



Bath & North East Somerset
Local Safeguarding Children Board

Threshold for Assessment of Children and Young People & Guide to Level of Service Intervention In Bath & North East Somerset

Date approved by LSCB	December 2015
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Date for review	December 2018
Detail of review amendments	

'Shift the investigative question from 'is this a child protection case or not?' to 'does this child or young person need help and, if so, which service is appropriate?' Munro, 2011, pg 132

Dear Colleague,

This document is intended to clarify for everyone who works with Children and Young People the shared agreement on thresholds provided by Bath and North East Somerset's Children's Services. It is hoped that the guidance assists professionals in identifying the most appropriate level of intervention and support.

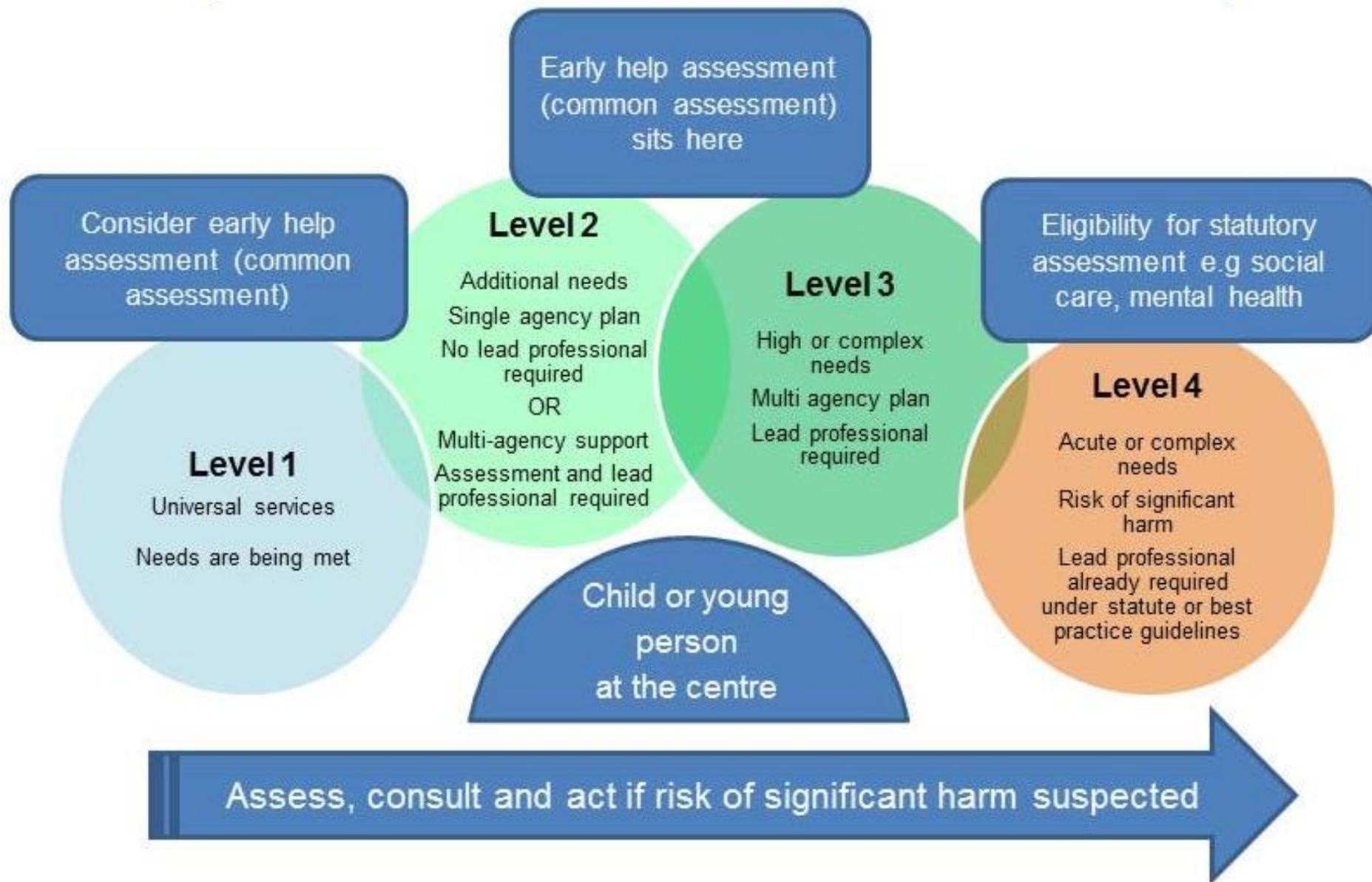
The thresholds for Social Care intervention should be seen within the broader context of the "Early Help" windscreen which is attached at the beginning of this document. The importance of providing help to families at the earliest possible opportunity must remain an imperative for all professionals who work with vulnerable young people and their families. However as concerns become more complex, or where early identification and intervention do not appear to assist in reducing risk, it becomes increasingly important that professionals are able to utilise guidance on what might be the most appropriate "next step" and just where-about on the spectrum of need these concerns appear to feature.

