# Oxfordshire's Threshold of Needs



**Right Support at the Right Time** 

For Oxfordshire's Children and Families

**Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board** 

2019

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## Welcome

#### Vision

We want Oxfordshire to be the best place in England for children and young people to grow up. By working with every child and young person to develop the skills, confidence and opportunities they need to achieve their full potential.

#### **Priorities**

Oxfordshire's Children's Services are committed to ensuring that:

- 1. All children have a healthy start in life and stay healthy into adulthood.
- 2. Narrowing the gap for our most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.
- 3. Keeping all children and young people safer.
- 4. Raising achievement for all children and young people.

## Our approach

We will focus on social disadvantage, help communities and individuals to help themselves and support locality working.

## **Our principles**

In order to meet our priorities we need to take a whole family approach, encourage early intervention, get input from children and young people, work in partnership, ensure smooth transitions and deliver cost effective services.

For more information on the Children Trust Plan please visit: <a href="https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/children-and-young-peoples-plan-2015-2018">https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/children-and-young-peoples-plan-2015-2018</a>

## January 2019 Version

This version of the Threshold of Needs was updated in January 2019. This guidance is reviewed every two years.

## Introduction

This document has been developed to provide guidance for service users and professionals, to identify the needs of children and families in Oxfordshire and provide support to manage the identified need. It will assist in promoting the health, emotional and social development of all children and families in Oxfordshire and aid in the safeguarding and protection of children.

#### The purpose of this guidance is to:

identify strengths, needs and risks for the whole family

build on strengths

identify multiple and cumulative risk factors

suggest actions to manage difficulties and risks

clarify circumstances in which children's services will assist and safeguard children

provide a shared and common language

## A whole family approach

Improved outcomes are achieved for children and families by having a whole family approach, where children and young people are not viewed in isolation and, wherever appropriate, action is taken to address issues that affect the whole family.

The Governments Troubled Families Programme is focused on families with the highest level of needs and who are facing the greatest challenges. It seeks to identify and improve outcomes relating to crime and anti-social behaviour; school attendance; level of need; financial exclusion and out of work; domestic abuse; health problems. The essential elements of this work includes: a whole family assessment; a whole family, multi-agency, outcome focused plan, driven by a named key worker, leading to transformation of public services and improved outcomes for children and families.

# Early help

Evidence and research show certain factors place children at risk of abuse and neglect, mental health problems, disengaging from education or becoming involved in crime or antisocial behaviour.

Early help is early identification of these factors and quick response to emerging problems for children, young people and their families. It refers both to help in those critical early years of a child's life when the fundamental building blocks for future development are laid, and to timely help throughout a child, young persons and families life. When early help is not offered there is a real risk for some children. Their social and emotional development may be impaired, they may experience harm, or family life and relationships may break down.

Early help is a way of working effectively across agencies and services that supports families', children and young people to overcome difficulties and build their resilience so that problems do not escalate, and they are able to thrive, live and engage happily in their communities.

The ethical and financial rationale and evidence base for providing "early help" within a whole -family model is very strong. Many recent publications, including Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 highlight the need for strategic partners to provide a co-ordinated targeted and evidenced-based early help offer. This is particularly important for families with multiple and complex needs.

Preventative services cost less and are more effective than reactive services. They are also more effective in improving the life chances of children young people and families. Early help is a core principle of practice in Oxfordshire and there is substantial commitment and energy to support and work with families as outlined in the Children and Young People's Plan.

When a child or family is identified as benefiting from early help, a whole family, multi-agency Early Help Assessment (EHA) should be completed by the practitioner identifying the concern. The Early Help Assessment should identify what help the child and family require, preventing needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment.

If early help or other support is appropriate, the case should be kept under constant review by a lead professional via an outcome focused, Team Around the Family (TAF) Plan. This should be linked to the identified needs in the EHA.

Early help would be expected across levels 1, 2a, 2b and 3a of the Threshold of Needs.

# Safeguarding

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone working with children and families should work in a child centred, whole family approach to gather high quality information, identify concerns, risk assess, share information and take appropriate action to ensure that children have the best outcomes.

The Threshold of Need document should assist in deciding the child's level of need and provide advice on what to do, when, to ensure that children and families get the right support at the right time.

For additional support, advice and guidance, professionals can contact their local Locality and Community Support Service.

If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of significant harm, a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.



# **Statutory requirements**

Where there are more complex and enduring concerns, which are likely to or are, impacting on a child's health and development then the local authority is required, under the Children Act 1989, to provide an assessment and appropriate services for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Partners play a key role in supporting the assessment process and support a child and family whilst the assessment is being undertaken and following conclusion.

Statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989 include:

## Section 17 – children in need (Level 3)

A child in need is defined as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled.

#### Section 17 – Young Carers (Level 3)

When children's caring responsibilities become 'excessive or inappropriate' and when caring affects their emotional or physical wellbeing, education and life chances then this enhances children's vulnerability, and they should be considered children in need.

#### Section 47 – children in need of protection (Level 4)

A child is in need of protection where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child may be suffering significant harm or is at risk of significant harm. Concerns about maltreatment may be the reasons for the referral of a family to the local authority or concerns may arise during the course of providing services to a family. In such circumstances, the local authority is obliged to consider initiating enquiries, with partners, to find out what is happening to/for a child, under section 47 and decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

## Section 20 – duty to accommodate (Level 4)

Some children may require accommodation because there is no one who has parental responsibility for them, because they are lost or abandoned or because the person who has been caring for them is prevented from providing them with suitable accommodation or care. The local authority has a duty under section 20 to accommodate such children in their area.

## Section 31 – care orders (Level 4)

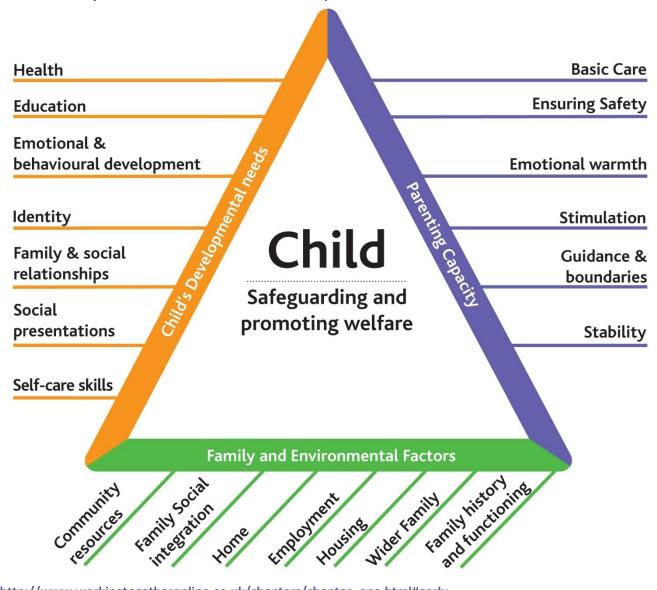
Where a child is the care of the local authority, the local authority as cooperate parent, must assess the child's needs and draw up a care plan, which sets out the services which will be provided to meet the child's identified needs.

