Wiltshire Portage Service Admissions and Discharge Policy for Portage

Referral System

Referrals are accepted directly from parents/carers. Referrals may also be made by professionals working with the family, provided that the parent/carer has given their agreement for the referral to be submitted. Referrals must not be made by a third party without the informed consent of the parent/carer.

Parents/carers and early years settings should have a clear understanding of the Portage approach and the level of commitment expected before a referral is made. They should be encouraged to consider whether they can commit to the requirements of the service.

Referral forms can be obtained from the Wiltshire Portage website: **https://wiltshireportage.org.uk/**.

All referrals must be made with the verbal consent of the parent/carer and must be accompanied by relevant information relating to the child's developmental level and recent progress. This may include, but is not limited to:

- My Support Plan
- My Plan
- Developmental screening information
- Medical reports
- Early Support Assessment (ESA)
- One Plan
- Other relevant professional assessments or reports

Providing comprehensive and up-to-date information will assist the service in determining the child's eligibility and prioritisation for support.

Criteria

Wiltshire Portage is available to children and families who meet all the following criteria:
At the point of referral, the child must:

Geographical Area
The family must live within Wiltshire, excluding the Swindon Borough Council area.
Age of Child

- ★ The child must be between birth and school entry;
- ★ children attending a District Specialist Centre must have at least one academic year before starting school from the date of referral;

- ★ referrals for children not attending a District Specialist Centre, attending mainstream provision, or not in any mainstream setting, or with less than one academic year before school will be reviewed against evidence and service capacity.

N.B. Children attending a District Specialist Centre with less than one academic year before starting school. Maybe eligible for Portage Plus, please contact the Service Manager.

Diagnosis or Need

The child must present with significant concerns of developmental delay in more than two areas of learning. One of these areas must be cognition/thinking.

N.B. The child does not need to have a diagnosis.

Family Commitment

Parents/carers must commit to meeting with the Portage Home Visitor on a weekly basis during term time, at a mutually agreed time, in the family home. Parents/carers are also expected to support and facilitate the activities and interventions recommended by the Portage Home Visitor between visits, to help promote their child's learning and development.

Visits

- ★ The number of visits depend on family needs across the Wiltshire Portage service area and service capacity;
- ★ a block of visits lasts no longer than six months; (A single block of visits is usually six to twelve weeks. However, a block will not last longer than 6 months.)
- ★ Families meeting the Portage criteria **may** be offered multiple blocks;
- ★ At the end of a block, a family may return to inactive status or be discharged from the Service.

Portage alongside other Sessions

Portage will provide support to children who attend an early year's setting, childminder, or District Specialist Centre for 25 hours per week or less. Or children who do not attend any early year’s provision e.g., nursery.
Consideration will also be given to the availability of time within the child's week to accommodate Portage sessions. The capacity of the service to deliver support, and the availability of Portage Home Visitors.

To remain in receipt of Portage Delivery

- ★ The family and child must meet the criteria’s above for living in the Service area
- ★ Be of the correct age to receive Portage.
- ★ Commit to Portage visits
- ★ Be within the hours of attending an early year setting or District Specialist Centre.
- ★ Or not be attending any early year’s provision.

Following a Wiltshire Portage assessment, the child must demonstrate a significant developmental delay of at least 50% in two or more areas of development, or 30% in two or more areas if the child is under 3 years of age. One of the areas of delay must be cognition (thinking and learning skills).

To remain in receipt of Portage with a Final Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP)
To continue receiving Portage support following the issue of a Final EHCP, the child must attend a setting, DSC, or childminder for a maximum of 10 hours per week. Children attending for more than 10 hours per week will be discharged from the Portage Service.
Where appropriate, families may be offered a block of Portage Plus support before the child starts school. (Depending on availability of Portage Plus)

Discharge
Any family that no longer meets one or any of the criteria above will be discharged from the Service at any time.

They will also be discharged if
Delayed/Deferred School Entry
Wiltshire Portage are unable to see children who have a delayed or deferred entry to school. For these children, please consider a referral to Portage Plus. For further information, please contact the Service Manager.

Borderline Children
Children assessed by the Service as borderline following a Wiltshire Portage assessment will be placed on inactive status for up to six months. A further Portage session will be undertaken at the end of this period to review the child's developmental progress and to determine their ongoing eligibility and appropriateness for Portage support.

Family Commitment
Repeated or unexplained cancellations of Portage visits may result in action being taken by the Service Manager to review the appropriateness of the service. In such circumstances, the family may be discharged from the service, and the referrer will be informed.

Places will be offered at the CEO/Managers discretion.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Service Manager on 07780 653888

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