E-enablement of the Common Assessment Framework

eCAF Overview Document

Version 1.0

Every Child Matters
Change For Children

Document Control

Revision History

Issue date	Version	Summary of Changes
08/06/2006	1.0	Initial publication

Purpose of this Document

This paper introduces a set of documents to facilitate progress with e-enabling the Common Assessment Framework. These documents are intended to provide guidance to Local Authorities in implementing local eCAF projects.

Contents

Abbreviations

Term	Definition
CAF	Common Assessment Framework
eCAF	Electronic Common Assessment Framework
DfES	Department for Education & Skills
ECM	Every Child Matters
IWP	Integrated Working Project

1.   Introduction

1.1   Document Objectives

This paper introduces a set of documents to facilitate progress with e-enabling the Common Assessment Framework (CAF). It acts as an Executive Summary for managers responsible for implementing CAF, and as an introduction for all readers to the more detailed documents.

The documents in this set are intended to provide guidance to Local Authorities in implementing local electronic CAF (eCAF) projects. In particular, the aims of the document set are:

- To provide standards for local eCAF implementations, thus promoting consistency and interoperability.

- To communicate the vision and rationale behind the standards

- To inform detailed discussions between Local Authorities and software developers

- To inform discussions between groups of Local Authorities, and between Local Authorities and key partners in Children's Services

The Department for Education and Skills is considering the best way of increasing integration of practitioner support systems and may modify these documents accordingly as and when this is deemed appropriate

1.2   CAF objectives and background

The documents in this set need to be understood in the context of Every Child Matters (ECM) and CAF.

In response to the Lord Laming report, following the tragic case of Victoria Climbié, the Government has committed to transforming the manner in which services are delivered to children. To achieve this objective the Every Child Matters Programme of change has been created. The CAF is a key component of this as it helps agencies to offer a more integrated service to children. It provides a standardised approach, which includes a Common Assessment Form (CA Form), for all practitioners to use in holistically assessing a child's needs and designing interventions to meet those needs. This is an important part of the strategy to shift the focus from dealing with the consequences of difficulties in children's lives to preventing things from going wrong in the first place.
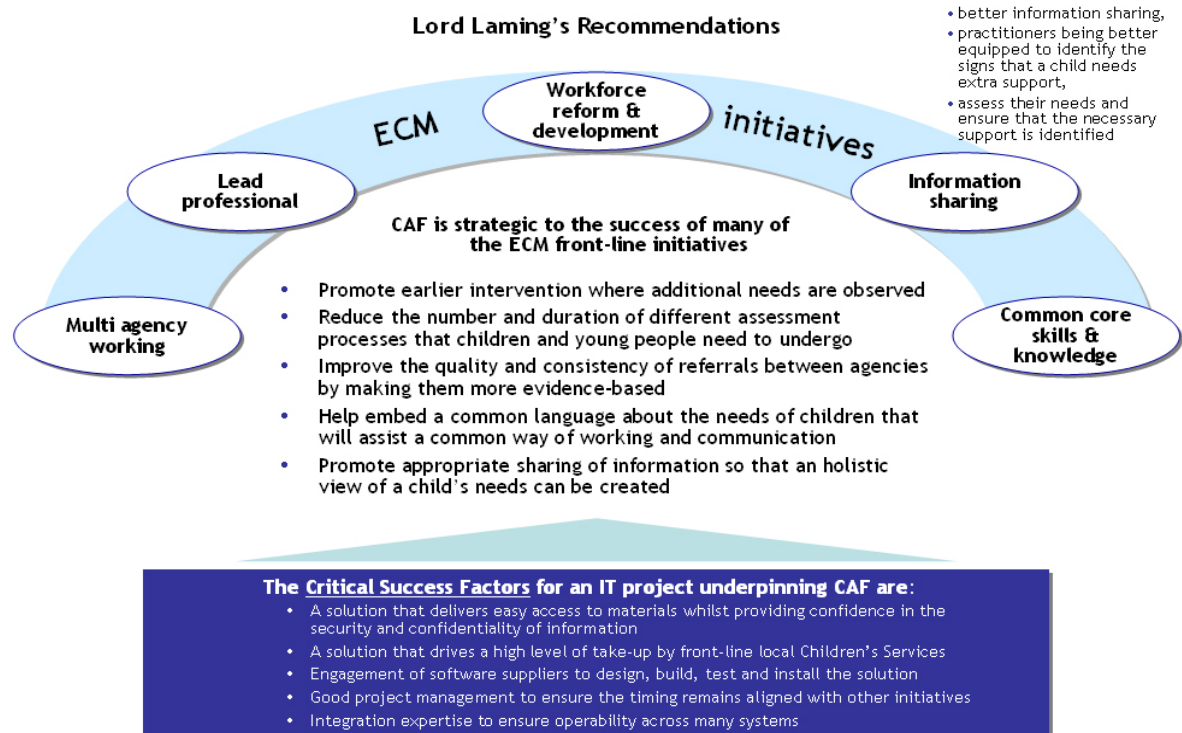
More information about CAF and the Every Child Matters programme (including the CAF Form and Practitioner Guidance) can be found on the Every Child Matters website at www.ecm.gov.uk/caf

1.3   eCAF Project Background

Local Authorities and practitioners, when consulted on CAF proposals, have told us that without computerised support the CAF will not achieve its objectives. There are obvious benefits from e-enablement in achieving the objectives of CAF - particularly with regard to information sharing between practitioners and co-ordinating service delivery across both geographical and organisational borders.

The eCAF project was therefore initiated with the goals of:

- Confirming the Business Case for e-enablement, and

- Providing detailed practical guidance on the way forward

These goals were approached through a series of workshops and consultations with Local Authorities and Practitioners. This document set is the first step towards providing detailed practical guidance, and is a direct result of this process.

1.4   Importance of standards

Consultation with practitioners has revealed cross-border working as a key issue for CAF.

Cross-border Working; a complex issue.[1]

Children's lives are complex and do not adhere to the boundaries set by Local Authorities. Children often receive services from multiple Local Authorities, increasing the importance of cohesive cross-border working. This is evidenced across Local Authorities. For example, in Leeds 3.5% of children (over 4,500 individuals) attend schools outside of the Local Authority. Social Services in this Local Authority as in others, can also foster anywhere in England and provide services for children in hospitals who come from around the country. In Knowsley 598 pupils are known to access education in another area, with over 100 pupils in Knowsley from other Local Authorities. Furthermore, *"Knowsley like many Local Authorities is surrounded by several other Local Authorities. This means that children can receive services and/or support from two or more areas"*. In Rotherham, some 50% of pupils in faith schools (~250 children) are from outside the Local Authority. In addition, as is common across most Local Authorities, agencies do not share borders; for example, South Yorkshire Police covers four Local Authorities with an additional area breakdown with these Local Authorities, further complicating cross-agency and cross-border working.

