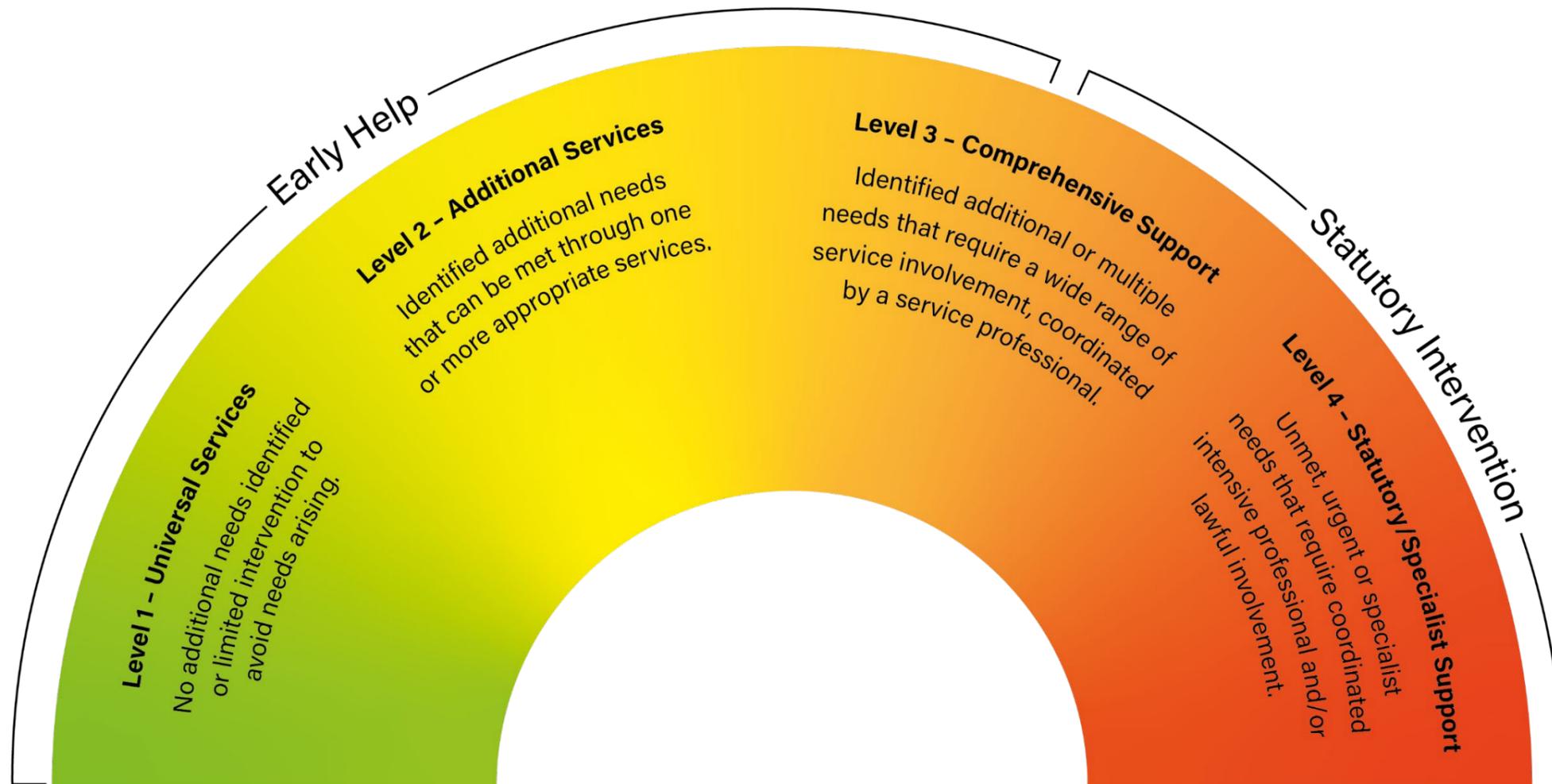


Continuum of Need incorporating Threshold guidance



Level 1 Universal Services	No additional needs identified or limited intervention to avoid needs arising. Children and young people whose needs are met by on-going services such as schools, GP's, Health visitors and Dentist alongside the love, care and protection of parents and carers. Children and young people in this category are making good overall progress in all areas of their development. Some limited intervention from a universal service may be needed to avoid needs arising or to meet a single identified need. The majority of children living in each local authority area will fall into this category.
Response:	Agencies should identify what they can do first to support the child and their family through their own service.
Assessment:	Agencies may use their own assessment processes to tailor the services they provide.

