

CHILD DLA CARE COMPONENT FACTSHEET

Disability Living Allowance is split into two parts, Mobility and Care, but you apply for both on the same form.

In this factsheet we have detailed information about the Care criteria for children under 16 which can be very useful if you are trying to ascertain as to whether your child could qualify.

Care can be paid at three rates: Low, Middle or High

- Low rate is awarded if your child needs additional care for over an hour per day.
- Middle rate is awarded if your child needs additional care or supervision throughout the day or at night time.
- High rate is awarded if they need additional care and supervision throughout the day and at night time.

DLA criteria only takes into account certain types of care.

Additional Care:

DLA rules take into account the care your child needs which is 'substantially in excess' of the care needed by a non-disabled child of the same age.

If your child needs help with an activity that another child the same age does not, then that would count. FOR EXAMPLE: a 12 year old who needs someone with them for support and to prompt them through the bathing process, then care could be '**substantially in excess**' or if it's the help all children of that age need but your child takes a lot longer, ie, it takes them much longer due to refusals or to get them undressed/dressed.

DWP are looking to see what extra care is needed, so it's really important you give lots of detail about the **exact care** you provide and **how long** it takes, this shows that care is '**substantially in excess**' of other children of the same age.

Attention and Supervision:

DLA rules take into account two types of care:

Attention with a bodily function:

- This is anything to do with the body and how it works, ie, eating, drinking, washing, dressing and sleeping, toileting where they need attention, ie, practical help such as washing their hair or
- doing buttons up on a coat (**if they are old enough for other children of the same age to be able to do this without help**), or
- it can be non physical help such as prompting them through the stages of getting dressed, or
- encouragement to eat.

Supervision:

When there is a need for someone to supervise a child to avoid substantial danger, however, all children need some degree of supervision, so it's important to give indepth detail to show that the quality and degree of supervision is greater than another child would reasonably require.

DWP look for the care that's **reasonably required** rather than the **care that's provided**, or **is available** or if the child accepts. ie, it's very stressful/ time consuming to get them to brush their teeth so you might have to do this twice a day - **help** with brushing teeth is still needed twice a

day, so that's what counts -or a child who needs help to eat, but doesn't get this at school, you can argue the fact that they come home from school having not eaten their lunch shows they **'reasonably require'** help to eat lunch, even if this help is not provided.

Definition of Night and Day Time

Night time is defined at home, when everything closes down for the night, or would shut down for the night if it wasn't for the caring responsibilities.

For example: if you would go to bed at 10.00pm if you could, and get up at 6am, that's night time, even if you are up frequently throughout the night caring for your child.

So, getting your child ready for bed and settled to sleep counts as the day time needs, because it happens when you would usually be up anyway. If they wake in the middle of the night where you have to get up, that would usually count towards night time needs, because if it wasn't for the child waking, you would be still in bed.

How does my child qualify for lower care rate?

To qualify for the care component at the lower rate your child must need **'attention'** in relation to **'body functions'** which is **'substantially excessive'** of the care required by another child the same age, and this additional help must be needed for an hour or more per day.

How does my child qualify for middle or high rate care?

Your child must meet one of the four rules below.

To qualify for high care your child must meet one of the day time rules and one of the night time rules listed below.

Day time rules :

- Frequent attention needed throughout the day in connection with their bodily functions. The attention must be needed frequently and spread throughout the day. ie, a child needing a couple of hours additional help in the morning to get up, washed and dressed but needed no more additional care the rest of the day would not qualify for middle or high care because the care needed is not spread throughout the day, instead they would qualify for low care due to the additional help being more than an hour.
- Continuous supervision is needed throughout the day to avoid substantial danger. It's important to explain how the supervision that's needed is a lot more than supervision needed by another child the same age, explain what dangers are being avoided by providing additional level of supervision.

Night time rules :

- Repeated or prolonged attention is needed at night in connection with bodily functions. Prolonged means approx 20 minutes and repeated twice or more, ie if you have to be up at night time for more than 20 minutes to help a 14 year-old to get up, use the toilet and then return to bed you could qualify under this rule. Soothing a child back to sleep can count as attention with a bodily function, but only if it is **substantially in excess** of the help that another child the same age would need.
- Your child needs watching over at night for a prolonged period or at frequent intervals to avoid substantial danger.

Watching over means someone being awake to watch over your child. Prolonged means approx 20 minutes and repeated twice or more, ie if they wake in the middle of the night, and you have to get up to watch over them because it's dangerous to leave them alone, you could qualify under this rule.