



Multi-Agency Neglect Strategy 2018-2020

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Neglect is the most prevalent form of child abuse. It is a complex issue and there is no single cause of neglect and no single solution. Full commitment, from all partners, to urgently address child neglect is essential.

The experience of childhood neglect can have significant and long term consequences, affecting all aspects of child development. Neglect can impact upon children and young people's cognitive, physical, emotional and behavioural development, educational achievement and wellbeing.

In infancy, neglected children are more likely to show inadequate growth and failure to thrive; at primary school age, they are more likely to be socially isolated, lack social skills and appear withdrawn; neglect during adolescence can lead to problems with mental and physical ill-health, poor engagement with and attainment at school, difficulties with interpersonal relationships and a higher propensity to risk-taking behaviours.

Research also indicates that neglect is often experienced in combination with other forms of maltreatment (especially emotional abuse) within the family.

This strategy represents a call to action by the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Board (RBSCB) to partners across the borough. Whilst acknowledging the scale of the issue, it provides a starting point, in the form of a two-year plan, to more effectively address neglect in the Borough.

The strategy is informed by lessons learned nationally and locally, by statutory guidance and research. The span of this Strategy is such that it will be part of the Safeguarding Partnership arrangements laid down in Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government, 2018) and will reflect this transition. This will be a whole Rochdale Strategy encompassing all facets of the community and should be read in conjunction with the [Integrated Early Help Strategy](#) and the [Rochdale Children's Needs and Response Framework](#).

MISSION STATEMENT

‘Rochdale will be a great place to live and grow up; children and families will have what they need to thrive.’

AIM

To safeguard and protect children and young people in the Borough and ensure every worker in Rochdale understands and fulfils their role in relation to addressing Neglect.

The strategy builds upon the Rochdale Neglect Strategy 2016-18.

As a result of the 2016-18 strategy, the following was achieved:

- Multi-agency working group established;
- Delivery of multi-agency Neglect training;
- Development of RBSCB website resource for practitioners;
- Rochdale SCR Conference in April 2018;
- Developed and promoted local assessment tools including the Rochdale Neglect Screening Tool and the Rochdale Graded Care profile;
- Multi-agency case file audits (MACFAs) on Neglect;
- Developed and delivered a local Neglect campaign in September 2017 and supported the DfE national campaign in 2017 and 2018 to encourage the public to report neglect and child abuse.

Whilst significant work was undertaken to improve the multi-agency response to Neglect, the 2018-20 Strategy aims to provide a different outcome focussed approach to addressing the issue across the Borough. This is due to recognition that despite a great deal of commitment and endeavour the previous strategy did not translate into action and impact. In turn this meant that children and families have not always received the timely, appropriate support they need to thrive. In addition, evidence within the Borough would suggest that professionals and the public are not always able to identify neglect. Although there are identified tools to identify, assess and measure neglect evidence has shown there is a lack of knowledge in relation to these and the use is sporadic.

The entrenched nature and impact of Neglect has also been evidenced through our work with families that have large sibling groups – the diversity of needs in line with age and development are varied and are supporting our commitment to take a whole family, whole system approach to tackling Neglect which moves beyond the identification of Neglect to one of intervention by all professionals. Getting this right will impact positively upon our ambition to ensure all children get the right help at the right time.

This strategy moves from a knowledge based approach to a competency based approach outlining the mechanism of how we will work with children, young people and families.

It is underpinned by discussion and analysis from the Rochdale Neglect Workshop held in June 2018 and by direct consultation with practitioners undertaken in October/November 2018.

