

# Tameside Safeguarding Children Partnership

# Neglect Strategy

2024-2027

Version 1, November 2024



# Working in Partnership

This strategy was created in collaboration between all agencies within Tameside Safeguarding Children Partnership. The agencies include Children's Services, Health, Police and Education. (July – November 2024)



# Mission Statement

In Tameside you feel happy, safe and proud of who you are. You belong, can have fun, feel loved and are able to live your best life.





# Why do we need this strategy?

Neglect can affect any child at any age. The impact of neglect is often corrosive and enduring leading to poor health, education and social outcomes. It is vital that all agencies working with children/ young people and their families including those that are working with parents and carers understand the role that they play and the role of other practitioners when identifying and responding to concerns of neglect.

It is important to recognise that neglect is difficult to conceptualise for both families and professionals working with our families. The terminology used when we are referring to neglect is not restorative, and we must ensure that we use direct language to support families in quantifying concerns.

Neglect differs in its presentation from other forms of abuse. There is rarely a unique incident or critical event. More commonly a repetition of neglecting behaviour which causes incremental damage to the child(ren). Understanding its repercussions and the potential for both prevention and intervention is vital.

Working within the Tameside 5 C's Practice Model which supports practitioners to promote **conversation**, practice with **curiosity**, in **collaboration** with **consideration** and with **courage** which aligns itself to working restoratively with our families and partners, building on all aspects of professional practice and what we will achieve when evaluating what practitioners do, this document will support all practitioners in Tameside in recognising, responding and applying the right level of support when neglect is assessed as a concern.



# What young people say neglect is like for them...

It means not having your needs met. Maybe dirty clothes or not being taken to a Doctor.

It makes you feel that you are not cared about.

It makes you feel like you're not there and that you're not cared about.



# Our new strategy will support our practitioners to:

Listen to the voice of the children and young people we are working with and direct our work towards what is needed.

More effectively reduce the impact of neglect on children and young people.

Recognise the signs of neglect at the earliest opportunity and provide the right people at the right time to offer help and support

Provide training and resources to our practitioners which will ensure that we have the tools we need to support children and young people.

Reduce the number of children and young people who are subjected to neglectful situations.



# Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

**Neglect 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 or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.**

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- Provide suitable education It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

(Working to Safeguard Children 2023)



# Understanding Neglect

Neglect is not always an intentional act. We need to consider a parent or carers own childhood experiences and how this may impact on the care that they are providing to their children.

Neglect can affect any child at any age. The impact of neglect is often corrosive and enduring leading to poor health, education and social outcomes.

Neglect differs in its presentation from other forms of abuse. There is rarely a unique incident or critical event. More commonly a repetition of neglecting behaviour which causes incremental damage to the child.

Neglect affects 1 in 10 children and is the most common form of abuse in the United Kingdom. Neglect significantly reduces a child or young person's ability to thrive.

Children with complex needs, disabilities and children and young people who are cared for by the Local Authority are more at risk of living in neglectful circumstances.

Neglect can result in the death of a child or young person.

A child or young person who experiences neglect can suffer long lasting and pervasive consequences which will have an effect on their overall development.



