

Safeguarding Competencies – Neglect

Minimum standards for practitioners in the Rochdale borough who come into contact with children and families

The RBSCP Neglect competencies are designed to ensure that all practitioners can demonstrate an agreed minimum level of knowledge and skills and deliver appropriate responses to neglect in line with the Rochdale Borough Neglect Strategy 2018-20.

The competencies apply to a wide range of practitioners and volunteers in a range of settings, including but not restricted to:

- Those working directly with children, young people and their families in child/family specific or front line public services e.g. children's social care, early year settings, health services, schools.
- Those working in services for Adults e.g. adult mental health, substance misuse, domestic abuse who may become aware of child safeguarding risks as a result of their work
- Those with limited contact with children, young people and/or parents/carers as part of their role who may nonetheless become aware of possible abuse or neglect, e.g. bus drivers, librarians, front line/administrative staff in any universal service.

RBSCPP recognise that single agencies will also have their own competencies that are specific to their area of work and that, depending on an individual's role and responsibility, further competencies may need to be achieved and evidenced.

The neglect competencies do not replace these single agency standards but should be used in conjunction with them.

The decision about how to promote the competencies and to assess and monitor compliance should be made by individual agencies, in a way that is appropriate and relevant for their workforce and service users, as well as meeting any statutory and regulatory requirements.

It is recommended that assessments of competency take place as early as possible for all new starters – this will ensure that any development needs are identified as soon as possible, to reduce the risk of children, young people and families experiencing abuse or harm. Further suggestions for using the competencies can be found on page 11 of this document.

Child Neglect – Everyone who comes into contact with children, young people and their families

No.	Core Competencies for everyone who comes into contact with children and families	All practitioners and volunteers, at all levels, need to be able to:	Effective response/practice (examples taken from local Multi Agency Case File Audit & learning from SCRs) Practitioners who are effective are likely to:	Ineffective response/practice (examples taken from local Multi Agency Case File Audit & learning from SCRs) Practitioners who are ineffective are likely to:
1	Understanding Neglect	<p>Be alert to Neglect as the most common form of child abuse.</p> <p>Be objective – so that any experience of neglect within their own childhood history does not blur their understanding of what constitutes an acceptable standard of care.</p>	<p>Recognise a range of potential indicators of child neglect, including indicators of physical, emotional, educational, nutritional and medical neglect and lack of supervision and guidance.</p> <p>Use Graded Care Profile to grade neglect.</p>	<p>Consistently fail to recognise the seriousness of Neglect.</p> <p>Fail to recognise neglect as a form of child abuse.</p>
2	Risk factors	<p>Be alert to risk factors which may make a child more vulnerable to neglect</p>	<p>Understand that some children are more vulnerable to Neglect, including babies, teenagers, unaccompanied asylum seekers, children who are looked after and disabled children.</p> <p>Recognise that factors including domestic abuse, parental drug and alcohol misuse and parental mental health issues may increase the risk of Neglect.</p>	<p>Fail to recognise and address vulnerability and risk</p>

3	Signs and indicators	<p>Be alert to the signs which may indicate that a child's basic needs are not being met.</p>	<p>Be able to distinguish a healthy child from one who's health and development is being impaired due to abuse or neglect</p> <p>Consider the child's behaviour and development as a possible indicator of the child's experience within the family</p>	<p>Fail to notice the signs that a child is experiencing Neglect</p>
4	Impact of neglect	<p>Understand that neglect is serious and can cause significant, long term harm</p> <p>Understand that children who experience Neglect are more vulnerable to other types of abuse.</p>	<p>Identify the need for support at an early stage.</p>	<p>Underestimate the short and long term impact of Neglect.</p>
5	Taking Action	<p>Know when and how to respond to immediate safety issues in relation to a particular child /children</p> <p>Know the boundaries of their own personal competence and responsibility, when to involve others and where to seek advice and support.</p> <p>How to report concerns about a child</p> <p>Understand the importance of sharing information in order to safeguard</p>	<p>Understand their role in relation to neglect.</p> <p>Take timely action to safeguard children.</p> <p>Demonstrate appropriate professional ownership and persistence.</p> <p>Work closely with other agencies to plan interventions.</p> <p>Confident in analysing thresholds and managing uncertainty</p>	<p>Avoid responsibility for dealing with neglect.</p> <p>Blame others for lack of progress</p> <p>Lack persistence</p>

