



Neglect Screening Tool

Tool to aid professionals working with children and families in the identification of neglect

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Credit: Paolo Cordoni

Child's Name:		Practitioner	
Date:		Agency	

Neglect is not a discrete event, but rather an absence of appropriate care, frequently over a long period, where the risks accumulate over time. It may be difficult to distinguish between neglect and material poverty. Any one sign, or even a number present in combination, may not in themselves indicate neglect. This requires professional judgement and discussion. This screening tool is available to support professionals in the identification of issues or concerns about a child or young person in order to consolidate thinking, inform next steps and support consultation with Children's Social Care if necessary.

The use of the term 'child' will refer to all children 0-18 years unless otherwise specified.

How to use scaling

For each of the areas of need, please scale between 0 and 10; 0 being the worst it can be and 10 being the best. Scaling questions are used to support the Signs of Safety* approach adopted in Worcestershire.

Example on the first question:

The child's general development is not what you would expect for a child of their age - 0 would be the child's development is significantly behind other child of the same age such as a 3-year-old not talking at all or being able to communicate, 10 being in line with or above other children. 7 could be able to say a few words, but a little bit behind.

This tool does not replace the requirement for an immediate referral to Children's Social Care if safeguarding issues are identified. It is not intended to be a diagnostic tool rather a checklist/list of prompts to consider the needs of a child or young person.

* www.worcestershire.gov.uk/signsofsafety

Yes/No (If yes, please scale)	Areas of Need This tool does not replace the requirement for an immediate referral to Children's Social Care if safeguarding issues are identified	Scale 0 = extremely concerned, 5 = some action needs to be taken/ requires attention, 10 = no concerns at all	Score	Observations/ examples of impact on child/YP	View of carers
	Development and Education				
	The child's general development is not what you would expect for a child of their age	0<----->10			
	Age appropriate communication skills are not evident	0<----->10			
	The child's attendance at school or nursery is below 95%	0<----->10			
	The child does not attend school or nursery on time	0<----->10			
	The child does not arrive at school or nursery prepared and able to participate in all aspects of their day	0<----->10			
	The child is not always collected on time from school or nursery	0<----->10			
	The child is not reaching their academic targets	0<----->10			

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	Health Care				
	The child is not registered with a GP locally	0<----->10			
	The child does not have good dental hygiene and is not registered with a dentist	0<----->10			
	The child has not had all appropriate immunisations	0<----->10			
	Parent or Carer does not seek medical attention in a timely manner	0<----->10			
	Child does not always attend health appointments accompanied by parent/ carer when required	0<----->10			
	The child has a chronic health condition which is not well managed e.g. Asthma, diabetes, Epilepsy	0<----->10			
	The child has a skin condition this is not well managed e.g. Eczema, scabies	0<----->10			
	The child has recurrent minor infections	0<----->10			
	The child frequently attends the Urgent Care Centre or A&E in hospital	0<----->10			

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	Feeding and eating				
	The child is not of the expected growth for age (within their own parameters)	0<----->10			
	The child does not look well nourished	0<----->10			
	The child does not feed or eat well	0<----->10			
	The child does not have an adequate and balanced diet	0<----->10			
	The child does not have a healthy weight (e.g. excessively overweight or underweight)	0<----->10			
	The child has an unusually large appetite	0<----->10			
	There is evidence that the child is stealing or hoarding food	0<----->10			

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	Appearance				
	The child is not always dressed appropriately for weather conditions	0<----->10			
	The child does not have correctly fitting clothes and shoes	0<----->10			
	There is evidence of poor hygiene (i.e. dirty or unkempt)	0<----->10			
	Emotion and behaviour				
	The child is not well stimulated	0<----->10			
	Evidence of attention seeking behaviour or short attention span	0<----->10			
	Evidence of any behaviour problems or destructive behaviour	0<----->10			
	Parents/carers are not receptive to advice on child's emotional/behavioural needs	0<----->10			
	The child has poor friendship group and is isolated	0<----->10			

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	The child appears emotionally unresponsive to peers or adults (e.g. appears flat in mood)	0<----->10			
	The parent/carer ignores the child	0<----->10			
	The parent/carer belittles the child	0<----->10			
	Environmental factors (related to home environments)				
	Smokers in the household do not ensure that the child is in a smoke-free environment	0<----->10			
	There are no clear, clean and tidy areas for child to play	0<----->10			
	Evidence of hazards in home e.g. fire risks, sharp objects, needles	0<----->10			
	Home is in a poor state of repair	0<----->10			
	There is not adequate food in the cupboards	0<----->10			