Consistency across both geographical and organisational borders therefore emerges as a major concern.

While this applies to the paper CAF Form in terms of a "common language" and approach, it becomes even more important when considering e-enablement and the requirements for computer systems.

The documents in this set contain guidance and standards in order to promote the necessary consistent approach. By following these standards, Local Authorities can be assured of benefiting from future DfES assistance, and of maximising their opportunities for sharing and exchanging data across borders.

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[1] Leeds Local Authority, Knowsley Local Authority, Rotherham Local Authority, and West Sussex Local Authority statistics.

2. Document Set Overview

2.1 Diagram

The diagram below shows the documents in the set, and each one is briefly described in the following text. The remaining sections of this document give more information on each one.
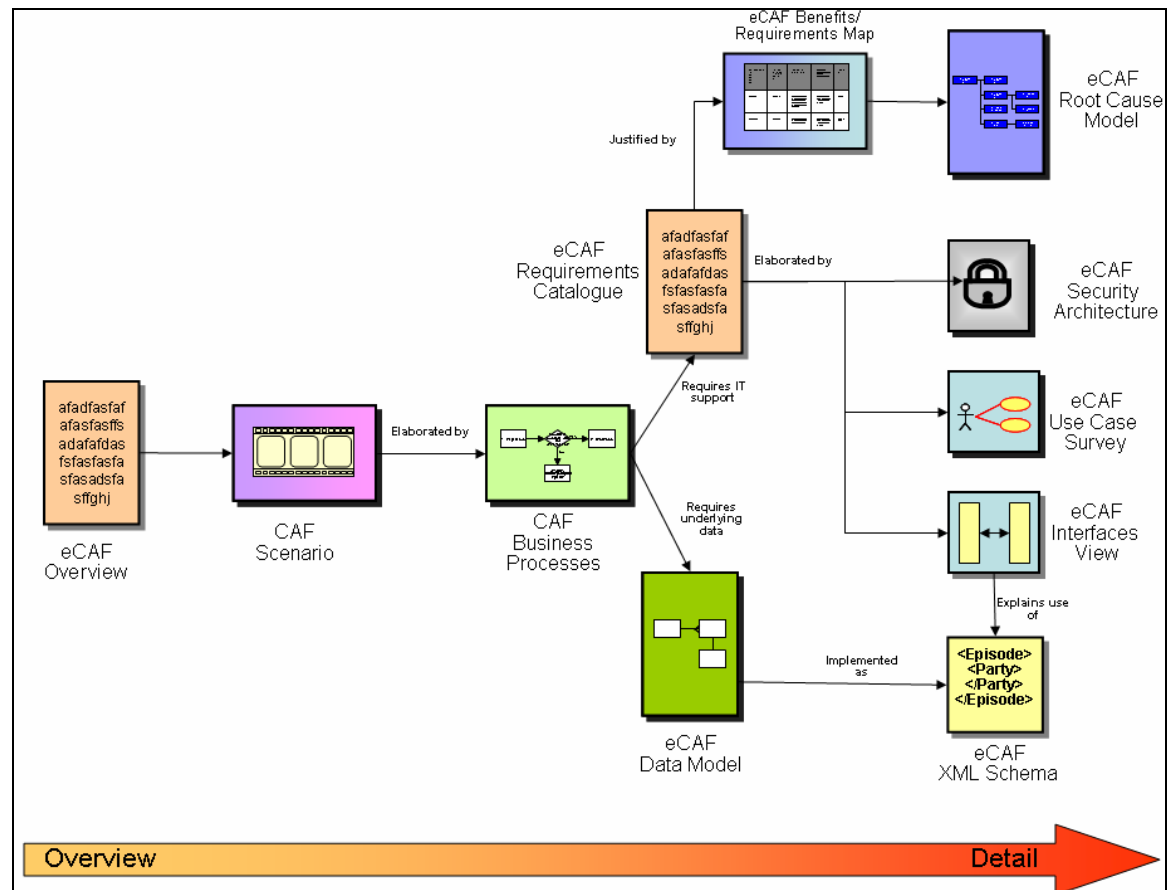
2.2 Description of documents

- **eCAF Overview** – Essential starting point and executive summary. Introduces the other documents in the set.

- **The CAF Scenario** – This document walks through a "story", showing an example of how the CAF Business Processes might work in practice. Useful for all readers, to gain a basic familiarity with CAF process.

- **The CAF Business Processes** – This document describes the people and business activities that are required to complete a Common Assessment and the subsequent actions arising out of that Assessment. It also indicates where IT support from an eCAF system will assist these activities.

- **The Requirements Catalogue** – This document defines what system support is required by practitioners using the Common Assessment Framework (CAF). It contains categorised listings of functional and non-functional requirements.

- **The Security Architecture** – This document defines in more detail the security requirements for an eCAF system. This is a critical aspect, and thus worthy of specific consideration.

- **The Use Case Survey** – This document presents the requirements as Unified Modelling Language (UML) Use Case diagrams. This may be useful for more technical readers, for example to inform the Inception and Elaboration stages of a Rational Unified Process (RUP) development project.

- **The Interfaces View** – This document provides more information about the interfacing requirements for an eCAF system. Interfacing is important but potentially complex, so this document provides additional guidance.

- **The Data Model** – This document contains a high-level diagram of the information that will be required in the context of CAF. It provides a more detailed view of information requirements in the form of an Entity Relationship Diagram that defines the essential eCAF data items and their relationships. It also includes a set of Data Classifications which summarise the types of data used in CAF, such as Name and Contact Details. It provides standard names and definitions that will be used by an eCAF system.

- **The XML Schema** – This is a technical schema specification (plus example xml file), providing a standard representation of the Data Model as an XML (GovTalk) message. XML is a widely accepted data format used for information exchange between systems.

- **The Root Cause Model** – This document describes the root causes of the main issues which prevent the delivery of the targeted outcomes of the 'Every Child Matters: Change for Children' Programme (relevant to initial assessments). It states both the business challenges faced (the issues and their root causes) and the business need to be addressed.

- **The Benefits/Requirements Map** – This document provides the linkage between the root causes eCAF looks to address and the solution components (requirements) designed to address them.

