



LEVELS OF NEED

This guidance is intended to support professionals in identifying need and appropriate referral pathways. It is not prescriptive and requires judgement of a child's level of need from the perspective of the professional(s) considering referral. Descriptors are provided to aid this decision-making about needs level – they are examples not definitions as there will always be issues that do not easily fit. They are a starting point to assist professionals from different disciplines to come to a common understanding of a child's and family's needs. The Levels of Need should be read in conjunction with the CAF 5-Step Process to guide referral requests to the Children's Contact Centre.

Child Protection

Where identified needs demonstrate that a child may be suffering significant harm a Strategy meeting and S47 enquiry may be completed under Surrey Safeguarding Children Board Procedures. The descriptors that follow are referenced to the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DSCF) and the Common Assessment Framework.

High level of need

Children, young people and families who have high levels of need **will** require support and intervention. In cases of high need SCS will undertake an initial assessment of children and young people, where this has not already been undertaken, which may lead to further core or specialist assessments, family support services, child protection intervention, or care alternatives. Significant harm or the risk of significant harm **will** usually be a feature. SCS will be responsible for co-ordinating an agreed multi-agency care plan in which all involved professionals, the child and family members will work together to reduce the level of risk.

Medium level of need

Children, young people and families who have a medium level of need will require the support of agencies. SCS **may** undertake an initial assessment, when this has not already been done, to determine specific service provision and any involvement will normally be support in co-operation with the family. A number of agencies may need to work together to support the child and their family. It is recognised that a combination of factors at a medium level may require a response as a High level of need.

Low level of need

The CAF will be invaluable in helping practitioners to identify, at a very early stage, any sign that a child may need extra support, assess their specific needs and provide a vehicle for gathering other practitioners together to address those needs. It will provide a common process for recording and sharing information across agencies, and enable specialist services to focus their resources where they are most needed. Consideration should be given to whether concerns are impacting on all dimensions of the assessment framework.

DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

	High - Safeguarding	Medium – Child in Need	Low – CAF	Strength
<p>Access all CAF Forms on www.surreycc.gov.uk/caf</p>	<p>Safeguarding – Urgent Referral to Children's Service Form (do not submit CAF Service Return Form) High Level of Need - CAF process to evidence needs and request service Submit CAF Service Return, Refer to Social Care and other appropriate agencies on CAF Form + Common Referral Form (step 4b)</p>	<p>CAF process to evidence needs and request service. Submit CAF Service Return. Refer to Social Care and other appropriate agencies on CAF Form + Common Referral Form (step 4b)</p>	<p>CAF 5-Step process, including Submit CAF Service Return Refer to appropriate agency on CAF Form + Common Referral Form (step 4b)</p>	
<p align="center">HEALTH</p> <p>* Surrey Drug Action Team – Screening Tool available ** CAMHS screening tool to identify mental health needs of Young People available</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important medical or therapy appointments not kept; therapy/nursing/care programme not carried out. • Significant unexplained change in growth pattern/persistent unexplained health problems • Child/Young Person with a high level of special needs or a disability requiring constant supervision that results in a high risk of family breakdown • Child/Young Person involved in serious substance misuse * • Child/Young Person who seriously self harms including eating disorders ** • Child/Young person involved in prostitution, risk of sexual exploitation/trafficking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to attend medical/therapy appointments. • Indications of physical/emotional neglect which could result in significant harm. • Child/Young Person with a significant level of special needs, whose parents are unable to meet their needs without the provision of support • Moderate risk of self-injury/harm from substance abuse. • Child/Young Person who lives in an environment that poses a risk to their safety or wellbeing • Child/Young Person in hospital for three months or more. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occasional missed appointments, care and therapeutic programmes not consistently carried out. • Indications of occasionally inadequate care, eg child sent to school when unwell. • Medical treatment requires regular hospitalisation, which impacts on other areas of the Assessment Framework • Child/Young person with special needs who require referral for other services, for example, physiotherapist, speech therapist 	<p>No significant health concerns</p>
<p align="center">EDUCATION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-school receiving no stimulation. • Severe behaviour problems preventing access to curriculum • Chronic non-attendance at school or other educational provision attributed to lack of parental support • Child/Young person has been permanently excluded resulting in a risk of family breakdown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate stimulation of pre-school child. • Frequent unauthorised short term absence. • Frequent fixed term exclusions and at risk of permanent exclusion • Child/Young person underachieving severely at school and not supported or encouraged by parents • Behaviour causing frequent difficulties in fulfilling a statemented child's IEP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child who is not reaching their educational potential • Occasional absence /exclusion. • Behaviour causing occasional difficulties in school. • Some difficulties in fulfilment of IEP. • Frequent hospitalisation or illness which disrupts education. 	<p>School attendance good; no expressed concerns from school; any learning needs (including statement) being satisfactorily met</p>

