



Bournemouth & Poole Local Safeguarding Children Board

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

LSCB Levels of Need and Continuum of Support

July 2016

<http://bournemouth-poole-lscb.org.uk/home>

Bournemouth & Poole Local Safeguarding Children Board Thresholds Principles

The purpose of this guidance is to help agencies, that work directly or indirectly with children, young people and families, identify a child's degree of need and respond appropriately. The guidance does not remove the need for workers to make a professional judgement when considering the identified needs of children.

This is guidance for the Multi-Agency Early Support and Safeguarding Thresholds with regard to meeting the needs of children, young people and families in Bournemouth and Poole.

Multi-Agency communication is the key to developing a full picture of the child and their family circumstances, using independent interpreters or signing services if necessary. If there are any queries, practitioners should seek advice and support from the Safeguarding Leads within their own organisation.

Sarah Elliott

Independent LSCB Chair

Bournemouth and Poole Local Safeguarding Children Board

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Key Guidance

All children have the right to grow up safe from harm and the Children Act 1989 and 2004 place duties on all agencies to promote and safeguard the welfare of children, in need and at risk, in their local area. A child is defined within the Children Act 1989 as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

Practitioners should hold in mind that disabled children are three to four times more vulnerable to abuse (Ofsted 2012). The “Parent” should be taken to refer to anyone who has parental responsibility for the child, or any birth/natural father or any other adult within the family who can reasonably be regarded as having a parenting role. When there are issues of consent, it will be important to distinguish who has parental responsibility.

The Children Act 1989 and 2004 encourages all agencies, wherever possible, to work in partnership with families and to make onward referrals with their consent. It is acknowledged that gaining consent when there are child protection concerns could at times place a child at further risk and the practitioner should gain advice, if time allows, from their Safeguarding Lead. Further guidance on Information Sharing can be found [here](#).

Sometimes “Significant Harm” will be a single traumatic event, but more often it is an accumulation of significant events, both acute and longstanding, such as in situations of persistent neglect. There are no absolute criteria in making judgements regarding children's wellbeing. Practitioners are encouraged to raise concerns, and escalate those concerns with other agencies, if they feel that their professional judgement about a child's needs or safety are being overlooked. Refer as appropriate to the Escalations Policy [here](#).

The Designated Officer/s should be alerted, within one working day, to all cases in which an allegation that a person who works or volunteers with children has: behaved in a way that has, or may have harmed a child; possibly committed a criminal offence against children or related to a child; behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that s/he is unsuitable to work with children (Working Together 2015)

When there is an immediate need to protect a child because they are being harmed or at risk of significant harm, the relevant Local Authority should be contacted promptly. Bournemouth – Children's First: 01202 458101. Poole – The Hub: 01202 735046. When there is an immediate risk to protect a child, call the Police on 999.

For Pan Dorset Procedures visit: <http://pandorsetscb.proceduresonline.com/index.htm>

Continuum of Need Model

This is guidance for everyone to use to support inter-agency working, information sharing and common assessment.

The Bournemouth and Poole Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) has adopted this continuum of need model to provide a multi-agency, whole system approach to assessment, prevention and intervention for children, young people and their families. It also directly supports the full implementation of Bournemouth and Poole's Assessment Framework.

The adoption of the model provides consistency for professionals working across LSCB area.

At no time must disagreement prevent a child from being safeguarded. If you are not getting the response you feel is appropriate, please refer to the [Escalation Policy](#). This provides the procedures to be followed when disputes cannot be resolved through practitioner discussion and negotiation at front line level.

1. Levels of Vulnerability

The Threshold Principles guidance identifies **four levels of need** to assist practitioners to identify the most appropriate service response for children, young people and their families. These are:

Level 1 Universal – mainstream community services provided to all

Level 2 Universal Plus – Additional support which may or may not require multi-agency work with other professionals

Level 3 Partnership Plus – Help and support from a range of professionals for families with complex and unmet needs, coordinated by a lead practitioner.

Level 4 Specialist /Statutory Services – Children in need, Children in need of protection and/or Local Authority care; Children with high priority needs including other specialist services

2. Continuum of Need

The Continuum of Need matrix in this document sets out the levels of need and indicates an expected response alongside professional judgement, for the individual circumstances.

