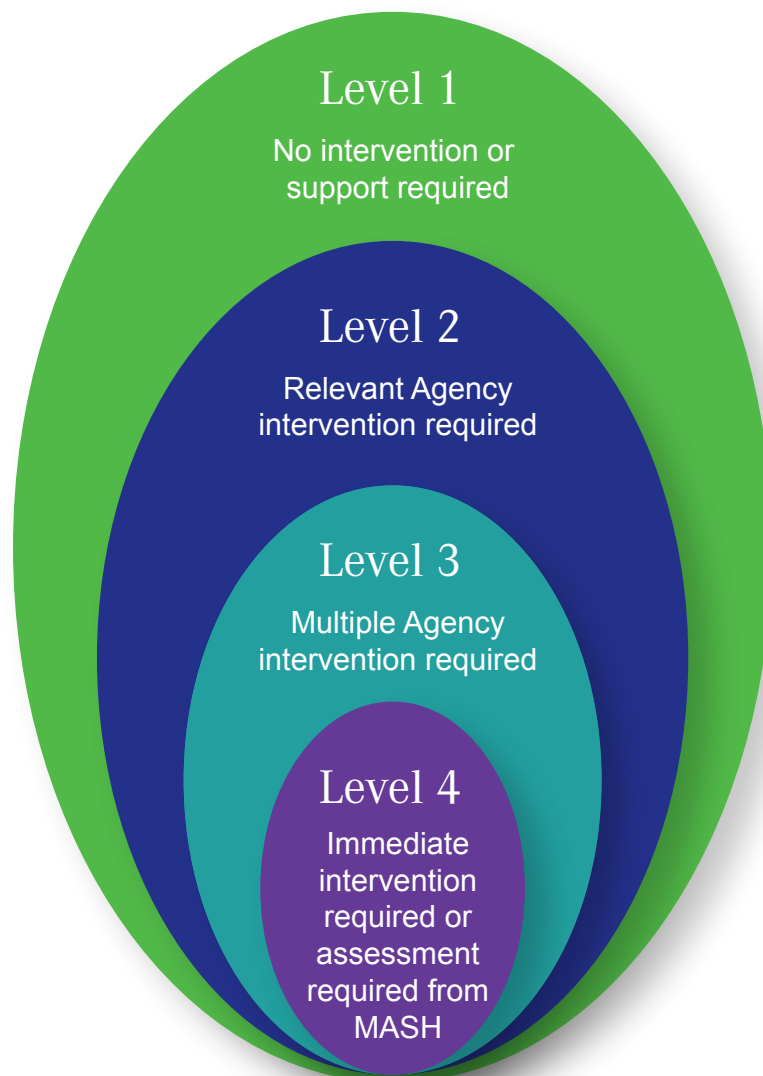




# Herefordshire Levels of Need Threshold

## A guide to support professional judgement



Written by: Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board  
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## Purpose

*The vision of Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board is that children and young people in Herefordshire grow up in an environment in which their well-being needs are met and where they are safe from harm.*

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board's aspiration is that children, young people and families receive the right support at the right level at the right time. This guidance will support professionals to exercise their professional judgement to achieve this.

**Working Together 2013 requires every local safeguarding children board to publish a threshold document that includes:**

- the process for an early help assessment and the type and level of early help services to be provided;

[Common Assessment Framework Guidance and Pre-Assessment Checklist](#)

[Early Help Services](#)

[Local Offer: Information for families on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities](#)

- the criteria, including the level of need, for when a case should be referred to local authority children's social care for assessment of children in need of support, protection and/or accommodation under:
- section 17 of the Children Act 1989 (children in need);
- section 47 of the Children Act 1989 (reasonable cause to suspect children suffering or likely to suffer significant harm);
- section 31 (care orders); and
- section 20 (duty to accommodate a child) of the Children Act 1989.

