

Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility

Continuum of Need and Risk Identification Tool

Practice guidance for improving outcomes for children and young people through the early identification of need, risk and vulnerability

www.bradfordscb.org.uk



Title page

➔ p1

Foreword

➔ p2

Continuum of Need Model

➔ p3

Levels of Vulnerability, Risk & Need

➔ p6

Indicators of Need and Intervention Criteria

➔ p7

Key Guidance – BSCB

➔ p15

Key Guidance – Child Neglect

➔ p16

Key Guidance – Domestic Abuse FGM

➔ p17

Key Guidance – Child Exploitation, Radicalisation

➔ p18

Key Guidance – Signs of Safety

➔ p19

Glossary of Terms & Useful Links

➔ p23

Foreword

This document and guidance is aimed at every agency, statutory, voluntary, private and independent which works directly or indirectly with children, young people and families. The purpose of this guidance is to help agencies identify a child's degree of need and respond appropriately - "the right help, right time".

The guidance does not remove the need for workers to make professional judgement when considering the identified needs of children.

This is a guidance document for the Multi-Agency Early Support and Safeguarding Continuum in regard to needs and services in Bradford.

The core function of Bradford Safeguarding Children's Board (BSCB) is to publish a continuum of need document that includes:

- The process for the early help assessment and the type of level of early help services to be provided
- The criteria, including the level of need, for when a case should be referred to local authority children's social care for assessment and for statutory services under:
 - Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 (Child in Need)
 - Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 (reasonable cause to suspect children suffering or likely to suffer significant harm); - section 31 (care orders); and
 - Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 (duty to accommodate)
- Clear procedures and processes for cases relating to Child Exploitation including sexual exploitation of children and young people (working together 2018)

Multi-Agency communication is the key to developing a full picture of the child and their family circumstances, using independent interpreters if necessary. It is important that all involvement with a child and their family is recorded on your own agency's files. If there are any queries, practitioners should seek advice and support from the Safeguarding Leads within their own organisation.

Gladys Rhodes White OBE
Strategic Director of Children's Services

Jane Booth
Independent Chair of Bradford Safeguarding Children's Board.



The wording in this publication can be made available in other formats such as large print and Braille. Tel: 01274 434361.

Title page
p1

Foreword
p2

Continuum
of Need
Model
p3

Levels of
Vulnerability,
Risk & Need
p6

Indicators
of Need and
Intervention
Criteria
p7

Key Guidance –
BSCB
p15

Key Guidance –
Child Neglect
p16

Key Guidance –
Domestic Abuse
FGM
p17

Key Guidance –
Child
Exploitation,
Radicalisation
p18

Key Guidance –
Signs of Safety
p19

Glossary of
Terms & Useful
Links
p23

Continuum of Need Model

1. Levels of Vulnerability

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

Level 1 UNIVERSAL

Level 1 Universal – mainstream community services provided to all – e.g. Education, GP's, Dental Health/Dentist and the Healthy Child programme.

Level 2 UNIVERSAL PLUS

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

Level 3 TARGETTED SUPPORT/ PARTNERSHIP PLUS

Level 3 Targetted Support/Partnership Plus – Help and support from a range of professionals for families with complex need.

Level 4 STATUTORY/ SPECIALIST/CHILD PROTECTION

Level 4 Statutory, Specialist and Child Protection – High priority needs including other specialist services.

2. Matrix

The Continuum Matrix can be used to create a picture of individual needs and vulnerability. **It is not a formal assessment and you are not required to send this in or share this with anyone.** It is a means of enabling you to set out your thoughts to help you make a decision about what to do next. It is not necessary to complete all areas of the matrix if you do not have the evidence to do so. The needs of child and young people rarely fit into neat categories and often change over time. It has been designed to inform early identification of vulnerability, risk and need and can be used to start the process to clarify concerns and/or monitor progress.

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 straight away and not after a long wait or an appointment



Continuum of Need Model (continued)

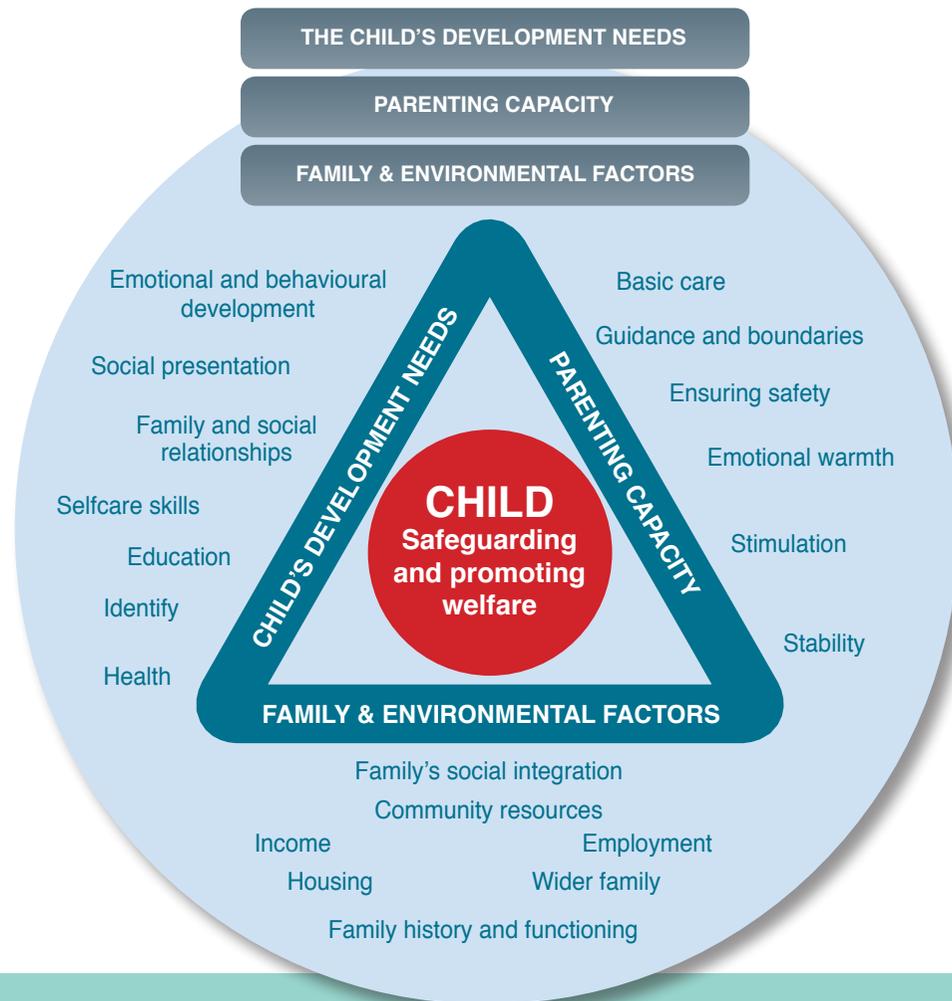
3. Descriptors

A set of descriptors and indicators have been laid out in the document to enable partner agencies to use shared terminology and develop a shared understanding of levels of need, risk and vulnerability.

They provide a detailed breakdown of the three domains and dimension of the Framework for Assessment of Children in need and their families:

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

The descriptors and indicators are indicative rather than definitive, but will help to provide an evidence base for professional judgement and decision making. **The descriptors and indicators cannot reflect or predict sudden changes in the child's world** and any sudden change in a child's presentation should be explored to establish if there is a cause for concern. In addition 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.



This is a tool for everyone to use to support inter-agency working, information sharing and assessment. Bradford's Safeguarding Children's Board (BSCB) has adopted this continuum of need model to provide a multi-agency, whole system approach to assessment, risk, prevention and intervention for children, young people and their families.

The adoption of the model provides consistency from professionals working across geographical areas. This dynamic model provides a needs led, outcome focussed matrix of need and vulnerability which, when used effectively can match the child/young person's needs with the appropriate assessment and provision.

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 "Resolving Professional Disagreement & Escalation Policy". This provides the procedures to be followed when disputes cannot be resolved through discussion and negotiation between practitioners at front line level.