2.3   Suggested reading paths

If you are an executive who wants an overview of eCAF:

You should read:

- **eCAF Overview** (this document) - for a high-level summary

You might also be interested in:

- **CAF Scenario** – for a "feel" of what CAF is all about in practice

- **Root Cause Model** – for an understanding of the main business issues that eCAF will solve

If you are a business manager with responsibility for eCAF implementation

You should read:

- **eCAF Overview** – for an introduction and summary

- **CAF Scenario** – to understand the business process at a high-level

- **CAF Business Process** – for a more detailed understanding of how the CAF processes work

- **Requirements Catalogue** – for an explanation of what an eCAF system is required to do

You might also be interested in:

- **Root Cause Model** – for an understanding of the main business issues and business case for eCAF

- **Security Architecture** – for information on the security infrastructure and procedures that will be needed.

- **Interfaces View** – for information on the options for interfacing and interoperability with other systems such as Case Management Systems

If you are a technical manager or developer of an eCAF system

You should read:

- **eCAF Overview** – for an introduction and summary

- **CAF Scenario** – to understand the business process at a high-level

- **Requirements Catalogue** – for an explanation of what an eCAF system needs to do

- **Security Architecture** – for information on the security infrastructure and requirements

- **Interfaces View** – for information on interfacing options and requirements

- **Use Case Survey** – for UML diagrams of the requirements

- **Data Model** – to learn about the database requirements for the system

- **XML Schema** – for the standard format for data interchange

You might also be interested in:

- **CAF Business Process** – for additional background information on the business process that the system is required to support

- **Root Cause Model** – for an understanding of the business issues driving the requirements

If you are developing interfaces between eCAF and Case Management Systems

You should read:

- **eCAF Overview** – for an introduction and summary

- **CAF Scenario** – to understand the business process at a high-level

- **Interfaces View** – for information on interfacing options and requirements

- **Data Model** – to learn about the Episode data structure

- **XML Schema** – for the standard format for data interchange

- **Security Architecture** – for information on security infrastructure and requirements

You might also be interested in:

- **Requirements Catalogue** – for more information on the requirements around interfacing

- **CAF Business Process** – for additional background information on the business process that the system is required to support

If you are writing (e)CAF materials for practitioners to use:

You will find useful material in:

- **eCAF Overview** – for an introduction and summary
- **CAF Scenario** – to understand the business process at a high-level

You might also consider:

- **Root Cause Model** – for an understanding of the main business issues and business case for eCAF

3. Root Cause Model Overview

The **Root Cause Model** outlines the main issues that an eCAF system needs to solve, and provides the business context for the other requirements.

3.1 About the Root Cause Model

Consultation with practitioners has revealed seven "Major Issues" within the business which are preventing complete delivery against the desired outcomes of the 'Every Child Matters; Change for Children' programme.These are summarised below:
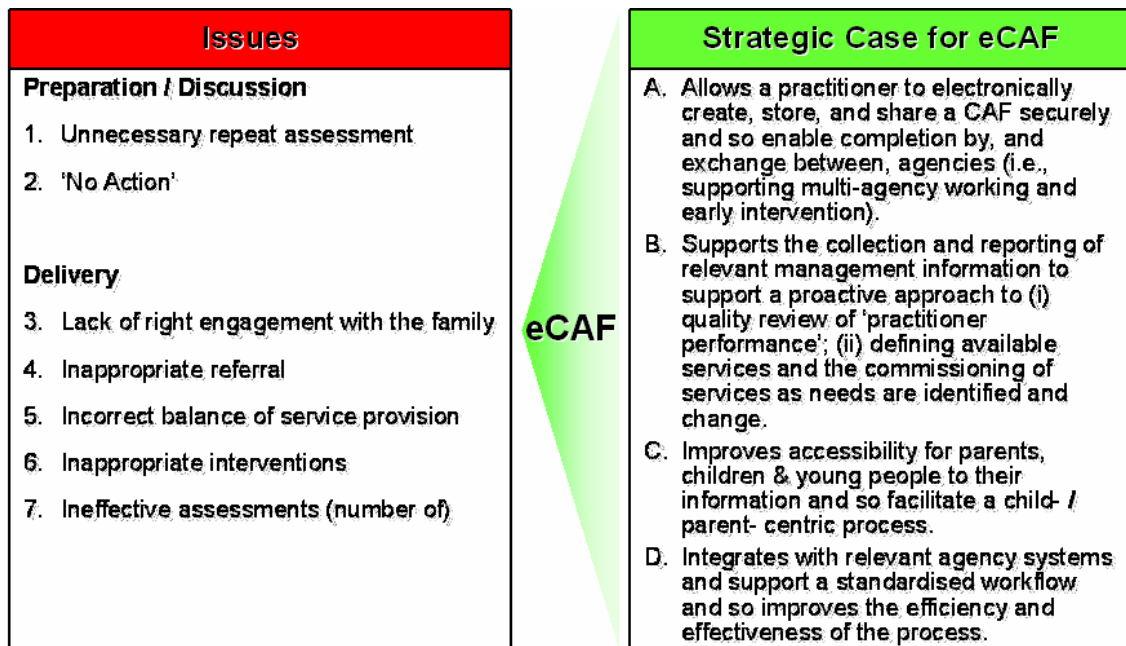
1. **Unnecessary Repeat Assessment;** on first contact with child/family, practitioners ask the same basic information again and again, thus putting the working relationship at risk. Root cause is largely due to the manner in which information is not shared amongst agencies (e.g., because no actual sharing, lack of easy access to previous assessments, lack of understanding of DPA);

2. **No Action;** practitioner assumes someone else is doing an assessment or "It's just too much work/It's not my job" or they don't look at the whole picture;

3. **Lack of right engagement with client;** due to lack of holistic view (i.e., being able to 'see' that holistic view), which results in wrong approach or intervention;

4. **Inappropriate Referral;** due to insufficient time to get all of required information or because practitioner misunderstands what services are available or because parent / child have decided what they want;

5. **Incorrect Balance of Service Provision;** because service planning has not been based on a proper understanding of needs – there is no feedback loop from assessment of needs to success of delivery to value for money for each service;

6. **Inappropriate Intervention;** due to lack of information, practitioner does not possess enough data to tailor the intervention to the needs of the user; and,

7. **Ineffective Assessments (number of);** because too much time is spent on the initial assessment the number of children who are initially assessed and

have all needs identified is reduced – due to a misunderstanding of the level of assessment information required.

The Root Cause Model – developed in consultation with practitioners - takes each of these Major Issues in turn and breaks it down into the underlying Root Causes. This process is repeated until the problems reach a low enough level for them to be solved by mapping to eCAF system features.

3.2   Where to find out more

▪ **The eCAF Root Cause Model**

Provides the fully detailed breakdown of the Major Issues and their Root Causes.