*This document should be read in conjunction with HSCB's Multi Agency Child Protection Procedures and used in conjunction with the [Multi Agency Referral Form Guidance](#).*

Wherever possible refer to the electronic version of this document available at: [Insert hyperlink](#)

This contains hyperlinks to additional information and more detailed guidance to support the application of your professional judgement.

**Always consider what else is going on for the child and the impact of their experience on their safety and welfare to inform your judgement about the right support at the right level at this time.**

# Supporting your Professional Judgement

**All staff who are aware of concerns about the welfare or safety of a child should know:**

- What services are available locally
- How to gain access to services
- Who to contact in what circumstances
- When and how to make a referral to Children's Social Care

**When you have concerns you should:**

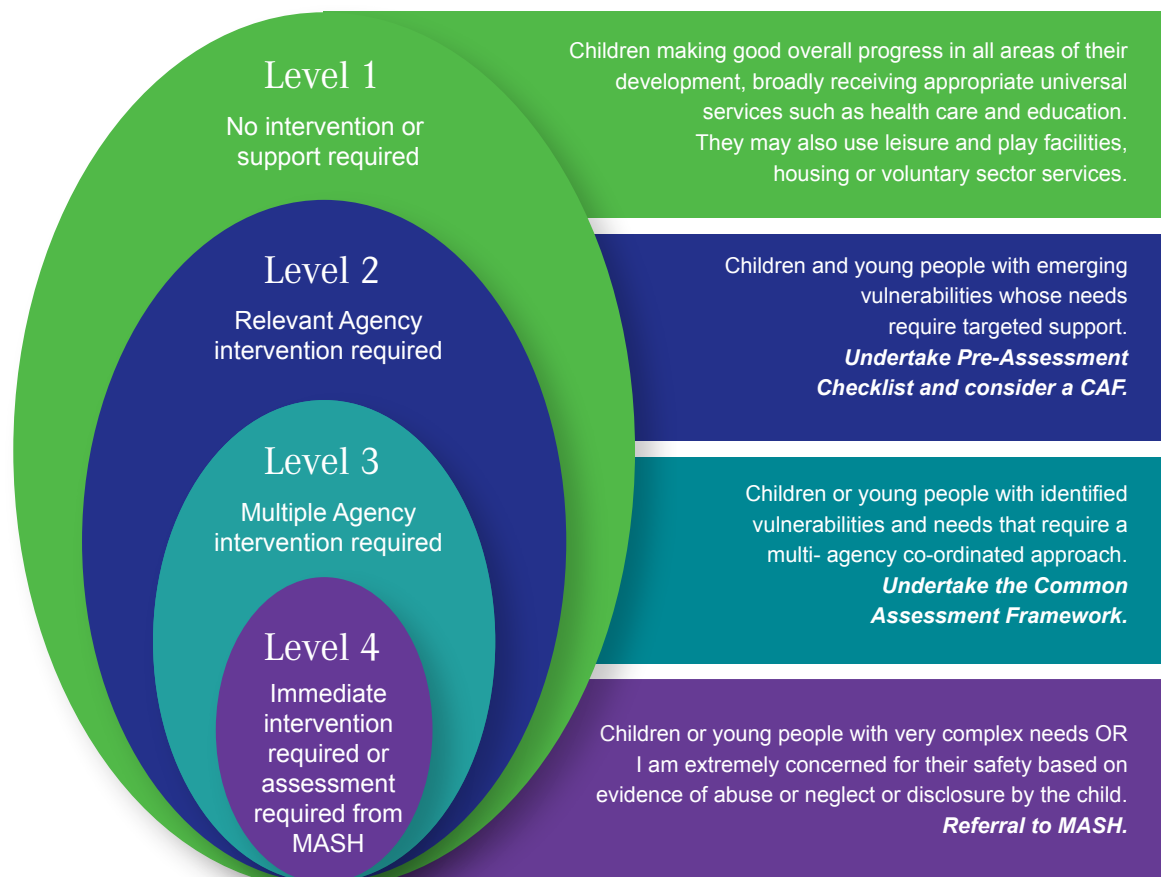
- Discuss with a manager or designated lead in your agency/service
- Discuss with the child/family where it is appropriate to do so (unless this will lead to risk of significant harm)
- Seek consent to disclose and share information
- Talk to other agencies/services involved
- Discuss a Common Assessment with the child/family
- Refer to your Multi-Agency Group (MAG)

**If you believe a child is suffering, or is at risk of suffering, significant harm always contact the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) - Tel: (01432) 260800**

If, once you have taken appropriate action, you are then concerned about the response of another agency refer to HSCB's Escalation Guidance which supports the resolution of case disagreements.