		How to take action, as an individual which is appropriate to your role/position and leads to effective outcomes.		
Child Neglect: Practitioners who work directly with children, young people and/or their families				
No.	Additional Core Competencies for practitioners who work directly with children and families	Practitioners who work directly with children, young people and/or their families, need to be able to:	Effective response/practice (examples taken from local Multi Agency Case File Audit & learning from SCRs) Practitioners who are effective are likely to:	Ineffective response/practice (examples taken from local Multi Agency Case File Audit & learning from SCRs) Practitioners who are ineffective are likely to:
1	Focus on the Child	Understand and demonstrate that the needs of the child are paramount. Recognise the importance of understanding the child's lived experience.	Demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which abuse and neglect may impact on the normal development of children and young people Recognise that children and young people who are being neglected may find it difficult	Lack a basic understanding of child development Fail to see and speak to the child, observe how they are, listen to them or take serious account of their views, and see the situation from their perspective and experience.

			<p>to tell someone and that children may 'normalise' their experiences if it is all they have known.</p> <p>Recognise that children and young people may communicate their abuse or neglect indirectly through their behaviour and appearance</p> <p>Demonstrate understanding that some children are more vulnerable to neglect, including babies, children with disabilities and adolescents.</p> <p>Use creative approaches/a range of tools to elicit and understand the child's perspective, wishes and feelings.</p> <p>Understand the concept of the Child's Voice and use tools to elicit this.</p>	<p>Focus on the immediate needs of a parent who may be dominant or very needy so that the voice and best interests of the child are not clear, not considered and therefore not acted upon.</p> <p>Fail to provide appropriate opportunities for the child's voice to be heard</p> <p>Fail to understand that the concept of the 'child's voice' applies to pre and non-verbal children</p>
2	Early Identification and Early Help	<p>Understand that the sooner families get the help they need, the better the outcomes for children.</p> <p>Understand universal services and the role that an Early</p>	<p>Respond to risk in a timely and effective manner.</p> <p>Aware of available resources to</p>	<p>Allow cases to drift.</p> <p>Be unaware of agreed processes and of available resources.</p>

		Help Assessment and processes can play.	be able to intervene.	
3	Think Family	<p>Understand that 'Think Family' is about securing better outcomes for children, young people, adults and families by co-ordinating the support they receive from all services</p> <p>Understand that whilst there are different family patterns and lifestyles and that these can vary across different ethnic, cultural and faith groups, all children have a fundamental right to have their basic needs met.</p> <p>Understand that issues such as mental health etc. can significantly impact on people's ability to parent</p>	<p>Tailor packages of support/work to reflect each family's individual needs.</p> <p>Be flexible and creative.</p> <p>Take a multi-agency approach.</p>	Display a rigid approach – 'one size fits all' – no flexibility.
4	Thresholds	Understand the relevance and application of the Rochdale Borough Children's Needs & Response Framework to their work.	<p>Be familiar with the Children's Needs & Response Framework and be confident and competent in using it.</p> <p>Use the Framework to identify levels of need and the appropriate agency/multi-agency response to those needs. Use the tool to facilitate multi-agency conversations and have the confidence to have those discussions.</p>	<p>Be unfamiliar with the Children's Needs & Response Framework</p> <p>Fail to understand thresholds</p> <p>Make inappropriate referrals</p>

			<p>Knows how and when to refer to children’s social care if they have identified a safeguarding/child protection concern.</p> <p>Offer Early Help as soon as need is identified.</p> <p>Seek evidence of improved and sustained outcomes for the child and if these are not evidenced, escalate.</p> <p>Take into account previous interventions/ historical information at each referral.</p>	
5	Recording	Maintain accurate records in line with their agencies recording policy and procedures.	<p>Maintain accurate, timely, clear written records of all concerns and actions regarding safeguarding and child protection, including chronology.</p> <p>Clearly state the difference between facts and opinion</p> <p>Consistently record the voice of the child</p> <p>Follow up all phone calls in writing so there is a clear audit</p>	Fail to maintain appropriate records