For further information please see Working Together (2015): http://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/chapters/chapter\_one.html#early

## Assessment framework

At whichever level an assessment is being completed, the purpose of the assessment is always to gather information, analyse need and decide on appropriate actions to improve child's outcomes. A high quality assessment should be child centred, rooted in child development, outcome focused, holistic, strengths based and inclusive of the child, family and those supporting them.

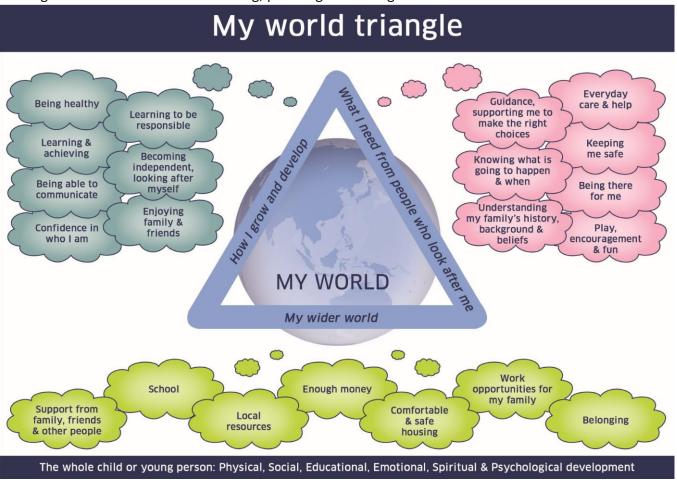
The Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families provides a systematic basis for collecting and analysing information to support professional judgements about how to help children and families in the best interests of the child. Practitioners should use the framework to gain an understanding of a child's developmental needs; the capacity of parents or caregivers to respond appropriately to those needs, including their capacity to keep the child safe from harm; and the impact of wider family and environmental factors on the parents and child.



http://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/chapters/chapter\_one.html#early

## **Child-centred assessment**

Designed by the Scottish Government, 'My World' defines needs and risks as two sides of the same coin. It promotes the participation of children, young people and their families in gathering information and making decisions as central to assessing, planning and taking action.



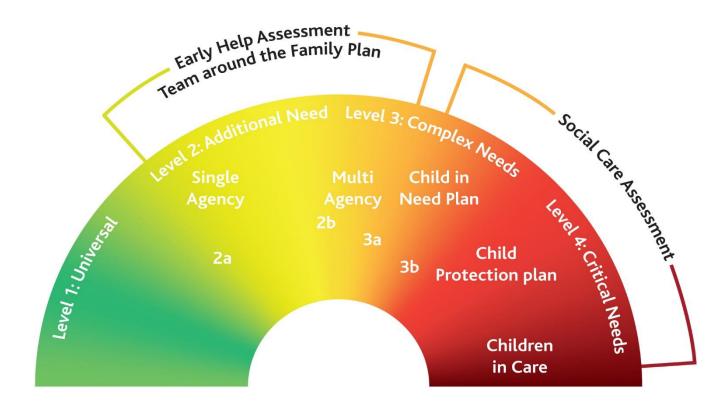
For further information please visit:

http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright/national-practice-model/my-world-triangle

## The Threshold of Needs

The Thresholds of Needs creates an explicit link between the Assessment Framework, so assessments produced clearly illustrate both a child's level of need and any associated risks, thus determining the most appropriate support and service.

This threshold document describes criteria, level and type of need and level of help to be provided at each stage. Children can move between these levels according to their circumstances. Divisions between levels should not be conceived as 'hard and fast'. The presence of single or multiple combinations of factors, the age of the child and protective factors should all be taken into account.



#### Level 1

(Universal): Children and young people, including those who are disabled/seriously ill and young carers, who reach their full potential, make good overall progress through the care of their families, communities and the support of a range of universally provided services e.g. schools, primary health care, leisure services, and some specialist disability services such as health care/education.

#### Level 2

(Additional Needs): Children and young people, including those who are disabled/seriously ill and young carers, who may become vulnerable and who will require additional support due to their own development, family circumstances or environmental factors. They are at risk of not reaching their full potential and life chances may be impaired without additional services. This can be a single or multiagency response and won't always necessitate a response from the Local Authority.

#### Level 3

(Complex Needs): Children and young people, including those who are disabled/seriously ill and young carers, whose needs are complex and who require support from more than one agency. They are at risk of social or educational exclusion; their health, welfare, social or educational development is being impaired; and life chances will be impaired without the provision of additional services.

#### Level 4

(Critical Needs): Children and young people, including those who are disabled/seriously ill and young carers, who have critical and enduring needs. They are at risk of significant harm or removal from home. If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of significant harm, a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.



# Child's developmental needs

#### HEALTH

This includes growth and development as well as physical and mental wellbeing. The impact of genetic factors and any impairment needs to be considered. It involves receiving appropriate health care when ill, an adequate and nutritious diet, exercise, immunisations where appropriate and developmental checks, dental and optical care and, for older children, appropriate advice and access to information on issues that have an impact on health, including sex education and substance misuse.

#### 0 – 19 (up to 25 with SEND) EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT

This covers all areas of a child's cognitive development from birth. It includes opportunities: for play and interaction with other children; to have age-appropriate and safe access to books and the internet; to acquire a range of skills and interests; to experience success and achievement. Involves an adult interested in educational activities, progress and achievements, who takes account of the child's starting point and any special educational needs.

#### **EMOTIONAL & BEHAVIOURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Concerns the appropriateness of response demonstrated in feelings and actions by a child, initially to parents and caregivers and, as the child grows older, to others beyond the family. Includes nature and quality of early attachments, characteristics of temperament, adaptation to change, response to stress and degree of appropriate self-control. Takes into account a child's SEND/stage of development.