▪ **The eCAF Benefits/Requirements Map**

Links the Root Causes to eCAF system features that can help to address them

4. Business Processes Overview

The **eCAF Business Processes** provide further context for the system. Any eCAF system implementation will need to support these processes.

4.1 About the CAF Business Processes

The diagram below shows a high-level summary of the Business Processes.
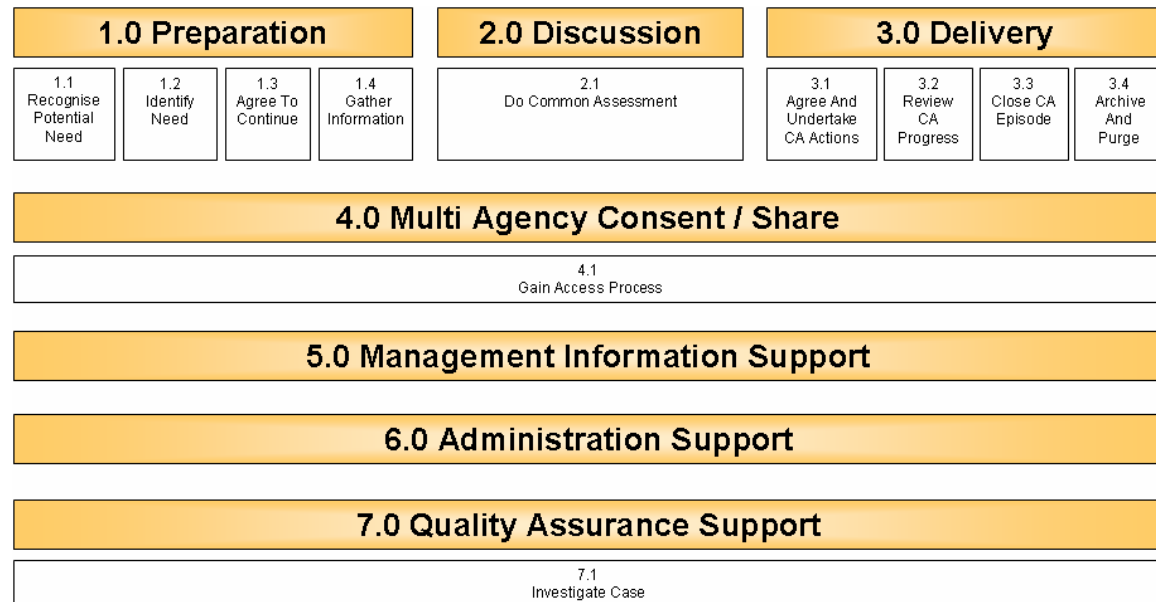
The core of the Business Process for practitioners is the sequence of Preparation, Discussion, and Delivery. The following descriptions summarise these major steps from a practitioner viewpoint. More information is available in the CAF Practitioners Guide. (See "4.3 Where to find out more" for details).

1.0 Preparation

You have a discussion with the child and/or their parent about your concerns. You find out whether a common assessment already exists. You talk to anyone else you need to - your manager, colleagues, other staff (including those in other agencies) already involved with the child. (The Child Index will be operational in all English local authority areas by the end of 2008, and will be a useful supporting tool). You might also use the checklist. You discuss the possibility of a common assessment with the child and/or their parent as appropriate and you decide with them how to proceed.

You prepare for the discussion. If the child has a disability, you consider whether there are any special communications requirements, such as signing, or access requirements. (Note: Most children with a disability will have had a SEN and CIN assessment). Where the child's or their parent's first language is not English, you consider whether an interpreter is needed.

2.0 Discussion

You talk to the child and/or their parent and complete the assessment with them. You make sure the child and/or their parent understand what information you are recording and what is going to happen to it. In the case of minority ethnic families you ensure account is taken of their needs when providing information or services. You make use of information you have already gathered from the child, parent or other practitioners so they don't have to repeat themselves. At the end of the discussion you understand better the child and family's strengths, needs, and what can be done to help.

3.0 Delivery

You agree with the child and/or parent the actions that your service and the child and/or parent themselves can deliver. (Actions may also be agreed as part of the discussion in step 2). Where you intend to approach another service for support, you check the child and/or parent is content. You record this on the form.

If you have access to a CAF IT system you record the common assessment on it. If you do not have access to a CAF IT system you follow the locally agreed procedures for recording common assessments.

You deliver on your actions. You engage or broker access to other services, using the common assessment to demonstrate evidence of need. If appropriate, you set up a meeting of the practitioners who are, or should be, involved with the child. You continue to monitor and review the child's progress until you are satisfied that all needs have been met. Where the child or family needs services from across a range of agencies, there should be a process across agencies to identify a lead professional. Completing a common assessment does not necessarily mean that you will take the lead.

The remaining Business Process areas are concerned with back-office processes that are needed to support these practitioner activities:

4.0 Multi Agency Consent / Share
These processes provide support for sharing information with other parties involved with Child / Family

5.0 Management Information Support
This records the need for management information and statistics to support service provision.

6.0 Administration Support
This process area provides support for administrative tasks, for example alerts and user assistance

7.0 Quality Assurance Support
This process area provides support for undertaking quality assurance and operational monitoring, audit and review of CAF Systems and practice

4.2 Key eCAF Business Process Concepts

Underlying the eCAF Business Processes are a number of key concepts. Understanding these is essential to making sense of the Business Processes and appreciating "What CAF is". Any eCAF system must provide an implementation of these key concepts.

4.2.1 The CA Episode

An Episode represents a complete single pass of the child through the CAF Business Process. It separates the 'process' from the 'form', allowing a flexible approach that can span all aspects from Preparation, through Discussion to Delivery – and which may be tailored to local needs.

Key to the CAF are its holistic and cross-agency approach, and this is supported by the Episodic model. This is in contrast to, and "joins up", the more focused case-based interventions typically used within agencies.

4.2.2 Episode Items
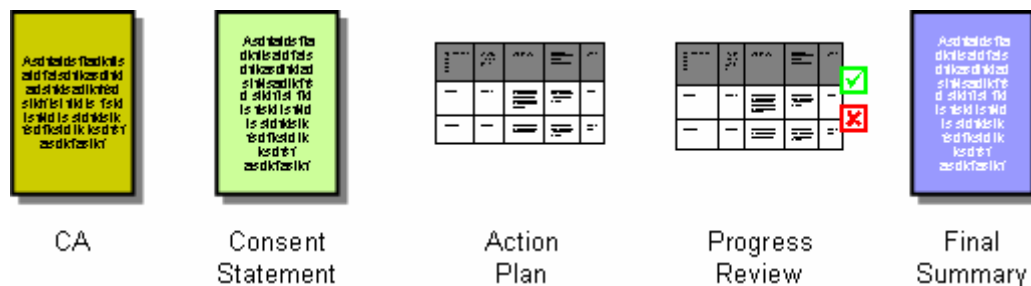
The Episode can be visualised as a "folder", within which are various loose-leaf forms know as "Episode Items". These include the Common Assessment itself, one or more Consent Statements recording the child/family's intentions for sharing the data, Action Plans and Progress Reviews, and a Final Summary to close the Episode.

