The Child Neglect Screening Tool is for front line practitioners within all partner agencies in Herefordshire when they are concerned about possible child neglect. The screening tool is a means to develop an overall picture of life for a child and quickly identify areas of concern that may indicate a child or young person (of any age) is being neglected. The Day in My Life tool[[1]](#footnote-1), can also be used to capture more information about what a child’s daily life is like.

Due to the format and some technical language used, this tool is not designed to be completed alongside families, however you are encouraged to discuss concerns and ask for information from the family, child or young person, using appropriate methods. The Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2)[[2]](#footnote-2), is a more in-depth tool to identify and address child neglect, that is designed to be completed alongside the family. For families where a Child and Family Assessment is being completed, or there is an Early Help Assessment/Plan, Child in Need, or Child Protection Plan, the GCP2 should be used rather than this screening tool.

See further Guidance on completing the tool, and Safeguarding Statement, below.

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| **Part 1: Child’s Information** | | | |
| **Child’s Name** |  | **Child’s NHS, Mosaic, etc. reference (if any)** |  |
| **Child’s Date of Birth** |  | **Contact tel no. for young person/ parent/carer (say which)** |  |
| **Child’s home address** |  | | |
| **Parent/carer name (1)** |  | **Parent/carer name (2)** |  |

| **Part 2: Child Neglect Screening Tool** | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Area of concern**  (examples in bullet points are given as a guide only) | **Not Concerned** | **Partly Concerned** | **Very Concerned** | **Not**  **known** | **Details of concern for this child**  (include any specific reasoning, evidence and observations) |
| **1. Child’s weight**   * Are you concerned about the child being under or overweight? * Is the child’s fitness a concern? |  |  |  |  |  |
| **2. Child’s access to adequate food**   * Do you have concerns about the availability of food in the home? * Are there concerns about the quality (nutritious) and quantity of food provided? |  |  |  |  |  |
| **3. Home conditions**   * Is the house and garden poorly maintained; are there signs of disrepair that impact upon the child? * Is there clutter or signs of hoarding? (use [Clutter Image Rating Scale](https://www.herefordshiresafeguardingboards.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/clutter-rating-final-1.pdf) – **4 and above** is cause for concern) * Is the house overcrowded? * Does the cleanliness of the home cause concern? Is it smelly and/or dirty? * Is there untreated mould? * Are there concerns about facilities for cooking, storing food, washing and heating? |  |  |  |  |  |
| **4. Child’s sleeping arrangements**   * Does the child have nowhere to sleep/no bedding/ insufficient bedding/dirty bedding? * Does the child’s sleep pattern cause concern? Is there no (age appropriate) bedtime routine? * Is the child co-sleeping? |  |  |  |  |  |
| **5. Lack of age appropriate safety measures (stair gates/fireguards etc.)**  - Is the home/garden unsafe and/or unsecure for a child? |  |  |  |  |  |
| **6. Type and/or number of pets**   * Are there signs of inappropriate care of pets (excrement/feeding/lack of exercise) * Is there a risk from animals to the child e.g. dangerous dogs/snakes |  |  |  |  |  |
| **7. Child not having appropriate clothing and footwear**   * Is clothing/footwear inappropriate for the weather conditions? * Are the child’s clothes/shoes ill fitting, dirty, smelly, in poor repair, not cared for? |  |  |  |  |  |
| **8. Child’s physical appearance causes concern**   * Cleanliness/lack of hair brushing or teeth cleaning/ unkempt/smelly * Does the child look tired? |  |  |  |  |  |
| **9. Is the parent seeking medical advice appropriately?**   * Are there unmet health needs? * Is health related advice ignored for children with diagnosed illness/disability? * Is there frequent illness? Does the child have persistent and untreated head lice? * Is medication not being administered as prescribed? * Are health appointments repeatedly missed? * The child is not registered with, and regularly accessing a dentist/GP * Is there evidence of tooth decay? |  |  |  |  |  |
| **10. Does the child appear to lack confidence or have low self-esteem?**  - Is the child/young person socially isolated, appearing withdrawn, or acting aggressively?  - Has there been a change in their behavior?  - Not attending clubs or hobbies, or engaging in activities?  - Is the child being bullied?  - Are there concerns about change of diet, self-harm, or substance misuse? |  |  |  |  |  |