#### IDENTITY

This concerns the child's growing sense of self as a separate and valued person. It includes the child's view of self and abilities, self-image and self-esteem, and having a positive sense of individuality. Race, religion, age, gender, sexuality and disability may all contribute to this. As well as feelings of belonging and acceptance by family, peer group and wider society, including other cultural groups.

## **FAMILY & SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS**

The development of empathy and the capacity to place self in someone else's shoes, this includes a stable and affectionate relationship with parents or caregivers, good relationships with siblings, increasing importance of age appropriate friendships with peers and other significant persons in the child's life and response of family to these relationships, taking account of child's SEND. Where the child is a young carer (providing ongoing care or emotional support to a family member) care provided is age-appropriate; does not impact negatively on emotional or physical wellbeing, education and life chances.

#### SOCIAL PRESENTATION

Concerns child's growing understanding of the way in which appearance, behaviour, and any impairment are perceived by the outside world and the impression being created. This includes appropriateness of dress for age, gender, culture and religion; cleanliness and personal hygiene; and availability of advice from parents or caregivers about presentation in different settings.

#### **SELF-CARE SKILLS**

This concerns the acquisition by a child of practical, emotional and communication competencies required for increasing independence. It also includes early practical skills of dressing and feeding, opportunities to gain confidence and practical skills to undertake activities away from the family and independent living skills as older children. It also includes encouragement to acquire social problem solving approaches. Special attention should be given to the impact of a child's impairment and other vulnerabilities, and on social circumstances affecting these in the development of self-care skills.

## **Additional Guidance for Threshold Decision Makers**

Consistent application of established thresholds for statutory intervention and non-statutory early help provision is crucial to managing demand whilst maintaining quality of service provision.

Threshold consideration is not just about the front-door to children's social care and early help. It happens throughout the journey of the child, especially at case-transfer points. High numbers of transfer points, movement between statutory and early help services, and differences between areas can create variation in application of thresholds. This can cause confusion to families and to partners.

This guidance helps you apply the Threshold of Needs consistently throughout the child's journey and across the County. It also helps ensure social care intervention only happens when necessary.

## **Principles**

When decision-making in response to a new referral or case transfer, consider the following alongside the OSCB Threshold of Need guidance. This balances the child/children's safety and welfare against a proportionate response, so the intervention offered is not greater than that required, to ensure safety, and assist the family with meeting identified unmet needs.

- Case history have there been similar incidents to the presenting concerns and if so, how many, and how long ago? Consider frequency of the risk; regular exposure can lead to gradual harm to the child building up over time. But also consider intensity one incident can be very serious. Chronology is crucial to decision-making; many serious case reviews enquiries have found that a careful chronology could have helped form an earlier, more accurate identification of risk.
- 2. **Previous CSC involvement** has there been previous social care and/or early help involvement? Was this due to similar concerns? How successful was the intervention provided? How many previous involvements have there been, and how long ago? If previous interventions have not been successful, careful consideration of the likelihood that more of the same will assist the family is achieving the changes required. Be careful to avoid "start again syndrome".
- 3. **Parental response to presenting incident** how have parents/caregivers responded to the incident of concern? Have they denied their part in the incident, are they defending or rationalising an unsafe or inappropriate parenting style, or are they demonstrating remorse and a willingness to work to reduce risks? Is there a risk of "disguised compliance"?
- **4.** Parental engagement what do we know already about parents' willingness and/or capacity to engage with intervention, from previous work with the family? Parents/caregivers' verbal commitment to engage with intervention must be balanced against historical evidence of ability to engage with professional intervention. Do they have sufficient capability to change?
- 5. Direct impact on child/children what is the evidence of any direct impact on the child/children of parents/caregivers' behaviour? Is there a direct disclosure from children which evidences impact? Child impact can vary depending on protective factors, individual resilience, history and more. Worrying parental behaviours should be considered alongside evidence of direct impact on the child/children. Be alert to hidden or disguised impacts, but do not assume.
- 6. Child's timescale the paramountcy principle of childcare legislation requires consistent focus on the child's timescale. How old is the child/children in the family, how much of their lives to date have been adversely affected, and what is the prognosis, based on chronology, for timely

and sustained parental change? Repeating plans and intervention tried previously may not accord with the child's timescale. This must always be considered carefully on receipt of new referrals raising concerns about families well known to CSC.

#### Threshold consideration at transfer points

There are several potential transfer points within the child's journey in Children, Education and Families. Threshold decision-making needs to be considered carefully at these stages. They are:

#### a) Locality Community Support Service transfers to:

- Supporting Universal Services
- Targeted Early Help (FSS)
- Community Early Help
- MASH
- CAFAT

#### b) Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub transfers to:

- CAFAT
- Targeted Early Help (FSS)
- Community Early Help
- John Radcliffe Hospital Assessment Team
- Disability Service
- Closed to services

#### c) Child and Family Assessment Team transfers to:

- Community Early Help
- Targeted Early Help (FSS)
- Statutory (FSS)
- Closed to services

#### d) John Radcliffe Hospital Assessment Team transfers to:

- Community Early Help
- Targeted Early Help (FSS)
- Statutory FSS
- Closed to services

#### e) Family Solutions Service transfers to:

- Child in Need Targeted Early Help
- Community Early Help
- Closed to services

Transfer points can be a point of vulnerability for families. There may be disagreements between professionals and teams. This is an opportunity to explore the risks to the family and reach an agreed, transparent and consistent application of thresholds for the case. This should consider individual factors, and history, but also the impact of changes to service provision and/or support levels going forward.

#### Community Early Help – application of Troubled Families criteria

If a family has been provided with robust community support and outcomes have not improved within agreed timescales or are deteriorating, targeted early help can be provided if —

- 1. The family consents to Early Help
- 2. Two or more of the Troubled Family criteria is met; these are:
  - Parents or children involved in crime or anti-social behaviour.
  - One or more children not attending school regularly
  - Children who need help
  - Adult out of work/at risk of financial exclusion/young person at risk of worklessness
  - Families affected by domestic violence and abuse
  - Parents and children affected by a range of health problems

### **Closure summary**

At each transfer point where a recommendation is made regarding the status of a case and type of plan going forward, the lead worker should complete a brief closure summary. This says what work has been done and provides a rationale for the recommendation. The transfer/closure summary should include:

#### **Brief case history**

- 1. Original presenting concern(s)
- 2. Previous service involvement.
- 3. Any additional concerns found/changes in current presenting issues.
- 4. What interventions took place and whether they were successful.
- 5. Summary of your team's involvement.

