



Kirklees Safeguarding Children Board



Neglect Strategy 2018

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Introduction

I would like to introduce you to the refreshed Kirklees Neglect Strategy.

I hope that the following pages will give you a deeper insight into neglect, the causes of it and how we respond individually and collectively.

Research tells us neglect can have a cumulative and pervasive impact on the development of children and young people and this is likely to have a long term impact on their wellbeing. It is important that we understand the full picture locally in Kirklees and nationally. This will enable us to have a clear and consistent approach to addressing responding to it and measuring the impact it has on the children and families that we are working for.

Professional curiosity and being inquisitive is important in effectively safeguarding children, professionals should have a good working knowledge of child development and poverty. It is important also that professionals think about the child's daily lived experience and the circumstances in which families live.

There is a body of research that suggests there is a strong association between families' socio-economic circumstances and the chances that their children will experience child abuse and neglect.

This strategy aims to take new approach to tackling child neglect, by using the public health method of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention and developing a holistic and long term solution to reducing children affected by neglect.



Guiding principles

This strategy sets out our approach to tackling neglect in Kirklees. In order to be successful, our strategy needs to be grounded in the culture and ethos of the Kirklees partnership, and as such it will adhere to the following principles:

- **Voice of the child**
Kirklees has an ambition to be a child friendly local authority and our approach to helping the most vulnerable children, young people and families in neglectful situations needs to reflect these values
- **Right conversations right people right time**
we want children, young people and families to receive the right support and help at the right time, as early as possible in the life of a problem. Preventative and early support responses to neglect are critical to avoid issues from escalating and children experiencing further harm;
- **Children and Young people are safe from harm, inside the home, outside the home and online** (KSCB Business plan 2017-2019)
- **Children and young people have access to the right help, the right service at the right time and in the right place** (KSCB Business plan 2017-2019)
- **Effective partnership working and accountability to improve safeguarding outcomes for children, young people and their families** (KSCB Business plan 2017-2019)
- **Every child should have the best start in life** (Kirklees Corporate plan—Shared Outcome 2017-2018)

Why we need a neglect strategy

The impact of neglect is far reaching, from the directly physiological and developmental such as failure to thrive and developmental delays, through to emotional and relationship problems such as the inability to regulate emotions and to know how to interact with others.

- ➔ Neglect is the most common reason a child in Kirklees is made subject to a child protection plan
- ➔ Neglect is the most common reason children are made subject to repeat Child Protection plans or Early Support plans
- ➔ Neglect makes Children vulnerable to other forms of abuse e.g. Child Sexual Exploitation, radicalisation, criminal exploitation
- ➔ Neglect is an area where there can be drift and delay in the interventions put in place to address it; professionals can become de-sensitised to children's living conditions and experiences of poor parenting
- ➔ Neglect can be especially damaging in the first 18 months of a child's life but also has a demonstrable, damaging cumulative effect which can be a causal factor in poor adolescent mental health
- ➔ Children who experience neglect have some of the poorest long term health developmental outcomes, are at high risk of accidents, are likely to have insecure attachment patterns and less likely to develop characteristics associated with resilience

Our Neglect Strategy is aligned with our improvement plan and other local strategies such as Early support strategy 2018, and will focus on the key things that will make the most difference to improving the lives of our children and young people

National context

The Department for Education (DfE) is responsible for child protection in England. It sets out policy, legislation and statutory guidance on how the child protection system should work. In 2016 the DfE consulted on the introduction of mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect, which could see an increase in referrals for neglect.

At a local level, it is the responsibility of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) to co-ordinate and ensure the effectiveness of work to protect and promote the welfare of children, including setting local policy, procedure and guidance. The main statutory guidance is Working Together 2015.

The role of Ofsted is to inspect the effectiveness of local arrangements and to make recommendations for improvement. 'In the child's time: Professional Responses to Neglect', Ofsted's thematic audit in 2014, found the quality of professional practice around neglect was too variable overall, with the result that some children are left in situations of neglect for too long. The report set out a number of findings to be addressed by LSCBs and local authorities that are embedded within our strategy. Ofsted has announced that neglect will be the focus of its joint targeted inspections from April 2017.

