



BSCB Neglect Toolbox

April 2018

Introduction

Safeguarding is not a paper exercise, it's not about ticking the right number of boxes, critically it is about the application of professional judgement. This simple toolkit has been designed for our multi-agency safeguarding community as an aid to help guide and focus thinking. Knowing what to look for, what to do and how to seek help when you suspect a child may be suffering from neglect is key. Please use this toolkit to help focus on the questions you should ask and the actions you could take.

Neglect Indicators and Bromley Thresholds of Need

Neglect can be difficult to identify. Isolated signs may not mean that a child is suffering neglect, but multiple and persistent signs over time could indicate a serious problem. It is common for evidence of neglect to present through signs and symptoms which may be noticed by different agencies in relation to different children in the family at different points in time.

Below are indicators of Neglect, taken from the [Bromley Threshold of Need Guidance](#).

Level 2 – Children with additional needs—Early Help and Targeted Services

- Children with development delay within Early Years Foundation Stage
- Children whose parent/carer frequently fails to attend meetings with the school or early years provider to discuss the child's wellbeing
- Children with low attendance at school (below 85%) or at early years settings and persistent absence
- Children with a pattern of missed appointments – routine and non-routine
- Children who are showing early signs of organic or non-organic failure to thrive
- Children with low self-esteem which is impairing their educational and personal development
- Children who lack age appropriate behaviours and independent living skills likely to impact negatively on development
- Children affected negatively by inconsistent care (i.e. inappropriate care or very young parents)
- Children's development negatively affected by inconsistent parenting in relation to boundaries, responses and engagement in learning

Level 3 – Complex – Children with high or complex additional needs

- Physical and emotional development raising significant concerns
- Missed appointments – routine and non-routine which are impacting significantly on the child's health

- Inadequate physical care or supervision of a child
- Inconsistent parenting significantly impairing the emotional or behavioural development of the child
- Allegations of neglect including poor supervision, poor hygiene, clothing or nutrition
- Failure to seek/attend treatment or appointments
- Drug/alcohol use has escalated to the point where it is chaotic and impairs the parents' capacity to provide safe and appropriate care for the children. This is beginning to impact on the children's health, development and well-being

Level 4 – Children with acute additional unmet needs and/or child protection (Section 47)

- Medical referral of non-organic failure to thrive in under 5's
- Suspicion of neglect that may cause significant harm to the child
- Any allegation of neglect or any suspected injury suspected to be a non-accidental injury to a child
- Children/young people suffering neglect emotionally or physically (including a history of apparently minor but cumulative episodes) which is impacting on their long term development
- No available parent, and child is at risk of suffering significant harm (eg an abandoned baby)
- Parental drug and/or alcohol use is at a problematic level and the parent/carer cannot carry out daily parenting.
- The parent's capacity to provide appropriate care is significantly reduced and aggravated by the combination of domestic violence, substance misuse and mental ill health

Identifying and Assessing Neglect

It is important that children and young people receive the right service at the right time and this is supported by Working Together 2015. In order for this to happen, all professionals who have contact with children, young people and families have a duty of care to identify issues at the earliest opportunity and assess what intervention is required.

Assessment should be a dynamic process that identifies analyses and responds to the changing nature and level of need and/or risk faced by a child. A good assessment will enable practitioners to intervene at the right time with the right level of support and to monitor and record the impact of any services delivered to the child and family. Continuous assessment is crucial in ensuring that the help and support being delivered is having the intended impact.

This multi-agency neglect assessment toolbox has been developed to support practitioners to undertake effective assessments that enable them to accurately identify appropriate cases in need of early help or onward referral to Children's Social Care. The tools included should also be used to review the effectiveness of the support plans that are in place and the outcomes for the child/ren. Using the assessments early in intervention will hopefully support positive outcomes for children, meaning onward referral may not be required.

Who should use the toolbox?

These tools are available for any services, schools or organisations who work with children and families in the London Borough of Bromley.

All professionals need to be familiar with the tools provided and **know when and how to use them**.