This threshold document seeks to provide assistance and clarity to professionals for the occasions where professional discussion is required either within teams or between agencies about whether or not the identified concerns might require a different type of response.

It is also important to clarify that the threshold document should be used primarily as a helpful indicator of the types of interventions that are felt to be the most appropriate for families, and it is not an "absolute" guide to decision-making or responses. Ultimately, there is no substitute for professionals discussing the appropriateness of referrals either face to face or via the telephone both with the Child Protection Lead for their organisation or with a member of Children's Social Care. It is vital that agencies are able to have a healthy debate about the most effective type of service provision in response to each individual referral.

Richard Baldwin
August 2015

Level of support can change in line with level of need



Levels of support appropriate to meet the identified needs of the Child or Young Person

	Early Help & Targeted Support Level 2	Combination of Support: Early Help (CAF) & Child/Young Person in Need (S.17) - Level 3	Specialist Support co-ordinated by a Local Authority Social Worker Level 4
Assessment	Common/Early Help Assessment or Step-down Meeting which generates an Action Plan	Consideration of referral to Children's Social Care. Common assessment or Single Assessment or Education and Health Care Plan	Definite referral to Children's Social Care. Single Assessment or other Specialist Assessment that may lead to an application to the Family Court.
Needs	A Child/Young Person's needs not met by Universal Services (examples provided on following pages) unless there is a clearly defined service e.g. Speech and Language Therapy to meet that need.	A Child/Young Person has a number of needs not met due to their complexity and require additional support. A co-ordinated multi-agency response is required to ensure the best possible outcome.	Evidence of: Complex needs leading to serious concern about the care, health and development of the Child/Young Person Child/Young Person at immediate risk of physical or sexual harm or sexual exploitation. Serious family dysfunction, Child/Young Person beyond parental control, Child/Young Person abandoned through parent or other family member not being present e.g. hospital admission or imprisonment.
Types of possible Professional involvement	These can include Parent Support Adviser, Youth Connect, Children's Centre Services, Connecting Families, Willow Project and other relevant health or commissioned services.	Qualified SW, Family Support Worker, CAMHS, Children's Centre Services, Youth Connect, Parent Support Adviser, Connecting Families, Willow Project, substance misuse services.	Allocation of a qualified Local Authority SW, to be supported by a wide range of professionals and agencies.

<p align="center">Child/Young Person's Development: (Health, Education, Emotional & Behavioural Development, Identity, Family & Social Relationships, Social Presentation, Self-Care Skills)</p>		
<p align="center">Early Help & Targeted Support Level 2</p>	<p align="center">Combination of Support: Early Help (CAF) & Child/Young Person in Need (S.17) Level 3</p>	<p align="center">Specialist Support (Co-ordinated by a Local Authority Social Worker) Level 4</p>
<p>Child/Young Person with behaviour problems.</p> <p>Child/Young Person with some impairment and/or mental health needs.</p> <p>Child/Young Person identified with low self-esteem.</p> <p>Child/Young Person is vulnerable for a range of reasons including access to online media.</p>	<p>Child/Young Person exhibiting behaviour which could lead to parent/carer being unable to provide care, or could lead to harm to self or others, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offending behaviour - Self-harming - Child/Young Person at risk of sexual exploitation (including online abuse) - Risk taking behaviour - Substance misuse <p>Child/Young Person whose attendance at school is becoming erratic and/or behaviour is leading to exclusion.</p> <p>A Child/Young Person identified as a young carer.</p> <p>Child/Young Person indicating signs of neglect, e.g. repeat late attendance, unclean clothing, claiming hunger.</p> <p>Child/Young Person experiencing domestic abuse as witness, victim or perpetrator.</p>	<p>Child/Young Person exhibiting behaviours that are putting themselves or others at risk. For example, ongoing substance misuse, repetitive involvement in crime or child sexual exploitation, repetitive/significant self-harm.</p> <p>Child/Young Person at risk of significant emotional harm e.g. through repeat rejection.</p> <p>Child/Young Person presenting as suffering from chronic neglect e.g. basic needs not met.</p> <p>Child/Young Person not attending &/or repeatedly missing from the home or school raising concern for their vulnerability.</p> <p>Child/Young Person presenting having suffered physical harm from parent/carer including inconsistent &/or repeated explanations for injuries to Child/Young Person and any injury on a non-mobile baby.</p> <p>Child/Young Person at risk of female genital mutilation, honour based violence and forced</p>

