

# **Manchester Safeguarding Children Board**

## **Neglect Strategy for Children, Young People and Families 2017 to 2019**

**Issued: June 2017**



MANCHESTER SAFEGUARDING  
CHILDREN BOARD

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Manchester’s Safeguarding Adults Board (MSAB) and Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB) are multi-agency partnerships made up of a wide range of statutory, independent and voluntary agencies and organisations. These all work together to keep children, young people and adults, particularly those who are more vulnerable, safe from the risk of abuse, harm or exploitation.

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## Foreword

The development of this Neglect Strategy is of critical importance and will provide strategic direction and priorities to 2019. Manchester has a high number of children experiencing neglect at all level of the Multi-agency Levels of Need and Response Framework.

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 imperative that we understand why Manchester has such high levels of neglect and that we have a clear and consistent approach to addressing responding to it and measuring our impact.<sup>1</sup>

Neglect is identified as an objective in the Manchester Safeguarding Children Board Business Plan 2017/18.

The Children and Young People's Plan 2016/20 (which has explicit links to Manchester's Sustainable Community Strategy and Family Poverty Strategy) sets out the strategic direction and priorities for the city, and all services working with children and young people, over the next four years "*Our Manchester - building a safe, happy, healthy and successful future for children and young people.*" The city is ambitious for all its children and young people and the plan aims to reflect this by setting out priorities under four outcome themes of Safe, Healthy, Happy and Successful.<sup>2</sup>

To effectively safeguard children requires professionals to understand child development and poverty and be curious and to be inquisitive about children'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. Evidence of this association is found repeatedly across developed countries, types of abuse, definitions, measures and research approaches, and in different child protection systems.<sup>3</sup>

As the Independent Chair of the Manchester Safeguarding Children Board I am committed to driving forward this strategy and ensuring the safeguarding partnership in Manchester take action to prevent, reduce and manage the detrimental effects of neglect on children and their families.

The successful implementation of this strategy is a key component in helping the Manchester Safeguarding Children Board to achieve our vision that "Every child and young person in Manchester should be able to grow up safe, free from abuse, neglect or crime allowing them to enjoy a happy and healthy childhood and fulfil their potential".

**Julia Stephens-Row**  
**Independent Chair of Manchester Safeguarding Children Board**

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<sup>1</sup> Manchester Safeguarding Children Boards Business Plan [www.manchestersafeguardingboards.co.uk/](http://www.manchestersafeguardingboards.co.uk/)

<sup>2</sup> Manchester Children and Young People's plan 'Our Manchester, Our Children'

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.irf.org.uk/relationship-between-poverty-child-abuse-and-neglect-evidence-review>. March 2016

# 1. Introduction

1.1 Neglect is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children 2015<sup>4</sup>, as “the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical, emotional and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development.”

1.2 Manchester City Council and partners are participants of the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Partnership (GMSP) Neglect Strategy and recognise the opportunities to work with partners and within existing and developing partnerships across Greater Manchester to tackle child neglect.<sup>5</sup>

We support the Mission Statement and Vision outlined below:

## **Mission Statement**

Tackling child neglect at the earliest opportunities; improving the lives of children.

## **Vision**

Child neglect is a complex issue; too often it takes us too long to recognise the impact it is having on our children. The vision of this strategy is that action is taken at the earliest opportunities to prevent neglect having a long-term impact on children.

The GMSP strategy aims to identify opportunities to work across Greater Manchester to develop partnership systems to improve responses to neglect across all levels of need.

This will be achieved by:

<b>Preventing</b>	Nipping neglect in the bud; developing a shared understanding of the early indicators of neglect; listening to children’s experiences; providing pathways for universal services to take action; and creating and maintaining positive change.
<b>Intervening</b>	Developing confident workers; making sure our children and families workforce have the skills, knowledge and tools to understand why neglect happens; build trusting relationships with children and their families; and deliver effective interventions.
<b>Protecting</b>	Taking decisive action; making the right decisions in the child’s time when working with families; supported by a strong evidence base and analysis of parental capacity to change.

1.3 Manchester deliver services to a population of approximately 124,000 0-18 year old children and young people (mid-2015 population estimate).