Through consultation the following key priorities evolved:

Communication and co-operation:

- A strategic commitment by all agencies to tackling Neglect;
- The partnership effectively communicates its commitment to uphold the right of all children in Rochdale to develop their full potential, free from Neglect;
- The partnership effectively communicates positive change and improvement;
- A common set of Rochdale values ensure that everyone knows what good looks like;
- Engagement with the local community to talk about Neglect;

Analysis:

- Understanding local prevalence of and response to Neglect;
- Local commissioning of services which addresses Neglect;
- Outcome focused quality assurance and evaluation processes;

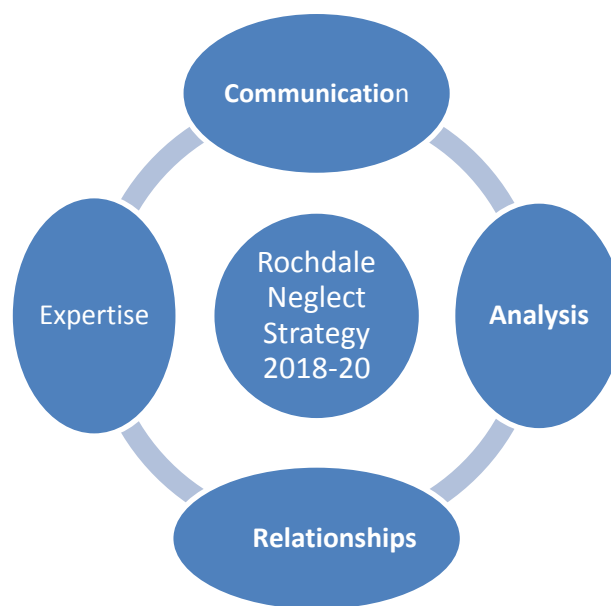
Relationships:

- Build on and improve relationships with children, young people and families so that any risk of Neglect is tackled at the earliest opportunity, through respectful partnership with families;
- The Voice of the Child, both individually and collectively, shapes strategic planning and service delivery;
- Build on and improve relationships across partner agencies and within single organisations based on the Rochdale values;
- Improve the perception of the Partnership within all of Rochdale's communities;
- A strengths based approach with a focus on positive outcomes for children and their families;
- Families know how to access support and express trust in services;
- Each partner agency will provide appropriate responses to children, young people and their families through a multi-agency Think Family approach in line with the guiding principles in this strategy.

Expertise:

- Professionals at all levels in all organisations need to raise their awareness, confidence and competence in working with Neglect;
- An emotionally resilient workforce;
- Development of multi-agency Neglect competencies for practitioners which include critical thinking, professional curiosity and analysis.

Our strategy for 2018/19 recognises that everyone in Rochdale needs to CARE about Neglect and understand how their individual contribution can help to improve outcomes /create positive change for children across the borough.



Definition of Neglect

The definition of Neglect from statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government, 2018) is:

'The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health and development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once a child is born Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- a) Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- b) Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- c) Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care givers);
- d) Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include Neglect of, or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.'

As well as the statutory definition, it is necessary to recognise the specific needs of children and in turn understand 'failure to meet basic needs':

- Medical Neglect;
- Nutritional Neglect;
- Emotional Neglect;
- Educational Neglect;
- Physical Neglect;
- Lack of supervision and guidance.

The nature of Neglect is such that it is insidious, it advances gradually and thus there is a risk that agencies do not intervene early enough or recognise their role within Neglect. The approach needs to be consistent, holistic, strengths-based and person-centred. Practitioners are supported in the identification of Neglect by the use of the Neglect Screening Tool (Appendix 1). A further tool to identify Neglect is under development and will support individuals with infrequent contact with children and families, for example, taxi drivers and supermarket employees, who may nonetheless play an important role in safeguarding children.

In the Borough, partners should utilise the Early Help Assessment (EHA) to assess unmet needs and co-ordinate an action plan for support and intervention. The implementation of an early help offer is not the responsibility of a single agency. Ownership should be partner based and incorporate a 'Think Family' approach focussing on improved outcomes for children, young people and families.

The tool of choice for the assessment of Neglect in the Borough is the Graded Care Profile (Appendix 2). This is a practical tool which is an objective measure and defines care in terms of strengths and weaknesses. Changes after intervention can be monitored by reassessment using the tool. Historically the measure of success has been a numerical record of number of profiles completed. The aim of this Strategy is to encourage a more qualitative measure.