Development of the baby or child		Parent and carers	Family and environment elements
Health	Identity and self-esteem	Basic care, safety and protection	Family functioning and well-being
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physically well Nutritious diet Adequate hygiene and dress Developmental and health checks and immunisations up to date Developmental milestones and motor skills appropriate Good height/weight Sexual activity appropriate for age Good mental health Not misusing substances or engaging in risk taking behaviours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive sense of self and abilities Sense of belonging and acceptance by others Confident in social situations Can discriminate between safe and unsafe contacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide for child's physical needs, e.g. food, drink, appropriate clothing, medical and dental care Protection from danger or significant harm, in the home and elsewhere Demonstrates appropriate awareness of safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good relationships within family, including when parents are separated Sense of wider family, friends and community, networks Parents/carers provide consistent positive role modelling No physical or mental health needs or if present do not impact on the ability to parent
Emotional development	Family and social relationships	Emotional warmth and stability	Housing, work and income
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good quality early attachments Able to adapt to change Able to understand others' feelings (appropriate to age and stage of development) Quality of attachment with caregivers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stable and affectionate relationships with carers Good relationships with siblings and peers Developing independent and self-care skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows warm regard, praise and encouragement Ensures stable relationships Provides consistency of emotional warmth over time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accommodation has basic amenities and appropriate facilities, and can meet family needs Parents/carers able to manage the working or unemployment arrangements Managing budget to meet individual needs
Behavioural developments	Learning	Guidance, boundaries and stimulation	Social and community including education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Takes responsibility for own behaviour Responds appropriately to boundaries and constructive guidance Interacts appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to books and toys Attends school/nursery Acquires a wide range of skills and interests Enjoys and participates in learning activities Has experiences of success and achievement Sound links between home and school Planning for career and adult life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourages learning and development through interaction and play Enables child/young person to experience success Ensure the child can develop a sense of right and wrong Child / young person accesses leisure facilities as appropriate to age and interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family feels part of the community Good social and friendship networks exists Community is generally supportive of families with children / young people No concerns of exploitation or risk of online harm Child's positive sense of self and abilities reduces the risk that they will be targeted by peers or adults who wish to exploit them No concerns of discrimination

Useful contacts:	Please visit Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership website – buckssafeguarding.org.uk/childrenpartnership/
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Level 2 Additional Services	ADDITIONAL NEEDS: Children and young people with additional needs (not just SEN), that can be met through a single agency response or through agencies working together to provide a coordinated partnership response. The support required may only be short term, but if ignored, these issues could lead to escalating.
Response:	Agencies should refer to a single agency to meet identified need. Agencies can be identified through the Buckinghamshire Family Information Service website which provides details to local support services and access to family support and information of wider early help approaches. Towards the top end of level 2, agencies may need to work together to provide a coordinated service to support a child and their family who need support from more than one agency.
Assessment:	Agencies who have carried out their own specific assessment (for example the Outcome Star or Children’s Neglect Tool Kit), should consider sharing those outcomes as this will be particularly helpful when more than one agency may be involved.