| **11. Is there a lack of emotional warmth and interaction between parent and child?**  - Is there a lack of interest in the child’s achievements?  - Is there a lack of affection, physical contact, or talking with the child? |  |  |  |  |  |
| **12. Are there concerns relating to the child’s developmental needs?**   * Is there a delay in the child’s development for which there is no known reason? * Is there a lack of appropriate stimulation or play/access to age appropriate toys/games? |  |  |  |  |  |
| **13. Are there concerns about the child’s education?**   * Does the child frequently arrive at school late? * Is the child frequently absent from nursery/school? * Is this a young person who is Not in Employment Education or Training (NEET)? * If being home schooled, are there concerns about the child’s access to appropriate learning? * If attending nursery/school does the parent show an interest in their child’s learning and development and do they engage with nursery or school? |  |  |  |  |  |
| **14. Inappropriate behavior management and/or expectations from the parent/frequent criticism**   * Are there concerns about how the child’s behavior is managed? * Boundaries, if set, are not appropriate to the child’s age or stage of development |  |  |  |  |  |
| **15. Are there concerns regarding supervision of the child?**   * Inside and outside of the home? * Is this appropriate to their age/stage of development? * Is the parent/carer aware of what the child does and who they are in contact with outside of the home? |  |  |  |  |  |
| **16. On-line safety**   * Does the child have access to inappropriate online content? * Do parents expose their child to on-line risks? * Do parents have a lack of awareness of on-line safety and do not discuss on-line risks with their child? |  |  |  |  |  |
| **17. Inappropriate peer relationships for age of child or relationships with unsuitable adults?**  - Are there indicators that the child could be at risk of exploitation? (are they in contact with people who may put them at risk, are they receiving gifts, is some of their time unaccounted for, do they have unexplained injuries, do they go missing?)  - Does an [Exploitation Risk Assessment](https://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/local-content/4cjN/exploitation-tools-and-pathways/?b=Herefordshire%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20Manage%20Cookie%20Consent%20%20We%20use%20some%20necessary%20cookies%20to%20make%20this%20website%20work.We%27d%20like%20to%20set%20additional%20cookies%20to%20understand%20how%20you%20use%20the%20site,%20remember%20your%20settings%20and%20improve%20the%20website.See%20our%20full%20cookie%20policy%20for%20more%20information%20which%20includes%20a%20list%20of%20all%20of%20the%20cookies%20we%20use.%20%20%20%20%20%20Accept%20additional%20cookies%20%20%20%20Reject%20additional%20cookies%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20Cookie%20Policy%20%20%20%20Manage%20Consent) need to be undertaken? |  |  |  |  |  |
| **18. Is the family experiencing financial hardship?**  - Does this impact on the care and wellbeing of the children? |  |  |  |  |  |
| **19. Is parenting compromised by one, or more, of the following factors:**   * Parental substance misuse * Domestic Abuse * Parental mental ill health * Parental learning disability/Acquired Brain Injury/concerns about mental capacity? * Parental self-neglect * Poverty |  |  |  |  |  |
| **20. Does the family have a history of or current poor engagement with services?**  - Often misses appointments,  - Shows little motivation to change,  - Says they have done something but they have not,  - Appear reluctant to share information or engage,  - Engagement with services fluctuates,  - Hostility or aggression towards professionals. |  |  |  |  |  |

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| **Part 3 – Analysis** |
| **What is working well?** |
|  |
| **What are you worried about?** |
|  |
| **What is the child or young person’s view of their situation? (If the child is too young to express their views what are your observations of the child?)** |
|  |
| **What is the parent / carer, or other family members’ view of the situation?** |
|  |

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Part 4 – Action plan – complete if any action is required by any professionals or family members (following discussion with the family)** | | |
| **What needs to happen?** | **Who is doing it?** | **When by?** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**Have you discussed your concerns with parents/carers? Yes**  **No**

If yes, when was this discussed (date) and summary of the discussion

**Has the child or young person contributed to this screening tool? Yes**  **No**

If yes, when and what was discussed?