#### Current parental response to the current incident /concern

- 1. Have parent/s/caregivers acknowledged current concern?
- 2. How have they responded? Denying, defending, rationalising?
- 3. Does parent show understanding/insight?
- 4. Are parent/s denying, defending or rationalising?
- 5. Are parent/s demonstrating remorse and a willingness to work to reduce risk?

#### Parental engagement

1. What do we know about parents' willingness and or capacity to engage with interventions from previous work with the family and current information?

#### Direct impact on the children

- 1. What is the current "lived experience for the child/ren
- 2. What is the evidence of direct impact on the children of parenting behaviour
- 3. Is there a direct disclosure from the children which evidences impact?

#### **Summary and conclusion**

1. Outline reasons for transfer to the team you are transferring to and priority actions for that team.



# Child's developmental needs

#### **HEALTH**

This includes growth and development as well as physical and mental wellbeing. The impact of genetic factors and of any impairment needs to be considered. It involves receiving appropriate health care when ill, an adequate and nutritious diet, exercise, immunisations as appropriate and developmental checks, dental and optical care, and, as children grow older, appropriate advice and information on issues that impact on health including online safety, sex education and substance misuse.

#### 0 – 19 (up to 25 with SEND) EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT

This covers all areas of a child's cognitive development which begins from birth. It includes opportunities: for play and interaction with other children to have access to books; to have safe and age appropriate access to the internet; to acquire a range of skills and interests; to experience success and achievement. Involves an adult interested in educational activities, progress and achievements, who takes account of the child's starting point and any special educational needs.

## **EMOTIONAL & BEHAVIOURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Concerns the appropriateness of response demonstrated in feelings and actions by a child, initially to parents and caregivers and, as the child grows older, to others beyond the family. It includes nature and quality of early attachments, characteristics of temperament, adaptation to change, response to stress and degree of appropriate self-control. This should take into account a child's SEND/stage of development.

#### **IDENTITY**

This concerns the child's growing sense of self as a separate and valued person. It includes the child's view of self and abilities, self-image and self-esteem, and having a positive sense of individuality. Race, religion, age, gender, sexuality and disability may all contribute to this, as well as feelings of belonging and acceptance by family, peer group and wider society, including other cultural groups.

#### **FAMILY & SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS**

The development of empathy and the capacity to place self in someone else's shoes, this includes a stable and affectionate relationship with parents or caregivers, good relationships with siblings, increasing importance of age appropriate friendships with peers and other significant persons in the child's life and response of family to these relationships, taking account of child's SEND.

## **SOCIAL PRESENTATION**

Concerns child's growing understanding of the way appearance, behaviour, and any impairment are perceived by the outside world and the impression being created. This includes appropriateness of dress for age, gender, culture and religion; cleanliness and personal hygiene; and availability of advice from parents or caregivers about presentation in different settings, including online.

#### **SELF-CARE SKILLS**

This concerns the acquisition by a child of practical, emotional and communication competencies required for increasing independence. It also includes early practical skills of dressing and feeding, opportunities to gain confidence and practical skills to undertake activities away from the family and independent living skills as older children. In addition, it includes encouragement to acquire social problem solving approaches. Special attention should be given to the impact of a child's impairment and other vulnerabilities, and on social circumstances affecting these in development of self-care skills.

#### Level 1 Level 2 Level 3 Level 4 **Developmental** Slow in reaching Developmental Developmental milestones unlikely milestones are met milestones are delayed to be met and/or failure to thrive Missing specialist health Starting to default on Regular health care Missing routine and care appointments appointments are met non-routine health appointments and/or and /or multiple A&E care appointments not registered with attendance causing **GP** or dentist concern Significant concerns re Minor concerns re diet Concerns re diet (under/ Adequate diet, hygiene (under/overweight), overweight), hygiene diet (under/overweight), and clothing hygiene and clothing hygiene and clothing and clothing Substance misuse Substance misuse and/ Not using substances **Emerging substance** and/or self-harm or self-harming causing or self-harming misuse and/or self-harm causing concern significant concerns Sexual activity and/ Sexual activity which cause Early sexual activity and/ Not engaging in or sexually harmful concern and/or sexually or emerging sexually inappropriate behaviour causing harmful behaviour sexual activity significant concern Disabled child with Severely/profoundly Needs of disabled Disabled child needs disabled child requires significant, complex and additional support child being met by permanent additional support from specialist from targeted universal services services needs requiring community services protection and support Concern that a child's disability is being used to mask maltreatment by caregivers

## 0 – 19 (up to 25 with SEND) EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Attends education regularly > 95% and on time	Occasional educational absence (<95%) and poor punctuality, impacting on educational progress	Poor educational attendance (<85%) poor punctuality and/ or some fixed term exclusions and risk of permanent exclusion.  Remains on part time timetable despite appropriate strategies and support in place	Less than <80% attendance in education or not in education or and/or repeated fixed term exclusions or permanently excluded from education
No concerns about cognitive development	Not thought to be meeting educational potential	Progress made by the end of the key stage is low compared with that made nationally by other pupils with similar starting points	Progress made by the end of the key stage is very poor compared with that made nationally by other pupils with similar starting point
Acquired a range of skills and interests	Not always engaged, i.e. poor concentration, motivation and interest	No interest/skills displayed	No interest/skills displayed
Experiencing success and achievement	Sudden or sustained drop in achievement	Limited achievement across any area of education or enrichment activities	Lack of achievement across any area of education or enrichment activities
Electively home educated with no concerns identified	Parents are electively home educating but concerns have been raised about the quality of the education	No home education is being provided and legal action is being taken to require parents to enrol at a school	No education is being provided and additional concerns about parents' emotional/mental health needs impacting on the development/wellbeing/ safety of the child
No additional learning needs	Outcomes improving as a result of SEN support or EHCP	Concerns about progress due to SEND and other factors in child's life	Significant concern about progress due to SEND and other factors in child's life
Young person in education or employment and no concerns identified	Identified as requiring additional NEET support	Young person is NEET (consultation/referral to EET service)	No GCSE's or academic attainment coupled with additional vulnerabilities e.g. teenage pregnancy; LAC; offending behaviour; young carers; homeless (referral to EET service)
Able to secure appropriate education, employment or training	Poor employability skills	Unlikely to achieve education, employment or training without EET service support	Employability skills substantially impaired. EET unobtainable. EET service required