Development of the baby or child		Parent and carers	Family and environment elements
Health	Identity and self-esteem	Basic care, safety and protection	Family functioning and well-being
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate diet e.g. no breakfast Missing immunisations/checks Child is susceptible to persistent minor health problems or accidents Slow in reaching developmental milestones Minor concerns re diet, hygiene, clothing Weight not increasing at rate expected, or obesity Dental care not sufficient Vulnerable to emotional problems, perhaps in response to life events such as parental separation e.g. child seems unduly anxious, angry or defiant Early sexual activity or awareness Experimenting with tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs Frequent accidents or A & E attendance or admissions to hospital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some insecurities around identity expressed e.g. low self-esteem May experience bullying around difference May be perpetrating bullying behaviour Child can be over friendly or withdrawn with strangers Child/young person provocative in behaviour/appearance e.g. inappropriately dressed for school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic care is not provided consistently Haphazard use of safety equipment e.g. fireguards Parent/carer engagement with services is poor Parent/carer requires advice on parenting issues Some concerns around child’s physical needs being met Young, inexperienced parents Teenage pregnancy Inappropriate childcare arrangements and/or too many carers Some exposure to dangerous situations in the home or community Unnecessary or frequent visits to doctor/casualty Parent/carer stresses starting to affect ability to ensure child’s safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents/carers have some conflicts or difficulties that can involve the child/young person A child or young person has experienced loss of significant adult, e.g. through bereavement or separation Parent/carer has physical/mental health difficulties A child/young person is taking on a caring role in relation to their parent/carer, or is looking after younger siblings Privately fostered Adopted Limited friends and family support Child looked after by many different adults Parent / carer has learning needs Physical or mental health needs
Emotional development	Family and social relationships	Emotional warmth and stability	Housing, work and income
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some difficulties with family relationships Some difficulties with peer group relationships and with adults, e.g. ‘clingy’, anxious or withdrawn Some evidence of inappropriate responses and actions Starting to show difficulties expressing empathy Limited engagement in play with others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of positive role models Child has some difficulties sustaining relationships Unresolved issues arising from parents’ separation, step parenting or bereavement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistent responses to child/young person by parent/carer Parents struggling to have their own emotional needs met Child/young person not able to develop other positive relationships Child/young person’s key relationships with family members not kept up Starting to show difficulties with attachments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor housing Some problems over basic facilities Family seeking asylum or refugees Periods of unemployment of parent/carer Parents/carers have limited formal education Low income Financial/debt problems
	Self-care skills and independence		Social and community including education
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability limits amount of self-care possible Not always adequate self-care, e.g. poor hygiene Child slow to develop age-appropriate self-care skills 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family new to the area or with limited contact with community members Some social exclusion or conflict experiences; low tolerance
	Learning		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability limits amount of self-care possible Have some identified learning needs that result in a school level response Language and communication difficulties 		

<p>Behavioural developments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not always able to understand how own actions impact on others • Finds accepting responsibility for own actions difficult • Responds inappropriately to boundaries and constructive guidance • Finds positive interaction difficult with peers in unstructured contexts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some school absence • Poor punctuality/pattern of regular school absences Not always engaged in play/learning, e.g. poor concentration • Not thought to be reaching his/her education potential • Reduced access to books/toys • Home-School links not well established • Limited evidence of progression planning • At risk of making poor decision about progression • Limited participation of young person in education, employment or training 	<p>Guidance, boundaries and stimulation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/carer offers inconsistent boundaries • Lack of routine in the home • Child/young person spends considerable time alone, e.g. watching television • Child / young person is not often exposed to new experiences; has limited access to leisure activities • Child / young person can behave in an anti-social way in the neighbourhood, e.g. petty crime • Possible risk of online harm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community characterised by negativity towards children/young people • Difficulty accessing community facilities • Child has a negative sense of self and abilities and suffers with low self-esteem making them vulnerable to peers and adults who pay them attention and/or show them affection but do so in order to exploit them (CE). • Some concerns of possible discrimination
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<p>Useful contacts:</p>	<p>Please visit Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership website – buckssafeguarding.org.uk/childrenpartnership/</p>
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Level 3	Children and young people who have multiple and complex needs requiring a multi-agency Early Help response with a lead professional. Level 3 also includes the threshold for a Child in Need. Although a Child in Need requires a statutory response from Children’s Social Care, a statutory intervention is not necessarily required. For this reason, the threshold for a Child in Need falls in level 3, but where a statutory intervention is required from Children’s Social Care this would fall into level 4. It should be noted that at this level Early Help involvement is still an option. Children and young people in this category have increasing levels of un-met needs that are more significant and complex. The range, depth or significance of the problems faced by children at level 3 may begin to prevent them from achieving or maintaining a reasonable standard of health or development if they don’t receive appropriate services. They are likely to require targeted and/or longer-term intervention from specialist services.
Comprehensive Support	
Response:	Agencies should contact First Response (aka MASH) using the Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF). Once contact is made, the case is then screened by Children’s Social Care in the MASH and a decision is made within 72 hours as to what service level is needed in relation to the Continuum of Need. If contact needs to be made out of hours, you can call the Emergency Duty Team on 0800 999 7677. Schools will need to consult with their link support worker to discuss concerns from which a decision to complete a MARF will be decided.
Assessment:	The key tools for assessing need are the Outcomes Star, Children’s Neglect Tool and a Child in Need assessment (a statutory assessment led by Children’s Social Care under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989). However other agencies may use their own assessment tools in the first instance.