4.2.3 Episode Team

The Episode Team represents the idea of the 'Team around the Child'. It includes the Assessed Child, Parents, relevant siblings and other family members, and involved agencies and practitioners. Part of managing the Episode is maintaining the Team. Team members may fulfil "roles", such as coordinating the Episode or creating particular Episode Items.

4.2.4 Access and Consent

There is an important distinction identified between "Access" and "Consent". "Consent" records the child or family's intentions about the data, while "Access" represents an interpretation of this into actual system controls. From this, a model of Consent Statements, Access Decisions, Access Control and Access Logging has been developed.

4.3   Where to find out more

- **The eCAF Scenario**

  The eCAF Scenario walks through a "story", showing an example of how the CAF Business Processes might work in practice.

- **The eCAF Business Processes**

  Provides detailed flowcharts showing what happens in each step. Also links to the eCAF Requirements Catalogue, showing where system support for the processes is needed.

- **Existing CAF materials**

  There is extensive existing material available about CAF itself and the practitioner process. This is not part of this document set, but can be downloaded from the Every Child Matters website at http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk

  CAF Practitioners' Guide

  > *The practitioners' guide is for all practitioners who want to know about the CAF and how to use it.*
  >
  > *It is for everyone who works with children, young people and families, whether they are employed or volunteers, and working in the public, private or voluntary sectors. It is for staff working in health; education; early years and childcare; social care; youth offending; police; youth support/Connexions services; advisory and support services; and leisure. It is also for practitioners who work in services for adults, as many of the adults accessing those services are also parents or carers.*

  CAF Tools for Practitioners

  Provides more detailed practitioner guidance on how to conduct a Common Assessment discussion.

  CAF Managers' Guide

  > *The managers' guide is for all strategic and operational managers across all children's services who have responsibility for implementing the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), to ensure better outcomes for children, young people and their families.*
  >
  > *It covers the background and policy context, an introduction to the Common Assessment Framework, the CAF Process, and Implementing the CAF.*

  Integrated Working Project

  > *Improving outcomes for children and young people, so that every child achieves their potential, involves changes to culture and practice across the children's workforce. These new ways of working shift the focus from dealing with the consequences of difficulties in children's lives to early intervention and effective prevention. Every Child Matters sets out a children's trust model for whole-system change, with integrated frontline delivery, processes, strategy and governance.*
  >
  > *Integrated working focuses on enabling and encouraging professionals to work together and to adopt common processes to deliver frontline services, coordinated and built around the needs of children and young people.*

  Cross-Government Information Sharing Guidance

The aim of this cross-Government guidance is to improve practice by giving practitioners across children's services clearer guidance on when and how they can share

information legally and professionally. This document:

● summarises, in one page, six key points for practitioners to remember on information

sharing in respect of children and young people;

● sets out core guidance for practitioners on information sharing;

● sets out further information to inform practitioners' decisions on information sharing

5.   Requirements Catalogue Overview

The **eCAF Requirements Catalogue** starts to answer the question "What does an eCAF system look like?" It provides an overview of what the system actually needs to achieve.

5.1   Systems overview

Before looking in depth at what an eCAF system needs to do, this section outlines the "big picture".

(Note that this is a provisional view and may evolve as the full picture of Every Child Matters systems – including the IS Index – continues to develop. The purpose for now is to highlight how eCAF provides a layer of shared working, over and above that available from individual Case Management Systems)
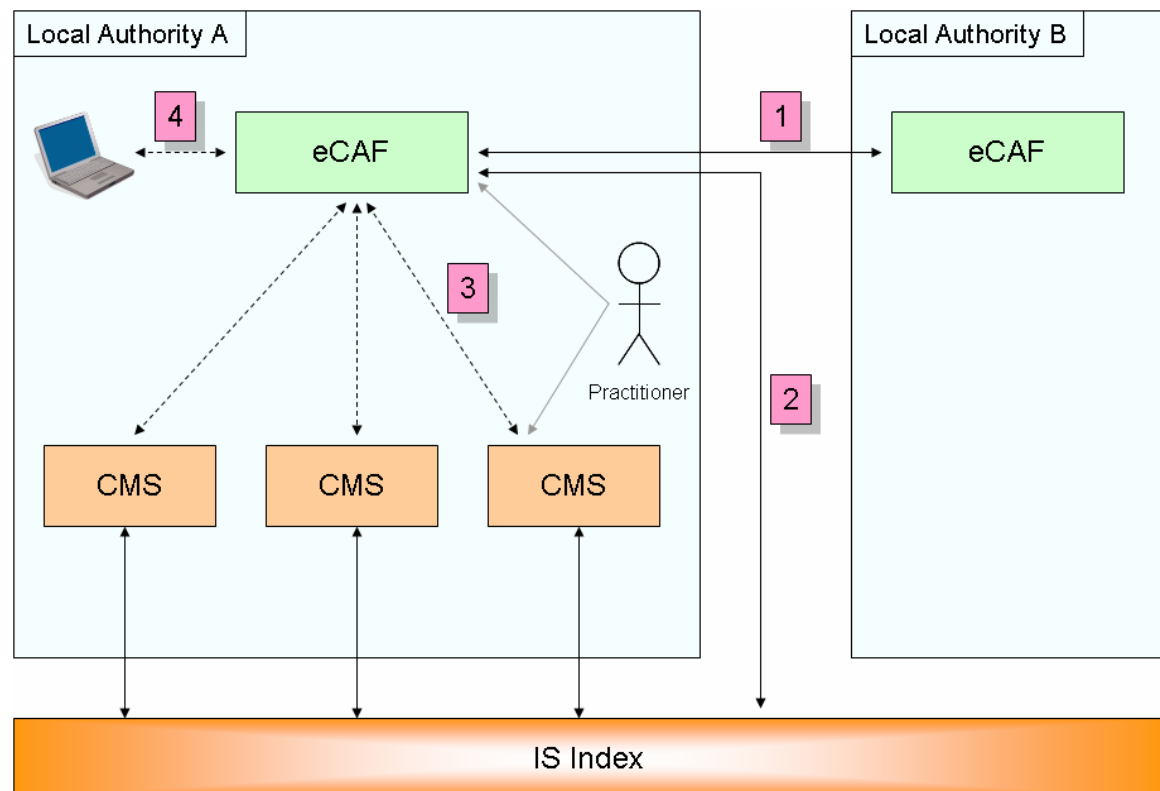
The diagram above shows three major building blocks of IT support for Every Child Matters. Each of the three types of system fulfils an important and specific role in the overall picture:

- **eCAF**

  eCAF systems sit at Local Authority level and provide a forum for shared working. All CA Episode data is stored in the Local Authority-based eCAF system, where it can be accessed (subject to consent) by all practitioners.
  eCAF brings a thin layer of needs-based coordination on top of the detailed activities in Case Management Systems.