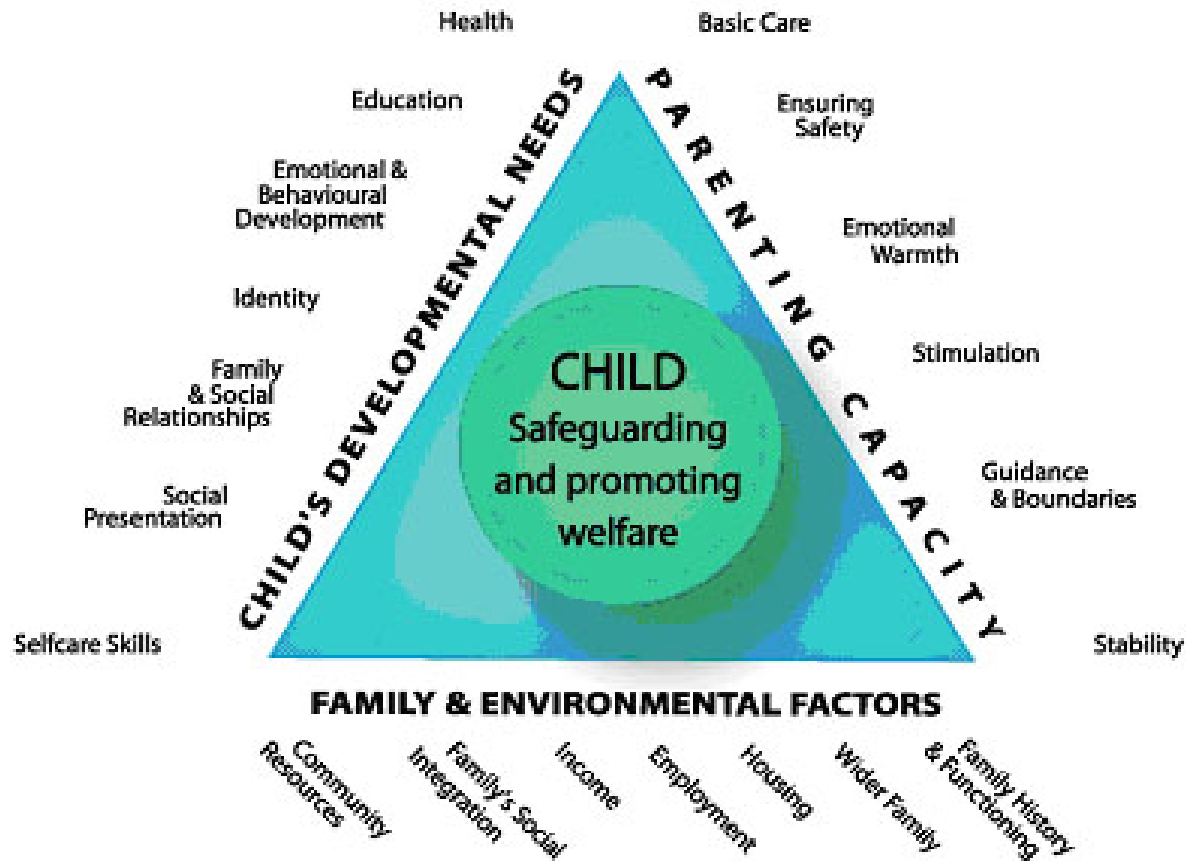
3. The Framework for Assessment of Children in Need:

Partner agencies should consider the three domains and dimensions of the Framework for Assessment of Children in Need and their Families to help provide an evidence base for professional judgement and decision making.

- The child's developmental needs
- Parenting capacity
- Family and environmental factors

The age of the child and any protective factors that may enhance resilience need to be taken into account. The lack of impact of previous or on-going service involvement should also be noted as a concern.

Assessment Framework



Principles of Successful Intervention

Intervention is most likely to be successful if:

- **It is child centred and non-stigmatising**
- **It involves and empowers the family**
- **It is provided within the community, with a good understanding of what support and facilities are available**
- **It can be provided straightaway and not after a long wait for an appointment.**

Vulnerable Children and/or children with complex needs (Universal plus/Partnership plus)

A child or young person identified as vulnerable is in need of some additional support without which they would be at risk of not reaching their full potential. The additional support may relate to health, social or educational issues. They may have difficulty making a transition from primary to secondary school, their development may be delayed, they may break the law or have emotional difficulties. Vulnerable children may have or develop additional needs that are defined as “Complex”.

Children with unmet Complex Acute needs (Partnership plus/Specialist/Statutory)

Within our communities a smaller number of children have complex or acute needs for various reasons. These include children who are disabled, or who have serious difficulties in school or severe mental health disorders, children suffering abuse or rejection by their families, children who are young carers.