	<p>Child/Young person expressing an interest in extremism.</p> <p>Pregnancy where previous children have been removed (does require referral to CSC).</p> <p>A Child/Young Person with moderate to significant physical disability, mental health issues or serious developmental delay.</p> <p>Younger children demonstrating behaviours that you would expect of older Children/Young People.</p>	<p>marriage.</p> <p>Profound or severe and/or multiple disabilities.</p> <p>Suspicion of fabricated induced illness.</p> <p>Young Carers whose responsibilities compromise their own life chances.</p> <p>Evidence of young person accessing and acting upon interest in extremism that relates to the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.</p> <p>Child/Young Person presenting at risk of sexual harm including repeat STI's, Child Sexual Exploitation.</p> <p>Child/Young Person at risk due to domestic abuse either of physical harm through becoming involved &/or emotional harm through repeat exposure.</p>
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Parenting Capacity:
(Basic Care, Ensuring Safety, Emotional Warmth, Stimulation, Guidance & Boundaries, Stability)

<p align="center">Early Help & Targeted Support Level 2</p>	<p align="center">Combination of Support: Early Help (CAF) & Child/Young Person in Need (S.17) Level 3</p>	<p align="center">Specialist Support (Co-ordinated by a Local Authority Social Worker) Level 4</p>
<p>Parents/carers have learning disabilities and require extra support to meet Child/Young Person's needs.</p> <p>Substance misuse affects parent/carers abilities to meet Child/Young Person's needs.</p> <p>Ongoing physical or mental health needs of parents/carer negatively impacting on Child/Young Person.</p> <p>Low level concerns about amount of supervision, especially of younger children.</p> <p>Household chaotic resulting in not all basic needs of the Children/Young People being met.</p>	<p>Parents/carers provide a poor or inconsistent level of physical care. e.g. missed meals, health appointments</p> <p>Parenting displays low warmth and high criticism</p> <p>Consistent under-stimulation of the Child/Young Person, leading to impaired learning and intellectual development.</p> <p>Parents/carers have mental health issues which adversely affect most of the needs of the Child/Young Person.</p> <p>Parental relationship involves domestic abuse, which causes distress to the Child/Young Person.</p> <p>Parental substance abuse, including alcohol, presents a risk to the wellbeing of the Child/Young Person. This includes not storing drugs/paraphernalia safely.</p> <p>Parents/carers failing to maintain a consistently stable and secure environment.</p> <p>Child/Young Person who is Privately Fostered. This is a Child/Young Person that lives with a non-immediate family member for more than 28 days or more (requires referral to CSC).</p>	<p>Parents/carers consistently fail to meet basic physical needs.</p> <p>Care from parents/carers is negligent leading to the Child/Young Person to be at risk due to poor supervision.</p> <p>Parents/carers use excessive discipline to maintain control.</p> <p>Parental relationship involves extensive domestic abuse, whether the Child/Young Person is present or not.</p> <p>Parental/carer substance abuse, which seriously affects the care of the Child/Young Person.</p> <p>Parents/carers require continuing emotional and practical support in order to sustain good enough parenting.</p> <p>In all of the above risk is increased when Parents/Carers refuse to engage with services.</p>

Family & Environmental Factors

(Family History & Functioning, Wider Family, Housing, Employment, Income, Families Social Integration, Community Resources)