Development of the baby or child		Parent and carers	Family and environment elements
Health	Identity and self-esteem	Basic care, safety and protection	Family functioning and well-being
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physically unwell Concerns re diet, hygiene, clothing Child has some chronic/recurring health problems; not treated, or badly managed Missing routine and non-routine health appointments Weight gain – drop in centiles Limited or restricted diet, e.g. no breakfast; no lunch money Concerns about developmental progress, e.g. overweight/underweight; bedwetting/soiling Developmental milestones are unlikely to be met Dental decay Smokes/ other regular substance misuse ‘Unsafe’ sexual activity Learning significantly affected by health problems Significant speech language difficulties/delay or disordered development Child has significant disability Mental health issues emerging Sexual activity which cause concern and/or sexually harmful behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child subject to persistent discrimination, (e.g. racial, sexual or due to disabilities). Demonstrates significantly low self-esteem/confidence in a range of situations Victim of crime or bullying Signs of deteriorating emotional well-being/mental health May not discriminate effectively with strangers Clothing is regularly unwashed or unsuitable Presentation (including hygiene) significantly impacts on all relationships Child lacks confidence or is watchful or wary of carers/people May be aggressive in behaviour/appearance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent/carer is struggling to provide adequate care Parents have found it difficult to care for previous child/young person Inappropriate care arrangements Instability and domestic violence in the home Parent’s mental health problems or substance misuse significantly affect care of child/young person Non-compliance of parents/carers with services Practitioners have serious concerns Experiencing unsafe situations Child/young person caring for siblings/parent Child/young person perceived to be a problem by parents Child/young person may be subject to neglect Child/young person previously looked after by LA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incidents of domestic abuse between parents/carers Acrimonious divorce/separation Family has serious physical and mental health difficulties Family has poor relationship with extended family or little communication Family is socially isolated Parent / carer has Learning needs Physical or mental health needs which impact on parenting capacity.
	Family and social relationships	Emotional warmth and stability	Housing, work and income
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships with carers characterised by inconsistencies Child has lack of positive role models Child appears to have undifferentiated attachments Misses school or leisure activities Involved in conflicts with peers/siblings Lack of friends/social network May have previously had periods of LA accommodation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child receives erratic or inconsistent care Child has episodes of poor-quality care Parental/carer instability/emotional needs affects capacity to nurture Some relationship difficulties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor state of repair, temporary or overcrowded, or unsafe Living in interim accommodation Experiencing frequent moves Intentionally homeless Parents/carers experience stress due to unemployment or ‘overworking’; may be impacting on other aspects of family life e.g. marital relationship Parents/carers find it difficult to obtain employment due to poor basic skills Serious debts/poverty impact on ability to have basic needs met