Although these numbers are small, it is important that these children are also identified early so that appropriate specialist services, including immediate protection if necessary, can be provided quickly.

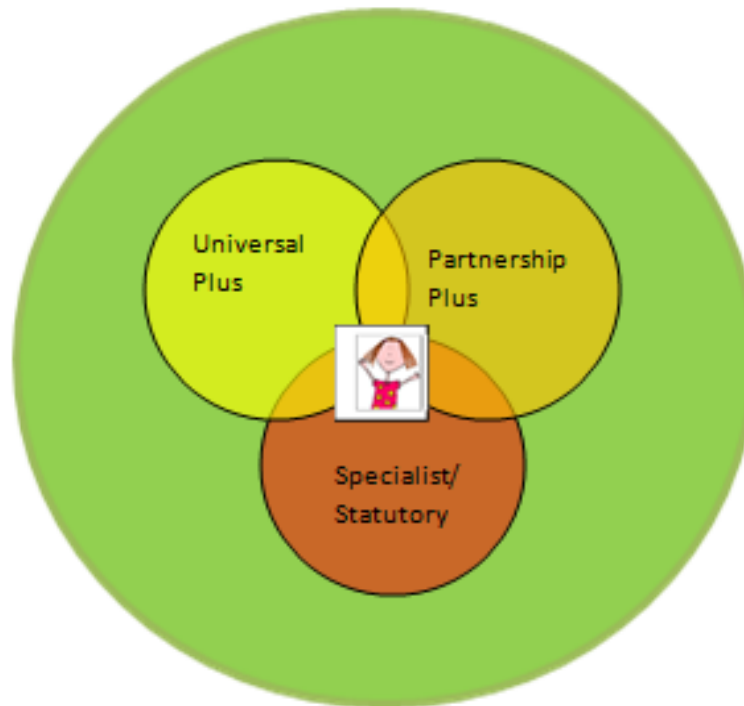
Children and young people with acute needs who are subject to specialist assessment including those who are:

- At risk of significant harm and all children on a Child Protection Plan
- Looked After by the local authority either voluntarily under S.20 of the Children Act 1989 or via proceedings under the Public Law Outline
- Not in education, employment or training
- Experiencing some serious mental health disorders
- Persistent offenders
- Subject to an Education Health and Care plan
- Experiencing enduring mental health problems

Levels of Vulnerability and Need

Levels of Need and Continuum of Support

- A child's level of need can move forward and backwards across the continuum. Integrated service delivery is important for providing a seamless provision of service in meeting a child's need.



Levels of Need and Continuum of Support

LEVEL 1 UNIVERSAL	LEVEL 2 UNIVERSAL PLUS	LEVEL 3 PARTNERSHIP PLUS	LEVEL 4 SPECIALIST / STATUTORY
Children with no additional needs	Children with additional needs	Vulnerable children with high level additional needs requiring coordinated services	Children in need and/or children in need of protection who require statutory services and/or local authority care
All children and young people access UNIVERSAL services			
IDENTIFICATION: Children who make good overall progress in all areas of universal development and receive appropriate universal services	IDENTIFICATION: Children and Young People with additional and emerging needs which cannot be met without the support of additional services Many needs will be met by staff in universal services receiving advice and support from specialist services	IDENTIFICATION: Children and young people at this level are vulnerable and are characterised by the level and / or combination of needs within their families. They will have a number of high level additional complex needs which may escalate without a co-ordinated service intervention. There may be an element of unknown risk within the child's situation that requires further assessment.	IDENTIFICATION: Children in need and / or children in need of protection from likely or actual significant harm, often associated with concerns of immediate or ongoing physical, emotional or sexual abuse or severe neglect. (see LSCB Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Safeguarding Procedures), and those in need of local authority care
RESPONSE: To access universal services e.g. GP, Health Visiting, Nursery, School and Pre-School	RESPONSE: These children may require a lead professional if coordinated support services involving more than one agency is required. The lead professional could be within the universal setting or the additional support service.	RESPONSE: In these cases an Early Help Assessment is required and a Lead professional should be identified. Assessment should lead to a multi-agency support plan overseen by the Lead professional utilising Team Around the Child/Family meetings as needed. If there is a level of unknown risk within the complex needs of the family, statutory single assessment and intervention may be required and so a referral is made to Children's Services Social Care.	RESPONSE: Referral to Children's Services Social Care or specialist services for intervention.