Managers should facilitate practitioner's attendance at relevant **training** events to support the use of these tools and seek assurance in supervision that they are completed where appropriate.

Why is it needed?

Learning from Serious Case Reviews, Local Reviews and Thematic Inspections frequently highlight missed opportunities as a consequence of poor quality assessments and lack of early intervention.

The 2015 Working Together guidance lists some of the following as features of a high quality assessment:

- They are **child-centred** and informed by the views of the child.
- Decisions are made in the **best interests** of the child.
- They are rooted in child development and **informed by evidence**.
- They **build on strengths** as well as identifying difficulties.
- They ensure **equality of opportunity and a respect** for diversity including family structures, culture, religion and ethnic origin.

These principles should be applied when completing any of the assessments within this toolbox.

***Wishes and feelings of the child** -It is important when completing any assessments that the wishes and feelings of the child are listened to throughout. Professionals need to ensure the voice of the child runs through everything we do. Seeking the views of the child will ensure that there is not over reliance on parental accounts which can therefore minimise the risk of disguised compliance.*

These tools are there to be used when you are concerned that the quality of care of a child you are working with suggests that their needs are being neglected. It will help you to reflect on the child's circumstances and will help you put your concerns into context and identify strengths and resources.

BSCB assessment tools

- [BSCB Thresholds Document](#)
- **Chronology guide**



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A chronology will help you to describe concerns if you suspect neglect and collate evidence. This simple chronology template can be used by any organisations who do not already have a recording structure in place.

More assessment resources

The Department Of Health developed a pack of tools and resources that can be used to support evidence based practice and assessments. Although developed in 2000, they can still be a helpful tool for practitioners to use to support evidence based practice when working with neglect.

The Family Pack of Questionnaires and Scales

- **Parenting daily hassles scale**
An assessment tool which can be used with the parents/carers to consider their view of the children’s needs and how they are coping with these needs.



8-parenting-daily-hassles-scale.pdf

- **Strengths and difficulties**
The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) is a brief behavioural screening tool to consider whether a child or young person has emotional or behavioural difficulties. The questionnaire can be completed with the parents/carers and also other professionals such as teachers



9-strengths-and-difficulties-questionnaire.pdf

- **Home conditions assessment**
An assessment tool which can be used if making a home visit where there have been concerns about neglect and poor home conditions.



7-home_conditions_assessment.pdf

- **Clutter Image Rating**
The Clutter Image Ratings can be used to assess the condition of a hoarded home as well as the hoarder’s level of insight
<http://hoardingdisordersuk.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/clutter-image-ratings.pdf>

Practical tools

Helpful resources and information to support practice, including links to the NSPCC core info leaflets

- **Core info leaflets**
 - [Neglect Matters: What you need to know about neglect; a guide for parents, carers and professionals](#)
 - [Home alone](#)
 - [Emotional neglect and emotional abuse in pre-school children - NSPCC](#)
 - [Neglect or emotional abuse in children aged 5-14 – NSPCC](#)
 - [Neglect or emotional abuse in teenagers aged 13-18 - NSPCC](#)

Training materials

The **Department for Education** developed resources for training multi-agency participant groups in identifying and dealing with child neglect. Although published in 2012 they are still relevant.

- **Childhood neglect: training resources**

- Childhood neglect: improving outcomes for children – guidance for trainers
- Childhood neglect: improving outcomes for children – the framework
- Training resources on childhood neglect: exercises and guidance
- Training resources on childhood neglect: presentations and notes
- Training resources on childhood neglect: handouts
- Training resources on childhood neglect: family case studies

The **BSCB** runs two separate training courses on neglect for the children’s workforce in Bromley. See the [BSCB training programme](#) for more information on content and how to book.

- Safeguarding Neglected Children Introduction
 - Safeguarding Neglected Children in Families with Complex Needs.
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Communications materials

BSCB and partner agencies may wish to raise awareness of neglect within its communications. Suggested copy is attached.



Neglect summary
text suitable for publi