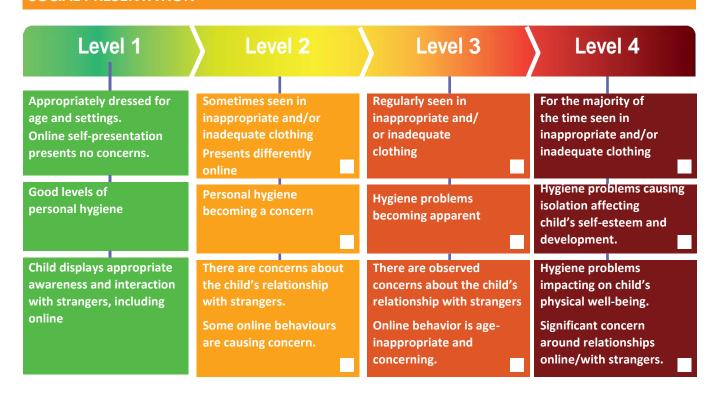
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Good quality early attachments	Emerging concerns about attachments which are impacting on development	Concerns about attachment and impact on emotional and behavioural development	Significant concern about the impact of attachment on future relationships and mental health
Can manage emotions appropriate to age and stage of development. Can regulate impulse control	Emerging concerns about emotional regulation/impulse control	Concerns about emotional regulation/impulse control impacting on wellbeing	Significant concerns about emotional regulation and impulse control impacting on wellbeing/mental health/safety
Ability to express and demonstrate empathy	Emerging difficulties demonstrating empathy	Unable to demonstrate empathy	Unable to demonstrate empathy which causes harm to others
Able to adapt to change	Can find managing change difficult	Finds change difficult to manage	Cannot manage or deal with change
Able to regulate behaviour appropriate to age and stage of development	Signs of disruptive or challenging behaviour	Behaviour which impacts on health, wellbeing & development	Significant concern about behavior including online which could cause harm
No behavioural concerns, including online	Behaviours may lead to pre-court interventions	Behaviour likely to lead to pre-court or court interventions	Behaviours likely to lead to custody or remand, illegal/high risk online activity
Demonstrates appropriate awareness of safety  Confident and age appropriate use of internet and mobile devices	Emerging concerns about risky behaviour  Behaviours escalate in disabled child if sensory needs not met  Child's use of internet and mobile devices is risky or out of step with age and stage	Concerns about risky behaviours, including online, that may cause harm to self or others.  Behaviours involve destruction to property	Risky behaviours cause harm to self or others. Child on child or child on parent/carer violence Domestic abuse relationships between young people Self-injury caused by anxiety/frustration/ sensory issues in disabled child

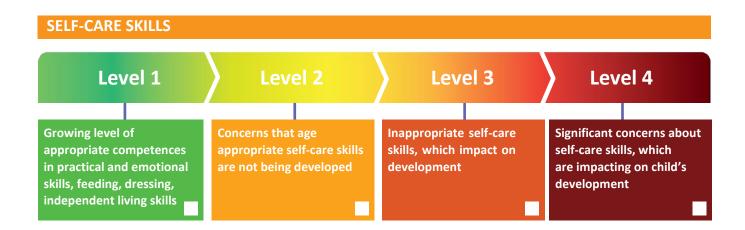
#### Level 2 Level 1 Level 3 Level 4 Level of self-esteem Positive sense of self **Demonstrates significantly** could cause harm to and ability identity expressed e.g. low low self-esteem in a range self or others self-esteem of situations May experience bullying, **Experiencing persistent** Subject to bullying, Does not suffer any form of discrimination or bullying, discrimination discrimination or discrimination or harassment harassment Emerging concerns that a Child is isolated and **Demonstrates feelings of Concerns about isolation** has developed harmful belonging and acceptance child is isolatated or or is developing harmful which are deemed developing inappropriate relationships relationships appropriate relationships **Emerging concerns about** Consistent and appropriate Concerns about changes in Concerns about significant changes in behaviour and behaviour and sense of behaviour that could cause and persistent changes sense of self, including self, including online harm to self or others, in behaviour which could be harmful to including online self or others Good relationship with **Emerging concerns** Young person displaying Young person causing parent(s)/carer(s) with significant and substantial regarding young escalating behaviour no identified concerns person's relationship towards parent/sibling that harm to parent/sibling with parent/sibling includes the use of physical Self-isolated child spends or verbal violence Unresolved transgender most of time in bedroom accept diagnosis despite issues distressing child, Child's online identity is despite appropriate appropriate support harming self or others. support

#### **FAMILY & SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS**

#### Level 2 Level 1 Level 3 Level 4 Concern about **Emerging concerns** Stable and affectionate Concern that relationship about the relationship relationships with relationships with with caregivers is likely to with caregivers caregivers which impacts caregivers cause significant harm to on child development child and/or lead to family and wellbeing breakdown Able to form and sustain Unable to form and sustain Has some difficulties Involved in regular conflict appropriate relationships appropriate relationships, sustaining relationships with peers, wider family with peers, wider family which could cause harm to and significant others and significant others self and others No inappropriate caring Child has caring Regular caring Child has some caring responsibilities responsibilities which responsibilities which responsibilities, that impact on development impact significantly may impact on on child and wellbeing wellbeing Young person living Young person living Young person unable to Young person living independently with independently independently where there live independently emerging concerns are concerns about their regarding ability ability to cope to cope Child free from abuse **Emerging concerns about** Increasing concerns about Child has suffered or may the safety and wellbeing the safety and wellbeing of be suffering physical, Online realtionships of the child the child sexual, emotional abuse are age appropriate or neglect. Online contact with risky Online relationships and positive Child expresses concerns include some conflict or adults or peers. verbally/via behaviour risk-taking that they do not feel safe at home

#### **SOCIAL PRESENTATION**







## Parenting capacity

#### **BASIC CARE**

Providing for the child's physical needs, and appropriate medical and dental care. Includes provision of food, drink, warmth, shelter, clean and appropriate clothing, and adequate personal hygiene.