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Threshold of Need and Intervention Criteria

Child or Young Person's Developmental Needs - Note: this is an illustrative rather than comprehensive list of indicators

Action	Universal	Universal Plus	Partnership Plus	Specialist / Statutory Services
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physically well • Adequate diet /hygiene/ clothing • Developmental checks/ immunisations up-to-date • Health appointments are kept • Regular dental/optical care • Physical and sensory development milestones are met • Age appropriate involvement in physical activity • Age appropriate development re: • Fluency of speech and confidence • Willingness to communicate • Verbal and non-verbal comprehension • Language structure and vocabulary and articulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overweight/underweight • Concerns re diet/hygiene/clothing • Starting to miss on health appointments • Defaulting on immunisation/checks • Susceptible to minor health problems • Not registered with GP/dentist • Soiling / wetting self • Low level substance misuse • A&E attendance giving cause for concern • Slow in reaching developmental milestones • Sensory developmental delay • Reluctant communicator • Not understanding age- appropriate instructions • Confused by non-verbal communication • Difficulty listening for an appropriate length of time • Immature structure of expressive language • Speech sounds immature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chronic health problems with a severe impact on everyday functioning • Failure to access appropriate health care • Persistent excessive alcohol consumption, smoking or other substance misuse impacting on parental care • Serious mental health issues impacting on parental care • Pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Infection in young person under16 where there is risk to the Young Person • Multiple A&E attendances causing concern • Frequent unexplained minor injuries and/or delay in seeking medical attention • Impact of significant physical disability on the family's capacity • Impact of serious developmental delay on the family's capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to thrive • Suspected non-accidental injury/abuse/neglect • Class A / serious drug misuse • Acute and serious mental or physical health needs or behavioural difficulties, including life-threatening self harm, suicide • Children who are accessing acute health services including sexual health clinics which indicates significant harm

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Action	Universal	Universal Plus	Partnership Plus	Specialist / Statutory Services
Social & Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good quality early attachments • Feelings and actions demonstrate appropriate responses • Able to adapt to change • Able to demonstrate empathy • Involved in leisure and other social activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulties in relationships with peer group and / or with adults • Over-friendly or withdrawn with strangers • Finds coping with change difficult even with support • Difficulties expressing empathy • Impulsive/ lacks self-control • Child causing concerns over use of internet and/or social media • Concerns about possible bullying/ cyber bullying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachments that have a severe impact on parenting capacity • Relates to strangers indiscriminately without regard for safety or social norms, parents' awareness of risk appears limited • Reaction to change triggers prolonged inability to cope • Phobias and other psychological difficulties at a clinically significant level • Association with serious risk taking peers • Suffers from periods of serious depression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involved in or suspected to be involved in child sexual exploitation or trafficking • Disappears or is missing from home for long periods • Multiple criminal incidents/ involvement in activities that would constitute arrestable offences/ behaviour that would constitute criminal activity
Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate self-control • Appropriate social behaviour • Appropriate sexual development and activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruptive/challenging behaviour, including in school or early years setting • Concerns about sexual development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruptive/challenging behaviour at school and in neighbourhood and at home • At risk of permanent exclusion • Regularly missing from education, employment or training (NEET) • Young person regularly involved in anti-social criminal activities/violent/ risk taking behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child suspected of having in appropriate relationship with adult or peers • Concerns about sexualised behaviour and inappropriate language

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Action	Universal	Universal Plus	Partnership Plus	Specialist / Statutory Services
Identity, Self Esteem & Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive sense of self and abilities • Demonstrates feelings of belonging and acceptance • An ability to express needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows lack of self-esteem • Vulnerable to bullying, discrimination or harassment • Limited insight into how appearance and behaviour are perceived • Inclined to bully 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seriously affected by persistent discrimination, e.g. on the basis of ethnicity, sexual orientation or disability • Subject to severe bullying • Severe bullying of others • Family environment impacting on identity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child has suffered or may have suffered serious physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect including possible child sexual exploitation • Child presents as severely neglected • Crime or incident which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family or community (honour based violence) • Suspicions that the child may have been or potentially made to marry against her will (forced marriage)
Family & Social relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aware of personal and family history • Stable and affectionate relationships with care givers • Good relationships with siblings • Positive relationships with peers • Age-appropriate friendships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited support from family and friends • Lacks positive role models • Serious conflicts with peers/siblings • Difficulties sustaining relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children returning home following looked after episode • Siblings of looked after children and young people with mental health or well-being issues • Children and young people who have a high level of responsibility for others (e.g. parents, siblings) 	
Independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing level of competencies in practical and emotional skills • Good level of personal hygiene • Gaining confidence and skills to undertake activities away from the family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendships and relationships inappropriate for age • Not always adequate self-care, e.g. poor hygiene • Slow to develop age-appropriate self-care skills • Failing to develop confidence and skills for independence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor self-care for age, including hygiene • Children and young people who have a high level of responsibility for others (e.g. parents, siblings) 	