Neglect is the most common type of abuse experienced by children and young people in England

Kirklees context

Common with most local authorities Kirklees has experienced reductions in its budget and corresponding reductions in its services, staffing and resources such as Children's Centres. Re-organising the Early Support offer following this is a priority for Kirklees Council.

Recent Ofsted inspections have also highlighted areas for improvement across children's services, some of these improvements are reflected in this strategy and others will also run alongside it.

Recently, Kirklees has had Serious Case reviews where Neglect is a key feature for those children. How we respond to low level neglect and to those families who move up and down the thresholds has been highlighted as an area for improvement. Addressing this is included in the action plan for this strategy.

What do we want our new neglect strategy to achieve?

-  Understand the scale and impact of neglect in Kirklees and
-  Clear expectations of senior leaders in all partner agencies to
-  Reduce the number of children who suffer neglect and reduce the impact and time that they suffer

Definition of Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Young persons definition

Every child and young person has the right to be looked after properly. Not receiving the important things they need could constitute a form of neglect.

The term neglect is an emotive issue which can illicit an array of different feelings and responses from an individual depending on their personal experiences.

Children and young people are often able to describe what neglect means to them and throughout the document you will see quotes

from young people that have been taken from the summary document "What 'Neglect' means" an engagement project carried out by the IYCE Team, Kirklees Council September 2017.

As a result, to minimise the potential impact of this issue on vulnerable participants of the project, rather than focus on the term 'neglect' they were asked to explore the concept of 'Wants and Needs'.

'WANTS & NEEDS':

There is a big difference between having the things we want and the things we need. The children and young people involved were clearly able to identify between the two, defining 'wants' as desirable items such as consoles and phones and 'needs' as things that are important for their well-being and survival such as food, clothes and shelter.

According to Childline, every child and young person needs and should have access to the following:

- Clothes that are clean and warm and shoes that fit and keep you dry
- Enough to eat and drink
- Protection from dangerous situations
- Somewhere warm, dry and comfortable to sleep
- Help when you're ill or you've been hurt
- Love and care from your parents or carers
- Support with education
- Access and help with medication if needed

WANT

NEED

Not having our basic needs met:

Here are some adjectives that the young people used to describe how they would feel if their basic needs were not being met:

- Hopeless
- Depressed
- Tired and fed up
- Unhappy
- Useless
- Stressed
- Heartbroken
- Mentally ill
- Worthless
- Not sociable
- Dirty
- Downhearted
- Embarrassed
- Unwanted and not needed
- Scared
- Frustrated
- Neglected
- Like a robot – disconnected with reality

These are some of the comments young people made to describe what their thoughts feelings of not having their basic needs met might lead to:

It would be very difficult to do well in education because learning and school would be the last thing on your mind. You'd just want to survive

I would have a lack of motivation; I wouldn't feel like doing anything or feel safe around the people who are meant to love and look after me

You might hang around with the wrong people and start doing bad stuff. Eventually you might end up in prison

Depressed and it might lead you to do things like drinking alcohol, smoking cigarettes or taking drugs and maybe suicide.

I'd feel bad about myself and useless

I don't think you'd grow up to be a very happy adult



The young people were asked to summarise in a few words what they thought were the most important things they needed to be healthy and happy:

A child needs a good education to stay healthy. Education is one of the most important things as it can give you the information you

Very basically we all need food, water, clothes shelter as well as a good education to survive and stay happy.

Children need the opportunity to get involved with things instead of staying in a little shell.

Every child needs a loving caring person in their life. If you have that, you have everything you need because nothing can harm you.