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<sup>4</sup> Working Together To Safeguard Children 2015. [www.gov.uk/government/publications](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications)

<sup>5</sup> Greater Manchester Neglect Strategy. [greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com/](http://greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com/)

1.4 Whilst the data below does not relate to neglect alone, the Child Health Profile 2014 provides evidence of higher levels of need in Manchester compared to the rest of England. This includes:

- A higher rate of children looked after than the England average.
- The health and wellbeing of children in Manchester is generally worse than the England average.
- Higher than average referrals to children social care compared to other Core Cities.
- Higher percentage of referrals received within 12 months of a previous referral compared to statistical neighbours.

1.5 Manchester was ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in the index of Multiple Deprivation 2015.<sup>6</sup> In addition there is a high level of child poverty, with 36.4% of children aged less than 16 years living in poverty compared to 22.5% in the North West and 20.6% in England.

1.6 The neglect of children and young people is one of the most difficult areas of abuse to identify, assess and intervene in. Research undertaken during the past decade has found that neglect is the most prevalent type of harm children and young people experience and the impact on their cognitive, social and psychological development is significant.

1.7 Research undertaken by the NSPCC in 2012<sup>7</sup> shows that in the UK:

- **21,666** children were on a child protection plan for neglect
- **1 in 7** secondary school age children and
- **in 20** children under 11 have been neglected at some point.

1.8 Neglect is known to be the most common reason for a child to be the subject of a child protection plan in the UK - 43% of all children subject to a child protection plan in England in 2015 were on plans under the category of Neglect.

1.9 In 2015/16 Manchester 57% of all children subject to a child protection plan under the category of Neglect. Table 1 below shows the rate of children per 10,000 population who were subject to a child protection plan under the category of Neglect in 2015/16. Manchester had a significantly higher rate of children subject to child protection plans for Neglect when compared with all statistical comparators.

1.10 By intervening earlier and purposefully we can address at an earlier stage the emerging signs of neglect. By undertaking strength based conversations with children and families we can ensure our response is targeted and has impact.<sup>8</sup>

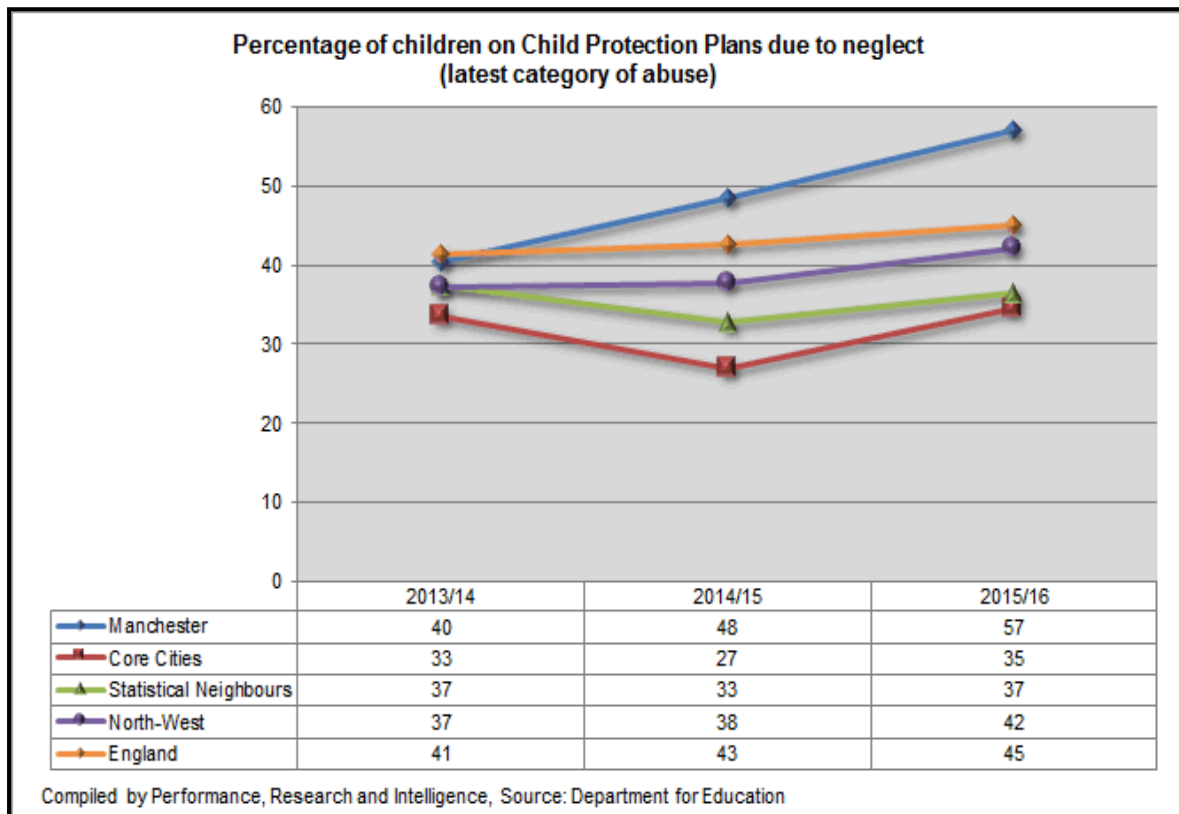
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<sup>6</sup> Department of Communities and Local Government. The English Indices of Deprivation 2015  
[www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2015)