- **Case Management Systems**

  Case management Systems (CMS) continue to be used by practitioners to record specialist assessments and detailed (private) casework.

- **IS Index**

The IS Index sits at a National level.
It supplies basic information about the child and any practitioners working with them. It also provides information about any CAFs that are in existence.

The diagram shows a practitioner using both eCAF and a Case Management System. In fact this view is somewhat simplified - as practitioners may also use the IS Index, and there are options for access to eCAF via Case Management Systems. (This is discussed further below).

However the point of the diagram is to illustrate that eCAF and CMS are distinct systems, each being the correct "tool" for a specific job. In many cases practitioners will see them in this way, and will require access to both.

5.2 Interfaces overview

Interoperability between the systems discussed above can help practitioners with their work, particularly in the area of information sharing. Common standards, as defined in this document set, make this possible. The numbers on the diagram highlight the key interfaces that an eCAF system must (solid line) or may (dotted line) provide to support links between systems:

1. **eCAF – eCAF**

   At a minimum, eCAF systems must be able to transfer CA Episode data between different Local Authorities when a child moves house. (More advanced scenarios might also see eCAF systems "talking to each other" in response to cross-border enquiries)

2. **eCAF – IS Index**

   eCAF behaves like Case Management Systems in this respect. It uses the IS Index as a source of definitive basic information about the child, and passes on updates to child data that it receives.

   However the IS Index also maintains a specific "CAF Flag" to track the existence and location of a CA Episode.

3. **eCAF – Case Management Systems**

   Three workable levels of integration between eCAF and Case Management Systems have been identified.

   i) No integration – the systems remain separate, each fulfilling their own role. The practitioner does private Casework in their CMS, and shared working on CAFs in the Local Authority eCAF system.

   ii) Integrated referrals – this allows CAF data to be passed through to a CMS when a child is referred. The Case Management System must map the data items as necessary and use them to pre-populate a specialist assessment

   iii) Full integration – The CMS acts as a "front end" to eCAF, and the practitioner accesses eCAF data from within their existing Case Management System. It is important that this provides true online access to the eCAF database, and does not encourage siloed working on a private copy of the data.

It is important to note that these three levels are not mutually exclusive, and that different Case Management Systems may co-exist at different levels, or progress through the levels over time. It is also important to note that this section provides a provisional view and it will be important to monitor developments on other ECM projects (such as IS Index) and maintain a compatible approach.

4. eCAF – Offline devices

This link shows the possibility for practitioners to complete Common Assessments "in the field", using laptops, digital pens, PDAs, and so on. Interfaces allow for connecting and uploading the results on return to base.

5.3 Functional Requirements

In order to support the Business Processes, an eCAF system needs to provide functionality in the areas shown below.
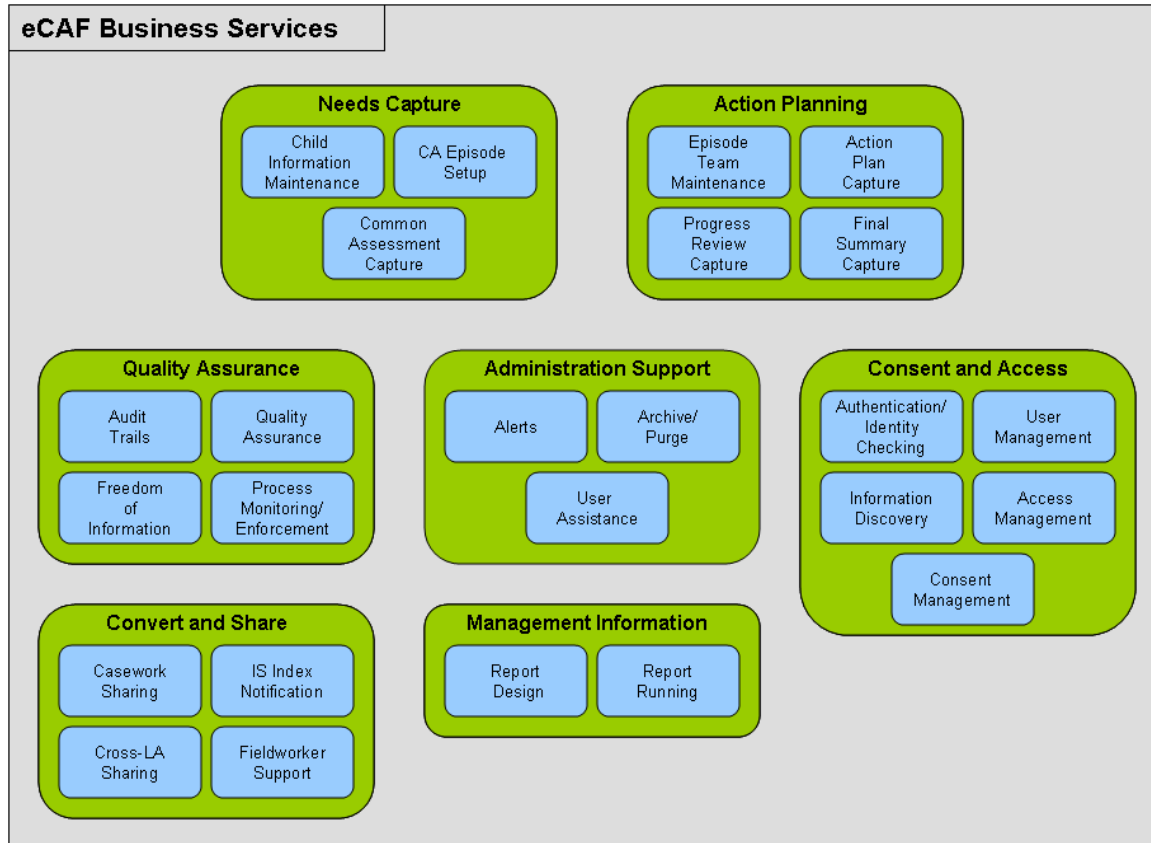
A brief summary of each area is as follows:

5.3.1 Needs Capture

Needs Capture involves setting up an Episode "folder", recording information about the child, and capturing the results of a Common Assessment discussion.