<p>Emotional development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good quality early attachments e.g. conduct disorder; ADHD; anxiety; depression; eating disorder; self-harming • Frequent accidents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns of absences from home without parental consent • *Emerging behaviours which could suggest CSE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child has no other positive relationships • Child has multiple carers; may have no significant relationship to any of them • Child has been 'Looked After' by the LA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low income plus adverse additional factors e.g. up to borrowing limit of Social Care Fund • Rent arrears put family at risk of eviction or proceedings initiated
<p>Behavioural developments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not accept responsibility for own actions; finds it hard to understand how own actions impact on others or learn from consequences • Disruptive/challenging behaviour at school, home or in the neighbourhood • Starting to commit offences/re-offend • Interacts negatively with peers in learning and play contexts • Child/young person is withdrawn, isolated/unwilling to engage • Concerns of absences from home without parental consent • *Emerging behaviours which could suggest CSE 	<p>Self-care skills and independence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability prevents self-care in a significant range of tasks • Child takes little or no responsibility for self-care tasks compared with peers • Child lacks a sense of safety and often puts him/herself in danger • Child is main carer for family member 	<p>Guidance, boundaries and stimulation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erratic or inadequate guidance provided • Parents struggle/refuse to set effective boundaries e.g. too loose/tight/physical chastisement • Child/young person behaves in anti-social way in the neighbourhood • Parent/carer does not offer a good role model, e.g. by behaving in an anti-social way • Child not receiving positive stimulation, with lack of new experiences or activities • Child/young person under undue parental pressure to achieve/aspire • Exposure to online forums increasing risk of online harm. 	<p>Social and community including education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents/carers socially excluded/isolated • Lack of a support network • Low community support for families • Acrimonious relationships within community • Poor quality access to universal and targeted services • Concerns expressed by others • Child's negative sense of self/low self-esteem contributes to their involvement with peers and/or adults thought to be treating them badly and/or encouraging their involvement in self-harm and/or criminal behaviour. • Child regularly goes missing and family do not know where Child is. • Incidents and or increase of discrimination
<p>Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified learning needs that are being addressed at school level. • Regular underachievement causing concern at school • Poor nursery/school attendance and punctuality • Poor home-nursery school link • Some fixed-term exclusions • Very limited interests/skills displayed • Not in education (under 16) • Not in education, employment, or training post 16 			

<p>Useful contacts:</p>	<p>Please visit Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership website – buckssafeguarding.org.uk/childrenpartnership/</p>
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Level 4 Statutory / Specialist Support	Children and young people with a high level of unmet or complex needs or children who are in need of protection. Children and young people in this category are identified as having suffered or likely to be suffering significant harm or significant impairment to their health or development. Harm is defined under 4 possible categories: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. These children require intensive support under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 (Child Protection Plan). 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 neglect.
Response:	Agencies should contact First Response using the Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) or by calling 0845 4600 001 (or 0800 999 7677 for the out of hours Emergency Duty Team). If there is a concern that a child is immediately at risk, call the Police on 999.
Assessment:	Statutory assessment will take place under the provisions of the Children Act 1989. This will be led by Children's Social Care. Where a child is assessed to have met the threshold for statutory intervention there are various options available to ensure a child is protected from harm. This includes making the child subject to a Child Protection Plan or taking the child into care.

Development of the baby or child		Parent and carers	Family and environment elements
Health	Identity and self-esteem	Basic care, safety and protection	Family functioning and well-being
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child/young person has severe/chronic health problems Child/young person's weight and height both under the 0.4th centile Other developmental milestones unlikely to be met; failure to thrive Lack of food may be linked with neglect Refusing medical care endangering life/development Seriously obese Dental decay and no access to treatment Persistent and high-risk substance misuse Dangerous sexual activity and/or early teenage pregnancy Child sexual exploitation (CSE) Suspected imminent risk of FGM (female genital mutilation) Sexual abuse Self-harming Non-accidental injury Acute mental health problems e.g. severe depression; threat of suicide; psychotic episode Physical/learning disability requiring constant supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child/young person experiences persistent discrimination; internalised and reflected in poor self-image Failed Education Supervision Order – 3 prosecutions for non-attendance: family refusing to engage Socially isolated and lacking appropriate role models Alienates self from others Bullying Lack of confidence is incapacitating Victim of crime; may fear persecution by others Poor and inappropriate self-presentation Child/young person likely to put self at risk Child sexual exploitation (CSE) Evident mental health needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents/carers unable to provide 'good enough' parenting that is adequate and safe; Parent/carer's mental health or substance misuse significantly affect care of child Parents/carers unable to care for previous children Instability and violence in the home continually Parents/carers involved in crime Parents unable to restrict access to home by dangerous adults Parents/carers own needs mean they are unable to keep child/young person safe Chronic and serious domestic violence involving child/young person Unexplained injuries Parents not engaging with professionals Allegation or reasonable suspicion of serious injury, abuse or neglect. Unable to manage severe challenging behaviour without support –high risk of family breakdown Suspected/evidence of fabricated or induced illness Unable to meet child/young person's physical or emotional needs Disclosure from parent of abuse to child/young person Escalating or serious domestic violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant parental/carer discord and persistent domestic violence Family characterised by conflict and serious chronic relationship difficulties History of rejection Poor relationships between siblings and wider family No effective support from extended family Destructive/unhelpful involvement from extended family Child/young person has been identified as a child/young person in need, but parents/carers have refused support Family involved in criminal activity; parent or sibling has received custodial sentence Individual posing a risk to children in, or known to household Unsafe home environment Family home used for drug taking, prostitution, illegal activities Family have physical or mental health needs that impact on parenting capacity Parent / care has Learning needs that impact on parenting capacity
	Family and social relationships		Housing, work and income
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeated missing persons episodes Relationships with family experienced as negative ('low warmth, high criticism') Rejection by a parent/carer; family no longer want to care for - or have abandoned - child/young person Periods accommodated by Council Family breakdown related to child's behavioural difficulties 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homeless - or imminent Housing dangerous or seriously threatening to health Physical accommodation places child in danger Chronic unemployment that has severely affected parents' own identities Family unable to gain employment due to significant lack of basic skills or long-term substance misuse Extreme poverty/debt impacting on ability to care for child No expectation that young person will work