Hyperlink to 'Resolving Professional Disagreement and Escalation'
https://westyorkscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_res_profdisag.html?zoom_highlight=professional+disagreement&zoom_highlight=professional+disagreement

- Title page p1
- Foreword p2
- Continuum of Need Model p3
- Levels of Vulnerability, Risk & Need p6
- Indicators of Need and Intervention Criteria p7
- Key Guidance – BSCB p15
- Key Guidance – Child Neglect p16
- Key Guidance – Domestic Abuse FGM p17
- Key Guidance – Child Exploitation, Radicalisation p18
- Key Guidance – Signs of Safety p19
- Glossary of Terms & Useful Links p23

Bradford Continuum of Need Model

This is a tool to help you. It is not an assessment. You are not required to complete it in full or share this with anyone.

Plot relevant descriptors on this matrix to give a visual representation of the child or young person's level of need. The matrix reflects your professional judgement and informs decision making. This is a TOOL to help you make your decision as to roughly where your concerns sit. It will enable you to focus on the complex needs of the child and will give you an idea of how Family Support, Social Care will respond and in what way. If a level of need for intervention is met – at any level – you should then follow your agency's procedures for escalating your concerns e.g. directly or via a manager.

REMEMBER: Child neglect – Be professionally curious

- Are your concerns increasing?
- Is there a pattern of neglect emerging?
- Consider the lived experience for the child, impact and risk
- Consider a chronology of events

Name of child:		UNIVERSAL No additional needs	UNIVERSAL PLUS Children with additional needs			TARGETTED SUPPORT/ PARTNERSHIP PLUS Children with complex additional needs			STATUTORY/ SPECIALIST/ CHILD PROTECTION Children in need of protection		
Development: Health	General Health including oral health										
	Physical & Sensory Development										
	Speech, language and Communication										
Development: Wellbeing	Emotional and Social										
	Behaviour										
	Identity, Self-esteem, Image										
	Family and Social Relationships										
	Self Care Skills and Independence										
Development: Learning	Understanding, Reasoning & Problem Solving										
	Participation in Education or Work										
	Progress and Achievement in Learning										
	Aspirations										
Parents and Carers	Parents & Carers Basic Care/Ensuring Safety and Protection										
	Emotional Warmth and Stability										
	Guidance, Boundaries and stimulation										
Family and Environmental factors	Family History, Functioning and Well-being										
	Wider Family										
	Housing, Employment and Finance										
	Social and Community Elements										
VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT:		Universal	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
Response:		No additional needs	Additional support in setting. Consider agency led assessments			Consider enhanced support under Plus Services or make a referral to Children's Services			Make a referral to Children's Services		

Levels of Vulnerability, Risk and Need

Continuum of Need

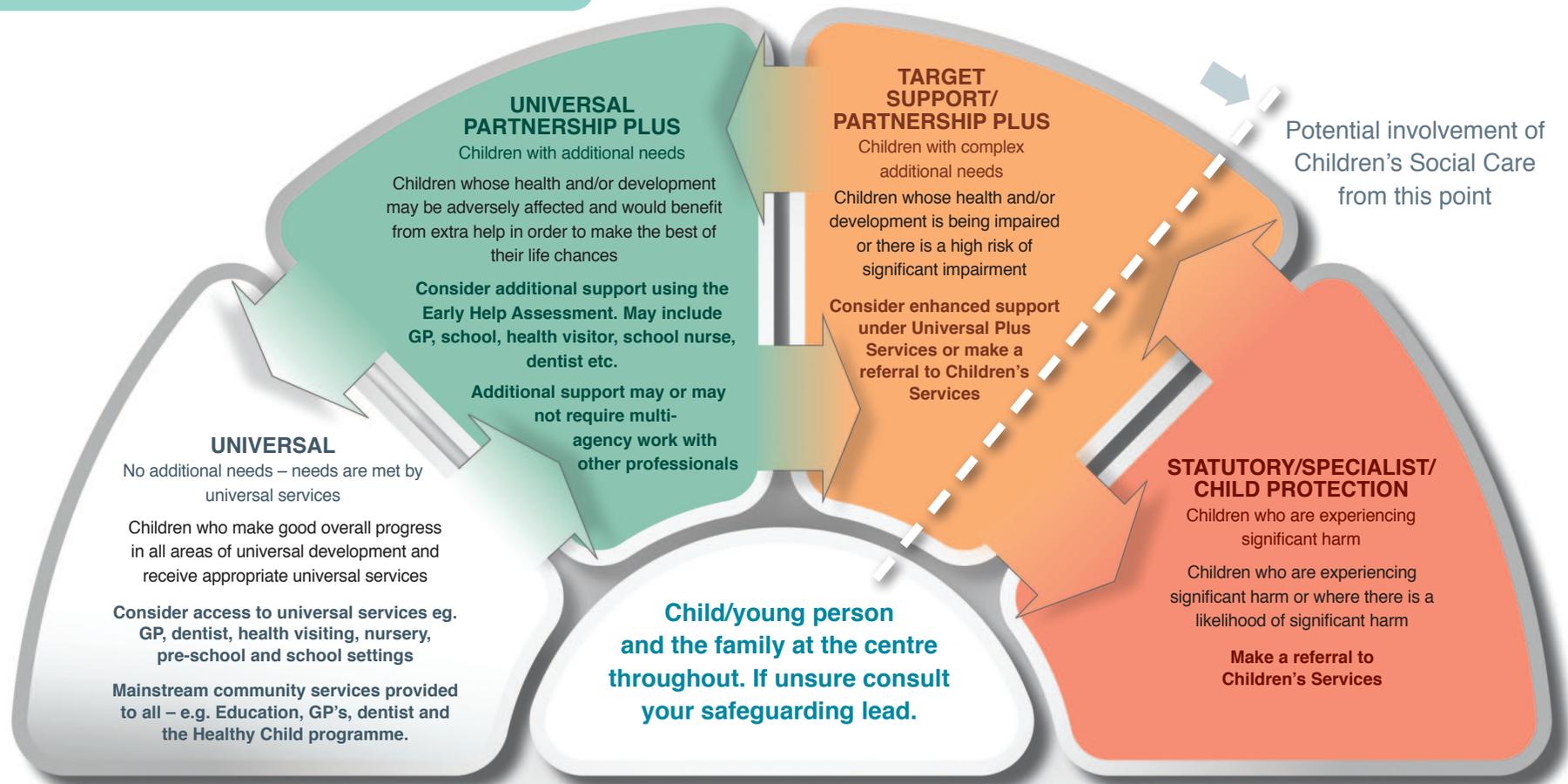
The Think Signs of Safety Principles

- Establishing constructive working relationships
- Encourages critical thinking and maintains appreciative enquiry
- Staying grounded – day to day work – child protection

Ask yourself the 4 key questions. What are you worried about (past current/future harm and danger)?

The spectrum of support and the relationship between the different levels of need

- A child's level of need can move forward and backwards across the continuum highlighting the importance of integrated service delivery, providing a seamless process to ensure continuity of care when a child moves between different levels of support.
- The whole system highlights the importance of always having a practitioner in place to co-ordinate service activity and to act as a single point of contact.