<sup>7</sup> NSPCC. [www.nspcc.org.uk/.../research.../neglect-serious-case-reviews-report](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/.../research.../neglect-serious-case-reviews-report).

<sup>8</sup> Early Help Strategy [www.manchester.gov.uk/earlyhelppractitioner](http://www.manchester.gov.uk/earlyhelppractitioner)

**Table 1: rate of children per 10,000 population who were subject to child protection plan under the category of Neglect in 2015/16.**



## 2. Purpose and Scope

2.1 The development of this strategy is supported and endorsed by Manchester Safeguarding Children Board and it is designed for use by all those who work with children, young people and families, in all agencies and settings.

2.2 The primary purpose of the strategy is to set out the strategic direction and priorities for 2017/19 which outline how partners will work together to offer a coherent, effective and well co-ordinated multi-agency response to cases where neglect is an issue.

2.3 The strategy seeks to ensure our children and families workforce is able to identify and recognise neglect in families across universal and specialist services, in order to ensure an effective multi-agency response is provided at the earliest opportunity to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families; and reduce the impact of neglect and the risk of an escalation of concerns. Integral to the strategy is the importance of early identification and engagement of families, including effective early help assessment and the development and delivery of a clear action plan.

2.4 It is vital that the children and families workforce has a shared language and that neglect can be named, articulated and effectively addressed. The strategy aims to make clear the statutory definition of neglect, key features and risk factors, including Manchester's Levels of Need Framework that will assist practitioners working at all levels to identify and respond to neglect at the earliest opportunity.

2.5 To effectively safeguard children and young people from neglect requires professionals working in all areas to be curious and inquisitive about family circumstances and events. Child neglect can be multifaceted and enduring; it often involves a broad set of circumstances which can only be pieced together through the accumulation of evidence.

### 3. What is Neglect?

3.1 Neglect is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children<sup>9</sup>: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children 2015, as "*the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical, emotional and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.*"

3.2 Neglect is characterised by the absence of a relationship of care between the parent/carer and the child and the failure of the parent/carer to prioritise the needs of their child. It can occur at any stage of childhood, including pregnancy and the teenage years.

3.3 The impact of neglect on children is often accumulative, advancing gradually and imperceptibly and therefore there is a risk that agencies do not intervene early enough to prevent harm.

3.4 Neglect can contravene the child's right not to be subject to inhuman or degrading treatment as defined in the European Convention on Human Rights<sup>10</sup>, Article 3 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), Article 19.<sup>11</sup>

3.5 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. Agencies need to feel confident in recognising and naming of neglect. It is important that all agencies, children's services, health, schools/education, police, probation, housing, voluntary and community organisations to identify emerging problems and potential unmet needs and seek to address them as early as possible; which is why an Early Help Assessment and Plan is critically important. It is also equally important that practitioners are alert to the danger of drift and 'start again syndrome' and 'parental disguised compliance'.

