do they do?
- Does anyone in your family work away from home or at night, such that you don't see them very often?
- Does their work mean that your family are always too tired to give you the attention you need?
- Is there enough money, from work and any benefits, to meet your family's needs?

Social and community elements and resources, including education

Day care; places of worship; transport; shops; leisure facilities; crime, unemployment, anti-social behaviour in area; peer groups, social networks and relationships

Explores the wider context of a baby, child or young person's neighbourhood and its impact on them, including local services and facilities available.

Impact on the baby, child or young person of the local area, including crime levels, availability and quality of shops, schools/colleges etc. This includes how well the child or young person fits in with neighbours, friends and others.

General Questions

- Tell me what local facilities you use (for example schools, day nurseries, sports, play and leisure centres, nurseries, libraries etc)
- Are there any local facilities that you would like to use but can't for some reason? If so, why can't you use these facilities? (for example cost, transport,

inaccessible to disabled people)

- When you are out and about locally with friends or family, what sort of things do you do?
- What is the best thing about living where you do?
- What is the worst thing about living where you do?
- Are you aware if drugs are bought and sold in your area?
- Do you think there is a lot of crime in your area?

Younger Children

- *What local facilities like pre-natal clinics, child care services such as day nurseries or play schemes, support groups or Children's Centre activities are available? Do you use them?*