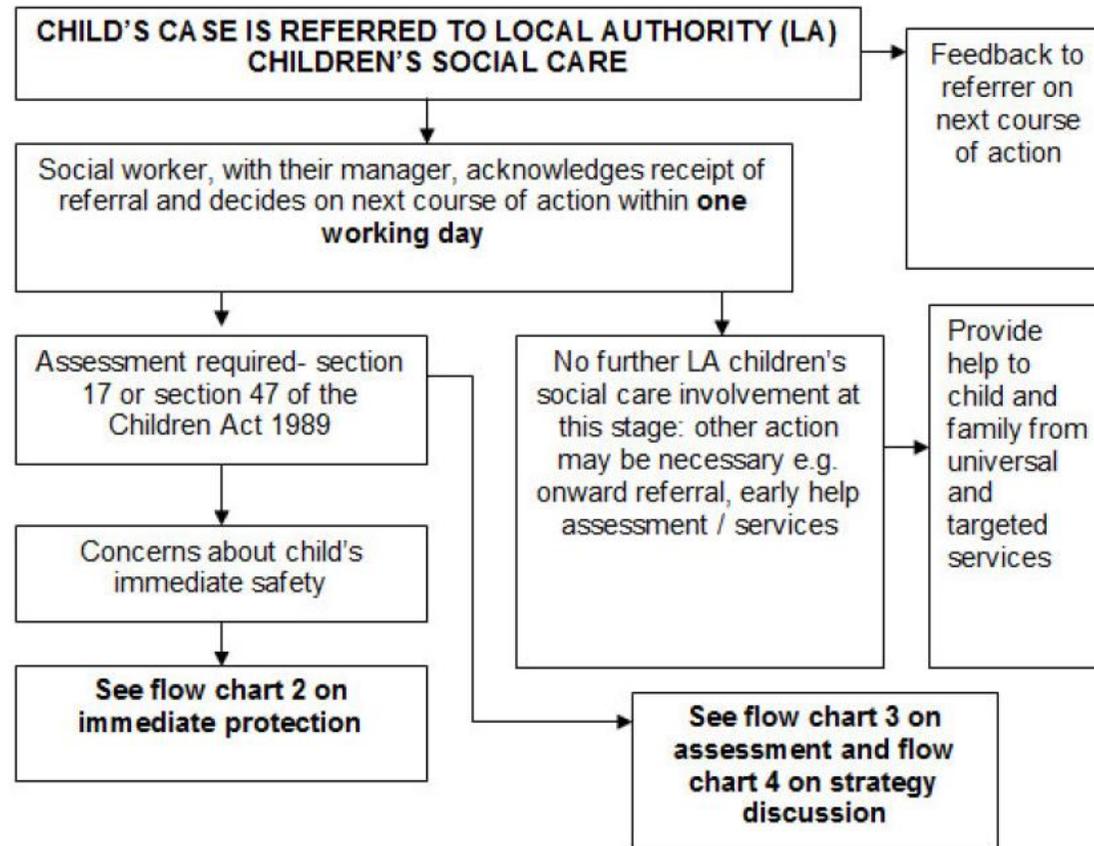
<p align="center">Early Help & Targeted Support Level 2</p>	<p align="center">Combination of Support: Early Help (CAF) & Child/Young Person in Need (S.17) Level 3</p>	<p align="center">Specialist Support Co-ordinated by a Local Authority Social Worker Level 4</p>
<p>Regular changes in care arrangements adversely affecting some aspects of Child/Young Person development.</p> <p>Concerns identified about anti-social behaviour in local area affecting children's needs, e.g. racist bullying of family.</p> <p>Parents/carers have range of issues such as problems with housing, unemployment and are financially excluded.</p>	<p>Families who are socially isolated.</p> <p>Household is chaotic with few routines and boundaries.</p> <p>Accommodation is neglected compromising the health and wellbeing of the Child/Young Person.</p> <p>Repetitive anti-social behaviour results in risk for Child/Young Person whether from within or outside the home.</p> <p>Parental behaviour results in unsafe people visiting family home placing the Child/Young Person at risk.</p>	<p>No responsible family member to meet basic care needs.</p> <p>Physical accommodation is inappropriate and leads to an immediate risk to the Child/Young Person.</p> <p>Neglect through poor parental choice, e.g. income spent purely on drugs/alcohol and not food.</p> <p>Significant risk from an adult who is a risk to Children/Young People, whether living in the property or visiting. To include those subject to Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) processes.</p> <p>Child/Young People exploited within the community e.g. as a victim or perpetrator of Child Sexual Exploitation and/or drug dealing.</p>