3.6 **The 'start again syndrome'** has proved a helpful way of conceptualising practice and decision making especially in cases of neglect. In these circumstances knowledge of the past is put aside with a focus on the present and on short term thinking. There may, for example, be an unfounded assumption that a new baby, or a different partner, presents an opportunity for the family to embark on a more successful period of parenting, without adequate professional reflection about whether the parental capacity to care for the child has in reality changed. This way of thinking and behaving tends to happen when workers are overwhelmed.

'Starting again' is a way of dealing not only with overwhelming amounts of information but also the feelings of helplessness generated by families, especially in long term neglect cases. This way of thinking prevents workers from having a clear and systematic understanding of a case. Starting with a clean slate can be prompted by a worker leaving (or being away on sick leave) or a new practitioner starting afresh to form an 'unprejudiced' view of the case. It can also be prompted by the courts rejecting applications for care orders and instructing workers to give families another chance to demonstrate successful parenting.

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<sup>9</sup> [www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/glossary/neglect](http://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/glossary/neglect)

<sup>10</sup> European Convention on Human Rights. [www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Convention](http://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Convention)

<sup>11</sup> United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Children [www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights](http://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights)



3.7 **‘Parental Disguised Compliance’** involves parents giving the appearance of co-operating with professionals to avoid raising suspicions and allay concerns. Published serious case reviews highlight that professionals sometimes delay or avoid interventions due to parental disguised compliance.

The learning from these reviews highlights that professionals need to establish the facts and gather evidence about what is actually happening, rather than accepting a parent’s presenting behaviour and self-reporting. By focussing on outcomes rather than processes professionals can keep the focus of their work on the child.

<b>3.6 Types of Neglect</b>	<b>Features</b>
<b>Educational neglect</b>	Lack of a stimulating environment or failure to show an interest in the child’s education; this includes failure to respond to their additional needs and or requirements re school readiness or attendance.
<b>Emotional neglect</b>	Lack of interaction or affection, undermining self-esteem or sense of identity.
<b>Medical neglect</b>	Minimisation of illness or health needs including failure to seek medical attention or administer medication/treatment.
<b>Nutritional neglect</b>	Nutritional intake not adequate for normal growth – failure to thrive.
<b>Physical neglect</b>	Lack of appropriate clothing, food, cleanliness and/or living conditions.
<b>Supervisory and guidance</b>	Lack of adequate supervision and guidance to ensure safety and protection from harm.

3.7 A number of factors increase the likelihood of neglect in some families. Vulnerable families may have a combination of the following risk factors:

<b>Child risk factors</b>	<b>Parental risk factors</b>	<b>Wider risk factors</b>
Disability Behavioural problems Chronic ill health Mental Health	Poor Mental Health (especially maternal mental health difficulties) Substance Misuse Domestic Violence and Abuse Learning Difficulties Lack of experience of positive parenting in childhood Obesity and underweight Disguised compliance	Poverty Unemployment Poor social support

3.8 The risk factors outlined above demonstrate the importance of a preventative public health approach that focuses on reducing the risk factors that cause neglect.

3.9 There is an overlap between emotional abuse and many forms of child maltreatment. This is especially true of neglect; therefore, when working with children subject to neglectful situations an understanding of emotional abuse is also necessary.

## 4. Guiding Principles for Working with Children and Families

The Strategy outlines a number of key principles that provide a framework that will underpin our practice and approach to working with children and families where neglect is a feature across all levels of need.

### **We will:**

4.1 Ensure the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and their families is paramount.

4.2 Demonstrate a commitment to ensuring safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children, young people and their families is seen and understood as being everyone's responsibility.

4.3 Recognise that the experience of neglect and its detrimental impact is not confined to young children and occurs across all ages and can occur in all parts of our communities.

4.4 Ensure our children have the opportunity to get the best start in life and understand and promote the importance of getting this right in the early years; and ensure we recognise early signs of neglect for babies and children less than five years.

4.5 Recognise children with special needs and disabilities have equal rights to protection from neglect and ensure that practitioners are trained to recognise and tackle neglect for this vulnerable group of children.

4.6 Recognise that neglect should be identified at the earliest opportunity to ensure children and young people at risk of, or those experiencing, neglect receive the necessary support in order to reduce the escalation of concerns.

