



Launch of the New Continuum of Need and Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF) – July 2019

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Introduction

- This Multi-Agency Continuum of Need guidance has been developed alongside multi-agency partners to offer guidance for practitioners in agencies working with children, families and adults with access to children in Bradford.
- The purpose of the guidance is to assist with decision making in order that children and their **families receive the right help at the right time from the most appropriate service(s).**
- The guidance acknowledges that there are different levels of need and risk that may require support and intervention and that this can be delivered by a range of agencies.
- It clarifies that Bradford is committed to a needs led approach which avoids a “one size fits all” method and has been designed to help professionals make decisions based upon what needs and risks have been identified and what support is best placed to enable effective sustainable change



VALUES and PRINCIPLES

Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility.

- We want all children and young people to be safe, secure and able to reach their full potential.
- In our engagement with children and their families and each other as practitioners, we are committed to the following values and principles:
 - Be child centred – the child is at the forefront of everything that we do
 - Listening to family members and giving importance to what they say
 - Understanding children in the context of their family
 - Listening and acting on the views and voices of children and young people | Our practice is informed by child development and evidence
 - Building on strengths as well as identifying difficulties



VALUES and PRINCIPLES

Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility (Cont'd)

- Focused on actions and outcomes for children
- Respectful to all people at all times
- Recognising difference - understanding and respecting the child and family's individuality, values, beliefs and culture
- Being honest and transparent about what we do and why we are involved, setting out clearly in a way appropriate to the family any concerns that we have and what needs to happen to reduce those concerns.
- Minimising intrusion - doing all that we can to assist in keeping our intervention at the lowest possible safe level.



Remember this is only a guide

- Individual cases need judgment and when in doubt contact your named or designated Safeguarding Professional
- The practitioner approach to identifying need and the decisions to make a referral **should not reflect the anxieties or uncertainties of the referrer**
- But should focus on the needs and risks for the child and value the knowledge and relationship of those already in contact with the family.
- Consistency for families in relation to the people supporting them is an important factor in building resilience.



Using Signs of Safety -



- The Signs of Safety approach has a common language for all practitioners.
- This strengths based approach uses three questions when considering a child and their family:
 1. What are we worried about?
 2. What's working well?
 3. What needs to happen next?

When answering these questions it is important that practitioners consider the child's circumstances holistically in terms of child development, parenting capacity, family and environmental factors



Taking a look at the new guidance



Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility

Continuum of Need and Risk Identification Tool

Practice guidance for improving outcomes for children and young people through the early identification of need, risk and vulnerability

www.bradfordscb.org.uk

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Multi Agency Threshold Guidance for Bradford District - December 2016

(replaces Bradford's Threshold of Need, 2010)

Section One Introduction

'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2015) requires Local Safeguarding Children Boards to publish a 'threshold document' which sets out:

- The process for early help assessment and the early help services to be provided
- When a situation should be referred to Children's Social Care for assessment

This document is to assist practitioners to identify the level of need of a child, together with guidance on a proportionate response. This guidance reinforces the benefits and expectations for early help. If we provide early help to children and their families we can achieve many positive outcomes for children.

The key functions of assessment as set out in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2015) are:

- To gather important information about a child and family
- To analyse their needs and/or the nature of any risk and harm
- To decide whether the child is in need of early help, a child in need (section 17) and/or is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm (section 47)
- To provide support to address those needs to improve the child's safety & outcomes

This framework describes need into four levels. These are not rigid as each child's situation is unique.

The descriptions against each level provide examples about how need might present itself, rather than an exhaustive list of fixed criteria that must be met. The examples are not a substitute for professional judgement. The level of need will always be increased by the multiplicity of factors and help. The document also encourages assessment of resilience as well as areas of concern.

When in doubt contact your local/agency Named or Designated Safeguarding Professional.

We want everyone to focus on:

Conversations, assessments and plans which focus on seeing and knowing about the day-to-day experience of the child – everything comes back to 'what is it like for the child? How is this situation impacting on them?'

N.B. Concerns may arise about a child's welfare or safety due to physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect, regardless of the broader factors which place them within a particular tier. In these situations there should be no delay in making an immediate referral to Children's Social Care (01274 437500) which should be followed up in writing.

Continuum of Need and Risk Identification Tool



Introduction of the Multi Agency Referral Form & Guidance

- [MARF](#) replaces the Common Referral and was developed following the workshops and in recognition of partners/agencies request for the document to be reviewed
- The MARF encourages and supports the use of SOS, eliciting the “Child’s voice” and “Lived experience” and consent.



Completing the MARF

- The Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF) is for practitioner's seeking to refer a child or young person. It enables us to provide the right kind of support at the right time. The form sets out
- A request for Prevention and Early Help Support (including group Work and Family Key Work).
- A request to Bradford's Children's Social Care (CSC) for an assessment in relation to a child or to confirm in writing a referral already made by telephone.
- To share relevant information relating to a child and their family. i.e. Probation service.
- To request information relating to a child and their family i.e. CAFCASS, OFSTED.
- A request to Bradford's Children's Social Care (CSC) due to concerns Child may/or is at risk of Child Exploitation, and/or is Missing from Home or Care.



Case Scenarios

- Let's try It!
- Three scenarios to discuss
- Refer to the Continuum of Need and Risk Identification Tool
- Multi-Agency Information Sharing / Consent Policy
- Consider how helpful the new guidance is, give some feedback!