**SOS
INFO**

What's working well?
(strengths and safety)

How worried are we?
(Safety and wellbeing scale)

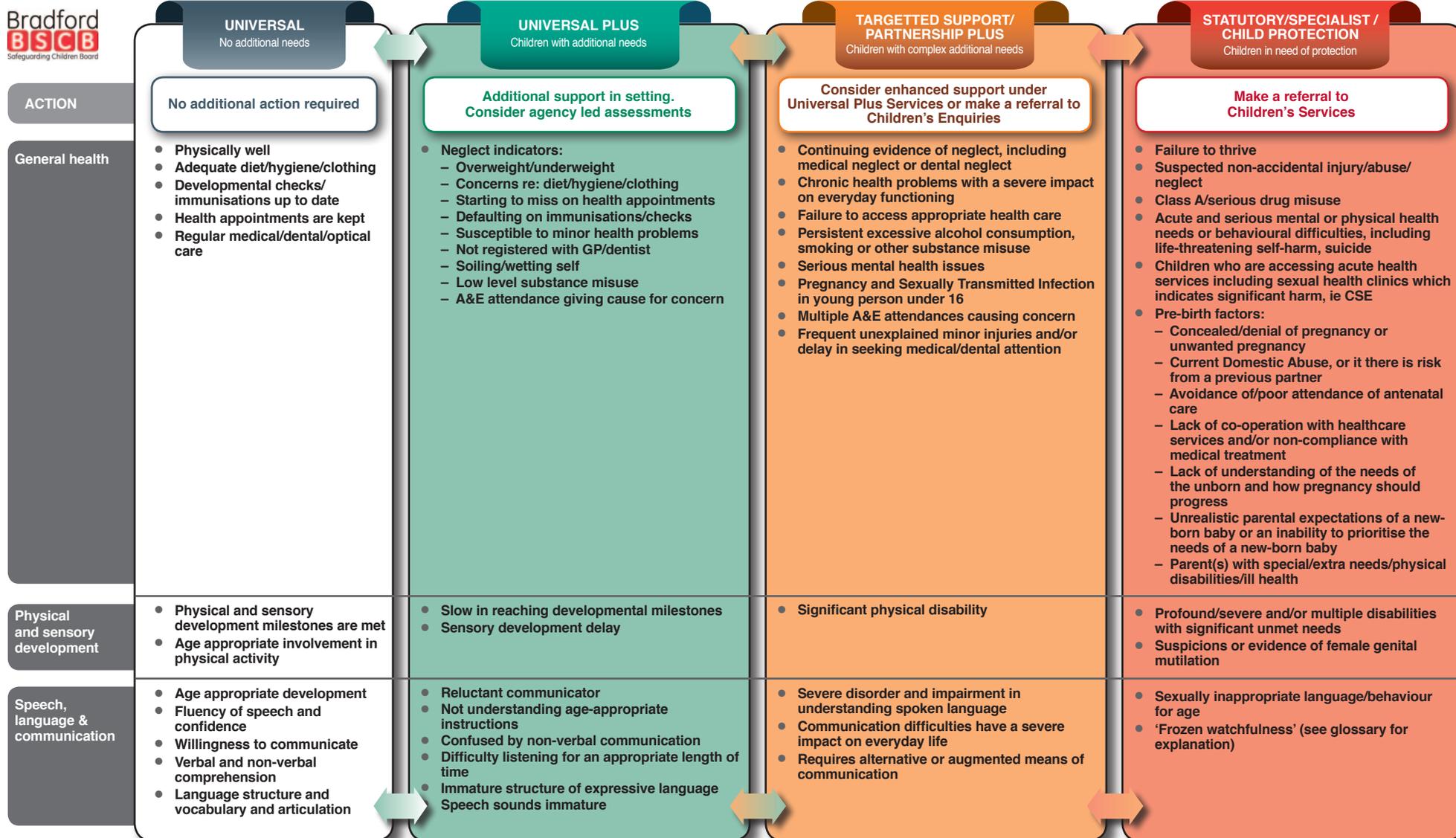
What needs to happen?
(Safety/wellbeing goals)

(see page 19 for more guidance)

Indicators of Need and Intervention Criteria

DEVELOPMENT OF CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON – HEALTH

Please note: This is an illustrative rather than comprehensive list of indicators



Where there is an immediate risk to a child call the Police on 999. For Bradford Safeguarding Procedures visit www.bradfordscb.org.uk

SOS INFO What's working well?
(strengths and safety)

How worried are we?
(Safety and wellbeing scale)

What needs to happen?
(Safety/wellbeing goals)

(see page 19 for more guidance)

Title page
p1

Foreword
p2

Continuum of Need Model
p3

Levels of Vulnerability, Risk & Need
p6

Indicators of Need and Intervention Criteria
p7

Key Guidance – BSCB
p15

Key Guidance – Child Neglect
p16

Key Guidance – Domestic Abuse FGM
p17

Key Guidance – Child Exploitation, Radicalisation
p18

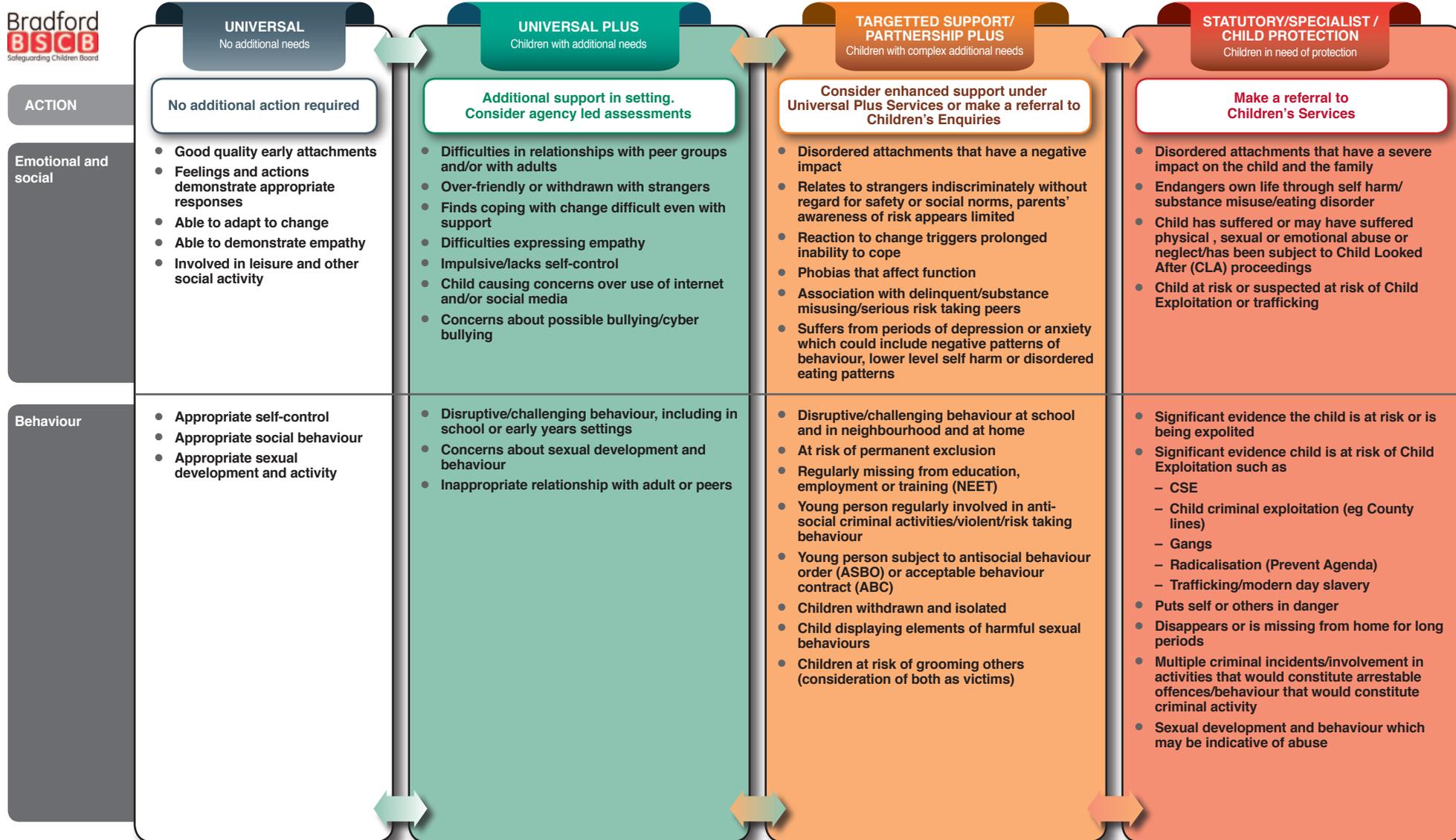
Key Guidance – Signs of Safety
p19

Glossary of Terms & Useful Links
p23

Indicators of Need and Intervention Criteria (continued)

DEVELOPMENT OF CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON – WELLBEING

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SOS INFO What's working well?
(strengths and safety)

How worried are we?
(Safety and wellbeing scale)

What needs to happen?
(Safety/wellbeing goals)

(see page 19 for more guidance)

Indicators of Need and Intervention Criteria (continued)

DEVELOPMENT OF CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON – WELLBEING (continued)

Please note: This is an illustrative rather than comprehensive list of indicators

