



Cumberland
Safeguarding
Children Partnership

Understanding the Level of Need and the Practice Response

Additional Information

The list of indicators is not exhaustive but provides examples of children's needs and circumstances that correspond to that level of need.

This is not a checklist to meet any level of need, professional judgement must be used. Practitioners must discuss with their Designated Safeguarding Lead any worries they have about children before beginning any intervention or referral.

In making a professional judgment about level of need there are a number of key questions that need to be asked. These questions are relevant, regardless of the level you are working at:

What is the individual child/ family telling us? Do we understand enough about their lived experience? How do we know we are making a difference to the child/family and we are enabling change? Have we understood what help and support they need for their health and development? If things don't change for the child/family what would happen? What would worry you the most and would this cause `harm`? What have you, and the connections that matter to the family done to try and help and support the child/family? Practitioners, along with their Designated Safeguarding Lead, should consider whether the family should be referred to Children's Social Services.

When we feel a family no longer needs the same level of help, we will work together to ensure they receive the right help in their community. We must follow Cumberland's process to make sure this is done safely and in a way that is best for the child and family. You can find this process on the CSCP website: cumberlandsafeguardingchildren.co.uk/guidance-and-resources/early-help

Professionals must gain consent (or at the very least make parents and carers aware), of your intention to contact Cumberland Children Advice and Support Service (CCASS) prior to a referral being made to CCASS, unless doing so would place the child at risk of further harm.

	Level of Need	Indicators	Route to Support
	Level 1 At this level, services are 'universal' meaning that they are available to all children and young people. These are children who make good overall progress through appropriate universal service. The child has no additional unmet needs or there is a single need identified which has been or can be met by a universal service.	Universal Needs - Children in good physical health whose general development is age appropriate and who are making good progress academically. - Children are living with parents/carers who are supported to meet their needs. - Children who need some help and who would benefit from additional universal services to make things better. - Children are provided with the opportunities to develop their own sense of resilience within a supportive environment of their home and community. This might be developing independent skills and their sense of personal identity.	Level 1 - Universal Needs There is no concern for the child and family. Universal services are accessed. A single agency response or family may need support such as access to breast feeding support/referral to Speech and Language Therapy (SALT). Support must be sought from line manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead before intervention or referral for support is made. Further advice and support can be sought from Team Around the School/Team Around the Setting/Early Help Officer.
	Level 2 This is where children's needs cannot be met through universal services and children require additional help. At this level an Early Help Assessment – Signs of Wellbeing and Success will be initiated, registered, a Team Around the Family developed and Team Around the Family meetings put in place. The Lead Practitioner will coordinate the assessment and plan. The family should be involved in the decision making as to who the Lead Practitioner is, and they should be known to the family. The Lead Practitioner details should be communicated to the child, family and agencies involved in the Early Help Assessment - Signs of Wellbeing and Success.	Community Based (Partner Led Early Help) Support - Children with mild disabilities or health issues. - Emerging worries for children who are out of school or have regular unauthorised absences. - Young carers, where their role is recognised and supported. - Emerging worries for children who may be vulnerable to anti-social behaviour or exploitation, with opportunities for early support before worries become established. - Helping and providing support to families where there are low levels of substance misuse, adult mental health difficulties or domestic abuse and some worries about the impact on the child. - Emerging emotionally-based school non-attendance linked to anxiety or emotional distress, beginning to impact on education and wellbeing. No immediate safeguarding worries but requires early help to prevent escalation. - Children are at risk of a growing number of suspensions, at risk of permanent exclusions and displaying behavioural challenges in education. - Families affected by parental ill-health, parental custody, homelessness, poverty, immigration or other problems.	Community Based (Partner Led Early Help) Support - Support from agency's Designated Safeguarding Lead must be sought to ensure this is an appropriate level for Early Help. - Check if there is already an established Early Help Assessment - Sign of Well-being and Success on the family which you might be able to contribute in. Contact the CCASS on 0333 240 1727 and ask for the Duty Early Help Officer. - If there is an Early Help Assessment - Sign of Well-being and Success already initiated, contact the Lead Practitioner to discuss your worries and about you contributing to the Early Help Assessment. - Initiate an Early Help Assessment - Sign of Well-being and Success. Parental consent is required. Ensure that you register the Early Help Assessment - Sign of Well-being and Success using the online forms. https://cumberlandsafeguardingchildren.co.uk/early-help-assessments-eha