Guidance

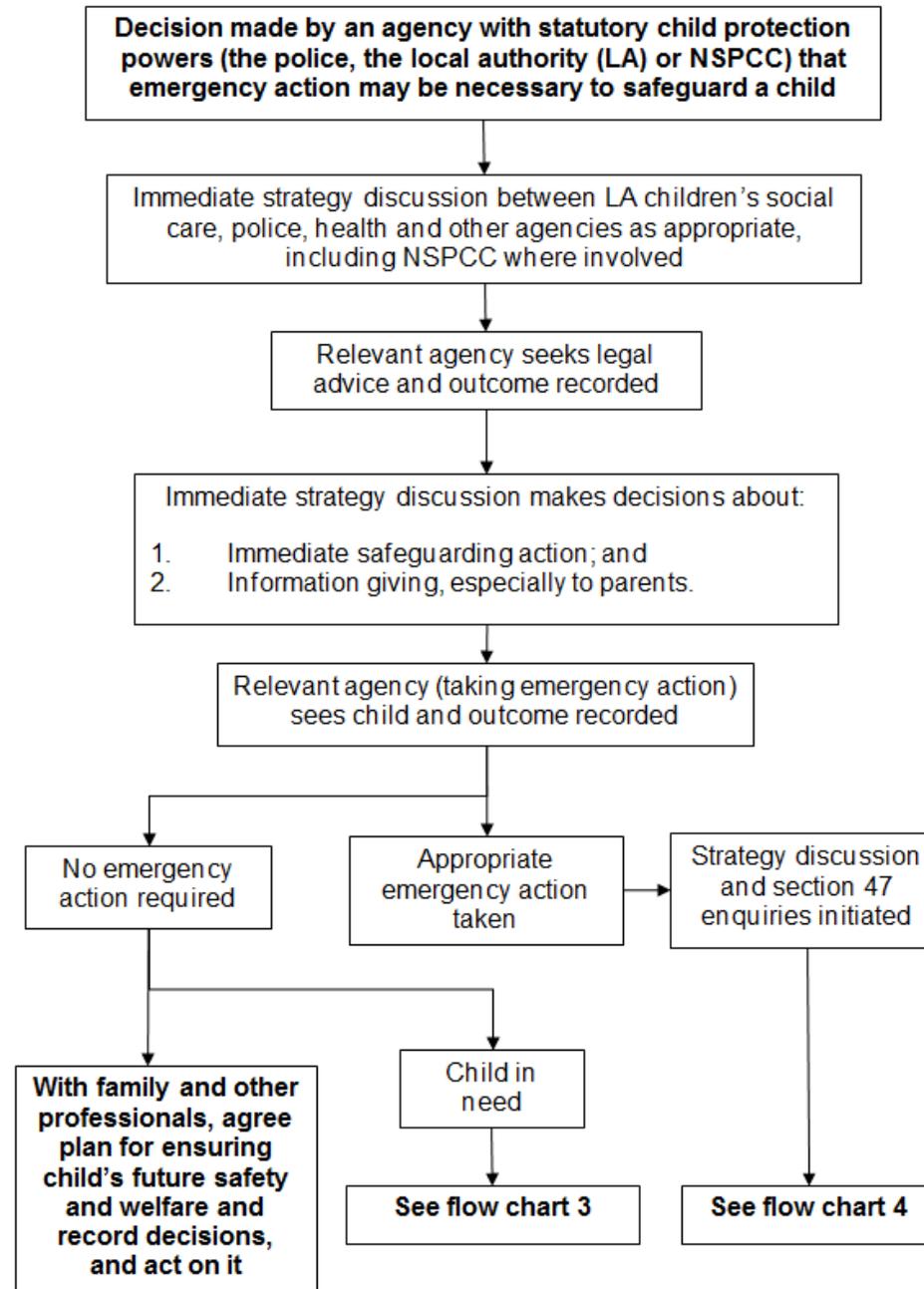
- If a Child/Young Person makes a disclosure to you, do not ask leading questions. Let the Child/Young Person talk if they wish and either make notes while they do or write them up as soon as possible afterwards. Do not promise to keep their confidentiality and if they are old enough to understand you will need to explain that because you are worried about them (or who the disclosure is about) that you will need to tell other people so that they can get help. Each agency should have a Child Protection Lead you can discuss with, or if not call either the Children and Families Assessment and Intervention Team for advice during office hours - 01225 396312 or 01225 396313 – or the Emergency Duty Team if outside office hours – 01454 615165.
- There is a range of Early Help services managed and/or commissioned by the local authority in addition to various voluntary sector organisations.
For up to date information on these please contact the Family Information Service:
<http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/children-young-people-and-families/childcare-information-and-support-your-family/family>
Or check the One Big Database which includes some Level 1/Universal services:
<http://www.1bigdatabase.org.uk/>
- For children with disabilities, please access the Families with Disabled Children webpage:
<http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/children-young-people-and-families/families-disabled-children>
- For children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, please refer to our local offer:
www.bathnes.gov.uk/localoffer
- Refer also to the South West Child Protection Procedures www.swcpp.org.uk
- Referrals/Joint Working/transition planning will occur with adult care for those needing to transition
- For children who have gone missing, these need to be reported to the Police in the first instance. They have in place procedures for informing social care that this has occurred. If the Police have classed a child as Missing, the Local Authority then have a duty to visit that child within 72 hours of their return home.
- If you have made a referral but have not had the response you were expecting, please phone Children's Social Care on the numbers above to discuss first with the person who made that decision. If you are still concerned that the child continues to be at risk of harm, please do escalate concerns either to their line manager or raise with your own agency's child protection lead who will know how to escalate.