	UNIVERSAL No additional needs	UNIVERSAL PLUS Children with additional needs	TARGETTED SUPPORT/ PARTNERSHIP PLUS Children with complex additional needs	STATUTORY/SPECIALIST / CHILD PROTECTION Children in need of protection
ACTION	No additional action required	Additional support in setting. Consider agency led assessments	Consider enhanced support under Universal Plus Services or make a referral to Children's Enquiries	Make a referral to Children's 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 bullying Emerging evidence of self harm and/or eating disorder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seriously affected by persistent discrimination eg, on the basis of ethnicity, sexual orientation or disability Subject to severe bullying Severe bullying of others Family environment (substance misuse/ poverty impacting on identity/worklessness/ crime) Continuing evidence of self-harm and/or eating disorder Evidence of emotional abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High level of drug, substance and alcohol abuse Continuing evidence of self-harm and/or eating disorder – severe or life threatening
Family and 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 Children returning home following looked after episode 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Siblings of looked after children and young people with mental health, wellbeing issues or severe disabilities Children and young people who have a high level of responsibility for others (young carers) 	<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 Forced Marriage/Honour Based Abuse: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concern that the young person is under familial or cultural pressure or duress to marry against their will or wishes (Do not discuss making a referral with the family) Child is believed to be at risk of honour-based abuse Crime or incident which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family or community (honour based violence)
Self-care skills and 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"> Not always adequate self-care eg, poor hygiene Slow to develop age-appropriate selfcare skills Failing to develop confidence and skills for independence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor self-care for age, including hygiene Friendships and relationships inappropriate for age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neglect of self-care because of alternative priorities eg, substance misuse Neglect of young person's own child Acute and serious mental or physical health needs or behaviour difficulties impacting significantly on ability to care for self. Profound/severe and/or multiple disabilities impacting on ability to care for self

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SOS INFO What's working well? (strengths and safety)

How worried are we? (Safety and wellbeing scale)

What needs to happen? (Safety/wellbeing goals)

(see page 19 for more guidance)

Title page p1

Foreword p2

Continuum of Need Model p3

Levels of Vulnerability, Risk & Need p6

Indicators of Need and Intervention Criteria p7

Key Guidance – BSCB p15

Key Guidance – Child Neglect p16

Key Guidance – Domestic Abuse FGM p17

Key Guidance – Child Exploitation, Radicalisation p18

Key Guidance – Signs of Safety p19

Glossary of Terms & Useful Links p23

Indicators of Need and Intervention Criteria (continued)

DEVELOPMENT OF CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON – LEARNING

Please note: This is an illustrative rather than comprehensive list of indicators

	UNIVERSAL No additional needs	UNIVERSAL PLUS Children with additional needs	TARGETTED SUPPORT/ PARTNERSHIP PLUS Children with complex additional needs	STATUTORY/SPECIALIST / CHILD PROTECTION Children in need of protection
ACTION	No additional action required	Additional support in setting. Consider agency led assessments	Consider enhanced support under Universal Plus Services or make a referral to Children's Enquiries	Make a referral to Children's Services
Understanding, reasoning and problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Milestones for cognitive development are met Demonstrates a range of skills and interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Milestones for cognitive development are not met Mild to moderate learning difficulties Identified learning needs from School Support SEN Code of Practice School support learning needs identified in line with SEN Code of Practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complex learning and/or disability needs Serious developmental delay Additional special educational needs support including Education, Health and Care Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complex learning difficulties and communication needs leading to safeguarding vulnerabilities
Participation in education or work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 Children missing from education Emerging concerns of a child who is presenting in an unusual/perplexing way (Consider FII) that is beginning to impact on learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent/child subject of statutory intervention for poor attendance; persistent poor attendance with parental acceptance 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 Has no school place and meets Fair Access Criteria (no school place and hard to reach criteria) Is a persistent absentee Is Electively Home Educated and evidence child is not in receipt of efficient and suitable education For any child who presents in an unusual/perplexing way (Consider FII) that is now impacting on learning and development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NEET and additional significant risk factors High level concern of radicalisation or extremism Concern regarding Fabricated Induced Illness (FII) is preventing or impacting on school attendance Homelessness Has been permanently excluded Is a Child Missing Education (CME) Is Electively Home Educated and evidence child is not in receipt of efficient and suitable education and other significant risk factors
Progress and achievement in learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquiring a range of skills and interests No concerns about achievements or cognitive development Access to books/toys, play Well motivated and self-confident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 Seeing little or no value in education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires alternative curriculum/ timetable Unable to access mainstream curriculum Not making progress in spite of interventions Educational (or social or mental health needs) may result in educational placement out of school or away from home Total disengagement from learning Is accessing alternative curriculum or reduced timetable Is not accessing a mainstream curriculum (unable to access mainstream curriculum) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child's substance misuse dependency putting them at such risk that intensive specialist resources are required Children with persistent short term exclusions and risk of permanent exclusion High level concern of radicalisation or extremism Child has multiple vulnerabilities/risks which impact on academic progress

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SOS INFO What's working well? (strengths and safety)

How worried are we? (Safety and wellbeing scale)

What needs to happen? (Safety/wellbeing goals)

(see page 19 for more guidance)

Title page

➔ p1

Foreword

➔ p2

Continuum of Need Model

➔ p3

Levels of Vulnerability, Risk & Need

➔ p6

Indicators of Need and Intervention Criteria

➔ p7

Key Guidance – BSCB

➔ p15

Key Guidance – Child Neglect

➔ p16

Key Guidance – Domestic Abuse FGM

➔ p17

Key Guidance – Child Exploitation, Radicalisation

➔ p18

Key Guidance – Signs of Safety

➔ p19

Glossary of Terms & Useful Links

➔ p23

Indicators of Need and Intervention Criteria (continued)