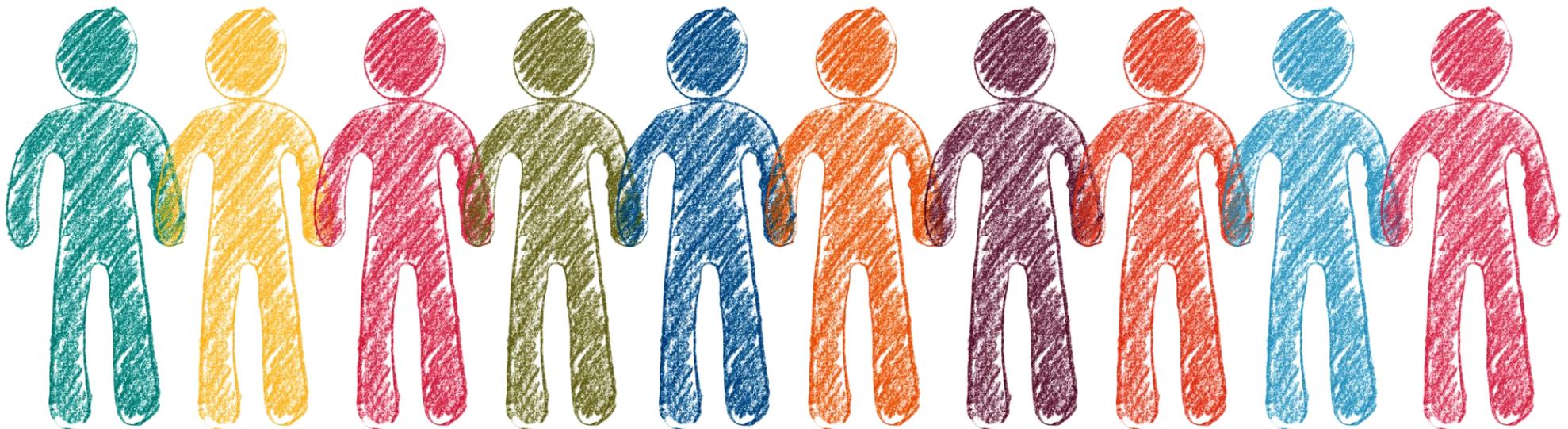
A caring, supportive family and friends to talk to through hard times.

Exercise and fitness is very important to me.

Every child needs toys and things to play with to keep them entertained.

We all at least need a loving family and friends

Resilience to never give up but also a good education and family to keep us safe and away from harm.



A Public Health Approach to Tackling Neglect

Primary Prevention

What we already have in place

Parenting Programmes
Early Support Partnership
2 year old childcare offer / information about childcare options
Increase public and professional awareness of child development
Locality hubs / Community plus

Work to do

Embedding a shared understanding of Nurturing Parents principles amongst services and systems engaged with our local communities
Public Awareness campaigns that encourage positive parenting (mobile phone addiction)
A local population that recognises and reports child neglect at the earliest opportunity

Secondary Prevention

What we already have in place

Support for parents of children with disability / special needs
SPA / PDVG / CHART/ SWANs
Targeted parenting classes
Family Nurse Partnership
Stronger Families / Homestart
Multi-agency legal interventions panel
Family Group Conferences, Advocacy

Work to do

A confident, well trained workforce who can effectively identify, assess and address child neglect throughout a child's life
Bring children and adult's agencies together
Agreed thresholds for intervention and framework for assessment, understood by the whole workforce
Evidence based interventions that allow children to be seen, heard and helped
Support for parents with learning disabilities

Tertiary Prevention

What we already have in place

Thriving Kirklees
Hidden Harm (CGL)
Multi-Systemic Therapy Service
Mothers Apart
Pastoral care within schools

Work to do

Work to mitigate the impact and repair the damage neglect causes
Appropriate interventions for children of all ages to ensure that no child is left behind
Work to increase childhood resilience
Post separation support for parents and children
Increasing sufficiency in foster and kinship care

What lessons have we learnt from local reviews and audits?