#### **ENSURING SAFETY**

Ensuring the child is adequately protected from harm or danger, including protection from significant harm or danger, and from contact with unsafe adults/other children, and from self-harm. There should be recognition of hazards and danger both in the home, online and elsewhere.

#### **EMOTIONAL WARMTH**

Ensuring the child's emotional needs are met, giving the child a sense of being specially valued, and a positive sense of own racial and cultural identity. Includes ensuring the child's requirements are met for secure, stable and affectionate relationships with significant adults, with appropriate sensitivity and responsiveness to the child's needs. There should be appropriate physical contact and comfort and affection sufficient to demonstrate warm regard, praise and encouragement.

#### **STIMULATION**

Promoting child's learning and intellectual development through encouragement and cognitive stimulation and promoting social opportunities. Includes supporting the child's cognitive development and potential through interaction, communication, talking and responding to the child's language and questions, encouraging and joining the child's play, and promoting educational and other opportunities appropriate to the child's stage of development or SEND. Enabling the child to experience success and ensuring school attendance or equivalent opportunity. Facilitating the child to meet the challenges of life.

#### **GUIDANCE & BOUNDARIES**

Enabling the child to regulate their own emotions and behaviour through demonstrating and modelling appropriate behavior, control of emotions and interactions with others. Guidance which involves setting boundaries, so the child develops an internal model of moral values, conscience and appropriate social behaviour. Enabling the child to grow into an autonomous adult, holding their own values and demonstrating appropriate behaviour rather being rule dependant. This includes enabling the child's exploratory and learning experiences, supporting social problem solving, helping with management of emotions, including anger, and promoting consideration for others through effective support and shaping of behaviour.

#### **STABILITY**

Providing a sufficiently stable family environment to enable a child to develop and maintain a secure attachment to the primary caregiver/s, in order to ensure optimal development. Includes ensuring secure attachments are not disrupted, providing consistency of emotional warmth over time and responding consistently to child's behaviour. Parental responses change and develop according to child's developmental progress. In addition, ensuring children keep in contact with important family members and significant others.

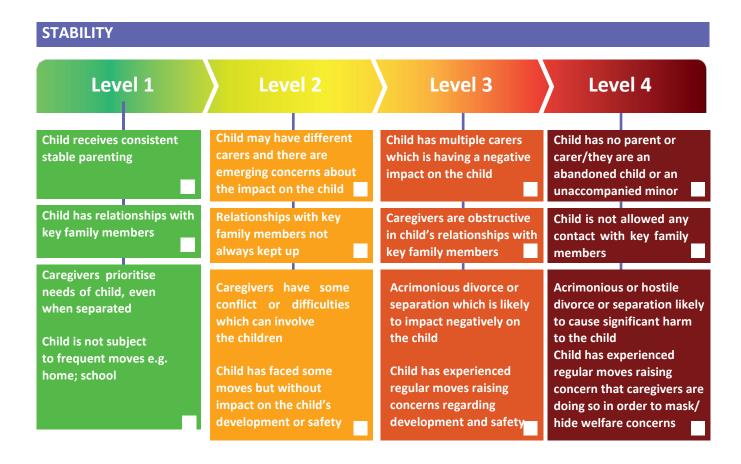
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Excellent quality food, drink and specific dietary requirements are provided	Food and drink is usually of appropriate quality and quantity	Variable to low or too much food is offered	Child is mostly starved or routinely overfed
Child is always appropriately dressed	Most of the time child is appropriately dressed	Most of the time the child's clothes are not adequate	No suitable clothing and the child is dangerously exposed
Caregiver takes an active role in child's hygiene needs dependent on age and stage of developmen	Most of the time child is appropriately clean	Most of the time little parental involvement in child's hygiene. Child is dirty or smelly	Caregiver shows no concern or awareness, child is dirty and smelly
Seeks suitable medical advice when child is ill and all appointments kept	Most of the time Caregiver seeks suitable medical advice when child is ill, some appointments may be missed	Frequent, inappropriate or delayed medical presentation, likely to impact on child'	Only seeks medical advice when child is critically ill or does not seek help at all significantly risk to child (includes unborn child)
All of the time Caregiver has good adherence to specific condition related medical advice	Most of the time caregiver attends health appointments for disabled child, some may be missed Most of the time adherence is generally good but lacking from time to time for no acceptable reasons	Most of the time poor adherence to specific condition related medical advice for no acceptable reasons	No adherence to specific medical advice or lies about adherence
Caregivers own physical and mental health needs do not impact on the child	Caregivers physical or mental health needs, substance misuse rarely impact on child's needs	Caregivers physical or mental health needs, substance misuse is likely to impact on the child's development	Parents/carers physical or mental health needs, substance misuse places the child at risk of significant harm
Caregivers fully engage with services for the child	Previous involvement with children's services with caregiver involvement	Difficult to engage caregivers with services for their children	No engagement with services for the child and/or history of child protection planning or being looked after. No behavior change or disguised compliance
Caregivers always put their child's needs first	Caregivers mostly put their child's needs first	Caregivers rarely put their child's needs first	Caregivers never put their child's needs first
Teenage parent has appropriate support and no concerns regarding pregnancy care or postnatal care of child	Concern that teenage parent is beginning to show signs of struggling in their parenting role	Teenage parent struggling to meet their child's needs e.g. no support of friends or family; inappropriate accommodation; puts own needs first development	Teenage parent unable to meet the needs of their chil placing the child at risk of significant harm

