

Practice Guidance for the use of the Assessment Checklist

IROs are qualified social workers with at least five years' experience, and who have acquired the right skills to carry out this role.

Introduction

- Both national and local Serious Case Reviews into child neglect have highlighted the need to gain an understanding of the child's lived experience and also the importance of measuring change over time. Only by doing this can cumulative or escalating risks be identified.
- The Assessment Checklist is designed to assist the practitioner and/or manager to ensure that a full and holistic view is formed of a child's needs, before forming an analysis and a plan of intervention.

How to use the checklist

- The checklist guides the practitioner through the domains of a child's needs as set out below:

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|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Nutrition and Feeding | Parent/carer's Emotional Involvement |
| Physical warmth | Routines |
| Physical health | Controls |
| Mental and emotional health | Parent's/Carer's Expectations of the child |
| Safety and protection | Leisure Activity |
| Cleanliness | Self-Harming |
| Possessions and personal space | Educational Needs |
| Animals and pets | Parents/Carer's Attitudes to Professionals |
| Visitors to the household | History and Context |
| The child | |

- The checklist should be used with a parent or parents, to help build a picture of need but also to help the parent to reflect on the areas of parenting where they are strong and also areas of parenting that need further development.
- In some cases the checklist may be used as a plan for direct work with children, to build a picture of their life. E.g. taking one or two domains on each visit or session with the child.

- The social worker undertaking an assessment should use the checklist to ensure that they have an understanding of the lived experience of the child, the environment and parenting the child is being exposed to.
- Good assessments are comprised of information gathering and analysis. It is important therefore that the information gathered is used to form an analysis and aide critical reflection on what social work intervention will build on the family's strengths and ensure the child's needs are met, in he immediate and longer term.

When to use the checklist

- The checklist is mandatory for all assessments or reassessments on children who are open to Children's Services where there are concerns about neglect. Here are some examples of when to use the checklist:
 - To inform the Child and Family Assessment
 - To inform a reassessment
 - To frame a conversation with a parent or parents
 - In supervision where an analysis of needs is being reflected up
 - For any review
 - To inform an analysis of need prior to a Family Network meeting

| Review / Contacts / References | |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Document title: | Practice Guidance for the use of the Assessment Checklist |
| Date approved: | February 2020 |
| Approving body: | SLT |
| Last review date: | February 2020 |
| Revision history: | Version 1 |
| Next review date: | February 2021 |
| Related internal policies, procedures, guidance: | Neglect Strategy |
| Document owner: | Deputy Director |
| Lead contact / author: | Independent Safeguarding Consultant |