- The significance of disguised compliance in causing drift and delay
- Failure to adequately assess the impact of parental issues on their ability to make meaningful and lasting change
- The importance of taking into account case history in assessments and avoiding “Start-Again Syndrome”
- The importance of contingency plans, clear thresholds and clear escalation and de-escalation processes
- The need for high support for practitioners undertaking complex assessments including the use of specialist tools
- High quality regular supervision undertaken by managers who are able to identify issue such as disguised compliance, drift and delay, start again syndrome and a lack of focus on the children’s daily lived experience
- Lack of understanding of and focus on the daily lived experience of the *each* child
- Consideration should be given to the impact of the number and range of professionals working with neglectful families to ensure that this does not become counter-productive
- Waiting for an “incident” such as a physical or sexual assault before responding to the neglect
- The importance of strong professional challenge to agencies who are not progressing their agreed work with families
- The need for consistently high quality of CP Plans; with clear timescales held to account by Independent Reviewing Officers



Learning for improved practice from National Serious Case Reviews (from NSPCC)

1. Be aware of children who are more vulnerable to neglect
2. Monitor missed appointments
3. Pay attention to accidents and injuries
4. Have the confidence and knowledge to effectively assess parental capability to change
5. See the bigger picture and understand the long-term impact of neglect
6. Support families through early evidence-based assessment and intervention
7. Work closely with other agencies to identify concerns and plan interventions
8. Undertake robust and comprehensive assessments
9. Keep focus on the need to improve outcomes for the child’s daily lived experience
10. Use staff supervision to avoid case drift

What we are going to do...

Initial priorities

- Commitment from all agencies to Neglect Strategy
- Set up a multi-agency task and finish group to drive this strategy forward
- Scoping of available resources to repair damage caused to children who have been neglected
- Review of current training available to all agencies
- Analysis of new, emerging data

Strategic

Awareness

- Media campaign for the general public including for children and young people
- Develop child friendly version of the strategy
- Relaunch continuum of need
- Promotion of new initiatives developed at strategic level
- Increase public and professional awareness of child development
- Development of practitioner Neglect toolkit

Training

- Review and update multi-agency training offer
- Support single agencies to develop internal training responses
- Offer a range of training options including advanced
- Improve quality of assessments and plans
- Targeted training for adults agencies to support identification and intervention

Data

- Audit of interventions
- Build picture of local hotspots
- Understand indicators from a range of agencies in relation to neglect
- Identify multi-agency indicators of success
- Record parental factors linked to child neglect (e.g. mental health, substance misuse)
- Produce performance booklet to be analysed quarterly
- Improve data capture around Early Support
- Longitudinal multi-agency case file audit

- Clear guidance on information sharing and consent, levels of need and escalation / de-escalation processes
- Review of Early Support paperwork, process and interventions
- Promotion of Nurturing Parents principles
- Improve joint working across adults and children services especially in relation to parental learning disability
- Explore post separation support for parents and children
- Increasing sufficiency in foster and kinship care

Governance and accountability

This strategy is owned and overseen by the Kirklees Safeguarding Children Board (KSCB).

The KSCB will monitor progress against the strategic objectives on an annual basis. The effective delivery of the strategy will be reported to the Board through highlight reports.

The success of the strategy will be measured based on a range of quantitative and qualitative measures set out in this strategy and an action plan will be developed to ensure these are tracked.

Quantitative

Qualitative



- KSCB audits of child protection plans for neglect will show early identification of neglect good assessment, impact of plan and use of appropriate interventions
- EH and Social care internal audits will show early identification of neglect, good assessment, impact of plan and use of appropriate interventions
- Feedback from parents will be collected using agencies existing mechanisms for service user feedback
- Feedback from young people will be collected using Children's Rights Service and Kirklees Youth Council
- Feedback from frontline practitioners will be gained after each training course and through Board member

- New Performance Indicator booklet for Neglect
- Numbers of people attending training events on neglect and accompanying evaluation of impact of this training data

How we will know our practice is good?

The KSCB Performance Indicator Booklet will show us if we are identifying early enough and at a young enough age, whether we deal with cases in a timely way and avoid drift and delay. It will also tell us whether practitioners are taking up the training offered and using the tools we have developed to support them in their practice.

