

MAAG

information for parents
Multi-Agency Allocation Group



All families experience difficulties at times and sometimes need help to get through. In Essex, we are supporting families and children when they need help from two or more services through a group called the Multi-Agency Allocation Group, or MAAG. This leaflet tells you about MAAG and how it can help you and your family.

What is MAAG?

The Multi-Agency Allocation Group (MAAG) is a meeting of the managers of professionals from different services, who support children and young people from a particular geographical area. The MAAG meets to see what help can be put in place whatever the issues may be. There is a separate MAAG in each district council area of Essex and most meet every week.

How can MAAG help my child and my family?

At a MAAG meeting members will think about what can be provided to meet the needs of your child and family. Managers will say whether their service can help you and give the name of a member of their team who could work with your child or family. A plan is made with the names of the services and their team members who may be able to help you and your family. The plan is a suggestion, and you will be able to decide what help you would like.



What information goes to MAAG about my child and family?

For the best help possible to be given to your child and your family it is helpful for MAAG to have full and up to date information. For most children the information is put on a form called a Common Assessment Framework or CAF. You and your child will be involved in writing the CAF with someone who knows you well. This could be a teacher, a nurse or your GP.



If you would like to find out more about the CAF, you can ask to see a separate leaflet for parents about CAF.

Members of MAAG share information they hold about your child and family if it is relevant to helping your child and family.

Do I have a say about what information goes on the CAF and who see it?

It is helpful for the people at MAAG to have a full picture of your child and family. The person writing the CAF with you should talk to you about what is on the CAF. You and your child have space on the CAF to put your views. If you do not want something recorded on the CAF it should not be recorded.

You can also say whether there are any services that you do not want involved in MAAG on the CAF form. If you say that you do not want a service involved, they will not be given any information about your child and will not be present at the MAAG meeting.

All information on the CAF is treated as confidential and will not be shared outside of MAAG without your consent, unless your child at risk of significant harm.

Who goes to a MAAG meeting?

The managers who attend MAAG differ a little bit across the different areas. However, there are some services that should usually attend. These are:

- Health – managers of local school nurses and health visitors
- Integrated Youth Services – managers of services such as youth work to young people 13-19
- Educational Psychologists
- Police – usually officers that work with communities or schools
- Social care – managers from the Assessment and Child Protection teams
- Children’s Centres – managers of local children’s centres who work with pre-school children
- Managers of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- Children’s Support Service – managers whose team help support children and young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties at school
- Education Welfare – managers of those who work with children and families where there are difficulties in going to school
- District Council – managers who work with housing or anti-social behaviour
- An education representative

There is also a MAAG Manager who always attends the meetings and is responsible for chairing the meeting. A MAAG administrator is also there to take notes.

Sometimes, other people are invited into MAAG to help with a specific child or family. For example, if a child has a disability, local disability services can be invited. The MAAG Manager is responsible for inviting other people to the meeting as needed.

As mentioned earlier in this leaflet, you can ask that certain agencies do not attend MAAG when your child is discussed and that information about your child is not shared with them.

Can I go to MAAG?

Most weeks there are a lot of children and families on the MAAG agenda. For this reason, it is not practical for parents to come to the MAAG meeting. However, we ask that a meeting with you and your child happens as soon as possible after MAAG. This meeting is called the Team Around the Child or TAC meeting. At this meeting the help that has been suggested by MAAG will be discussed with you. You can say whether or not you are happy to receive the help suggested. The services named on the plan will be there at the TAC to tell you how they can help.



Who will help me after the MAAG meeting?

We realise that there will always be several people who could start helping your child and family after MAAG. It can be difficult for families to keep track of these different people. Because of this, MAAG will also suggest someone who can take the lead in helping you. We call this person the Lead Professional. The Lead Professional can talk for you to the other people working with you if needed. The Lead Professional will also invite people to meetings and keep a record of who is doing what so everyone works together.



You are able to say who you would like as the Lead Professional. This should be agreed with you at the first Team Around the Child meeting. A lot of the time the person who completes the CAF with you will start off being the Lead Professional. It may be that someone else will become your Lead Professional in the future.

What if my child or family only needs help from one service?

If your child or family need help from just one service, it will still be helpful to complete a CAF to record full and up to date information. However, the CAF can be sent straight to that service and will not need to come to MAAG.

Who can I talk to about MAAG if I have more questions?

Please ask the person completing the CAF with you if you have more questions. They will be able to ask the MAAG Manager for advice if there is anything that they cannot answer themselves.

Essex County Council takes the lead in Multi Agency Allocation Groups (MAAGs) working with the partners from Local Children's Commissioning and Delivery Boards. Partners include private and voluntary organisations, children's centres, National Health Services, district councils, the police, education and social services.

We do not have space to list all the partners for more details contact your local MAAG office by contacting:

Children and Young People Services 0845 603 7627.

This booklet is issued by

Essex County Council, Schools, children and families.

You can contact us in the following ways:

By telephone:

0845 603 7627

By email:

MAAG.harlow@essex.gov.uk

MAAG.chelmsford@essex.gov.uk

MAAG.colchester@essex.gov.uk

MAAG.southessex@essex.gov.uk

Visit our website:

www.essex.gov.uk

The information contained in this document can be translated, and/or made available in alternative formats, on request.

Published February 2011



100% recycled paper