



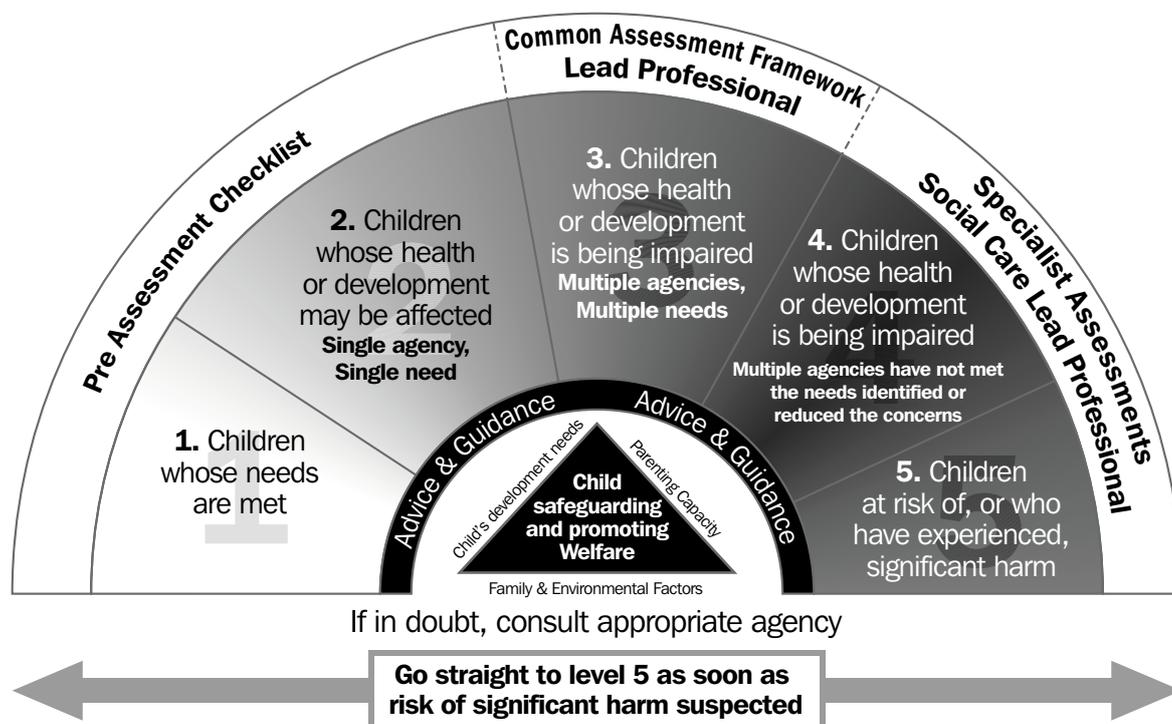
2 Continuum of need and response

Section 2: Continuum of need and response

- 2.1** The working definition of the continuum of need and response model within this document is:
“The point at which agencies respond when additional unmet needs are identified”.
- 2.2** Blackburn with Darwen’s model is illustrated via the windscreen model. The model refers to all children and young people who live in the borough of Blackburn with Darwen, with each band representing their different levels of need / interventions and related responses.
- 2.3** Children can, of course, enter the continuum of need and response at any stage in their lives, at any time dependent on circumstances.
- 2.4** Children, young people and their families will move between levels as their circumstances and needs change and this may result in changes in the services provided. The model is not incremental it is a continuum of needs and related responses.
- 2.5** A specific incident e.g. a child at risk of suffering significant harm, will trigger action at level 4. Following intervention, the level of vulnerability may reduce so that services provided at lower levels of need can be accessed.
- 2.6** Whenever possible the service response must be directed at reducing risk and vulnerability and meeting needs at the appropriate, least intrusive level of intervention. The availability of and access to effective early intervention and preventive services is essential in order to achieve this.
- Level 1** represents children with no identified additional needs. Their needs are met through accessing universal services.
- Level 2** represents children with additional needs that can be met by targeted support by a single practitioner or agency.
- Level 3** represents children with additional needs that can be met by targeted support by a multi agency integrated support package.
- Level 4** represents children with significant additional needs that have not been met following a coordinated, multi agency response and for whom significant concern remain.
- Level 5** represents children with complex needs at the highest level of vulnerability which will be met by multi-agency support from specialist services. (social care will always be the lead professional when a child protection enquiry is necessary, s47 children act 2004).

