

Home Safety Leaflet 2

Occupational Therapy Assessment for Complex Needs

In some cases additional help from an Occupational Therapist (OT) may be required for disabled children with complex needs, to provide strategic advice, equipment and arrange home alterations for more extensive home safety needs. Interventions generally involve major adaptations to the home (works costing over £1000). Major adaptations are variably funded according to tenancy: either via Enfield Homes, special funds held by the housing association, or via a Disabled Facilities Grant. None of these funding streams are means tested for children/young people.

The purpose of a major adaptation is to modify disabling environments in order to enable independent living and dignity for individuals and their families. It is not just a matter of building work but providing an individualised solution to the problems experienced by the child and their carer/s. Examples of major adaptations to meet safety needs might include the provision of an additional bedroom, raising fencing, replacement of glass doors, padding to a room or a Safe Space within a bedroom. However, home alterations are unlikely to be a complete solution to complex challenging behaviour and/or sensory processing difficulties. It is essential that the child and family have had sufficient support and input from relevant services who specialise in sensory/behavioural management and that a sensory diet/behavioural programme is in place (generally accessed via Health or school).

Referral to the Occupational Therapy Service – Social Care

Referrals for complex cases requiring specialist Social Care OT input, can be made by the child's parent/carer or another professional to the Access Service at adultsocialcare@enfield.gov.uk Tel: 020 8379 1001. Other professionals involved may be contacted for further information where necessary.

Please note:

- Basic parental responsibility needs does not fall under the remit of OT. For example, it would be reasonable to expect high levels of supervision for children under the age of 5.
- The OT service will not provide a home assessment where the needs can be met with provision of information at the point of the initial enquiry. E.g. equipment that is commercially available should be provided by the family.
- Referrals will not be accepted where the home safety request does not relate to a child with a permanent and substantial disability.

Criteria for major adaptations to property for home safety

1. The disability of a child would be such as to require extensive additional services or equipment from that normally provided to someone of the same age, to enable the child to cope with all activities of daily life and where help is needed to achieve a level of independence in personal care, mobility or communication skills.
2. The child demonstrates unsafe behaviours where the risk of injury to himself, siblings or the carer is severe and the provision of a major adaptation to the home would keep the child in a safe environment.
3. Provision of major adaptations will improve the quality of care given to the child
4. It will help alleviate the physical/psychological demands experienced by the carer.

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5. Less extensive, lower cost options should be tried before considering more costly options.
6. Alterations should be necessary and appropriate and should not present an increased risk to the child or other family members, for example fire safety.