To support this, a suite of multi-agency competencies will be developed. It is envisaged that these will lead to a cohesive way of working across partnerships and the spectrum of Neglect.

The table below reflects the CARE priorities and identifies a range of **key indicators which will be used to measure the effectiveness and impact of the strategy**

Priority	Actions to include	Measurement
Communication and co-operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All agencies pledge their commitment to tackling Neglect • Neglect Working Group • Neglect action plan developed, owned and driven forward by multi-agency leads 	<p>A solid commitment to tackling Neglect is evidenced in multi-agency strategic plans, commissioning and single agency plans across the partnership</p> <p>Consistent engagement, effective collaboration and an integrated approach from all agencies is clearly evident.</p>
Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise multi agency Performance Framework • Outcome focused performance measures to be agreed 	<p>Meaningful multi-agency performance data is routinely shared by all partners, collated and analysed to inform strategic needs analysis, commissioning and service design</p>
Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voice of the Child training for practitioners • Community engagement activities and consultation 	<p>The Voice of the Child is clearly evident in the record keeping and planning of all practitioners</p> <p>Parents consistently report that they feel safe to ask for help and work in partnership with high quality services to prevent and reduce Neglect.</p>
Expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of outcomes and competency frameworks for Neglect 	<p>Practitioners from all services understand the role they play in providing preventative interventions and are equipped and supported to do so.</p>

Further measures of success will be established and incorporated into a detailed action plan that will be used to measure progress and demonstrate the effectiveness of the strategy and its implementation.

GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Initially, governance will be provided by RBSCB with challenge provided by monitoring progress against the strategic objectives. Once the safeguarding arrangements laid down in Working Together 2018 the safeguarding partnership will provide governance.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 sets out the requirement for each Local Authority to establish a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangement (MASA). It identifies three key partners, the Local Authority, the Police and the Clinical Commissioning Group as accountable for these arrangements. Whilst the legislation identifies the three key partners, Rochdale would wish to retain the strong engagement of all partners and build on the benefits this has produced in the past. This approach would support the Neglect Strategy as the arrangements transition from RBSCB to RBMASA.

The purpose of the Safeguarding Arrangements is to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together to safeguard children, promote their welfare and improve outcomes for vulnerable children.

The new Safeguarding Arrangements will facilitate and drive creative practise beyond usual agency institutional and agency constraints and boundaries and ensure the effective protection of children is founded on practitioners developing lasting and trusting relationships with children and their families. The new arrangements will support the revised Neglect Strategy and provide the forum upon which partners can challenge themselves and others to ensure that the prevalence of Neglect is addressed within the Borough effectively and in a timely manner.

The transition arrangements with regard to the new 'Safeguarding Arrangements' applies from 29 June 2018 to 29 September 2020 however during the transition period the RBSCB will continue to provide oversight and scrutiny with regard to the Neglect Strategy and the outcomes achieved.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

[Neglect Screening Tool](#)

Appendix 2

[Rochdale Graded Care Profile \(0-11\)](#)

[Guidance Notes \(0-11\)](#)

[Rochdale Adolescent Graded Care Profile](#)

[Guidance notes \(Adolescent\)](#)

Appendix 3

Useful links

Greater Manchester Safeguarding Procedures

[Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Board/Multi-agency Partnership](#)

[OurRochdale](#)

[Rochdale Local Offer](#)

REFERENCES

Department of Education (2018) [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) HMSO
London

[Growing up Neglected](#): A multi-agency response to older children (July 2018)

[Thinking about adolescent neglect](#): A review of research on identification, assessment and intervention (Children's Society April 2018)

[The relationship between poverty, child abuse and neglect](#): an evidence review
(Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2016)

[Neglect](#): research evidence to inform practice (Action for Children)