Flowcharts from the Working Together Guidance 2015

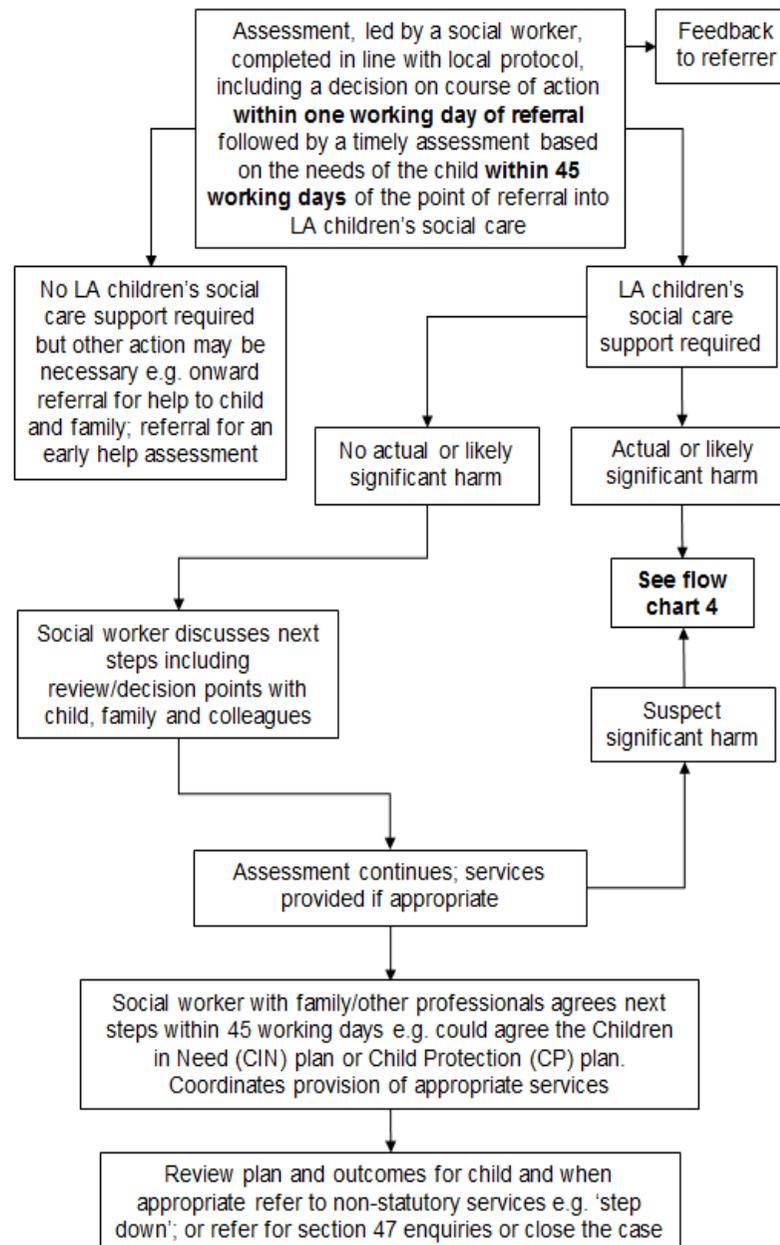
Flowchart 1: Action taken when a referral is made to Children's Social Care