Escalation and MASH contact details are available on the [3 Steps to Safeguard Children](#) page of HSCB's website.

*Throughout the electronic version of this document you will find links to Herefordshire's policy for each potential indicator to support your decision making around a case, as well as supporting guidance from alternative sources.*



# Level 4

## **Threshold to refer to Children's Social Care:**

Immediate intervention or assessment required from MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub).

[MARF Guidance](#) and [MARF](#)

## Level of Vulnerability:

Children or young people with very complex needs OR I am extremely concerned for their safety based on evidence of abuse or neglect or disclosure by the child.

The child's health and development is being adversely affected.






[Jump to Level 1](#)

[Jump to Level 2](#)

[Jump to Level 3](#)

**Level 4**

## **Potential Indicators** (not an exhaustive list)

-  Children where physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect is suspected.
-  Children where the following is suspected:
  - ***fabricated illness***
  - ***allegations of harm by a person in a position of trust***
  - ***female genital mutilation (FGM)***
  - ***honour based violence***
  - ***forced marriage***
  - ***sexual exploitation and trafficking***
-  Children whose parents are unable to provide care, for whatever reason.
-  Children who disappear or are missing from home or care regularly or for long periods.
-  Children who are in contact with persons who have been assessed as Posing a Risk to Children (PPRC)

## **FURTHER POLICY AND GUIDANCE**

[\*\*WM CP Procedures section 3.\*\*](#)

[\*\*Emotional neglect\*\*](#)

[\*\*NeglectGuidance\(2\).pdf\*\*](#)

[\*\*WM CP Procedures section 4.6\*\*](#)

[\*\*Safeguarding children in whom illness is fabricated or induced\*\*](#)

[\*\*WM CP Procedures section 4.1\*\*](#)

[\*\*WM CP Procedures section 6.13\*\*](#)

[\*\*Female genital mutilation guidelines\*\*](#)

[\*\*Government Guidance on Forced Marriage, including honour based violence.\*\*](#)

[\*\*WM CP Procedures section 4.7\*\*](#)

[\*\*WM CP Procedures section 6.6\*\*](#)

[\*\*WM CP Procedures section 4.8\*\*](#)

# Level 4

🎗 Children whose health and development are adversely impacted because parenting is compromised as a consequence of:

- **mental health issues**
- **substance misuse**
- **domestic abuse**
  
- **learning difficulties**
- **poverty**
- **prolific offending/in custody**
- **physical disability or severe/ complex medical conditions**

## Potential Indicators (not an exhaustive list)

- 🎗 Children whose behaviour is so extreme they are at risk of removal from home e.g. control issues, risk taking, dangerous behaviour
- 🎗 Children who are experiencing extreme forms of bullying that adversely impact upon their health and development
- 🎗 Children aged 16 and 17 who present as homeless
  
- 🎗 Children whose health and development is being adversely impacted through non-engagement with services
- 🎗 Where a pre-birth assessment has identified an unborn child's health or development is being adversely impacted
- 🎗 Children with Disabilities
  
- 🎗 Children who are young carers and wish to exercise their right to an assessment

## FURTHER POLICY AND GUIDANCE

[WM CP Procedures section 6.9](#)

[WM CP Procedures section 4.5](#)

<https://www.gov.uk/domestic-violence-and-abuse>

[WM CP Procedures 6.2.4](#)

[Government guidance for young people who are homeless](#)

[HSCB Guidance for Working with Resistant, Violent and Aggressive Families](#)

[WM CP Procedures 6.14](#)

[WM CP Procedures 6.11 Children, Schools and Families Act 2010](#)

[Government guidance for supporting young carers](#)

# Level 3

**Threshold to initiate Common Assessment Framework (CAF):**

Multiple Agency Intervention Required

[Common Assessment Framework Guidance and Pre-Assessment Checklist](#)

## Level of Vulnerability:

Children or young people with identified vulnerabilities and needs that require a multi-agency co-ordinated approach.