5.3.2 Action Planning

CAF Action planning is about taking the Common Assessment discussion forwards into interventions. It is about high-level planning and coordination between practitioners, and is not to be confused with the detailed action planning that takes place in casework systems.

A "team around the child" needs to be built and maintained. Service Requests and high-level CAF Action Plans need to be recorded, along with their subsequent Reviews. At the end of the process a Final Summary is recorded.

5.3.3 Consent and Access

Central to all this activity is the ability to share information in a controlled way. There must be facilities for recording the child/family's consent to share, and for interpreting this into access for other users. Appropriate search facilities are needed so that practitioners can discover what information is available. Also closely related is the

management of users and groups, and security measures to authenticate and confirm identity.

5.3.4   Quality Assurance

High quality provision of children's services is an important and sensitive topic. An eCAF system must support this by providing comprehensive audit trails and provision for monitoring and enforcing correct processes.

5.3.5   Administration Support

An eCAF system needs to include administrative facilities to support the process. Automatic alerts can help by pro-actively reminding users to perform tasks, and archiving/purging facilities are needed to manage the database size and comply with Data Protection obligations. Finally, assistance in the form of an online help system can ensure that users are able to use the system easily.

### 5.3.6   Convert and Share

An eCAF system needs to be a "good citizen" and interoperate with other related systems. This will include exporting data in standard formats to interface with the IS Index, Casework systems, and other Local Authority eCAF systems. Also useful will be the ability to interoperate with devices used by practitioners in the field – for example uploading data from portable devices.

5.3.7   Management Information

An eCAF system has the potential to be a valuable source of Management Information, to be used for monitoring and planning of service provision.

5.4 Non-functional Requirements

The non-functional requirements of the system also need to be carefully considered. An eCAF system will be used by a large number of practitioners to store sensitive data about children – so it is important that it is fit-for-purpose to meet these demands.
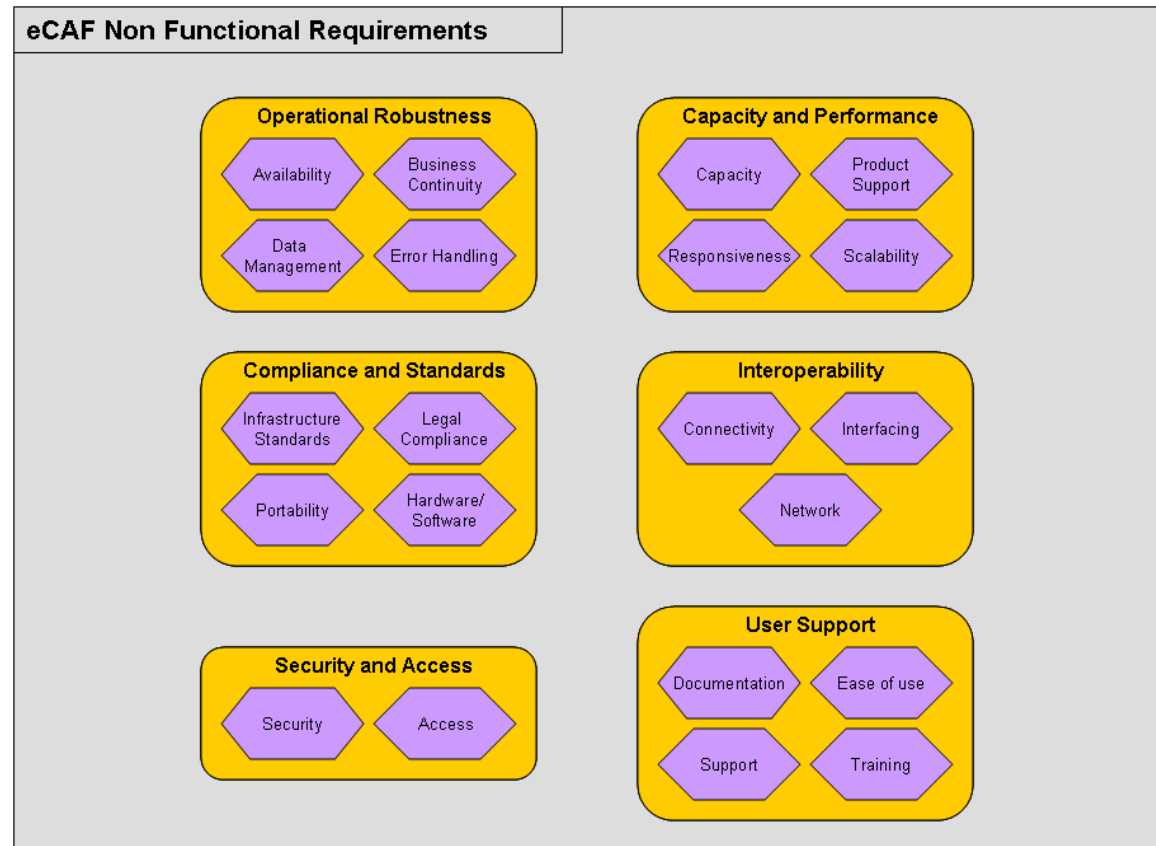
A brief summary of the main non-functional requirements is as follows:

5.4.1 Operational Robustness

Provision must be made for Business Continuity – the eCAF system must be hosted in an appropriate data centre, and plans be in place for disaster recovery without the loss of service or data. Availability and operating hours need to be considered, along with data management facilities such as back-ups and archiving. Error handling needs to be robust and informative.

5.4.2 Capacity and Performance

The number of users (practitioners) and volume of data must be assessed for each Local Authority, and the system sized appropriately. Scalability to cope with any anticipated growth in demand needs to be considered. The system must have acceptable response times to user input, with product support tools in place to monitor and diagnose any problems.

5.4.3   Compliance and Standards

The system must comply with all relevant Local Authority and Government standards for infrastructure and hardware/software. The design should be adaptable and future-proof – for example, not reliant on details of proprietary approaches. Legal requirements must also be complied with, including the Data Protection, Freedom of Information, and Disability Discrimination Acts.

5.4.4   Interoperability

The eCAF system must fit within the wider infrastructure of Children's Services. It should be able to use the network and/or internet for email and secure/reliable message transfer. It must be able to connect and interface with other systems such as the IS Index, casework systems, upload devices, and other eCAF systems.

5.4.5   Security and Access

The system must be accessible to all practitioners (eg web access), and single-signon is an optional consideration. Security is critical – much of the data is classified at the highest level of sensitivity which mandates extensive security measures. These are described further in the eCAF Security Architecture.