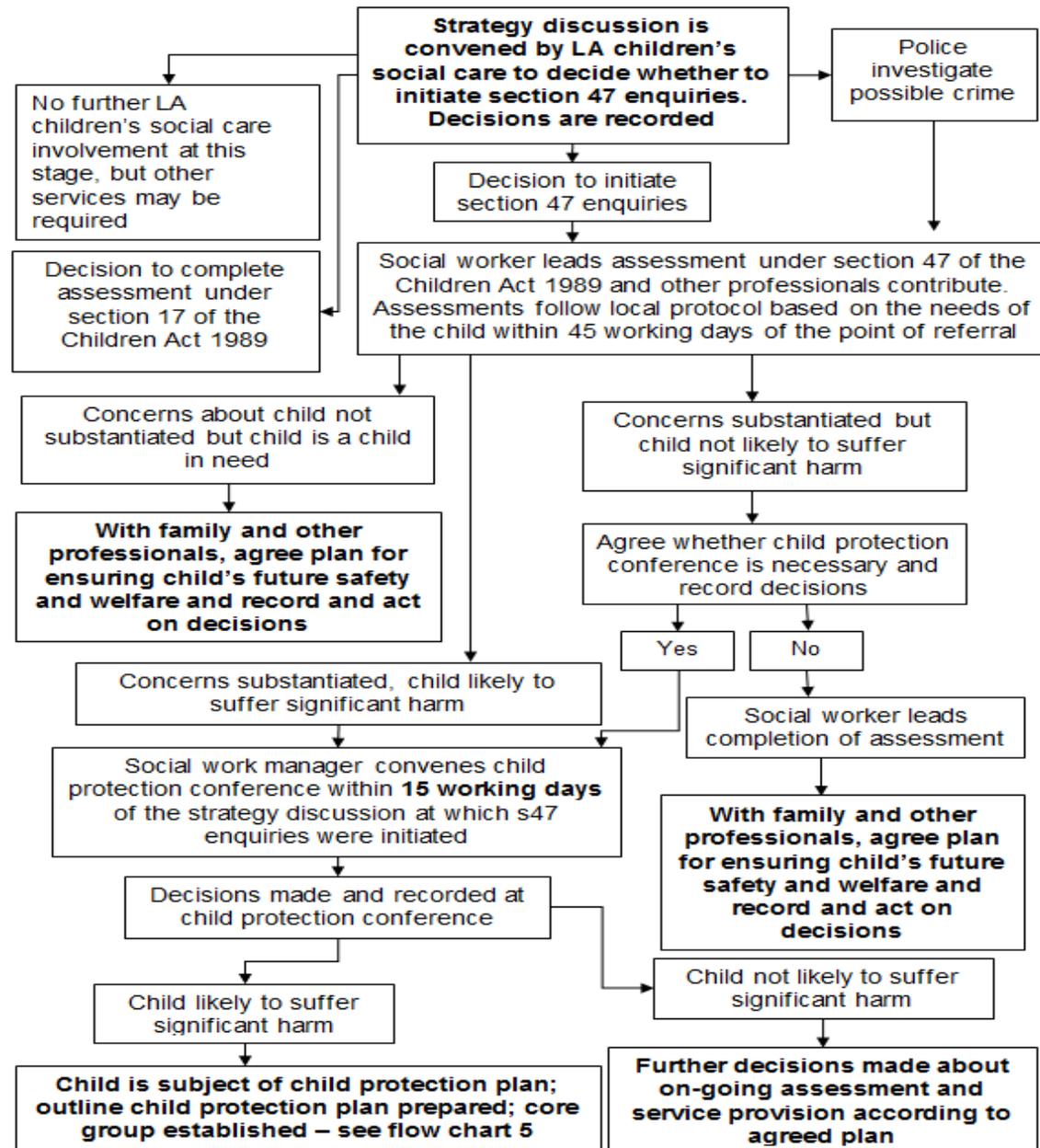
Flowchart 2: Immediate Protection (Specialist Support)



Flow chart 3: Action taken for an assessment of a child under the Children Act 1989