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Child or Young Person's Developmental Needs - Note: this is an illustrative rather than comprehensive list of indicators

Action	Universal	Universal Plus	Partnership Plus	Specialist / Statutory Services
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milestones for cognitive development are met • Demonstrates a range of skills and interests • Access to educational provision appropriate to age and ability • Access to employment (including work based learning) appropriate to age and ability • Regularly attends education or training, or in full-timework • Acquiring a range of skills and interests • No concerns about achievement or cognitive development • Access to books/toys, play • Well motivated and self-confident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milestones for cognitive development are not met • Mild to moderate learning difficulties • Identified learning needs under the SEN Code of Practice • Poor school/early years attendance/punctuality • Gaps in school/learning • Behaviour likely to lead to risk of exclusion • Multiple changes of school/early years setting • No access to early developmental experiences • Often appears tired in school which appears to impact on participation and achievement • Not accessing work-appropriate skills • Requires a modified curriculum and timetable • Learning expectations are not met • Not making progress in line with national expectations or children with similar needs across the ability range • Cannot access age appropriate resources for learning and play • Seeing little or no value in education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complex learning and/or disability needs • Serious developmental delay • Multiple fixed-term exclusions • At risk of or permanently excluded • Multiple changes of school without notification • Has no school place and meets hard to place criteria • Emotionally-based school refuser • Not in education, employment or training and experiencing barriers to progress • Requires alternative curriculum/ timetable • Unable to access mainstream curriculum • Total disengagement from learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/child subject of statutory intervention for poor attendance; persistent poor attendance with parental acceptance • Not making progress in spite of intervention • Educational (or social or mental health needs) may result in educational placement out of school or away from home • Additional special educational needs support including Education, Health and Care Plan.

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Threshold of Need and Intervention Criteria

Parental Capacity - Note: this is an illustrative rather than comprehensive list of indicators

Action	Universal	Universal Plus	Partnership Plus	Specialist / Statutory Services
Basic care and ensuring safety and protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides for child's physical needs, e.g. appropriate nutrition, clothing and medical care Protects from danger and harm in home and elsewhere Parents able to meet child's needs and know how and where to access support Works effectively with services in best interests of the child or young person <p>Unborn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ante-natal appointments kept Medical advice followed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent unable or unwilling to provide appropriate supervision Parents struggling to meet child or young person's needs without support Child's disability makes parenting challenging Poor social skills of parents and/ or child Child or young person exposed to hazards/risks Parent struggling or unwilling to prioritise child's needs over their own Parents over-controlling Evidence of domestic abuse <p>Unborn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some ante-natal appointments missed Some concerns that medical advice not followed Relationship difficulties identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food, warmth and basic care erratic and inconsistent persistently Parent struggling to provide 'good enough' care with significant impact on child Parents lifestyle has significant impact on child welfare Parents' mental health or substance misuse significantly affect care of children Ongoing serious domestic abuse Inability to recognise child's needs such that child's development may be significantly impaired Parents not offering adequate supervision to child based on age, maturity and development Parent overly controlling or inappropriate use of sanctions/ punishment <p>Unborn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Majority of ante-natal appointments missed Medical concerns remain – e.g. smoking and use of alcohol Issues of domestic violence identified Lack of preparation for the birth Housing issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents unable to provide 'good enough' care that is adequate and safe which places the child at risk of significant harm Persistent instability and violence in the home Parents do not take appropriate action if child goes missing Child not protected from sexual exploitation Suspicious or evidence of female genital mutilation Crime or incident which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family or community (honour based violence) Suspicious that child may have been or potentially made to marry against her will (forced marriage) Child left alone or unsupervised based on age, development and /or maturity Allegation of serious injury/ abuse Pre-birth assessment identifies unborn child at risk of significant harm Unable to protect from significant harm including contact with unsafe adults Allegation or reasonable suspicion of serious injury or abuse Extreme /continuous domestic abuse <p>Unborn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant drug or alcohol use Serious domestic violence/relationship issues Signs of serious neglect of self and living conditions Previous history of parents unable to care for children

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Threshold of Need and Intervention Criteria

