

Continuum of need and response



Information for people who work with families

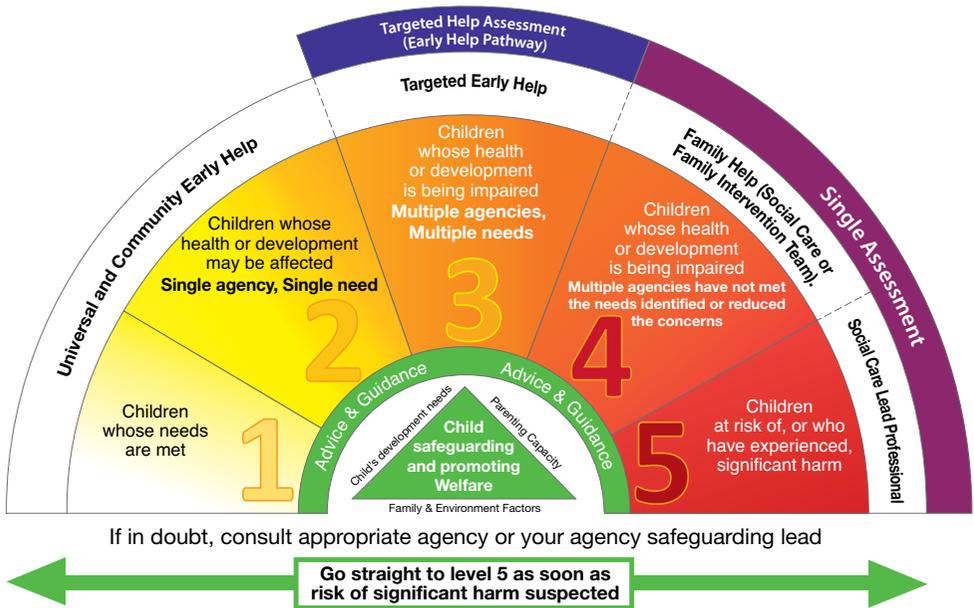
Continuum of Need

Most children and families will have their needs met with support from extended family, friendships, and their community and via access to universal services. Some children and families will require additional help and a very small minority will need intervention aimed at protecting them from significant harm.

The Children Act necessitates an assessment process where priorities of need can be identified. The purpose of this document is to establish a common language and definition across all levels of the continuum. The indicators listed are examples only and can never replace professional judgement, analysis and discussion. Where it is felt that a child, young person or families has needs that are beyond the remit of universal services alone, the continuum of need should be used as a means of identifying the level of need.



Continuum of Need and Response



Level 1 represents children with no identified additional needs. Their needs are met through accessing universal services Community Early Help.

Level 2 represents children with additional needs that can be met by targeted support by a single practitioner or agency - universal services.

Level 3 represents children with additional needs that can be met by targeted support by a multi-agency integrated support package through an Early Help Pathway, through Universal and Early Help Services.

Level 4 represents children with significant additional needs that have not been met following a co-ordinated, multi-agency response from the Early Intervention Panel and for whom significant concerns remain. This is when Children's Social Care may become involved.

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)

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 or your designated safeguard lead and if necessary share information with the most relevant agency/organisation.

Level 1 Children whose needs are met

Universal services and Community Early Help 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 or feeding difficulties has the child's needs met through health services or support from a local Family Hub
- Children have their education needs met through schools
- All young people 13 plus have their need for careers information, advice, guidance and support from Careers Advisor.

Level 2

Level 2 Children with additional needs, whose health and development may be affected without a co-ordinated and targeted response from 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 through a referel to the Early Intervention Panel.

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 housing officer assesses that a family with children has financial difficulties and accesses welfare benefit advice and the need is 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, educational psychologist as part of SEN support
- 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 as part of the action plan for the family
- 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 an Early Help Pathway which can be used to access additional services. The Partners Guide booklet explains how the Early Help Pathway process fits in with Early Intervention / Help and the use of the Early Intervention Panel.

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.

Contact the Early Help Pathway Team to check whether a Pathway is already open, the team will be able to offer support to initiate a Pathway.

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 or one of the parents becomes terminally ill
- A young person who is displaying a range of anti - social behaviour or extremist views and or a poor school attendance
- Parents capacity is compromised by drug and alcohol problems
- A child displaying challenging behaviour due to them experiencing their parent's domestic abuse or mental health issues
- A child who is not brought to health appointments for any intervention



Level 4

Children with significant additional needs that have not been met following a coordinated, multi-agency response using the Early Help Pathway and for whom significant concerns remain. Children who experience a moderate to severe learning disability, health or have complex needs requiring a Children's Social Care assessment.

Indicative examples of need and circumstances:

All those examples described in level 3 where families have had the benefits of a multi-agency coordinated plan, where services have been provided and the change plan and impact of interventions have been reviewed regularly. Where the lead facilitator and multi-agency team agree that despite the appropriate services being provided, the concerns for the child remain or have escalated, and their outcomes remain poor.

Level 5

Children at risk or who have experienced significant harm

Children will have high level of vulnerability and a referral must be made to Children's Social Care immediately by telephone followed by a referral form within 48 hours. Where applicable a copy of the completed Early Help Pathway should also be provided.

The judgment about what constitutes significant harm is complex one; see Working Together (2023) 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 judgment.

Children and young people who need protection from harm:

- Children, Young People and Unborn children at risk or who have been significantly harmed
- Children being abused including sexually and criminally 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 significantly, life threatening, self-harming behaviour / suicide attempts
- Children who make an allegation of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or indicate a future risk from FGM

Family Help



Family Help is Calderdale's overarching approach for (Early Help, Prevention and Targeted Support). Family Help brings all partners together under shared frameworks:

Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance

Children's social care: national framework - GOV.UK

Family Help aims to give children and families who are experiencing difficulty at any point in their lives the help they need as early as possible. Effective Family Help works to prevent problems occurring, or to tackle them head-on when they do, before problems get worse. It also helps to foster a whole set of personal strengths and skills that prepare a child for adult life. Family Help can take different forms from home visiting programmes to support vulnerable parents, to school-based programmes to improve children's social and emotional skills.