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disclosure of abuse from child/young person • Evidence of significant harm or neglect • Disclosure of abuse/physical injury caused by a professional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect • Child Exploitation (CE) • Suspected imminent risk of FGM (female genital mutilation) • Child is main carer for family member 	<p>Emotional warmth and stability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents/carers inconsistent, highly critical, rejecting or apathetic towards child • Family life chaotic • Child/young person beyond parental/carers' control • Parent's own emotional experiences impacting on their ability to meet child/young person's needs • Child has no-one to care for him/her • Child/young person threatened with rejection from home • Requesting young child be accommodated 	<p>Social and community including education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family chronically socially excluded • No supportive network • Community are hostile to family • Child frequently goes missing and fails to account for their locations or discloses situations indicating risk of CE • Child trafficked to UK for sexual exploitation • Currently being discriminated and or on going and increasing incidents of discrimination
<p>Emotional development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puts self or others in danger e.g. missing from home • Severe emotional/ behavioural challenges • Unable to connect cause and effect of own actions • Unable to display empathy • Suffers from periods of severe depression • Self-harming or suicide attempts 	<p>Self-care skills and independence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe disability – child/young person relies totally on other people to meet care needs • Child neglects to use self-care skills due to alternative priorities, e.g. substance misuse 	<p>Guidance, boundaries and stimulation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No effective boundaries set by parents/carers • Multiple carers with no consistency • Child regularly behaves in an anti-social way in the neighbourhood • No constructive leisure • Exposure to online forums evident to resulting in harm 	
<p>Behavioural developments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable to determine boundaries, roles and responsibilities appropriately • Cannot maintain peer relationships e.g. is aggressive, bully, bullied • Regularly involved in anti-social/criminal activities • Repeated missing persons episodes • Prosecution of offences resulting in court orders, custodial sentences, ASBOs • Non-compliant or poor response to support • Professional concerns – but difficulty accessing child/young person • Unaccompanied refugee/asylum seeker • Privately fostered • Abusing other children • Young Sex Offenders • Serious or persistent offending behaviour likely to lead to custody/remand in secure unit/prison • Subject to Family Support or Child Protection Plan 	<p>Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puts self or others at risk through behaviour • No, or acrimonious, home-nursery or school link • Young child with few, if any, achievements • No school placement • Child/young person is out of school • Has no access to leisure activities • Multiple fixed term exclusions or risk of permanent exclusion • Consistently poor or no educational attainment progress 		

Useful contacts:

Please visit Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership website – buckssafeguarding.org.uk/childrenpartnership/

Areas of Concern:

Other areas of concern that will need to be considered in terms of their impact and level of risk include:

- Behaviour
- Child exploitation
- Development
- Disability
- Domestic abuse
- Education
- Emotional well-being
- Female genital Mutilation
- Forced Marriage
- Gangs
- Honour based violence
- Housing
- Legal status
- Missing

- Neglect
- Offending
- Online risk
- Parental mental health
- Parenting
- Physical abuse
- Physical Health
- Radicalisation
- Relationships (social context)
- Self-harm
- Sexual abuse
- Sexual health
- Substance misuse
- Young Carer