Parenting Capacity - Note: this is an illustrative rather than comprehensive list of indicators

Action	Universal	Universal Plus	Partnership Plus	Specialist / Statutory Services
Emotional warmth and stability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents provide secure and consistent care • Parents show appropriate warmth, praise and encouragement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistent responses to child/young person • Erratic or inconsistent care from multiple carers • Family disputes impacting on child/young person • Poor home routines • Over-protective care which inhibits child's social and emotional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents highly critical of child and provide little warmth, praise or encouragement • Chaotic parenting of child/young person • Parents unable to exercise control of child/young person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child beyond parental control • Child rejected by parent • Abandoned child or unaccompanied minor • Child/parent relationship at risk of breakdown • Parents not confident in assessing the risks posed by potential carers
Basic care and ensuring safety and protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets consistent and appropriate boundaries taking account of age/ development of child/young person • Enables child to access appropriate activities and to experience success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent provides inconsistent boundaries • Parent provides limited interaction/ stimulation for child • Child or young person spends considerable time alone • Lack of response to concerns raised about child or young person • Parent does not support access to positive new experiences or social interaction • Child accessing social media sites without age appropriate parental supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No effective boundaries set • Parents unable to provide appropriate role model • Development of child impaired through lack of appropriate stimulation and play • Persistent condoned absence from school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No effective boundaries set—child out of control / offending and developmental delay • Parents do not know child's whereabouts and there are concerns child may be associating within appropriate adult(s) • Exposure to inappropriate or harmful material and people (e.g. via internet)

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Threshold of Need and Intervention Criteria

Family and Environmental Factors - Note: this is an illustrative rather than comprehensive list of indicators

Action	Universal	Universal Plus	Partnership Plus	Specialist / Statutory Services
Family history, functioning and well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good family relationships, including where parents are separated or bereavement or parental disputes not impacting on the child and is well managed, and child is supported • May be mild physical or mental health difficulties in immediate family, but not impacting on child/well managed and supported • No concerns regarding parental engagement • Family stresses but coping well • Few significant changes in family composition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family conflicts or parental disputes that may involve children • Moderate physical or mental health difficulties in immediate family • Difficulty with parental engagement • Loss of significant adult through bereavement or separation impacting significantly • Suspected/occasional domestic abuse • Multiple births /high number of young children • Family seeking asylum or refugees • Sibling/parent involved in criminal activity • Family not coping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incidents of domestic abuse or substance misuse • Family involved in criminal activity/ received custodial sentence • Young carer (parent/ siblings) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past or current incidence of abuse, neglect, serious domestic abuse or substance misuse • Significant mental or physical health difficulties within the immediate family • A person who has a conviction(s) for offences against children (sexual, physical or neglect)and poses actual or potential risk • Suspicion of child being taken/ prepared for female genital mutilation • Family with history of CP registration / previous removal of child • Family breakdown related in some way to child's behavioural difficulties • Evidence of female genital mutilation within the family, or significant others
Wider family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sense of larger familial network and / or good friendships outside of the family unit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family is socially isolated • Family has poor relationships or no contact with extended family 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household members /Adult in contact with children who is subject to multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) or multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) meetings • Destructive relationships with wider family including historical and inter- generational issues • Privately fostered • Living with other family members

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Family and Environmental Factors - Note: this is an illustrative rather than comprehensive list of indicators

Action	Universal	Universal Plus	Partnership Plus	Specialist / Statutory Services
Housing, employment and finances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accommodation has basic amenities and appropriate facilities Parents able to manage working or unemployment arrangements adequately and do not perceive them as unduly stressful Reasonable income over time with resources used appropriately to meet individual needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barely adequate/poor /temporary accommodation Housing causing family stress Difficult to obtain employment due to poor basic skills Parents experience continuing stress due to unemployment or 'overworking' Difficulties managing household finances Low level debt/ in need of financial advice Low income/ financial hardship Lack of affordability for basic amenities including household fuel and food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chronic and long-term unemployment due to significant lack of basic skills Or longstanding issues such as substance misuse/ offending, etc. Serious debts/poverty impacting on ability to meet family's basic needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accommodation places child in serious physical danger
Social and community elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally good universal services in the neighbourhood Family feels integrated into the community Adequate social and friendship networks Community are generally supportive of family and/or child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family not accessing universal or targeted services Chronic unemployment affecting parents/ family significantly Unexplained wealth Family is socially excluded Frequent housing moves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chronic social exclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extreme poverty/debt, impacting on ability to care for child

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