4.7 Provide a timely Early Help Assessment and put in place a clear plan of intervention help and support for children, young people and their families at the earliest opportunity in order to avoid, wherever possible, intrusive and costly statutory interventions, which will be the last resort where the level of risk to the child makes it a requirement.

4.8 Work with children, young people and their families using the early help strengths based conversations and Signs of Safety model and approach; building strength and resilience rather than promoting dependency. We are committed to 'do with, not to' families.

4.9 Make sure that where there are concerns about the safety of a child or young person, the sharing of information in a timely and effective manner between organisations will reduce the risk of harm and enable us to provide a joined up response.

4.10 Measure the progress and impact of the effectiveness of work with children, young people and their families when neglect is a feature. We will challenge ourselves to develop and improve by asking ourselves 'did our work result in improved outcomes for children and young people and a reduction in their experience of neglect?'

4.11 Engage with children and young people in all that we do to ensure their voice is heard and that we are able to understand their daily lived experience when considering their needs.

4.12 Offer learning and development opportunities to the children and families workforce working across all levels of need aimed at ensuring there is a shared understanding of child development including attachment theory; neglect; promoting safety and wellbeing; and child development.

4.13 Take into account children, young people and families' feedback and their personal experiences when planning learning and development opportunities.

4.14 Avoid 'start again syndrome' and ensure professionals carefully consider historical information when making decisions, reviewing progress and developing plans to inform the present position; and repeat this at times of significant change as well as reviewing at regular intervals.

4.15 Require effective information sharing to evaluate vulnerability, need, and risk of harm or suffering harm; encourage our children and families workforce to be 'professionally curious' and inquisitive about family circumstances and events; and require professionals to be challenging of each other about improvement made by families and its sustainability.

In 2015 the National Multi-agency Child Neglect Strategic Work Group published a paper titled *Child Neglect Be Professionally Curious!*<sup>12</sup>

4.16 Consider neglect in the context of other risk factors. Neglect often co-exists with other forms of abuse or risk factors, so this strategy must link with other MSB work streams and priorities; for example domestic abuse, substance misuse and adult mental health, child poverty and youth homelessness.

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<sup>12</sup> Multi Agency Child Neglect Strategic Work Group. [www.actionforchildren.org.uk/be-professionally-curious/](http://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/be-professionally-curious/)

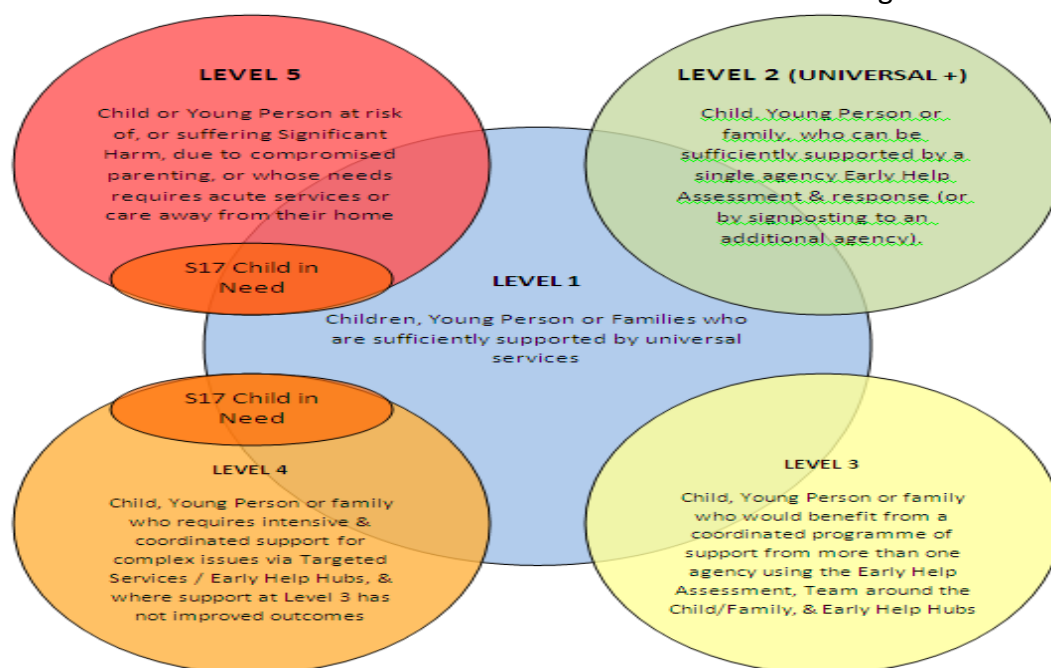
## 5. Manchester Multi-agency Levels of Need and Response Framework