Children subject to neglect are identified early	Practitioners are undertaking training and using what they have learnt in practice	Instances of repeat referrals / repeat plans are reduced
Children and young people report improvements to their daily lives quickly once interventions start	Audits will show evidence of good practice with all agencies working together	Referrals made by all agencies and the public are appropriate, high quality and enable the right intervention to be put in place quickly
Tools, thresholds and practical guidance is used consistently	Children who meet the threshold for care are identified quickly and cases are resolved swiftly	There are no gaps in our service provision in relation to locality or age of child
Instances of child absence from school or parents failing to bring children to health appointments will decrease	Practitioners will report improved confidence in identifying, assessing and addressing neglect	

Action Plan—to be used by the Neglect Task and Finish Group

Strategic			
What are we trying to achieve?	Who is the Lead?	When will this will be done?	Progress
Development of practitioner Neglect toolkit			
Clear guidance on information sharing and consent			
Improve robustness of transfer of cases			
Clear thresholds and guidance			
Review of Early Support paperwork, process and interventions			
Clear escalation and de-escalation processes			
Identify gaps in provision for therapeutic response			
Longitudinal multi-agency case file audit			
Awareness			
What are we trying to achieve?	Who is the Lead?	When will this will be done?	Progress
Media campaign for the general public including for			
Develop child friend version of the strategy			
Relaunch continuum of need			
Promotion of new initiatives developed at strategic level			

Training			
What are we trying to achieve?	Who is the Lead?	When will this will be done?	Progress
Review and update multi-agency training offer			
Support single agencies to develop internal training responses			
Offer a range of training options including advanced			
Improve quality of assessments and plans			
Targeted training for adults agencies to support identification and intervention			
Data			
What are we trying to achieve?	Who is the Lead?	When will this will be done?	Progress
Audit of interventions			
Build picture of local hotspots			
Understand indicators from a range of agencies in relation to neglect			
Identify indicators of success			
Record parental factors linked to child neglect (e.g. mental health, substance misuse)			
Produce performance booklet to be checked quarterly			
Improve data capture around Early Support			

Appendix 1 Categories of Neglect (Horwarth 2018)



Appendix 2 Risk factors for child neglect and why adult and children's' services need to work together

Any child can suffer neglect, but some are more at risk such as children who:

- Are in care
- Seeking asylum
- Live with a parent who has problems with drugs or alcohol
- Suffers from mental health problems
- Is in a domestically abusive relationship.

Other things that may make neglect more likely include:

- Living in poverty, unsuitable housing or a deprived area (Thoburn et al, 2000)
- Having parents who were abused or neglected themselves (Harmer et al, 1999)

Appendix 3 Key areas for inspection taken from the Guidance for joint targeted area inspections on the theme: children living with neglect

Inspectors will evaluate the extent to which:

1. Risks to children living with neglect are prevented and reduced. The needs of the child and their family are met at an early stage through timely access to effective help
2. Children living with neglect receive the right help and protection because of application of appropriate thresholds, effective information sharing and timely intervention
3. Agencies work together to identify children who are neglected, intervene to reduce risk and monitor effectively the impact of interventions so that risk is reduced
4. The impact of neglect on children is reduced because they and their families can access a sufficient range of local services, including therapeutic help that improves children's emotional well-being and safety. This may include help provided by community and voluntary services
5. Professionals and support staff are well trained, confident and knowledgeable. They understand the impact of neglect on children's daily lives as well as the long-term and cumulative impact on their health and well-being. This enables them to identify how to help and protect children and to take action to do so
6. Children who are neglected experience a child-centred approach from all professionals. The risks to them and their needs are assessed effectively and responded to appropriately. Assessments consider family history and the cumulative impact of neglect, and show that there is a clear understanding of the ways in which different forms of neglect affect children. The views of the child are clearly recorded and central to the work with the family
7. Professionals have a clear understanding of how the behaviour of parents and carers affects children. They assess any strengths and risks in parenting and the extended family. Where changes in parents' and/or carers' behaviour are required, clear timescales for change are agreed. These timescales are based on the child's needs, and improvements in parenting are closely monitored
8. Professionals challenge each other appropriately to ensure good practice, and they challenge and support parents/carers where poor parenting is resulting in neglect
9. Children living with neglect benefit from evidence-based approaches, tools and services that reduce risks and meet their needs
10. Children and their families feel their views have been heard and understood. This leads to improvements in the help and support that they receive
11. The police work in partnership with other agencies to appropriately identify and address the needs of children who have been or are neglected. They investigate effectively cases of neglect in families with children

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