Title page

← p1

Foreword

← p2

Continuum of Need Model

← p3

Levels of Vulnerability, Risk & Need

← p6

Indicators of Need and Intervention Criteria

← p7

Key Guidance – BSCB

← p15

Key Guidance – Child Neglect

← p16

Key Guidance – Domestic Abuse FGM

← p17

Key Guidance – Child Exploitation, Radicalisation

← p18

Key Guidance – Signs of Safety

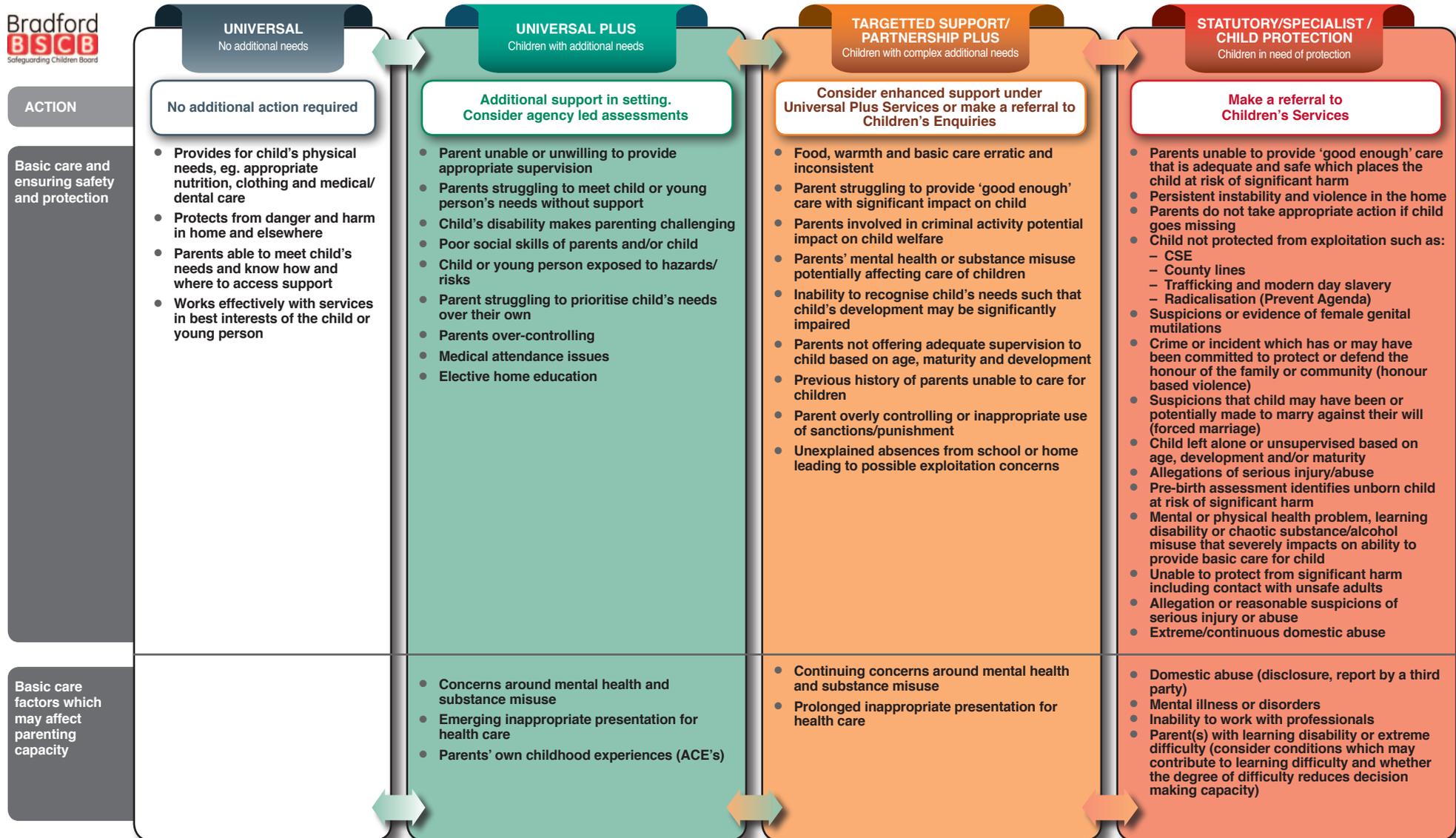
← p19

Glossary of Terms & Useful Links

← p23

PARENTS AND CARERS

Please note: This is an illustrative rather than comprehensive list of indicators



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SOS INFO What's working well? (strengths and safety)

How worried are we? (Safety and wellbeing scale)

What needs to happen? (Safety/wellbeing goals)

(see page 19 for more guidance)

Indicators of Need and Intervention Criteria (continued)

- Title page p1
- Foreword p2
- Continuum of Need Model p3
- Levels of Vulnerability, Risk & Need p6
- Indicators of Need and Intervention Criteria p7
- Key Guidance – BSCB p15
- Key Guidance – Child Neglect p16
- Key Guidance – Domestic Abuse FGM p17
- Key Guidance – Child Exploitation, Radicalisation p18
- Key Guidance – Signs of Safety p19
- Glossary of Terms & Useful Links p23

PARENTS AND CARERS (continued)

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ACTION	No additional action required	Additional support in setting. Consider agency led assessments	Consider enhanced support under Universal Plus Services or make a referral to Children's Enquiries	Make a referral to Children's Services
Pre-birth basic care, ensuring safety and protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-birth factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Antenatal appointments kept Medical advice followed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-birth factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some antenatal appointments missed Some concerns that medical advice not followed Relationship difficulties identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-birth factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Majority of antenatal appointments missed Medical concerns remain eg, smoking and use of alcohol Issues of domestic abuse identified Lack of preparation for the birth Housing issues Previous history regarding mental health, substance misuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-birth factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concealed/denial of pregnancy or unwanted pregnancy Current Domestic Abuse, or if there is a risk of abuse from a previous partner Avoidance of/poor attendance for antenatal care Lack of co-operation with healthcare services and/or non compliance with medical treatment Lack of understanding of the needs of the unborn and how pregnancy should progress Unrealistic parental expectations of a new-born baby or an inability to prioritise the needs of a new-born baby Parent(s) with special/extra needs/physical disabilities/ill health Significant drug or alcohol use Serious domestic violence/ relationship issues Signs of serious neglect of self and living conditions FGM Pathway Parents had previous children removed Mother is a Child Looked After (CLA) Parent who is a significant risk to children
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"> Child has experienced multiple main carers 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 seeking asylum Child/parent relationship at risk of imminent breakdown Parents not confident in assessing the risks of posed by potential carers
Guidance, boundaries and stimulation	<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 Child/parent relationship at risk of imminent breakdown Development of child impaired through lack of appropriate stimulation and play Persistent condoned absence from school Exposure to inappropriate or harmful material and people (eg, via internet) Parents in conflict with statutory services Not engaging with constructive leisure activities No access to support for education/social interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of effective parental boundaries leading to adverse consequences to child or others <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents do not know child's whereabouts Concerns child may be associating with inappropriate adults or peers Child at risk of child exploitation such as CSE/radicalisation

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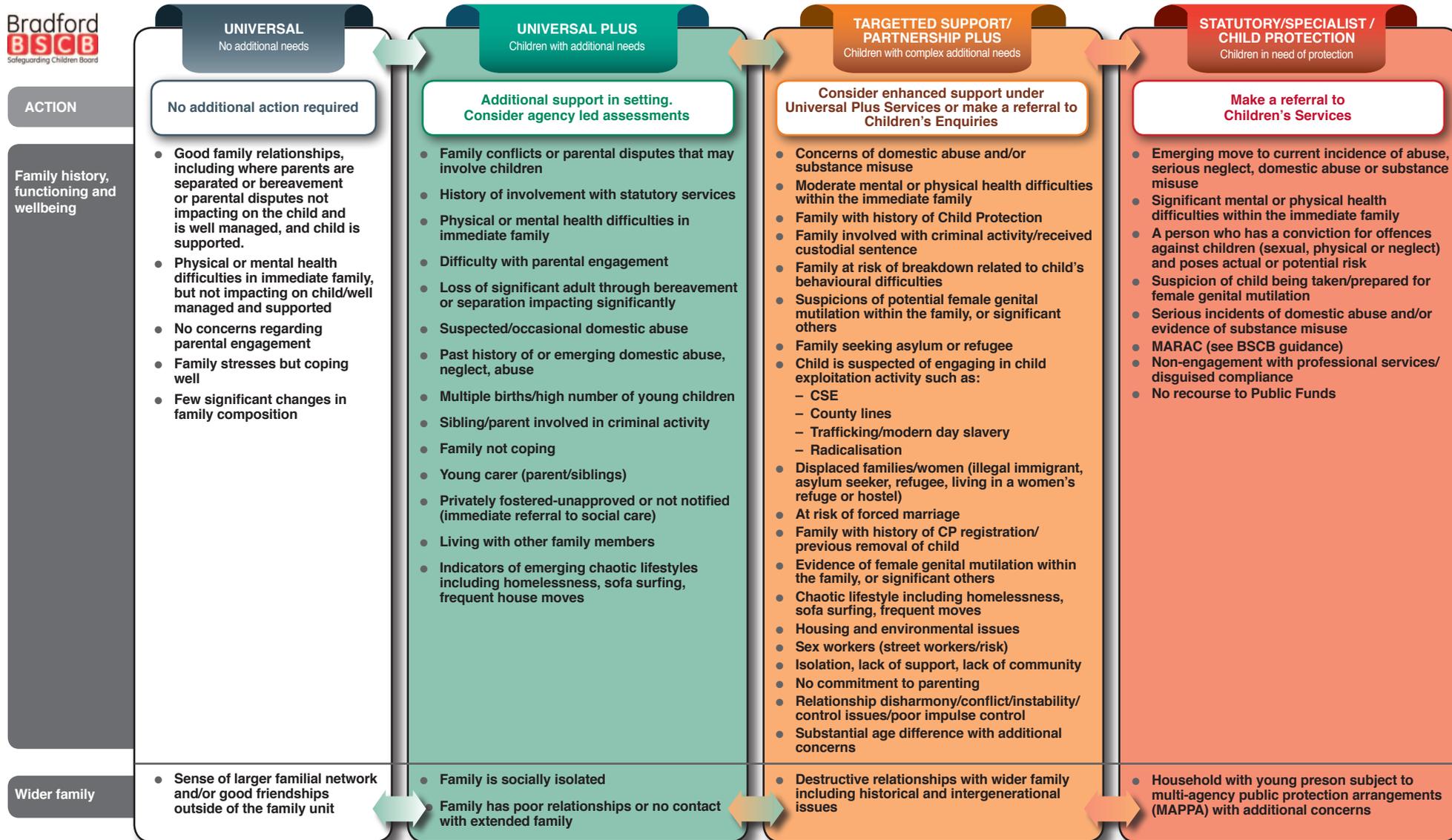
(see page 19 for more guidance)