Flow chart 4: Action following a strategy discussion

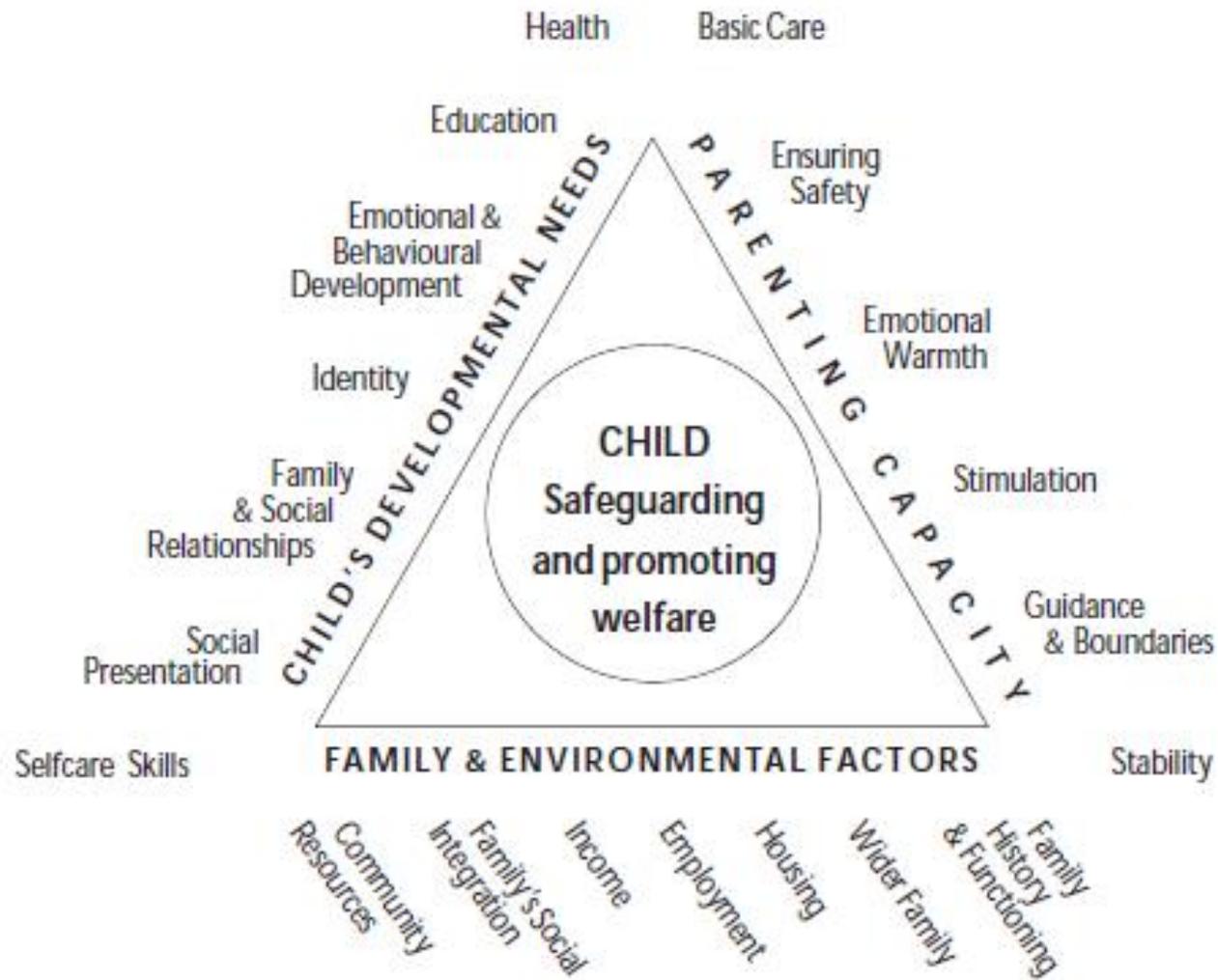


Key:-

- **Team around the Family/Child (TAF/TAC):** Early help assessment requires a team around the Child/Family meeting. All relevant agencies should be invited to agree an action plan and identify an appropriate lead professional.
- **Single Assessment:** An assessment of each Child/Young Person whose referral is accepted by Local Authority children's social care, to determine whether the Child/Young Person is in need, and the nature, of any services required. The assessment process should not take any longer than a maximum of 45 working days. The assessment is multi-agency and as part of the assessment process the Child/Young Person must be seen alone.
- **Strategy Discussion:** A meeting convened by the Local Authority children's social care whenever there is reasonable cause to suspect that a Child/Young Person is suffering or is likely to suffer, significant harm. To include children's social care, police, health and other agencies as appropriate, ie school. Parents/carers and young people are not usually invited to strategy discussions due to the possible implications for potential criminal investigations.
- **S47 or Child Protection Enquiry:** If a Strategy Discussion believes that a Child/Young Person has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm then a local authority social worker is allocated a S47/Child Protection Enquiry to investigate whether the Child/Young Person continues to remain of ongoing risk of harm. This can be done jointly with the Police but also requires input from all involved agencies with the family.
- **S17 or Child in Need:** Following either a Single Assessment or a S47/Child Protection Enquiry, the social worker can conclude that the Child/Young Person is in need of support as otherwise the Child/Young Person is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development or a Child/Young Person who is disabled. Support can then be provided by any combination of services and can be co-ordinated by a social worker or Team around the Family depending on the level of need. The Parents/carers have to consent to this level of support, if they do not consent then the Local Authority have to respect this decision.
- **Initial or Review Child Protection Case Conference:** If a S47/Child Protection Enquiry concludes that the Child/Young Person is at ongoing risk of significant harm, then the Local Authority will convene an Initial Child Protection Case Conference. This is chaired by an Independent Child Protection Chair and is a multi-agency meeting where information is shared and a decision is made whether the Child/Young Person should become subject to a Child Protection or Child in Need Plan. If a Child Protection Plan is made, a Review conference will then be booked. If a Child in Need Plan is made, a Child in Need Review meeting will be booked – if the parents/carers consent.

Assessment Framework

(Working Together 2015, P.22)



This document was reviewed by both Local Authority and other stakeholders in July 2015