Universal and Community Early Help

Our Family Hubs offer a 'place-based model' families are able to access services from a variety of partners for the right help at the right time. Family Hubs bring together existing Family Help services to improve connectivity between families, professionals, and services, placing relationships at the heart of our approach. Our Family Hubs include a physical and virtual offer, accessible for families with children of all ages, from 0-19 or up to 25 for those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and embedding the Start for Life offer at their core.

Family Help Advice & Guidance

Family Help Officers are the first point of contact for young people, families and professionals, they act as a "bridge" between the Community Help and Family Hub services in Calderdale.

Family Help Officers can support with:

- signposting families and providing information, advice, and guidance
- advocating and liaising with other agencies on behalf of families, referring to further support where needed
- providing insight into the activities supporting parents, children and young people in the local community
- sharing resources and information to families about parenting support, financial support, domestic abuse, and physical and mental health support

Family Group Decision Making

A Family Group Decision Making meeting is an opportunity for family members to get together to make a plan for their child which addresses the problems identified by professionals who know the child. An FGC is a strength-based way of working that aspires to recognise and utilise the strengths of all people, at the intersections of their lives and their learned experience.

Calderdale operates a 2 Tier Family Group Decision making approach:

Family Network Meetings (FNM) are a new, flexible and informal offer designed to support families earlier in their journey. Rooted in the principles of family-led planning, FNMs enable families to come together quickly to:

- Identify their support networks
- Explore unmet needs
- Develop practical, family-owned plans
- FNMs will be widely used across Early Help and Family Help (Section 17).

Family Group Conferences remain our established, structured model for families involved in more complex situations, particularly within Child Protection and Pre-Proceedings (PLO) contexts. FGCs provide a formal, facilitated space for families to develop safe and sustainable plans, supported by an independent coordinator.

Targeted Early Help

Targeted Early Help is for families who have accessed Universal and Community Early Help available to them, their needs are multiple and/or complex. This includes those who are currently eligible for targeted early help or receiving support and services as a child in need, and those subject to child protection enquiries and plans.

A referral for Targeted Early Help services is through the Early Intervention Panel.

Early Intervention Panel

The Early Intervention Panel work with services and key partners to provide positive outcomes for children, young people and families. To do this, the key functions of the panel is to:

- To receive referrals for multi-agency support at Tiers 3 of the Calderdale Continuum of Need, and allocate and/or refer to the appropriate lead agency
- To support the development of programmes and activities for both individuals and groups, which enhance the early Intervention process
- To monitor and follow up any barriers to delivery

Early Help Pathway

The Early Help Pathway can be initiated by any practitioner working with a family, this should be considered as early as possible after support needs are identified, and consent sought. The Early Help Pathway will help to facilitate earlier and improved partnership working with the parent/carer, child/young person's before needs escalate. The assessment should explore and understand worries for all children/ young people's or family's well-being that are related to issues beyond your service/support. An Early Help Pathway should also help improve the outcomes for a child or young person where current intervention and support processes are not working. Lastly, it will be the case that an Early Help Pathway will generate a change plan which will require a multi-agency approach to meeting the family's needs.

Contact Details



Integrated Front Door

Our Integrated Front Door for Calderdale (MAST & Family Help) receive safeguarding enquiries, referrals for Children's Social Care and Early Help services.

The role of the services within the IFD is to ensure that enquiries / referrals are directed to the right service for support.

Multi-Agency Screening Team (MAST)

MAST is the first point of contact for ANY CHILD PROTECTION concern.

Tel: **01422 393336**

[Report concerns – Safeguarding Calderdale](#)

Family Help Advice & Guidance

The Early Help Guidance and Advice team is Calderdale's first point of contact for families and professionals, to enable them to access services to meet their needs.

This is a dedicated advice line available for professionals, parents, carers and young people.

Tel: **01422 393387**

Email: [**earlyhelpadvice@calderdale.gov.uk**](mailto:earlyhelpadvice@calderdale.gov.uk)

Family Hubs

Family Hubs are here to help every family receive the support you need, when you need it. We are here to provide information and tools to help you to care for and interact with your babies and children and look after your own wellbeing.

To find your nearest Family Hub visit: calderdalefamilyhubs.org.uk

Early Intervention Panel

For general queries or to make a referral, please contact **EIP@calderdale.gov.uk** or visit

[Early Intervention Panel | Calderdale Council](#)

Early Help Pathway

For any enquires about the Early Help Pathway, please contact earlyhelp@calderdale.gov.uk or visit

[Early Help Pathway | Calderdale Council](#)

Children's Assessment Team (CAT)

The Children's Assessment Team receives all incoming cases from MAST and carries out Statutory Child and Family Early Intervention Single Assessments to determine what further level of Social Care support is required or appropriate service.

Tel: **01422 393340**

Calderdale Emergency Duty Team

Health and Social Care (Adult Services and wellbeing) and Children and Young People's Services provide an emergency service at nights and weekends, when their offices are closed - the Emergency Duty Team. The service is available to any adult or child who has social care difficulties that are causing a serious risk or concern that cannot be left until the start of the next working day.

Tel: **01422 288000**

[Emergency Duty Team | Calderdale Council](#)

Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership

Princess buildings,
Princess Street,
Halifax
HX1 1TS

Tel: **01422 394074**

Web: safeguarding.calderdale.gov.uk