	Level of Need	Indicators	Route to Support
		• Children who are starting to show signs of developmental delay, or who continue to experience delays even after receiving general support. • Families are affected by social isolation, discrimination or harassment. • Children who show early signs of being radicalised by people outside of their immediate family. • Child/young person experiencing emerging concerns in relation to online behaviour, including being involved in or affected by online bullying, trolling, or the sharing of inappropriate images. There may also be patterns of excessive gaming that are beginning to impact on the child's social interactions, relationships, emotional wellbeing, or day-to-day functioning. • Neglect - emerging worries that a child or young person's physical and emotional needs may not consistently be met, increasing their vulnerability within the home and community. This includes a need to understand the impact of poverty, including rural poverty, where access to services may be limited. Consideration should also be given to health needs, including access to dental care. • Neglect - concerns that the home lacks a secure emotionally available adult to enable the child to form a secure emotional attachment. For example, postnatal mental health or perinatal mental health within the first year of life. However, impact on their wellbeing is currently limited or short-term, and parents/carers are able to improve with support. •	• If you have access to the case management system, please initiate an Early Help and complete your assessment and ensure you register the assessment using the online forms. https://cumberlandsafeguardingchildren.co.uk/early-help-assessments-eha • Agree a Lead Practitioner with the family, if this has not been agreed already. In agreement with the family, establish appropriate family networks and develop/record the Early Help Plan with actions and timescales to meet the identified needs. The plan needs to be reviewed every 4-6 weeks. • Please ensure that all reviews are recorded; the plan updated and shared with professionals involved in the Team Around the Family (TAF). It is the Lead Practitioners responsibility to ensure that the case is closed using the online closure form at the end of the intervention. • Continue to seek line management/Designated Safeguarding Lead oversight to ensure this continues to be an appropriate level of Early Help. • Where Private Fostering is identified a referral must be made to the Cumberland Children Advice and Support Service (CCASS) using a single contact referral form. You can access the link: Report a concern about a child Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership • Where children are identified as at risk of Child Exploitation the Child Exploitation Risk Assessment and Review (CERAR) process must be followed: Child Exploitation (CE) Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership • When a young person (16/17 years old) is vulnerable to becoming homeless or presents as homeless then a referral should be made to CCASS.