5.1 The Neglect Strategy is aligned to the Manchester Safeguarding Children Board Multi-Agency Decisions Framework.<sup>13</sup> This Framework was developed to assist those who work with children, young people and their families in Manchester to identify the level of need of a child or young person (in the context of their family, environment and experiences) and provides guidance on how to respond with the most appropriate and proportionate intervention at the right time.

5.2 The Framework seeks to assist practitioners in achieving Manchester's vision to build a safe, happy, healthy and successful future for children and young people.

5.3 Whatever their level of need, children and young people should always have access to universal services and for the majority of children this will provide all the opportunities they need to reach their potential. However, there are times when their needs mean they require an enhanced level of support, either due to their own increasing complexity of need, or the impact of external factors.

5.4 The Framework sets out five levels of need as illustrated in the diagram below.



5.5 Neglect could be evident at any of the levels of need. Recognising and responding to the early signs of neglect is critical to avoid the unnecessary escalation of concerns; however in some circumstances an Early Help Assessment may identify a child and families' circumstances are escalated to receive the 'right' intervention.

The Framework has been developed to reflect that children and families situations are rarely static, nor do families move in a structured way up and down the continuum.

<sup>13</sup> MSCB Multi-Agency Decisions Framework, April 2015 [www.manchestersafeguardingboards.co.uk/levels-need-multi-agency-decisions-framework/](http://www.manchestersafeguardingboards.co.uk/levels-need-multi-agency-decisions-framework/)

## 6. Learning and Development

6.1 There is considerable research and evidence that demonstrates the impact on children and young people who live with neglect and that its long term cumulative impact damages children. We know neglect causes distress to children and young people and can lead to poor health, educational and social outcomes and at its worse can be life threatening. We will use learning from research and serious case reviews to develop and improve practice and services to children.

6.2 Over the past decade research has identified neglect as a serious factor in the majority of serious case reviews and it is the most common reason for children becoming the subject of child protection plans. Research highlights the need to develop a coherent, integrated and effective response to neglected children and young people. It is important that we recognise that the experience of neglect and its impact is not confined to young children and occurs across all ages.

6.3 In March 2013 the NSPCC commissioned the University of East Anglia to explore the circumstances in which neglect can be catastrophic and have a fatal or seriously harmful outcome for a child<sup>14</sup>. The research was carried out by reviewing and conducting a systematic analysis of neglect in 139 serious case reviews undertaken in England between 2009 and 2011. The published report identified how the risks of harm accumulate and combine, and highlighted the points at which intervention might successfully have helped contained risks.

6.4 Key messages from this research were:

- Neglect is much more prevalent in serious case reviews than had previously been understood (neglect was present in 60% of the 139 reviews from 2009/11).
- Neglect can be life threatening and needs to be treated with as much urgency as other categories of maltreatment.
- Neglect with the most serious outcomes is not confined to the youngest children and occurs across all ages.
- The possibility that in a very small minority of cases neglect will be fatal, or cause grave harm, should be part of a practitioner's mind set. Practitioners, managers, policy makers and decision makers should be discouraged from minimising or downgrading the harm that can come from neglect and discouraged from allowing neglect cases to drift.

6.5 Working with families in need is invariably very complex and research into families where neglect is a significant feature shows that simple interventions are unlikely to be successful. In 2012 Action for Children conducted a four year longitudinal evaluation of neglect, '*Outcomes for children, families, Action for Children and the UK*', 2012<sup>15</sup>, and described a 'bulging threshold' phenomenon where levels of intervention have not escalated despite significant deterioration in the child's situation.