			<p>train and to avoid misunderstandings.</p> <p>Ensure that records are stored securely</p>	
6	Assessment	Take a role in identifying and assessing children and families in need	<p>Always take the full history of the family into account and patterns of previous episodes of neglect. Create a full chronology.</p> <p>Include background information of the parents' own childhood to better assess parenting capability. Listen to other's perspectives. Check/triangulate information. Demonstrate professional curiosity.</p> <p>Use a range of appropriate tools in their work with children/families including the Rochdale Risk Model, the Neglect Screening Tool and the Rochdale Graded Care Profile</p>	<p>Produce limited assessments with little or no evidence of information gathering or analysis</p> <p>Approach assessments with existing preconceptions/ 'confirmation bias'</p> <p>Fail to review assessments in light of new information.</p> <p>Demonstrate 'fixed thinking'.</p> <p>Take information at face value</p>
7		Use SMART planning approaches to achieve best outcomes and to avoid drift and lack of progress for the child	Ensure that the child's wishes and feelings are clear when formulating plans	Ignore the knowledge and expertise that the multi-agency network of partners

	Planning		<p>Recognise the knowledge and expertise that partners bring.</p> <p>Ensure that plans are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-based)</p>	can bring to the work of the team
8	Information sharing	<p>Be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children</p> <p>Demonstrate an understanding of GDPR and knowledge that child protection issues over-ride confidentiality.</p>	<p>Be familiar with the 7 Golden Rules of Information Sharing</p> <p>Recognise which information is relevant and appropriate to share.</p> <p>Share appropriate and relevant information – in writing, by telephone, electronically, and in person.</p> <p>Be persistent in their requests – and confident to follow up.</p> <p>Escalate concerns if necessary.</p>	<p>Fail to share information when a safeguarding concern has been identified</p> <p>Share sensitive information inappropriately.</p> <p>Fail to understand the issues around confidentiality and information sharing</p> <p>Display little appreciation of the value of different professional contributions and perspectives</p> <p>Lack confidence to follow up requests.</p>
9	Critical thinking &	<p>Analyse the facts available – do not just repeat what is known.</p> <p>Awareness of risk framework/thresholds model,</p>	<p>Demonstrate that they are ‘professionally curious’ when engaging with a family where there are concerns about</p>	<p>Fail to consider the possibility of disguised compliance</p> <p>Fail to make good use of tools</p>

	analysis	and awareness of tools that facilitate critical thinking.	neglect Use reflective supervision to help explore issues.	or support.
10	Review – where are we now?	Understand the importance of timely reviews. Review as appropriate to the situation understand it is okay to review earlier if the case warrants it.	Undertake regular reviews to check improvements are being made. Update plans accordingly following reviews. Make effective use of reflective supervision.	Reviews become a tick-box exercise, Not meaningful.
11	Challenge / escalation	Appreciate the values of professional challenge – that it enhances practice and is supportive.	Understand and be able to describe the escalation process	Regard professional challenge as a threat, or immediately back-down from their beliefs. Cases will drift and interventions will be ineffective.
12	Training /Knowledge	Ensure knowledge is comprehensive and up to date.	Keeps up to date with latest developments, initiatives, tools and resources.	Is out of date and unaware of new approaches. Fails to acknowledge own responsibility for continuous professional development.

Sources:

[Growing Up Neglected: Ofsted](#)

[NICE guideline: Child Abuse and Neglect \(2017\)](#)

[Safeguarding children and young people: roles and competences for health care staff INTERCOLLEGIATE DOCUMENT](#)

[NSPCC: What is Neglect?](#)

Using the Competencies

Development activities that may contribute to meeting the competencies include:

- Multi-agency training, conferences and briefings
- Serious Case Review briefings
- Single agency induction/safeguarding training
- Practice workshops
- E-Learning
- Personal research/self-directed learning
- Mentoring and shadowing
- Management supervision
- Peer supervision
- Formal education/Qualification pathway

Competencies should be assessed using mechanisms that are already in place within organisations including:

- Induction programmes
- Direct observation
- Supervision
- Performance and Development Reviews (PDRs) / appraisal
- Discussion, formal or informal
- Questioning, individually or in team meetings
- Case File audits
- e-learning completion
- Coursework and assignments as part of a qualification

RBSCP – neglect competencies

This document is intended to provide practitioners with a means of planning and monitoring their own continuous professional development; it can also be used as a tool within supervision or appraisal.

NAME:

JOB TITLE:

Service:

Date:

Standard	Evidence	RAG	Comments