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<p>EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOURAL DEVELOPMENT & SELF-CARE SKILLS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child/Young person with severe challenging behaviour that results in serious risk to the child/young person or others, which parents are unable to manage, resulting in a high risk of family breakdown and may result in a request for accommodation • Child/Young person who are experiencing acute emotional rejection by parents or carers including unrealistic expectations, ‘scapegoating’ and inconsistent parenting • Severely delayed development of appropriate boundaries or independence. • Very poor quality of attachment to carer • Persistent severe sexualised behaviour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child/Young person with challenging behaviour whose parents are unable to cope without the provision of services • Child/Young Person involved in offending behaviour leading to the involvement of the courts • Child/Young person whose behaviour alienates or provokes rejection • Significantly delayed development of appropriate independence. • Moderate risk of harm from poor attachment or environmental factors. • Inappropriate sexualised behaviour • Child/Young Person with caring responsibilities impacting on their development (Carer’s Recognition and Services Act 1995) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any behaviour that may indicate significant change or difference when considered in relation to a child of similar age and developmental ability. Please refer to CAF guidance 	<p>Normal range of behaviour and emotional responses for his/her age</p>
<p>IDENTITY & SOCIAL PRESENTATION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hygiene/clothing persistently and grossly inadequate • Child/Young person continually bullied, isolated or rejected by peers/or adults • Child/Young Person has consistently low/negative self image and sense of worth. • Diverse needs, including race, culture, religion, sexuality and disability persistently unmet and/or subject to victimisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hygiene/clothing often inappropriate • Child/Young person often bullied /socially isolated • Child has low sense of self worth, giving rise to behavioural or emotional difficulties • Diverse needs, including race, culture, religion, sexuality and disability frequently unmet and/or subject to victimisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hygiene and clothing occasionally inappropriate. • Child occasionally bullied or inappropriately criticised by adults • Sometimes unable to access social opportunities outside the home. 	<p>Satisfactory sense of self, socially confident, engages appropriately with others</p>

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<p>FAMILY & SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very poor quality of attachment to carers or significant others; frequent changes in care arrangements • Inappropriately alone /unsupervised • Very high degree of parental stress. • Severe dysfunctional relationships leading to high risk to placement breakdown • Very high expectations of young carer • Child/Young person needing to be looked after outside their own family • Disabled child where the parent or carer is unable to cope and where there are no alternative carer(s) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent periods of poor quality attachment/change to carers creating inconsistency and insecurity. • Left inappropriately with siblings/ sitters. • Moderate degree of parental stress, breakdown of relationship with parent/carer and risk of placement breakdown. • Frequent demands on young carer • Young person 16-17years, without parent/carer to exercise parental responsibility, whose vulnerability is increased by their inability to lead an independent life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child/Young Person whose parents request advice and guidance to manage their behaviour, such as referral to parenting group • Young carer needing support. 	<p>Positive attachments within the family, stress levels within normal range</p> <p>No inappropriate requirement to provide care to other family members</p>
<p>CHILD’S ENVIRONMENT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child/Young person is living in an environment where there is the presence or risk of extreme domestic abuse • Child/Young person requires immediate support and protection because of serious level of harassment • Home environment or hygiene places the child at immediate risk of significant harm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child/Young person is living in an environment where there is a history of domestic abuse • Home environment or hygiene places the child at risk of harm if not addressed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents or carers have chronic relationship difficulties that may affect the child. They may be referred to mediation or Relate. • Family require support services as a result of harassment, as an example, resulting from racial abuse, sexual orientation, disability or religion • Severe overcrowding 	<p>No disruption to parental relationship, parents are able to address harassment issues without additional support, parents are able to manage home conditions to meet the child’s needs</p>

PARENTAL CAPACITY TO RESPOND TO NEEDS

	High Needs	Medium Needs	Low Needs	Strength
<p>Access all CAF Forms on www.surreycc.gov.uk/caf</p>	<p>Safeguarding – Urgent Referral to Children's Service Form (do not submit CAF Service Return Form) High Level of Need - CAF process to evidence needs and request service Submit CAF Service Return, Refer to Social Care and other appropriate agencies on CAF Form + Common Referral Form (step 4b)</p>	<p>CAF process to evidence needs and request service. Submit CAF Service Return. Refer to Social Care and other appropriate agencies on CAF Form + Common Referral Form (step 4b)</p>	<p>CAF 5-Step process, including Submit CAF Service Return Refer to appropriate agency on CAF Form + Common Referral Form (step 4b)</p>	
BASIC CARE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carers unable to respond to child's basic care needs or additional needs arising from complex health or disability (care, nursing or therapeutic) including use of universal services. Purposeful Avoidance of statutory child care agencies within the context of other concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistent ability to meet basic or additional needs, including access to universal services. Parent under 19 years and isolated from appropriate support networks Child/Young person re-referred within 12 months of discontinued Child Protection Plan Child/Young person re-referred because of "low key" concerns within 12 months of end of statutory order e.g. care/ supervision order 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of knowledge or ability to access universal services 	Able to meet all of the child's basic care needs
ENSURING SAFETY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persistent inability to ensure child/young person's safety, anticipate or act appropriately to minimise risk. Child/Young person has contact with persons who are considered "Risk to Children" or dangerous others Child/Young person at risk of physical, emotional or sexual abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequent episodes of failure to assess, anticipate, accept risk and act appropriately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasional lack of attention to lower risk issues. Child is occasionally left or allowed access to inappropriate environment, but no evidence of harm noted. 	Parents aware of risks and anticipate and manage appropriately
EMOTIONAL WARMTH & STIMULATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persistently low warmth, high criticism. Severe parental rejection/lack of attachment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor/Inconsistent attention to emotional needs. Carer responsive at times, general quality of emotional support poor Unable to respond to child's changing developmental needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasional episodes of difficulty meeting emotional needs or difficulties in relating to specific need Parent/Carer unwilling to support child's sexual development or orientation 	Warm, responsive parents; child's emotional needs met