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<sup>14</sup> NSPCC Report, University of East Anglia. [www.nspcc.org.uk/research-and-resources/2013/neglect-serious-case-reviews/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/research-and-resources/2013/neglect-serious-case-reviews/)

<sup>15</sup> Action for Children: Impact Report 2015. [www.actionforchildren.org.uk/evaluation-of-the-action-for-children-uk-neglect-project/](http://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/evaluation-of-the-action-for-children-uk-neglect-project/)

6.6 This longitudinal evaluation reported the following:

- Neglect can overlap with other forms of abuse, such as physical or sexual, which makes it particularly hard to focus on one area of problems. Assessing neglect therefore requires measuring a complex series of acts of parental omission - provision, protection and emotional availability.
- Thresholds for intervention by local authorities are geared to investigating incidence and as neglect does not always present in this particular way it is challenging to then gauge the impact on the child from the absence of parental basic care.
- The true impact does not always become evident until much later in a child's life.
- Another significant challenge to helping and supporting children and families is that interventions are geared to short-term interventions and not to longer term inputs. Combating neglect often requires repeated inputs and sometimes with long term support.

6.7 The findings of Ofsted's thematic inspections of neglect '*In the Child's Time*'<sup>16</sup> present a mixed picture in respect of the quality of professional responses to neglect. The quality of assessments in neglect cases overall was found to be to variable. Almost half of the assessments reviewed either did not take sufficient account of family history, or did not sufficiently convey or consider the impact of neglect on the child. The local authorities providing the strongest evidence of action to tackle neglect were more likely to have a Neglect Strategy and a systematic improvement programme that addresses policy, thresholds and practice.

6.8 Learning from local and national reviews, multi-agency audit and research will be taken into account alongside feedback from children, families or professionals involved.

6.7 A topic paper on Neglect is included in the Children and Young Peoples Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) which is updated as new data and guidance becomes available and should be referenced via the link below for a more detailed narrative  
[www.manchester.gov.uk/children\\_and\\_young\\_peoples\\_jsna](http://www.manchester.gov.uk/children_and_young_peoples_jsna)

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<sup>16</sup> Ofsted Report 2014. [www.gov.uk/government/publications/professional-responses-to-neglect-in-the-childs-time](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/professional-responses-to-neglect-in-the-childs-time)

## 7. Measuring Impact - How will we know if the strategy is working?

7.1 We will measure the success and effectiveness of this Strategy by the impact on outcomes for children and young people.

7.2 A multi-agency data set will be developed to enable us to measure impact; this will include:

- Multi-agency audit and evidence of practice quality and performance against the Strategy aims, objectives and guiding principles for working with children, young people and their families.
- Feedback from children, young people and their families which will be sought as part of audits.

7.3 A Performance Framework that provides information on key performance indicators and agreed targets that will include:

- Increase in the number of Early Help Assessments completed by agencies.
- Reduction in the number of repeat referrals for neglect to Children's Social Care.
- Reduction in the number of repeat referrals to Children's Social Care.
- Reductions in the number of re-registrations under the category of neglect.
- Reduction in persistent school absenteeism
- Reduction in the number of children and young people who become Looked After as a result of neglect.
- Number of Neglect training courses attended by service area.
- Analysis of MSCB multi-agency neglect case audits, which will enable us to understand the quality of practice.
- Number of Domestic Violence notifications where neglect is identified as an issue.

It is recognised that in the short and medium term, through improved recognition of neglect and improved screening and assessment tools, there may be an increase in some of the above indicators.

7.4 We will review and monitor the activities detailed under the strategic objectives on an ongoing basis and report on them on an annual basis.

## 8. Strategic Aims and Objectives

8.1 The aim of the strategy is to improve the recognition of neglect in families; to improve agencies' responses to these families; and to ultimately improve the outcomes for children, young people and families.

This will be achieved by ensuring the children and families workforce is sufficiently skilled to recognise and effectively act on neglect issues and to positively engage with families at the earliest opportunity; thereby promoting their resilience and willingness to engage with agencies.

With this aim the Manchester Safeguarding Children Board Neglect Strategy 2017/19 has six strategic objectives.

### 8.2 Strategic Objective 1

To develop and improve the awareness and understanding of neglect, both within and between agencies working in Manchester including adult services. This includes a common understanding of neglect and the thresholds for access to services.