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Fully and protectively aware of all safety issues, including online	Most of the time aware of safety issues but occasionally missed	Most of the time there is a casual approach to safety which potentially puts the child at risk	Careless disregard or casual approach to safety even when the risk is apparent. Child at significant risk.
Child adequately supervised at all times	Most of the time child is adequately supervised and when not there is limited risk to child	Child left unsupervised which could place them at risk of harm	Child left unsupervised which places them at risk of significant harm
Only leaves child with suitable adult, which child is familiar with	Most of the time suitable child care arrangements are made. Efforts are made to make sure a carer is suitable	Most of the time unsuitable child care arrangements are made makes little effort to ensure suitability or ability of person	Careless disregard for child's care arrangements, making no effort to check suitability or ability of carer or disregards known concerns
Caregivers are able to resolve conflicts without them impacting on the child	Caregivers have some conflicts and difficulties which can involve the children	Incidents of domestic abuse which may place child at risk of harm	Persistent and serious domestic abuse that places the child at risk of significant harm
No concerns about caregivers involvement in anti-social or criminal behaviour	Caregivers involved in anti-social behaviour which may impact on the child	Caregivers involved in crime or anti-social behaviour which is impacting on the child's development	Caregivers involved in crime or anti-social behaviour which is placing the child at significant risk
Child not exposed and/or protected from abuse or neglect, including online	Emerging concerns that child is at risk of abuse or neglect	Concerns that child is at risk of abuse or neglect	Allegation or evidence that child is at risk of serious injury, abuse or neglect
All available safety measures are in place and Caregivers closely monitor what child is viewing	Most of the time safety measures in place Caregivers do not always monitor what the child is viewing	Most of the time Caregivers have a casual approach to online safety, which potentially puts the child at risk	Careless disregard, despite understanding the dangers of online safety potentially placing the child at significant risk.
			Caregivers do not follow professional advice about moving, lifting or managing the behaviour of disabled child such that the child is at risk of injury

#### Level 2 Level 1 Level 3 Level 4 Anticipates or picks up very Caregivers have some Most of the time caregivers Insensitive to even subtle signals, verbal or sensitivity, although are insensitive, signals sustained intense signals non-verbal, expression or signals may need to need to be repeated or or aversive mood be obvious to make prolonged, from child, to get a response Caregivers' responses are Caregivers responses are Most of the time No response even when well timed with the child's caregivers respond in a delayed, usually due to child is distressed unless signals or even before in timely way, occasionally none essential activities self-protective on behalf anticipation delayed due to none of the parent Caregivers are very warm Most of the time warm Most of the time not warm Cold, callous, uncaring and responsive to the child or responsive unless child or aversive and can and responsive but occasionally abrupt when is distressed avoid or reject the child. burdened with problems Punitive even if child Inconsistent, highly Receives erratic and Child receives consistently Some inconsistencies critical or apathetic inconsistent care towards child - low warm responses warmth/high criticism Disapproval measures Most of the time Most of the time All of the time, parent and mild verbal sanctions disapproval measures are disapproval measures are can terrorise, ridicule are consistent and in place but can be applied negative, parent is harsh, the child; they may use suitable for child's age and tends to shout with more cruel language or understanding, response be abrupt, shout or even severe sanctions being physical punishment. is always appropriate ignore the child used

#### Level 2 Level 1 Level 3 Level 4 Most of the time caregivers High quality appropriate Most of the time the child Caregivers provide no interactive stimulation provide appropriate and is left alone, while parent stimulation, in babies this interactive stimulation pursues own none could include confining to however at times parent essential activity cot/chair/buggy pursues own non-essential activity Child exposed to Not exposed to new Child not often exposed to Not exposed to new experience or activities appropriate new new experiences experiences or activities and parent can even experiences and activities and activities be obstructive Caregivers show an active Most of the time, Most of the time essential Caregivers give no interest in schooling, joins caregivers do not educational support and in school activities, to support essential schooling are maintained, can even be obstructive support child at school and elements of the child's however less active home schooling, education participation in the is not effectively child's schooling **Numerous appropriate toys** Toys are not provided Most of the time Most of the time caregivers for the child to play with, unless given by other do not provide appropriate appropriate toys are whether bought or made source, may even wantonly toys and do not engage in provided, however there is creatively with the child deprive the child of toys. little engagement in play play In severely disabled children this could include isolating the child in a bedroom for prolonged periods during the day.

#### **GUIDANCE & BOUNDARIES** Level 1 Level 2 Level 3 Level 4 Inconsistent guidance and Erratic or inadequate Consistent and appropriate No affective guidance guidance and boundaries boundaries provided guidance and boundaries or boundaries, leading provided to child being beyond parental control **Provides consistent positive** Most of the time Negative role modelling Caregivers do not offer a role modelling caregivers act as an positive role model which significantly impacts appropriate role model may impact on the child's on the child's social, however can development emotional and behavioural be inconsistent development





# **Family history & functioning**

#### **FAMILY HISTORY & FUNCTIONING**

Family history includes both genetic and psycho-social factors. Family functioning is influenced by who is living in the household and how they are related to the child; significant changes in family/ household composition; history of childhood experiences of parents; chronology of significant life events and their meaning to family members; nature of family functioning, including sibling relationships and its impact on the child; parental strengths and difficulties, including those of an absent parent; the relationship between separated parents.

#### **WIDER FAMILY**

Who are considered to be members of the wider family by the child and the parents? This includes related and non-related persons and absent wider family. What is their role and importance to the child and parents and in precisely what way?

#### **HOUSING**

Does the accommodation have basic amenities and facilities appropriate to the age and development of the child and other resident members? Is the housing accessible and suitable to the needs of disabled family members? Includes the interior and exterior of the accommodation and immediate surroundings. Basic amenities include water, heating, sanitation, cooking facilities, sleeping arrangements and cleanliness, hygiene and safety and their impact on the child's upbringing.

#### **EMPLOYMENT**

Who is working in the household, their pattern of work and any changes? What impact does this have on the child? How is work or absence of work viewed by family members? How does it affect their relationship with the child? Includes children's experience of work and its impact on them.

#### **INCOME**

Income available over a sustained period of time. Is the family in receipt of all its benefit entitlements and is there enough income to meet the family's needs? Are there financial difficulties which affect the child?

#### **FAMILY'S SOCIAL INTEGRATION**

Exploration of the wider context of the local neighbourhood and community and its impact on the child and parents, includes the degree of the family's integration or isolation, their peer groups, friendship and social networks and the importance attached to them.