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<p>GUIDANCE AND BOUNDARIES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No effective moral or behavioural boundaries set for child relative to age and understanding. • Persistent, extreme or inappropriate disciplining. • Dangerous role modelling by carer including domestic abuse and substance misuse • Unable to adapt parenting response to meet changing circumstances. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moral or behavioural boundary setting or role modelling is dangerous and inconsistent; child unlikely to regulate own emotions and behaviour as a result. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occasional inappropriate role modelling, guidance and discipline or lacking depth and consistency. 	<p>Appropriate limit setting and parental role models</p>
<p>STABILITY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both or only parent/carer suffering from severe illness, physical or mental health problem or learning disability and failing to adequately care for child • Both or only parent/carer involved in severe alcohol or substance misuse which is affecting child/young person • Parents/carers with a pre-disposition to violence, extreme anti-social behaviour and /or domestic abuse • Dysfunctional family with frequent changes of carer. • Carer unable to ensure education, medical/ therapeutic care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/carer has physical disability /history of mental health problem /learning disability that affects ability to care for the child • Parent/carer involved in alcohol/substance misuse that impacts on ability to care for child • Parent/carer whose criminal and/or anti-social behaviour threatens the welfare of the child • Frequent episodes of change to family life, disrupting child/carer attachments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/carer requires information or advice to aid their continuing care of the child, including referral to Welcare, Homestart and other support organisations • Occasional episodes of disruption to family life. 	<p>Satisfactory degree of continuity in the child’s family life – no major disruption</p>

FAMILY AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

	High	Medium	Low	Strength
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FAMILY HISTORY & FUNCTIONING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persistent history of family dysfunction, inadequate parenting or significant harm. Significant previous contacts with "Risk to Children" offenders/ dangerous others. Multiple and severely disruptive changes in household composition or caregiver. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequent episodes of family dysfunction or inadequate parenting. History of child protection concerns. Household composition frequently changing leading to disruption of adequate parenting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some previous concerns about family dysfunction and inadequate parenting. Bereavement 	Functional family over the lifetime of the child
SOCIAL RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family is subjected to racial or other harassment, or child bullied in local community. Family experiencing severe stress due to social isolation and lack of support networks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequent episodes of stress due to isolation or lack of support networks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended family support diminishing with age/ illness. Lack of support networks or resources. 	Wider family generally positive. Family established in local community
HOUSING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child/family are homeless. Home is unfit for human habitation. Severely inadequate facilities to meet needs of child. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accommodation has inadequate basic amenities or very overcrowded. Unsuitable/unadapted property. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing/environment is of low standard. Adaptation/rehousing needs addressing in medium/long term. 	Satisfactory housing arrangements
EMPLOYMENT & INCOME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family income cannot meet or is not used to meet child's needs, or additional needs of complex health/disability. Employment/non-employment severely affects meeting of child's needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequent episodes of financial difficulty or mismanagement affecting child's basic needs. Parents/carers have chronic debts due to inability to manage finances Child/Young person of parent with no recourse to public funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasional episodes of financial difficulty. Child/Young person whose life chances are limited by poverty Family not in receipt of appropriate benefits. 	One or more carers employed; adequate or better income

**SURREY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S BOARD
LEVELS OF NEED – SUMMARY GRID**

Child/Young person's name:

Date:

CHILD DEVELOPMENT NEEDS					
	High Concern	Medium Concern	Low/CAF Concern	Strength area	More information required
Health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emot & Behav Development; Self Care Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identity & Social Presentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family & Social Relationships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Child's Environment					
PARENTAL CAPACITY TO MEET NEEDS					
	High Concern	Medium Concern	Low/CAF Concern	Strength area	More information required
Basic Care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensuring Safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emot Warmth & Stimulation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guidance & Boundaries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FAMILY AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS					
	High Concern	Medium Concern	Low/CAF Concern	Strength Area	More information required
Family History & Functioning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employment and Income	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Completed By:

Name:

Agency:

Recommendation for further action:

Reasons / Comments:
