



**Integrated Working  
Common Assessment Framework  
The age range for CAF use.**

**1. Agreed Local Guidance (CAF Project Board 14<sup>th</sup> July 2009):**

CAF is **routinely** used in respect of unborn children (from **24 weeks of gestation**) up to and including young people of **18** years of age.

If a child or young person has been **looked after**, that age limit is **up to and including** young people of **20** years of age.

If the young person has a **learning difficulty or disability**, the age limit is **up to and including** young people of **24** years of age.

If an individual practitioner determines that CAF is appropriate to enable the young person to have a smooth **transition to adult services**, the age limit is **up to and including** young people of **24** years of age.

We proceed on the basis that all CAF use with *children from 24 weeks of gestation up to and including young people of 24 years of age*...should be **registered** with the CAF Admin Team in line with the process detailed in the "CAF Quick Comprehensive Guide"

**2. Background:** Colleagues from the Connexions Service and Bradford College have raised the issue of the use of CAF with young people. This has led to discussions about the age-range for CAF use and the need for clarity on the issue.

**3. Research:** Work has been undertaken to gain background information via CAF requirements and existing legislation. Advice has also been sought from DCSF.

**4. Consultation process:**

- Presentation of paper to the IW implementation group on 11<sup>th</sup> June.
- e-Mail consultation process 15<sup>th</sup> June to 6<sup>th</sup> July 2009

**Underpinning Evidence:**

1. The "**Every Child Matters**" web-site provides the following relevant information:

- Both the "Children Act 2004" and the "UN Convention on the Rights of the Child" define a child as "a person under the age of 18" (or a person who is 18, 19 or 20 and has been in Local Authority care)

- The "Education Act 2002" and the "National Service Framework" defines a child as a person "under 19".

- The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 describes a child as being under 14, and a young person as being 15 to 17 (No mention of 13 year olds!)

- The term "Young people" is used by some advice and information services as meaning 18 to 25 year olds.

## **2. The DCSF have advised:**

- The terms 'child or young person' and 'children or young people' are used to refer to unborn babies, infants, children and young people aged 0 to 19.

- CAF is generally used with children and young people up to the age of 18, but its use can be extended beyond 18 where appropriate to enable the young person to have a smooth transition to adult services.

- In the case of the Connexions service, the CAF can be used with young people up to the age of 19, and up to the age of 24 where a young person has a learning difficulty or disability.

A local option of using CAF outside this age range is possible as long as consent is gained.

## **3. ContactPoint:**

ContactPoint will hold details of a child / young person from the date of their birth up to and including 17 years of age. When they reach 18, explicit consent is required from the individual to keep their details on the system. (eg: Where this is appropriate to enable the young person to have a smooth transition to adult services.)

## **Analysis of evidence:**

- The national CAF guidance refers to its use with "children and young people".

- CAF is a government requirement under the Every Child Matters agenda.

- The ECM agenda is underpinned by the Children Act 2004.

So, from the point of view of legislation, the Children Act 2004 definition of "children and young people" could have precedence...ie: CAF to be used in respect of unborn children (from 24 weeks of gestation) up to and including young people of 17 years of age (or up to and including 20 if they have been in care).

However, the DCSF advice on CAF clearly identifies that the definition of "children and young people" extends to young people up to and including the age of 18.

It also makes a clear statement about the work of Connexions.

That DCSF advice gives us the option locally to use CAF outside of the age ranges described in legislation.

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**6<sup>th</sup> July 2009**