#### **COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

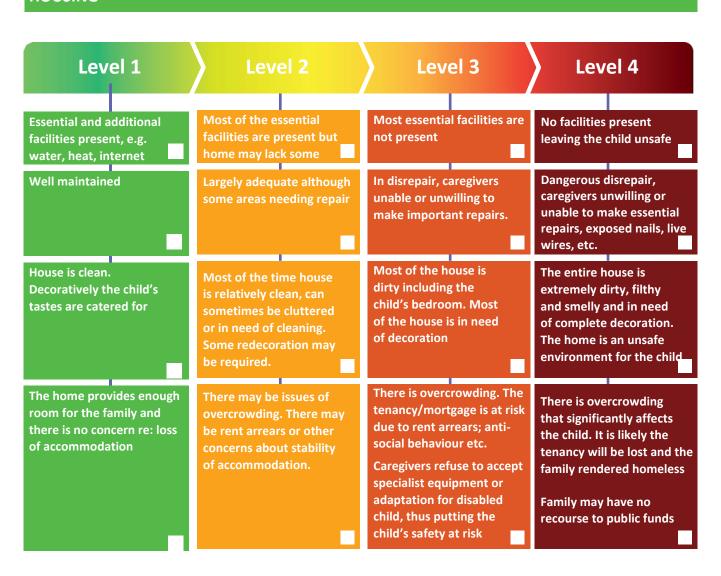
Describes all facilities and services in a neighbourhood and includes availability, accessibility and standard of resources and impact on the family, including disabled members.

#### **FAMILY HISTORY & FUNCTIONING**

#### Level 1 Level 2 Level 3 Level 4 Child has experienced loss Few significant changes in Child is not receiving Childs social, behavioural of a significant adult family composition that support for loss/ and emotional through separation or development is being could impact on the child bereavement and bereavement; child has caregiver unable to significantly affected caring responsibilities; provide support; Child's caregiver has mental/ caring responsibilities physical/substance abuse are impacting on their difficulties; caregiver social, behavioural and or sibling has received a emotional development custodial sentence; sibling and education will also be with a disability or affected; caregivers are significant health problem unable to prioritise the and Refugee/asylum needs of the child due to seeking family. However, their own difficulties or appropriate support is in those of a sibling place or being sought. No unsafe adults e.g. Presence of unsafe adults Concern that unsafe adult **Registered Sex Offender** Unsafe adult has access is known. Caregivers may have access to a has access to the child in an to a child and caregivers aware and appropriately child and caregivers not unsafe way unwilling to accept that protective, including undertaking appropriate there is any risk online responsibility Caregivers own history has no impact on child's Concern that caregivers **Caregivers history may Concern that caregiver** development/safety have some impact on the history impacts on the history significantly child but is not affecting development/safety impacts on child's overall development of the child development and safety.

#### Level 2 Level 1 Level 3 Level 4 Destructive and unhelpful Supportive extended Limited support from Family has poor family/friendships that are relationships with family friends and family so involvement from the able to step in to help family unit dependent and limited friendships. extended family which resolve any issues on themselves for the Family is socially isolated does not help resolve resolution of any issues and would significantly issues and can make things worse. struggle as a unit to resolve issues Family have no resource to resolve issues

#### **HOUSING**



#### **EMPLOYMENT**

## Level 1 Level 2 Level 3 Level 4

Caregivers are able to manage the working or worklessness arrangements and do not perceive them as unduly stressful.

Older children encouraged to seek work when developmentally appropriate. Caregivers find securing employment a challenge and may have barriers to this such as limited formal education.

Ability to support older children to seek work may be limited.

Caregivers experience stress/anxiety due to worklessness or overworking and this impacts on the child.

Older children may face inappropriate pressure to remain workless or seek work too early. Chronic worklessness that has severely affected caregivers' own identities and has seriously impacted on their ability to parent

Family unable to gain employment due to significant lack of basic skills; substance misuse which affects their ability to parent, etc.

#### **INCOME**

## Level 1 Level 2 Level 3 Level 4

Reasonable income, with resources used appropriately to meet need.

Income reliable and work legitimate and fully legal.

Low income that may put pressure on the family and may lead to not all needs being met.

Some concern about job security e.g. cash in hand working.

Serious debts/poverty impact on ability to have basic needs met.

Concern that income is coming from crime or exploitation.

Extreme poverty/debt impacting on ability to care for child and have basic needs.

Family have no access to benefits with no means of support.

**Known criminal activity** 

#### **FAMILY'S SOCIAL INTEGRATION**

#### Level 2 Level 3 Level 1 Level 4 Family chronically Family feels integrated Some social exclusion Caregivers socially socially excluded with into the community and experiences; family excluded and caregivers has a good social and may be new to the experience stress/anxiety no supportive network area; family may without a support (see wider family). friendship network. experience harassment or network. Family engaging with **Contacts are supportive** discrimination or are the Caregivers in risky social risky networks e.g. and safe, including victims of crime spaces, including online. crime, radicalization. online.

## COMMUNITY RESOURCES



## **Tools and resources**

The Threshold of Needs will provide an overview of the issues facing a family and the strengths to be harnessed. To gain fuller insight, a number of additional assessment and support tools are available including:

Tools	Will help with
Childcare Development Checklist (Neglect Toolkit)	Assessing care of children and identifying neglect
Graded Care Profile	Assessing care of children and identifying neglect
Outcome Star	Tool for supporting and measuring change across a range of issues
Neglect Practitioners Portal	Supports practitioners to successfully identify and record neglect.
Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Screening Tool	Assessing the risk of children and young people of Child Sexual Exploitation
CAADA DASH Risk Assessment	Assessing the risks of harm from Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour-based violence
Parental Substance Misuse Toolkit	Identify substance misuse, its impact and where to get support
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Screening Tool	Assessing the risks of Female Genital Mutilation
3 Houses Tool	Tool to actively involve children in child protection assessment and planning
Signs of Safety	A solution focused framework for risk assessment and safety planning
Multi-Agency Risk Management Plan (MARAMP)	Multi-agency risk assessment and plan where there are concerns about risky behaviour and there is no child protection plan

# **Further information**

For further information on resources, teams and services available. Please

visit: Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board: www.oscb.org.uk

Oxfordshire Practitioner Toolkit: <a href="www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/practitionertoolkit">www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/practitionertoolkit</a>

Oxfordshire County Council: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk

# **Glossary**

Term	Meaning
MASH	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
ЕНЕ	Electively Home Educated
MISPER	Missing Person Return Interview
ЕНА	Early Help Assessment (formally CAF)
CAF	Common Assessment Framework (now EHA)
TAC/F	Team Around the Child/Family
LCSS	Locality and Community Support Service
ЕНСР	Education, Health and Care Plan
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
EET	In Education, Employment or Training
TF	Troubled Families/Think Family
CSC	Children's Social Care
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
SEN	Special Educational Needs
OSCB	Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board
MARAMP	Multi Agency Risk Management Plan
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

The Threshold of Needs processes are vital components of ensuring that children and families get the right support at the right time. This is sponsored by all partners making up the OSCB.