- i) A common understanding of neglect between and within agencies is of critical importance to allow effective identification and a common language. This aim will be supported by a clear strategy, effective guidance and the development of a skilled children and families workforce through the provision of high quality single and multi-agency training.
- ii) Understanding of the Manchester Multi-agency Levels of Need and Response Framework will help to ensure that the right help from the right agency or agencies at the right time is given to children, young people and families.
- iii) Working effectively between services working with children and adults via a holistic family approach.

### 8.3 Strategic Objective 2

To agree which Neglect Themed Screening and Assessment Tools will be used by the children and families workforce who work with families where neglect is a feature.

In order to develop confidence amongst the children and families workforce and to ensure they have the skills, knowledge and tools to assess neglect we will need to:

- i) Identify and develop a range of Neglect Screening and Assessment Tools that can be used to inform holistic assessments of neglect across all levels of need by the children and families workforce.
- ii) Pilot, research and evaluate the impact of the Neglect Screening and Assessment Tools.



- iii) Ensure the Early Help and statutory assessment processes are complemented by the use of appropriate, assessment tools specifically developed in relation to neglect.

#### **8.4 Strategic Objective 3**

The views of children, young people and their families are used to inform the development of practice and services.

Partners can demonstrate that they are consistently seeking the views of children and young people and their families; and can provide evidence of how this is being used to drive continuous development and improvement in practice.

Training programmes offered by the Board have as a 'golden thread' running through them the importance of routinely seeking the views of children, young people and their families.

#### **8.5 Strategic Objective 4**

Developing and sustain an agreed, early multi-agency response to neglect.

- i) Manchester Safeguarding Children Board, through its Learning and Development subgroup, will monitor the effectiveness of the multi-agency response to neglect through audit, practitioner and family feedback and scrutiny of performance information. Findings from the monitoring will be presented into the board for dissemination to inform future development of the strategy.
- ii) Relevant developments in service provision are promoted and clear for practitioners on a multi-agency basis.
- iii) Agencies to hold responsibility for ensuring their workforce has access to relevant training and development opportunities and to support practitioners by signposting them to relevant multi-agency training for neglect and how to use agreed screening and assessment tools.
- iv) Raise awareness amongst practitioners about neglect and learning from local and national reviews, multi-agency audit and research.

#### **8.6 Strategic Objective 5**

Work with children and young people will be measured by its impact on outcomes for children, young people and their families.

A performance framework will be developed that will be monitored routinely by the MSCB Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement subgroup and reports to the Leadership Group.

- i) There will be a Neglect themed multi-agency audit each year.
- ii) Learning from reviews and individual agency audits will be considered and used to inform learning and development plans, resources and communications.
- iii) A Communication plan will be developed and used to inform plans.

## 8.7 Strategic Objective 6

Build strength and resilience in children, young people and families rather than creating dependency by promoting a culture that builds on strengths across the children and families workforce rather than promoting dependency. We will deliver on our commitment to 'do with, not to' children, young people and families.

- i) We will embed Signs of Safety - Manchester has adopted Signs of Safety, a Strengths based framework, with a focus on supporting parents to identify and build on their strengths to reduce the worries identified by professionals and members of the community. The model requires professionals to be very clear about their worries and describe them in a language which is easily accessible for the whole family.
- ii) Training and briefings offered will be reviewed to ensure that the need to build strength and resilience in children, young people and their families rather than creating dependency runs as a 'golden thread' throughout the training offer.
- iii) Reviews and audits of practice and feedback from children, young people and their families from across the partnership will consider the quality and effectiveness of practice. Are we 'doing with, not to' families?

## 9. Conclusion

9.1 The development of this Neglect Strategy is of critical importance and will provide strategic direction and priorities to 2019.

9.2 Manchester Safeguarding Children Board will prioritise Neglect in its 2017/18 Business Plan and will commit resources to ensure the effective delivery of agreed strategic objectives.

9.3 Manchester has a high number of children experiencing neglect at all level of the Multi-agency Levels of Need and Response Framework and it is imperative that all agencies work together collaboratively to improve outcomes for children and young people.