# Types of Neglect

Neglect Type	Signs and Indicators	Example
<b>Educational Neglect</b>	Where a parent/carer fails to provide a stimulating environment or show an interest in their child's education at school. They may fail to respond to any special needs and to make sure their child goes to school.	Child is frequently absent from school or late and parents/carers fails to make sure their child attends school, they may not work with the school to remove any barriers to attendance.
<b>Emotional Neglect</b>	Where a parent/carer is unresponsive to a child's basic emotional needs. They may fail to interact or provide affection, undermining the child's self-esteem and sense of identity.	Parent/carer is nonresponsive to baby crying, having a negative view/perception of their child. They may not spend enough quality time with their child and may put excessive pressure on the child to be high achiever.
<b>Medical Neglect</b>	Where a parent/carer does not seek and act upon medical or health advice to ensure their child, including unborn babies are as safe and healthy as they can be. This includes taking appropriate action when their child becomes seriously unwell or injured; preventing health professional's access to their child and seeking medical attention repeatedly when it is unnecessary.	Parent/carer not attending ante-natal appointments, not taking their child to health appointments or repeatedly cancelling health appointments; not following advice given by health professionals; failing to give prescribed medication, inaccurately reporting signs and symptoms in their child.
<b>Nutritional Neglect</b>	Where the child does not receive a healthy diet to help them grow and develop. This includes a child who may be seriously underweight (faltering growth) or overweight, due to the food they have been offered and there is no identifiable medical reason.	Parent/carer offer their child food that is too high in sugar and fats frequently, the child is allowed to eat too much or are not given enough food; food that is offered is not suitable for the child's age or development.
<b>Physical Neglect</b>	Where a parent/carer does not provide appropriate clothing, food, cleanliness and/or living conditions.	Concerns for the child's personal and dental hygiene. For example, the child is dirty and smelly, teeth are not brushed, and clothing is not appropriate for the weather and does not fit.
<b>Supervisory Neglect</b>	Where a parent/carer fails to provide an adequate level of supervision and guidance to ensure the child's safety and protection from harm.	The child may be left alone or with inappropriate carers, or without appropriate boundaries (for example, under-age sex or alcohol use) may not be applied. The child in the care of parents/ carers who are intoxicated or violent. Un-monitored access to the internet and social media.



# Positive Indicators

The child or young person appears to be healthy and has access to health advice and guidance from their GP and other related health services.

The child/young person is appropriately dressed in suitable clothing appropriate to their age.

The parent/carer is supportive of their child's interests and encourages them to take part in activities that will support the building of social skills. A child who is active in their interests is more likely to learn new skills and build a sense of achievement.

The child/young person feels emotionally safe with their parent/carer and is able to express a range of feelings including sadness, fear and anger which shows that the child is emotionally connected to their carers/givers.

The child or young person attends school is taken on time and is supported to learn. The parent/carer supports the child or young person's educational aspirations and works with the education provider.

The parent/carers provide guidance and boundaries and foster an open relationship so that the child or young person has someone to discuss their worries and concerns with.



# Our Priorities

1

To recognise the signs of neglect and the impact of neglect on children, young people and families.

2

Continue to secure strategic commitment and shared understanding across all agencies.

3

Preventing neglect by providing support to families in high-risk groups.

4

Acting on neglect: responding to neglect at the earliest opportunity.

5

Protective Factors: Improve effectiveness to tackle neglect through training, coordinated working and evidence-based practice.



# How will we achieve our priorities?

<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We have planned, in line with best practice and up to date research a multi-agency training programme. All practitioners will have access to training to ensure our workforce are confident in tackling neglect and being able to provide professional challenge and curiosity while building trusted relationships with children and families.</li><li>• We will continue to support our workforce to listen to the children/young people and their families that they are working with to ensure that we have a full picture of their lived experiences to enable them to make effective plans.</li></ul>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All agencies have signed a commitment to tackle neglect and work together to support the neglect work plan with our core neglect strategy message of Recognising, Preventing, Acting and Protecting.</li><li>• An active neglect work-plan will be produced and monitored by the TSCP executive meeting. This will be overseen by the multi-agency neglect subgroup that will report to the TSCP executives on the delivery of neglect strategy. Annual updates will be produced in 2025, 2026 and 2027.</li><li>• We will continue the development of the multi-agency neglect champion group and raise awareness across the borough to improve the collaborative efforts by all relevant agencies, including both adult and children's services to better support young people as they grow.</li></ul>
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We will continue to strengthen the Voluntary, Charity, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) offer that is used to support families when facing financial hardship, addiction, mental health, and other risk factors that contribute to neglect.</li><li>• We will work collectively to support families in high-risk groups. This will include taking a holistic view of support through the neglect subgroup. The neglect subgroup will identify and act on any gaps in provision, celebrate our successes and link in with the early help partnership and family hubs offer, to promote the support that can be accessed to tackle neglect.</li><li>• In supporting parents and carers to understand and meet the needs of their children we offer early help, family help and adolescent support to families where more bespoke support is required, where safe and appropriate.</li></ul>