5.4.6   User Support

The system must be easy to use so that it is accessible to practitioners with minimal IT literacy. It should be supported by online help and full documentation – both for end users and administrators. Training must be supplied, along with a helpdesk for user enquiries.

5.5   Where to find out more

- **The eCAF Requirements Catalogue**

  Provides more detail on the functional (Use Cases), non-functional requirements, and interactions with Case Management Systems.

- **The eCAF Security Architecture, Interfaces View, and Use Case Survey**

  Provide more detail and technical information on particular areas of the requirements.
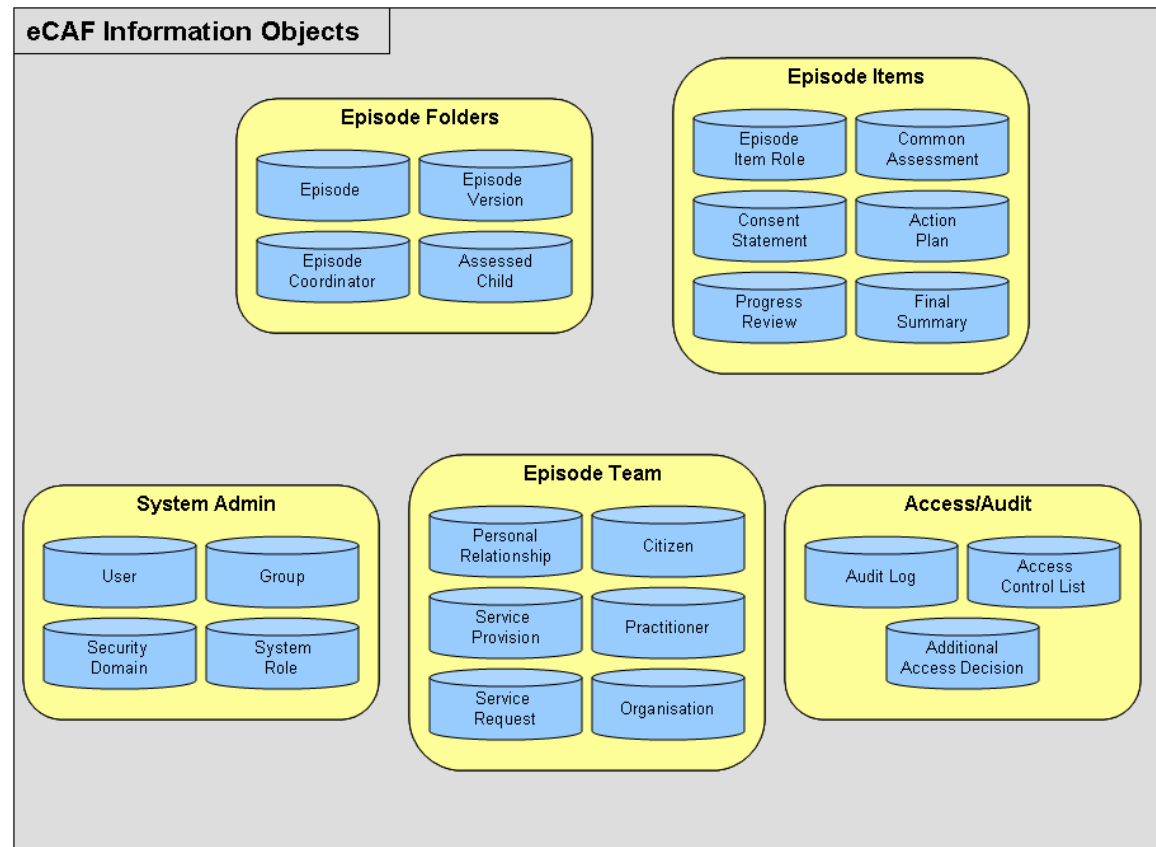
- **The eCAF Benefits/Requirements Map**

  Links the Requirements back to the Root Causes of the business issues.

6.   Data Model Overview

The **eCAF Logical Data Model** provides more information about a key aspect of the requirements – the data items which need to be stored in an eCAF database.

6.1   About the Data Model

The diagram below shows a summary of the main data items:

A brief summary of each area is as follows:

6.1.1   Episode Folders

The Episode Folders area contains the Episode "folders" of assessment information about a child It includes basic information on the Assessed Child (name, address, etc), and the history of all previous versions of each Episode. Associated with each Episode is an Episode Coordinator who is responsible for managing the Episode information and coordinating activities.

6.1.2   Episode Items

Each Episode can have any number of Episode Items within it. These can be thought of as loose-leaf "sheets" within the folder, and include:

- Common Assessment
- Consent Statement
- Action Plan
- Progress Review
- Final Summary

Each Episode Item also has roles associated with it recording, for example, the author and other contributors.

6.1.3 Episode Team

The Episode Team represents the "team around the child", and includes Practitioners, Organisations (eg agencies and teams) and other Citizens (parents, siblings). These are linked to the child through relationships – either Personal Relationships (family members, carers) or Service Provisions. Service Requests can also be recorded – these are Service Provisions which are requested but not yet confirmed.

6.1.4 Access / Audit

Security is based around the Episode, with individuals and groups being granted access via an Access Control List. Most access will be based on the consent of the child/family, but exceptional access can also be granted and controlled via an Additional Access Decision. The Audit Log keeps comprehensive audit trails of all activity on an Episode.

6.1.5 System Administration

The System Administration area allows for storage of practical information about users and groups, system roles (eg practitioner, administrator, reporting user), and the Security Domains that these users belong to.

6.2 Where to find out more

- **The eCAF Logical Data Model**

  Provides more detail about the data items, including full description of the entities, their attributes and relationships.

- **The eCAF XML Schema**

  Provides a standard representation of the data model as an XML message.

  (XML is a widely accepted data format used for information exchange between systems)

7.   Summary and next steps

The Common Assessment Framework is a key component of the Every Child Matters programme for transforming children's services. All Local Authorities are responsible for implementing CAF in their area, and e-enablement is an important aspect of achieving this successfully in practice.

The documents described above aim to "kick start" this process, by providing significant guidance and direction for Local Authorities wishing to implement an eCAF system. A process of change-control will be used to formally consider feedback and to keep the documents up-to-date.

Having read this overview, next steps include

- Reviewing the technical documents in the set
- Engaging with software suppliers developers to progress the development of a local eCAF system.

This document is part of an on-going programme of support for eCAF, and the DfES intends to provide further help and guidance with this process in due course. For further assistance and the latest information, please check the Every Child Matters website at www.ecm.gov.uk/caf.