**Undertake the Common Assessment Framework.**










[Jump to Level 1](#)

[Jump to Level 2](#)

**Level 3**

[Jump to Level 4](#)

### Potential Indicators (not an exhaustive list)

-  Children with a significant emotional and/or behavioural disorder
-  Children persistently absent and/or excluded from school
-  Children beyond parental control
-  Children in families without permanent accommodation
-  Children with an acute or chronic health condition (including morbid obesity) where there is non-attendance for appointments or poor engagement with treatment compliance, where this will have a significant impact on the child's health
-  Children involved in escalating criminal activity or anti-social behaviour
-  Children involved in substance misuse
-  Children in households where parenting is compromised as a consequence of:
  - **mental health issues**
  - **substance misuse**
  - **domestic abuse**
  - **learning difficulties**
  - **poverty**
  - **prolific offending/in custody**
  - **Physical disability**
  - **Unaccompanied asylum seekers**
-  Young Carers

*If help and support is refused, consideration must be given as to whether this will adversely impact the child's safety, health and/or development and, therefore, meet the threshold for Statutory Assessment at Level 4.*

### FURTHER POLICY AND GUIDANCE

[Children missing from Education/School](#)

[WM CP Procedures section 6.10](#)

[WM CP Procedures section 6.9](#)

[WM CP Procedures section 4.5](#)

[WM CP Procedures section 6.4](#)

# Level 2

**Threshold to undertake a Pre-Assessment Checklist and consider a CAF:**

Relevant Agency Intervention Required

**Common Assessment Framework Guidance and Pre-Assessment Checklist**

## Level of Vulnerability:

Children and young people with emerging vulnerabilities whose needs require targeted support.

Jump to Level 1














Level 2

Jump to Level 3

Jump to Level 4



### Potential Indicators (not an exhaustive list)

-  Children whose parents have difficulties managing their behaviour
-  Children in families where there is poor hygiene (including dental hygiene)
-  Children identified by school as requiring additional educational support
-  Children with additional health needs that require extra support
-  Children involved in criminal activity or anti-social behaviour
-  Children in households where difficulties in adult relationships have the potential to impact on the child if early help and support is not offered
-  Children who require support to access appropriate leisure and community activities in order to promote their development and enable them to reach their potential
-  Children where there are behaviour/mood changes which could indicate a change in their mental health and wellbeing
-  Children with unhealthy/poor diet and/or concerning weight gain/weight loss
-  Children starting to have unauthorised absences from school
-  Children involved in substance misuse
-  Children of families seeking asylum
-  Children involved in unhealthy relationships (potentially risky sexual behaviours)

### FURTHER POLICY AND GUIDANCE

**[Advice to Schools and Colleges on Gangs.pdf](#)**

**[WM CP Procedures section 6.10](#)**  
**[Drugs advice for schools](#)**

# Level 1

*No additional support beyond that which is universally available:*

## Level of Vulnerability:

Children making good overall progress in all areas of their development, broadly receiving appropriate universal services such as health care and education. They may also use leisure and play facilities, housing or voluntary sector services.

Level 1




Jump to Level 2

Jump to Level 3

Jump to Level 4



## Potential Indicators (not an exhaustive list)

-  Children that require no additional support beyond that which is universally available
-  Children accessing universal services, such as schools, leisure centres, GP surgeries, other primary health care services, youth centres, etc.
-  Children accessing and being included in social activities