# How will we achieve our priorities?

4

- Practitioners will be supported to identify in a child focussed way, family strengths, parental capacity, patterns of concerns and to be open and honest with families. We will utilise and promote the use of neglect assessment tools. Tameside has committed to the training and use of Graded Care Profile (2), which is produced by NSPCC.
- All professionals will work in accordance with their professional standards, including where appropriate, Tameside Practice Standards, utilising: Conversation, Curiosity, Consideration, Collaboration and Courage.
- We will improve information sharing across multi-agencies and analyse this information to understand the daily lived experience e.g. identifying education information, police information, health information, community information. Professionals must understand that GDPR should not be a barrier to information sharing as per ICO guidance - <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/uk-gdpr-guidance-and-resources/data-sharing/a-10-step-guide-to-sharing-information-to-safeguard-children/>

5

- When a practitioner notices the signs of neglect, agencies will use the GCP2 with families to identify strengths and areas for improvement. This allows interventions to be targeted in the areas of greatest need with agreed timescales. Progress should be reviewed in partnership with the family to measure progress and outcomes for the child.
- Workforce wide training on how to use relevant assessment tools such as Restorative Practice, Graded Care Profile 2, will be delivered. NSPCC will be delivering training on the Graded Care Profile (2) across the workforce. Through training, we will strengthen trauma informed practice across Tameside
- We will raise awareness of the need to understand the lived experience of the child or young person, reflecting our commitment to including the voice of the child.
- We will share the learning from rapid reviews with practitioners and update our approach to reflect learning, data and new information.



# Success for Tameside Children Partnership

## A reduction in...

- The number of families saying 'no' to an assessment (e.g. Child and Family, Neglect Toolkit)
- The number of families who require statutory services such as child protection plans as a reactive service
- The overall number of children who are impacted by neglect which will affect their wellbeing, education and safety.

## An increase in...

- Practitioners accessing training and development opportunities to increase their knowledge of neglect and the impact of neglect.
- The identification of neglect at earlier opportunities and our practitioners wrapping support round our families at the right time.
- The number of graded care profile 2 assessments being undertaken and the number of agencies who contribute to the child and families intervention.



# Success for Children accessing Children's Services

## A reduction in...

- The number of children who are subject to child in need and child protection planning where neglect is cited as the reason when early help has not been offered.
- The number of children and young people who are subject to a child in need plan or child protection plan for over 9 months.
- The number of re-referrals where neglect is a concern.

## An increase in...

- The number of early help assessments for children and young people where neglect is suspected.
- Children and young people experiencing positive long term outcomes as a result of successful intervention following assessment.
- The number of children and young people who remain in the care of their family following assessment.
- An increase in the number of identified young carer's and the support that is offered to them.



# Success for Children and Young People known to the Police

## A reduction in...

- The number of children and young people being taken into Police protection due to neglect.
- The number of children and young people requiring support from the Police who are experiencing neglect.
- The number of repeat referrals to the Police surrounding children and young people who are experiencing neglect.

## An increase in...

- The number of child centred investigations.
- The number of positive outcomes when threshold has been met.
- Early intervention and prevention, including engaging with people and organisations across the partnership.



# Success for Children and Young People's Health

## A reduction in...

- The number of children and young people who are not brought to appointments.
- The number of children under the age of 5 who are not meeting their developmental milestones.
- The number of children who are treated at accident and emergency where neglect has been an issue.

## An increase in...

- The number of children and families who are fully registered and accessing universal services.
- The number of women booking a pregnancy in time and accessing health throughout their pregnancy.
- The number of graded care profile 2 assessments that are undertaken and completed by health.



# Success Children and Young People in Education

## A reduction in...

- The number of 16 – 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- The number of children and young people who are absent from school, especially those who have been persistently absent.
- The number of children and young people who have been excluded from school.

## An increase in...

- The number of children under the age of 5 accessing early years settings, especially those where neglect is impacting.
- School attainment, particularly children and young people who have open plans for neglect.
- The number of children and young people who are accessing participation programmes in school, particularly children who are experiencing neglect.



# Agencies that can support you

## Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

0161 342 4101

## Out of office hours Emergency Duty Team

0161 342 2222

To make a referral that are not immediate safeguarding concerns please complete the online multi agency request for service form.

<https://secure.tameside.gov.uk/forms/mars/f1312mars.asp>.

## Childline

Call free on 0800 1111

Get Support | Childline

## NSPCC

Call the helpline on 0808 800 5000

NSPCC | The UK children's charity | NSPCC



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