	Level of Need	Indicators	Route to Support
	Level 3 Family Help There is an increasing level of complex and/or multiple unmet needs where coordinated help is required to prevent worries escalating. A multi-agency Assessment - will be initiated and a multi-agency team will be developed and coordinated with a clear evidenced plan about actions to be taken. A clearly identified Lead Practitioner will be in place at Level 3 to coordinate the multi-agency plan and act as the single point of contact for the family and professionals. Where the child and family's needs are met through Family Help, the Lead Practitioner will coordinate the multi-agency assessment and plan.	Family Help - Children with moderate disabilities or health issues. - Children who are out of school or have regular unauthorised absences. - Young carers, where their role has extended and compromised their childhood needs being met. - Children who are showing indicators of vulnerability linked to potential exploitation. They may be experiencing pressure or influence from others, which is impacting their ability to make safe choices. A coordinated, targeted family help response is needed to support the child and their family and build resilience and protective support networks. Children growing up in difficult family circumstances, where issues such as substance misuse, adult mental health difficulties or domestic abuse are ongoing, escalating and are having a clear impact on parenting capacity and the child's safety, development or emotional wellbeing. - Families affected by multiple and persistent worries (e.g. parental ill-health, custody issues, homelessness, poverty, immigration status), where these factors are interacting and resulting in instability, reduced parenting capacity, or unmet needs for the child - Children with developmental delay that is persistent, widening, or not improving despite early support, and where additional or coordinated intervention is required to meet their needs. - Families are affected by social isolation, discrimination or harassment, where there is evidence that this is impacting on the family's functioning, access to support, or the child's wellbeing. - Children showing indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation, where concerns are increasing, or linked to wider risk factors (e.g. social isolation, identity issues, exposure to harmful networks), requiring coordinated multi-agency assessment and intervention. - Neglect - ongoing worries that a child or young person's physical and emotional needs may not consistently be met, increasing their vulnerability within the home and community. This includes a need to understand the impact of poverty, including rural poverty, where access to services may be limited. Consideration should also be given to health needs, including access to dental care.	Level 3 - Targeted Early Help - Seek line management/ Designated Safeguarding Lead oversight to ensure this is an appropriate level for Early Help. - Check if there is already an established Early Help Assessment on the family which you might be able to contribute. Contact the Early Help line for Cumberland 0300 303 3896 - between 09:00am - 5:00pm Monday to Thursday and Friday 9:00am and 4:30pm. - If there is an Early Help Assessment - Sign of Well-being and Success already initiated contact the coordinator to discuss your worries and about you contributing to the Early Help Assessment - Sign of Well-being and Success. - Initiate an Early Help Assessment - Sign of Well-being and Success. Parental consent is required. Ensure that you register the Early Help Assessment - Sign of Well-being and Success using the online forms. https://cumberlandsafeguardingchildren.co.uk/early-help-assessments-eha - If you have access to the case management system, please initiate an Early Help Assessment - Signs of Well-being and Success, complete your assessment and ensure you register the assessment using the online forms. https://cumberlandsafeguardingchildren.co.uk/early-help-assessments-eha - Please ensure that all reviews are recorded, the plan updated and shared with professionals involved in the Team Around the Family. It is the coordinators responsibility to ensure that the case is closed using the online closure form at the end of the intervention. - This level will need a multi-agency response.

	Level of Need	Indicators	Route to Support
	Level 4 Harm and Significant Harm - Without intervention the child would become at risk of significant harm or the needs are such that without intervention the child's health or development would be seriously impaired. Help is provided as a "child in need" under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 via an assessment and following this at least initial co-ordination of services. - Where there is reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm because of abuse or neglect. Under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 local authority children's social care must make enquiries and decide if any action must be taken to protect the child. - The allocated Social Worker will take the lead coordination role and is responsible for oversight of the multi-agency plan.	Harm and Significant Harm - Children with lifelong disabilities., who are not experiencing compliance with a prescribed care plan. - Children whose growth and development is being impaired by the quality of care received. - Children displaying behaviours that may place them at increased risk, often in the context of trauma or exploitation, where families require support to promote safety and wellbeing. - Children at risk of extra-familial harm, e.g. sexual and/or criminal exploitation. - Pregnant women whose lifestyle may be affecting the development of the unborn child. - Parents experiencing difficulties in parenting capacity due to substance misuse, physical disability, learning difficulties, domestic or family violence or mental ill-health. - Children with high levels of emotional difficulties who may need a service from CAMHS. - Children who show more advanced signs of being radicalised and where parents or siblings may be involved in radicalisation. - Children requiring accommodation because there is no-one who is able to care for them. - Neglect – persistent failure to meet a child or young person's physical, emotional and developmental needs, which is likely to result in serious harm to their health, development or wellbeing. Their basic needs are consistently unmet across key areas, including appropriate supervision, safe living conditions and essential healthcare (including dental care). There are significant and enduring concerns regarding their education, including sustained non-attendance, which is impacting their development and future outcomes. - Children who exhibit sexualised behaviors, presenting an increased risk of self and others.	Harm and Significant Harm Child in Need (CiN) Child Protection (CP) - Need(s) require specialist services to protect from significant harm. - Advice and guidance must be sought from the agency's own Designated Safeguarding Lead/line management before making a referral to CCASS. - To make a referral follow procedure on CSCP website - CCASS office hours Monday - Thursday 8:00am – 5:00pm and Friday 8:00am – 4:30pm. - Emergency duty team (outside office hours): weekends, Bank Holidays, and between 5:00pm (Fridays from 4:30pm) and 8:00am – 0333 240 1727 - If making a referral to CCASS, the Single Contact Referral Form is to be used: https://cumberlandsafeguardingchildren.co.uk/report-concern-about-child