Continuum of Need and Response

for all Children, Young People and Families in Blackburn with Darwen



2.7 Levels of vulnerability and need

The following provides more information on the different levels and give examples of children and young people's needs. This is not an exhaustive list of needs. If you have any concerns about a child consult your immediate line manager and if necessary share information with the most relevant agency/organisation.

Level 1 Children whose needs are met

Universal services are available to all children and young people. The most easily identifiable universal services that children and families will access are primary health and education. Most children will access universal services successfully and have their needs met via those universal services and their family, informal support systems and the voluntary sector.

Indicative examples of needs and circumstances:

- a new born baby is provided with the necessary post natal care through midwifery services
- a mother having problems with her child's sleep patterns, feeding difficulties has the child's needs met through health visiting services
- children have their education needs met through schools
- all young people 13 plus have their need for careers information, advice, guidance and support from Connexions.

Level 2 Children with additional needs, whose health and development may be affected without additional services and an improved outcome would be likely if services were provided

If the child's circumstances do not improve after maximising the workers own agency resources, the worker must consider other agencies that may have skills and knowledge that may be of benefit. Consider seeking advice and guidance from the appropriate agency.

Indicative examples of needs and circumstances:

- a child is struggling to communicate at nursery. Speech and language therapy services are accessed and the assessed need is met
- a learning mentor assesses that a young person has a problem with alcohol and drugs, therefore substance misuse services are accessed and the need met
- a class teacher identifies a child's problems with accessing the curriculum and requests a service from another education professional for example specialist teacher, education psychologist as part of school action plus
- a health visitor assesses a child as having additional health needs and refers to a paediatrician who meets the need
- an adult social care worker providing support for a parent with mental health problems assesses the young person in the family as inappropriately caring and refers to the Young Carers Project as part of the action plan for the family
- a housing officer assesses that a family has financial difficulties and accesses welfare benefit advice and the need is met
- a child/young person is assessed as being at risk of being involved in anti-social behaviour by a youth worker who accesses positive activities and the young person is diverted from the risky behaviour.

Assessments of additional needs are best recorded on a CAF form which can be used to access additional services. The CAF practitioners toolkit provides further guidance and also explains how the CAF process fits in with specialist assessments for example special educational needs.



Level 3 Children and young people whose health and development is being impaired by a range of unmet needs and where an integrated response from a number of agencies and support systems is necessary to achieve an improvement in outcomes

If the child's circumstances do not improve after a multi agency coordinated approach, supported by a plan of action the lead professional should consider consulting children's social care services.

Indicative examples of needs and circumstances:

- children and young people who may be at risk of sexual exploitation through their own vulnerability or association with others who are believed to be victims of sexual exploitation
- a family where the children have complex needs, there is no extended family and one of the parents becomes terminally ill
- a young person who is displaying a range of anti social behaviour and non-school attendance. Parent's ability to manage this is compromised by their own drug and alcohol abuse
- a parent with ongoing mental health difficulties who has fled domestic violence. The children are exhibiting a range of challenging behaviour at school
- a single unsupported parent who continues to miss the child's hospital appointments for investigation of failure to thrive
- children who have severe disabilities, health or specialist needs requiring a coordinated intervention from a number of agencies will require specialist assessments including from social care.

Level 4 Children with significant additional needs that have not been met following a coordinated, multi agency response and for whom significant concerns remain

Indicative examples of need and circumstances:

- All those examples described in level 3 where families have had the benefits of a multi agency, coordinated approach, where services have been provided and the impact of these reviewed, where a lead professional and the multi agency team assess that despite the appropriate services being provided the concerns for the children remain or have escalated, and their outcomes remain poor.



Level 5 Children at risk of or who have experienced significant harm

Children will have a high level of vulnerability at this level and a referral must be made to social care by telephone followed by a completed CAF form within 48 hours.

The judgement about what constitutes significant harm is a complex one see Working Together (2006) for more detailed information. Therefore the examples of needs and circumstances are indicative only, and an assessment by social care practitioners will be necessary to inform the judgement.

Indicative examples of need and circumstances:

- children and young people who need protection from harm example:
 - children and young people at risk or who have been significantly harmed by their parents, including unborn children
 - children being sexually exploited
 - children who have been abandoned
 - a child / young person, who makes an allegation of abuse against a professional
- children with a serious and persistent eating disorder who refuse treatment
- children who have significant, life threatening, self-harming behaviour.