Indicators of Need and Intervention Criteria (continued)

- Title page p1
- Foreword p2
- Continuum of Need Model p3
- Levels of Vulnerability, Risk & Need p6
- Indicators of Need and Intervention Criteria p7
- Key Guidance – BSCB p15
- Key Guidance – Child Neglect p16
- Key Guidance – Domestic Abuse FGM p17
- Key Guidance – Child Exploitation, Radicalisation p18
- Key Guidance – Signs of Safety p19
- Glossary of Terms & Useful Links p23

FAMILY & ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

Please note: This is an illustrative rather than comprehensive list of indicators



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What needs to happen? (Safety/wellbeing goals)

(see page 19 for more guidance)

Indicators of Need and Intervention Criteria (continued)

- Title page p1
- Foreword p2
- Continuum of Need Model p3
- Levels of Vulnerability, Risk & Need p6
- Indicators of Need and Intervention Criteria p7
- Key Guidance – BSCB p15
- Key Guidance – Child Neglect p16
- Key Guidance – Domestic Abuse FGM p17
- Key Guidance – Child Exploitation, Radicalisation p18
- Key Guidance – Signs of Safety p19
- Glossary of Terms & Useful Links p23

FAMILY & ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS (continued)

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	UNIVERSAL No additional needs	UNIVERSAL PLUS Children with additional needs	TARGETTED SUPPORT/ PARTNERSHIP PLUS Children with complex additional needs	STATUTORY/SPECIALIST / CHILD PROTECTION Children in need of protection
ACTION	No additional action required	Additional support in setting. Consider agency led assessments	Consider enhanced support under Universal Plus Services or make a referral to Children's Enquiries	Make a referral to Children's 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 Impacting on family's ability to provide children's basic needs Children negatively affected by their family's low income or unemployment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accommodation places child at serious risk of harm Extreme debts/poverty impacting on ability to meet family's basic needs Children negatively affected as a result of overcrowded living conditions and potential homelessness Longstanding issues such as substance misuse/offending etc
Social and Community Resource	<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"> Unemployment affecting parents/family significantly Family is socially excluded Frequent housing moves Learning difficulties of parents or child leading to marginalisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social exclusion Victimisation of family in their local area 	<p>Children vulnerable to gangs due to social environment as victim or associate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children negatively affected as a result of insufficient facilities to meet needs or to access local services Children negatively affected as a result of the family's social exclusion Children associating with anti-social or criminally active peers Children who have limited access to age appropriate advice, including contraceptive and sexual health advice, information and services Children experiencing bullying, racism or discrimination at school or in the community

Where there is an immediate risk to a child call the Police on 999. For Bradford Safeguarding Procedures visit www.bradfordscb.org.uk

SOS INFO	What's working well? (strengths and safety)	How worried are we? (Safety and wellbeing scale)	What needs to happen? (Safety/wellbeing goals)	(see page 19 for more guidance)
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Safeguarding Children in Bradford District

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 have 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. Where there are issues of consent, it will be important to distinguish who has parental responsibility.

The Children Act encourages all agencies to work in partnership wherever possible with families and make onward referrals with their consent. This should be possible in levels 2 and 3, but it is acknowledge that gaining consent for Level 4 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 Bradford’s consent policy 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 over time, such as in situations of persistent neglect. There are not absolute criteria in making judgements regarding children’s well-being. Practitioners are encouraged to professionally raise concerns and escalate those concerns with other agencies, if they feel in their judgement that a child’s needs or safety are being overlooked. Refer as appropriate to the Resolving Professional Disagreement and Escalation Policy here (insert link).

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO – Tel. 01274 435908) should be alerted, within one working day, to all cases in which an allegation has come to an employer’s attention, 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 2018).



Title page

👉 p1

Foreword

👉 p2

Continuum of Need Model

👉 p3

Levels of Vulnerability, Risk & Need

👉 p6

Indicators of Need and Intervention Criteria

👉 p7

Key Guidance – BSCB

👉 p15

Key Guidance – Child Neglect

👉 p16

Key Guidance – Domestic Abuse FGM

👉 p17

Key Guidance – Child Exploitation, Radicalisation

👉 p18

Key Guidance – Signs of Safety

👉 p19

Glossary of Terms & Useful Links

👉 p23

Child Neglect

Be Professionally Curious

Safeguarding Children is everyone's responsibility. All children have the right to be safe and to be protected from all forms of abuse and neglect.

All practitioners whose work brings them into contact with children and families should be alert to the signs of abuse and neglect, know where to turn to if they need to ask for help, and be able to make referrals to children's social care or to police, if they suspect that a child is at risk of immediate harm or is in danger.

Children will rarely disclose abuse or neglect themselves and, if they do, it will often be through unusual behaviour or comments. This makes identifying abuse or neglect difficult for professionals across agencies. We know that it is better to help children as early as possible before issues get worse. That means all agencies and practitioners need to work together- the first step is to be professionally curious.

While the presence of a potential indicator of neglect does not necessarily mean that a child is being neglected, it will always warrant further investigation. Practitioners must be 'professionally curious' to determine further information in the best interests of the child. It is essential that professionals exercise professional curiosity at all times as it is likely that signs of any form of abuse including neglect will be identified when dealing with an unassociated incident.

Are you confident that you know what child neglect is?

- ✓ Neglect is the failure to meet a child's basic needs. Neglect can happen over a period of time, but can also be a one-off event
- ✓ Incidents often don't meet social care or criminal thresholds: it is a cumulative effect that is the most impactful
- ✓ A child may be left hungry or dirty, without adequate clothing, shelter, supervision, medical or health care.
- ✓ A child may be put in danger or not protected from physical or emotional harm
- ✓ They may not get the love, care and attention they need from their parents.
- ✓ A child who is neglected will often suffer from other abuse as well, both inside and outside the home.

The lived experience for the neglected child

Neglect can have serious and long-lasting effects. Not only will it make a child's life miserable but it can affect all aspects of their development and future relationships. It can be anything from affecting early brain development, language delay, physical injuries from accidents, low self esteem, poor school attendance, to self-harm and suicide attempts. In the very worst cases where a child dies from malnutrition or being denied the care they need. In some cases it can cause permanent disabilities.

Though neglect can affect any child, its impact particularly infants and very young children who, among all age groups, are the highest risk of death and/or incurring lasting mental and physical damage

Neglect can come in several different forms:

- ✓ **Physical Neglect:**
Failing to provide for a child's basic needs such as food, clothing or shelter.
Failing to adequately supervise a child or provide for their safety.
- ✓ **Emotional Neglect:**
The omission of love and failing to nurture a child.
Emotional neglect can overlap with emotional abuse (see below), but is a different form of maltreatment.
- ✓ **Educational Neglect:**
Failing to ensure a child receives an education
- ✓ **Medical / Dental Neglect:**
Failing to provide appropriate health care, including dental care and refusal of care where a child/young person has been diagnosed with a health condition e.g. Asthma, or ignoring medical recommendations and/or persistent not attending key appointments
- ✓ **Emotional Abuse:**
The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, it may involve deliberately telling a child they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunities to express their views, and may involve serious bullying.

Title page

➔ p1

Foreword

➔ p2

Continuum of Need Model

➔ p3

Levels of Vulnerability, Risk & Need

➔ p6

Indicators of Need and Intervention Criteria

➔ p7

Key Guidance – BSCB

➔ p15

Key Guidance – Child Neglect

➔ p16

Key Guidance – Domestic Abuse FGM

➔ p17

Key Guidance – Child Exploitation, Radicalisation

➔ p18

Key Guidance – Signs of Safety

➔ p19

Glossary of Terms & Useful Links

➔ p23

Domestic Abuse

Key guidance

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. But it isn't just physical violence – domestic abuse includes emotional, physical, sexual, financial or psychological abuse.

Abusive behaviour can occur in any relationship. It can continue even after the relationship has ended. Both men and women can be abused or abusers.