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	The child does not have a bed or a bed with bedding	0<----->10			
	The parent / carer does not ensure the child receives age appropriate supervision in or outside of the home	0<----->10			
	Attachment and emotional care				
	Child does not respond to or seek the attention of parental figure or carer	0<----->10			
	Parental figure or carer does not respond to child's emotional or physical needs	0<----->10			
	Child shows reluctance or refusal to return home	0<----->10			
	Early Years specific checklist (aged 0-5 years)				
	The child is not meeting key developmental milestones (consider 2-Year-Old Progress Check)	0<----->10			
	The child has not attended all developmental checks	0<----->10			
	The child suffers from persistent or recurrent nappy rash	0<----->10			

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	Nappies are not changed regularly	0<----->10			
	Child does not present as content and easy to settle	0<----->10			
	Alternative care arrangements (childminder, family member, nanny etc.) for the children are not always considered appropriate	0<----->10			
	The household is generally not stable and there appear to be unidentified adults or young people in the home	0<----->10			
	There is bruising on child who is not mobile	0<----->10			
	There is evidence of unexplained injury	0<----->10			
	The child does not have a good routine	0<----->10			
	The child has recurrent or frequent accidents	0<----->10			

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School aged child specific checklist (aged 5 to 16)					
	The child is not making good educational progress	0<----->10			
	Alternative care arrangements (childminder, family member, nanny etc.) for the children are not always considered appropriate	0<----->10			
	The household is generally not stable and there appear to be unidentified adults or young people in the home	0<----->10			
	The child is exposed to inappropriate films, websites or materials	0<----->10			
	The child goes missing from home or school	0<----->10			
	The child does not have good boundaries and routines	0<----->10			

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	The child is left alone inappropriately	0<----->10			
	Inappropriate expectations to provide physical or emotional care for a sibling or other adult	0<----->10			
	The child does use substances e.g. drug / alcohol use, legal highs etc.	0<----->10			
	There is evidence of unexplained injury	0<----->10			
	There is evidence of possible self-harm and/or suicidal idealisation	0<----->10			
	The child does have recurrent accidents	0<----->10			
	There are risk factors identified in respect to child sexual exploitation (see Screening Tool)	0<----->10			
	There are risk factors identified in respect to radicalisation	0<----->10			

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	Disabled child specific checklist				
	Parents/ carers do not attend all paediatric reviews	0<----->10			
	Concerns about lack of developmental progress which is not consistent with the disability of additional needs	0<----->10			
	Disability benefits are not used to meet the child's needs	0<----->10			
	If the child wears nappy pads, these are not changed regularly	0<----->10			
	If the child is non-mobile, there is evidence of pressure ulcers developing	0<----->10			
	Child is not afforded the opportunity to socialise	0<----->10			
	Young People specific checklist				
	Young person does not sleep regularly at home	0<----->10			
	Lack of parental concern or acknowledge of need	0<----->10			
	Family conflict	0<----->10			

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	Social isolation	0<----->10			
	Emerging or persistent patterns of criminal behaviour	0<----->10			
	Missing from Education	0<----->10			
	Parent does not accept or show appropriate support for their child	0<----->10			
	Clothing is not adequate	0<----->10			
	Concerns over personal cleanliness and the home environment	0<----->10			
	Lack of parental boundaries and supervisory oversight	0<----->10			
	Substance use - parental / young person	0<----->10			
	Health crisis not being addressed	0<----->10			

Reminder notes on possible uses of the checklist:

- This checklist is a tool to consider possible areas of concerns and is not a definitive list.
- It can be used by professional(s) to clarify initial concerns about neglect and determine whether to co-ordinate an early help response at Level 2 or refer to children's services (Early Help Family Support Level 3/ Children's Social Care Level 4)
- Use information derived from the checklist in your assessment of the child's needs for support or protection.
- Utilise the checklist to support your report to an initial or review Child in Need meeting or a Child Protection Conference and in supervisions.

If you are unsure about the level of risk and whether to refer, see also the **Levels of Need (Thresholds) guidance** located at:

[worcestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-11/Levels_of_need_guidance_September_2021.pdf](https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-11/Levels_of_need_guidance_September_2021.pdf)

If you have a disagreement with another professional about the level at which the child/young person being with managed , then an agreement should be reached using the WSCP Escalation policy:

[Escalation-Policy-Resolution-of-Professional-Concerns.pdf \(safeguardingworcestershires.org.uk\)](#)

The Virtual Family Hub has been developed to provide families a wide range of resources of support:

[Virtual Family Hub | Worcestershire County Council](#)



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