Domestic abuse can seriously harm children and young people. Witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse, and teenagers can suffer domestic abuse in their relationships

Domestic abuse can include:

- sexual abuse and rape (including within a relationship)
- punching, kicking, cutting, hitting with an object
- withholding money or preventing someone from earning money
- taking control over aspects of someone's everyday life, which can include where they go and what they wear
- not letting someone leave the house
- reading emails, text messages or letters
- threatening to kill or harm them, a partner, another family member or pet.

Children and young people witnessing domestic abuse

Witnessing or exposure to domestic abuse can result in long lasting trauma effects on children which can impair their development on many levels. Children living in a home where domestic abuse is happening are at risk of other types of abuse too. Children can experience domestic abuse or violence in lots of different ways. They might:

- ✓ see the abuse
- ✓ hear the abuse from another room
- ✓ see a parent's injuries or distress afterwards
- ✓ be hurt by being nearby or trying to stop the abuse

Teenagers experiencing domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can happen in any relationship, and it affects young people too.

They may not realise that what's happening is abuse. Even if they do, they might not tell anyone about it because they're scared of what will happen, or ashamed about what people will think.

Female Genital Mutilation

Key guidance

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a collective term for a range of procedures which involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. FGM is a criminal offence under the Female Genital Mutilation Act (2003) which includes failing to protect a girl from risk of FGM. It is an

extremely harmful practice and a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls (FGM Risk and Safeguarding: Guidance for Professionals DOH 2015)

Title page

➡ p1

Foreword

➡ p2

Continuum of Need Model

➡ p3

Levels of Vulnerability, Risk & Need

➡ p6

Indicators of Need and Intervention Criteria

➡ p7

Key Guidance – BSCB

➡ p15

Key Guidance – Child Neglect

➡ p16

Key Guidance – Domestic Abuse FGM

➡ p17

Key Guidance – Child Exploitation, Radicalisation

➡ p18

Key Guidance – Signs of Safety

➡ p19

Glossary of Terms & Useful Links

➡ p23

Child Exploitation

Key guidance

Child Exploitation refers to the use of children for someone else's advantage, gratification or profit often resulting in unjust, cruel and harmful treatment of the child. These activities are to the detriment of the child's physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development. It covers situations of:

- Manipulation
- Misuse
- Abuse (physical, sexual and emotional)
- Victimization
- Oppression or ill-treatment.

Child exploitation includes:

- The use of children for criminal activities etc.
- Sexual exploitation etc.
- Child domestic work
- Harmful work
- Child soldiers

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)/County Lines:

CCE is increasingly being recognised as a major factor behind crime in communities across the UK, including Bradford, while also simultaneously victimising vulnerable young people and leaving them at risk of harm.

Like all forms of abuse or exploitation it is typified by some form of power imbalance of the perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious imbalance, a power imbalance can also result from one or more other factors such as:

- Gender
- Cognitive ability
- Physical strength
- Status
- Access to economic or other resources.

The Home Office, 2018 defines Child Criminal Exploitation as:

Occurring where an individual or group takes advantage of a person under the age of 18 and may coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under that age into any activity...

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or
- For financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or
- Through violence or the threat of violence

The victim may be exploited even if the activity appears consensual (i.e. moving drugs or the proceeds of drugs from one place to another). CCE does not always involve physical contact: it can also occur through the use of technology.

- ✓ **County Lines** – is a form of Child Exploitation. It is a police term for urban gangs who supply drugs from one area to another.
- ✓ **County Lines** is a cross-cutting issue which can involve drugs, violence (physical and/or sexual), gangs, criminal and sexual exploitation, modern slavery, weapons and missing adults or children.
- ✓ **County Lines** can also involve 'Gangs' establishing themselves in the targeted localities by taking over the homes of vulnerable adults by force or coercion; practice referred to as 'cuckooing' and the criminal exploitation of children/vulnerable adults to move drugs and money.
- ✓ **County Lines and CCE** can involve children experiencing physical, mental and/or sexual exploitation, often over a significant period of time.

Radicalisation

Key guidance - Be Alert

- The child's parents, or other close associates, are members of prescribed organisations and there is evidence to suggest that the child supports violent extremist groups
- The child shares a non-specific wish to travel to conflict zones in pursuit of the ideology.

- The child is often intimidating towards others who do not share the same views, distributing material promoting violent extremism and conceals their online activity.

(please see page 23 for Government Prevent Strategy)

Title page

➡ p1

Foreword

➡ p2

Continuum of Need Model

➡ p3

Levels of Vulnerability, Risk & Need

➡ p6

Indicators of Need and Intervention Criteria

➡ p7

Key Guidance – BSCB

➡ p15

Key Guidance – Child Neglect

➡ p16

Key Guidance – Domestic Abuse FGM

➡ p17

Key Guidance – Child Exploitation, Radicalisation

➡ p18

Key Guidance – Signs of Safety

➡ p19

Glossary of Terms & Useful Links

➡ p23

Signs of Safety

Key guidance

- What are we worried about? (Past, current and future harm and danger)
- What's working well? (Strengths and safety)
- How worried are we? (Safety and Wellbeing scale)
- What needs to happen? (Safety/Wellbeing goals)

Remember Signs of Safety as an approach, helps you:

- Record, assess and plan
- Identify concerns
- Identify safety and strengths
- Scale the level of safety

So what are Danger/Worry Statements and Safety/Wellbeing Goals?

- **Danger/Worry Statements:** Simple behavioral statements of the specific worry we have about this child now and into the future that we need to work on.
- **Safety/Wellbeing Goals:** Clear, simple statements about what (not how) the caregiver will DO that will convince everyone the child is safe and their needs are being met now and into the future.
- **These are little gems of clarity**

Danger statements keep us focused on what exactly we worry will happen if nothing changes. One easy formula for writing a good danger/worry statement is to think of it in four parts:

- Begin with a brief phrase about who is worried. It may be just yourself and your organisation or it could include other organisations and family members.
- Next, describe the potential actions or inactions the caregiver may do, make sure that it is something that has happened and is repeated or an escalation of previous actions.
- Next reference when it has happened in the past, like the time when.
- Finally describe the impact on the child



1. Establishing constructive working relationships



2. Encourages critical thinking and maintains appreciative inquiry



3. Staying grounded day to day work – from early help – child protection

Danger statement example:

Frankie the social worker, Suzie the school nurse, Ms Brown and Mr Jupe, their teachers are all worried that the children will continue to come to school dirty and wearing a uniform that doesn't fit properly, like the time when the children came to school in dirty t-shirts that showed their tummies and dirty trousers that came up to their knees. They are worried that the children will stand out in school in a bad way and other children will not want to be friends with them. If this happens the children might get bullied and will grow up feeling they are not as good as other people and are not as lovable.

Worry statement example:

“The children's centre worker is worried without support Ms Harb's will struggle to manage Abal's behaviour and may hit Abal as she has reported she felt like doing this in the past. If this happened Abal, may become sad and frightened of her mother and even get hurt.

I am also worried that Ms Harb will find it difficult to introduce healthy foods to Abal's diet as this is a challenge and that Abal will continue to have a poor diet drinking fizzy drinks and eating toast, which could affect her teeth, health and growth.”

Title page

➡ p1

Foreword

➡ p2

Continuum of Need Model

➡ p3

Levels of Vulnerability, Risk & Need

➡ p6

Indicators of Need and Intervention Criteria

➡ p7

Key Guidance – BSCB

➡ p15

Key Guidance – Child Neglect

➡ p16

Key Guidance – Domestic Abuse FGM

➡ p17

Key Guidance – Child Exploitation, Radicalisation

➡ p18

Key Guidance – Signs of Safety

➡ p19

Glossary of Terms & Useful Links

➡ p23

Key guidance (continued)



Safety/Wellbeing Goals

The question that the Safety/Wellbeing Goal answers is:

“What does the agency need to see the parents doing differently with their children so everyone will know the children are safe and their needs are being met?”

- It is also important to make the distinction that this is not the same question as “what action needs to be taken” or “what services are needed?”
- This is a deceptively simple question that actually tries to help us do something very complex: to think about what behavioural changes the agency would need to see the parents make with their children in order to feel that the danger/worry was addressed **it’s not about what services to put in place.**
- These will take us from the future we worry about to the future we want to create.
- First, the “**who.**” We began with “who said” and then went to “who is worried.” Now we will use names of the people who are part of the safety network. In essence, this establishes that there are people who care about the child’s safety and are committed to helping and watching that the caregiver is doing what needs to be done. The safety network is the “jury” that must be persuaded that the child is safe.
- Next, a safety goal describes **what the parent will DO differently.** Note that the goal is not expressed as going to services, or even completing services, gaining insight, or having clean drug screens. It’s not expressed as what a

parent STOPS doing. **It’s extremely important to craft this part of the safety goal in terms of actions the parent will demonstrate.** Anchor what the caregiver needs to do differently in the caregiver’s behaviors that had everyone worried. What could the caregiver do instead? This ties the safety goal to the danger statement.

- The last part is make sure the “**demonstrated over time**” part is mentioned.

Safety goal example:

“**Frankie the social worker, the children’s parents and a safety network of family and friends agree to work together to show everyone that the children are always in a clean, well fitting uniform when they start the day at school and that they have all washed before putting on their uniforms. Frankie and the network will need to see this working for a period of nine months so that everyone is confident that the safety plan will keep working once the case closes**”

Wellbeing goal example:

“**Ms Harb will work with her network of people to show that she is able to manage her low mood and have actions that she could take to be in good mental health. Also that Abal has a healthy diet is putting on weight and meeting all her developmental milestones and that Abal will always be disciplined and cared for in ways that leave her feeling safe and cared about and does not involve hitting. We would want to see this happening for six months so that everyone is confident that Abal will continue to thrive**”.



Key guidance (continued)



REMEMBER

- When you share these statements with families, you are being honest and clear with them about what YOU worry about.
- It is important to gain what the family are worried about so that together you can write a danger/worry statement. When the families have a hand in creating the statements, they are more likely to understand agency worries.

- You are responsible for making sure that the agreed-upon danger statement fully expresses the agency worries and is written in plain language.
- If the family does not agree with agency worry, it is still the agency worry and will need to go in the danger/worry statement. (And keep an open mind about your worry. The family COULD be right!)

Here are a few examples of the questions we can use to explore what we are worried about with the families:

“Tell me about what happened today”

“What would your child say if they were here?”

“What do you think will happen in your family if nothing else changes?”

“It’s clear from what you’ve said you’re not happy with how things are going. How would you like things to be instead?”

“Has there ever been a time when X could have happened but you were able to do something different?”

“If the kids were here right now, what would they say is going well in your family?”

Safety goal example:

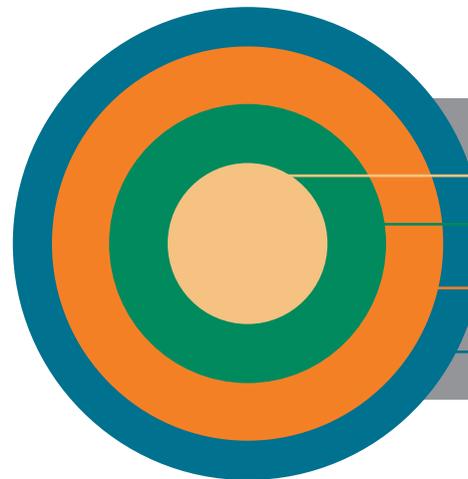
“Frankie the social worker, the children’s parents and a safety network of family and friends agree to work together to show everyone that the children are always in a clean, well fitting uniform when they start the day

Eliciting the child’s voice

While we have been talking about the family mostly as caregivers, remember to elicit the child’s voice as well.

Some of the tools you can use for these are the Three Houses and Safety Houses. Remember that these can be great sources of information about the behavioral detail of what the caregiver did (or what we worry the caregiver will do). These tools can be very effective ways to understand the impact of caregiver behavior on the child.

- Three houses
 - Safety house
- 
- What happened?
 - What was the **impact?**
 - What needs to happen for the child to feel safe?
 - In the child’s own words!



Family Safety Circle

- Name/photo/picture of child/children
- Who already knows everything that has happened?
- Who knows a little bit about what has happened?
- Who knows nothing about what has happened?

Key guidance (continued)

A 'Words and Pictures' storyboard never opens with a traumatic event or big difficulty. Write it with the family, caregiver or child.

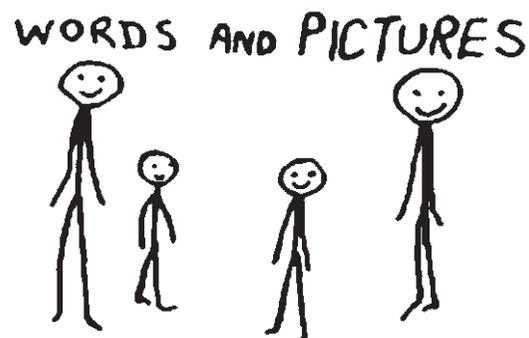
These can be used to explain to the child the danger statements, or for the child to explain what they know to their caregivers in a friendly format.

Basic Structure of a words and pictures explanation

1. Title to be clear what this is about
2. Starting picture sets the context, neutral not too worrying
3. Who is worried
4. What are they worried about, clear about what the worries are as this might be the only chance to let everyone in the system know the concerns
5. Who is trying to help and move things forward
6. End with everyone working together. Positive picture and future focussed.

When writing/drawing a words and pictures explanation consider these 3 points

- Why does the child need to know it?
- What does the child know already?
- What might the child have heard?



So why use Signs of Safety?

In a survey commissioned by the NSPCC in 2012 exploring where the approach is used in England. The key findings of the report were:

- Children and parents feel listened to and that they have a more active role in decisions. They like having their thoughts written on the board in meetings.
- Signs of Safety methods are thought to increase participation, co-operation and the engagement of parents/families
- Signs of Safety meetings are thought to decrease anxiety and relax parents/families
- Parents like having an insight into different perspectives and an understanding of what is expected of them
- Parents like focusing on strengths and not just problems

To find out more look at the website
<http://www.signsofsafety.net/signs-of-safety/>

Title page
p1

Foreword
p2

Continuum of Need Model
p3

Levels of Vulnerability, Risk & Need
p6

Indicators of Need and Intervention Criteria
p7

Key Guidance – BSCB
p15

Key Guidance – Child Neglect
p16

Key Guidance – Domestic Abuse FGM
p17

Key Guidance – Child Exploitation, Radicalisation
p18

Key Guidance – Signs of Safety
p19

Glossary of Terms & Useful Links
p23

Useful links

Information available on the web

- BDCFT Guidance on Paediatric Dental Neglect
- Bradford Consent Policy
- Bradford Neglect Toolkit
- Brook Traffic Light Tool for Sexual Behaviours
- Children Missing Education
- Children's Services – Child Exploitation Policy
- Elective Home Education
- FGM Pathway
- Government Prevent Strategy
- Home Office Child Exploitation Toolkit
- Information Sharing Guidance 2018
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018
- NICE Guidance on Child Abuse and Neglect
- Safeguarding Children in Whom Illness is Fabricated or Induced
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges
- Tri-x procedures for Fabricated or Induced Illness
- WTG 2018

Glossary of Terms

CE	Child Exploitation
CME	Child Missing Education
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
EDT	Emergency Duty Team
EHE	Elective Home Education
EHP	Early Help Panel
FII	Fabricated or Induced Illness
Frozen watchfulness	The state of a child who is unresponsive to its surroundings but is clearly aware of them
PEH	Prevention and Early Help
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
MASH	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training (Post 16)
TAC	Team Around the Child
TAF	Team Around the Family
TAP	Team Around the Professional
TAS	Team Around the School



Title page

👉 p1

Foreword

👉 p2

Continuum of Need Model

👉 p3

Levels of Vulnerability, Risk & Need

👉 p6

Indicators of Need and Intervention Criteria

👉 p7

Key Guidance – BSCB

👉 p15

Key Guidance – Child Neglect

👉 p16

Key Guidance – Domestic Abuse FGM

👉 p17

Key Guidance – Child Exploitation, Radicalisation

👉 p18

Key Guidance – Signs of Safety

👉 p19

Glossary of Terms & Useful Links

👉 p23