**Does the child have any Special Education Needs or a Disability? Yes**  **No**

If yes, explain what and how it affects the child’s day to day life:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Your name and role (person completing the tool)** |  |
| **Your contact information – email / phone number** |  |
| **Date tool completed** |  |

**Next Steps**

Always discuss the completed tool with your manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead and follow your own agency’s procedures to either manage the identified support required or to escalate to the Children Help and Advice Team (Early Help Support), or Herefordshire MASH (for safeguarding). Consult the [Right Help, Right Time Levels of Need](https://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/local-content/2gjN/thresholds-guidance/?b=Herefordshire%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20Manage%20Cookie%20Consent%20%20We%20use%20some%20necessary%20cookies%20to%20make%20this%20website%20work.We%27d%20like%20to%20set%20additional%20cookies%20to%20understand%20how%20you%20use%20the%20site,%20remember%20your%20settings%20and%20improve%20the%20website.See%20our%20full%20cookie%20policy%20for%20more%20information%20which%20includes%20a%20list%20of%20all%20of%20the%20cookies%20we%20use.%20%20%20%20%20%20Accept%20additional%20cookies%20%20%20%20Reject%20additional%20cookies%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20Cookie%20Policy%20%20%20%20Manage%20Consent) to help determine the level of need for this family, and appropriate response.

If action is required by you, another professional, or family members, complete the action plan above.

**As a result of the Screening Tool above is an Early Help Assessment / Plan needed?** Yes  No

For questions about Early Help, contact the Child Help and Advice Team - 01432 260261

**As a result of the above is a referral to Herefordshire MASH (Level 4 child safeguarding) required?** Yes  No

See [MASH Referral form (MARF) and Guidance here](https://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/local-content/zgjN/multi-agency-referral-reporting-concerns-marf/?b=Herefordshire%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20Manage%20Cookie%20Consent%20%20We%20use%20some%20necessary%20cookies%20to%20make%20this%20website%20work.We%27d%20like%20to%20set%20additional%20cookies%20to%20understand%20how%20you%20use%20the%20site,%20remember%20your%20settings%20and%20improve%20the%20website.See%20our%20full%20cookie%20policy%20for%20more%20information%20which%20includes%20a%20list%20of%20all%20of%20the%20cookies%20we%20use.%20%20%20%20%20%20Accept%20additional%20cookies%20%20%20%20Reject%20additional%20cookies%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20Cookie%20Policy%20%20%20%20Manage%20Consent)

**As a result of the Screening Tool above is a Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2) assessment needed?** Yes  No

\*You need to be trained to complete the GCP2 with the family. If you have not received training, who will complete the GCP2 on your behalf?

Guidance on using the tool

The purpose of tool is to equip frontline practitioners to:

* identify signs of neglect at the earliest point possible
* be clear about what information you have
* identify any other organisation or team that also needs to be aware of the situation
* identify the next steps needed, if any

The tool can also be used in supervision, to help frame discussions about possible child neglect.

In order to complete this tool, it is essential that you are able to evidence the reasons why you have highlighted concerns for any of the factors indicated. Only complete the parts of the tool you are certain about. For e.g. some questions depend on seeing the family in their home; if this is not possible due to the nature of your role, mark as “Not Known.” If you are unsure about completing the tool, seek appropriate help within your organisation.

There is no collated scoring or rules on what should trigger a safeguarding referral; the questions help to develop an overall picture of the child’s life and experiences, to support your analysis and judgement.

When you use this tool, you always need to consider the whole family and the context of the situation. Ask yourself:

* How many people live in the household? Of those in the household, how many people are showing signs of neglect?
* Is there an adult with care and support needs in the house and are they showing signs of Neglect? (if so, you may need to consider raising a safeguarding concern with Adult Safeguarding after speaking to the person for their views)
* Do you need to consider completing the screening tool for each child?

Child Protection / Safeguarding Statement

This screening tool does not replace Herefordshire’s and/or your own safeguarding policy and procedures in cases where you are concerned that a child/young person has been or is at risk of immediate harm. See the [West Midlands Safeguarding Procedures Chapter on Neglect (2.9)](https://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/pkphl/regional-safeguarding-guidance/neglect)

It will not be necessary in every case to refer on. Providing advice and guidance to a child, young person and/or family to address the concerns may be adequate and helpful support for families in some cases.

If there are wider concerns, consider the need for multi-agency planning and intervention and use the normal referral pathway. Maintain ongoing review of risk and re-screen if necessary.

If concerned about Child Neglect, then speak to your Designated Safeguarding Lead within your organisation.

If you are worried that a child is at risk of significant harm, make a referral to and/or consult with Herefordshire MASH. Tel: (01432) 260800; [cypd@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:cypd@herefordshire.gov.uk). If someone is injured or in immediate danger, always call 999 in the first instance.

**For any questions about this tool, contact the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership on** [**admin.sbu@herefordshire.gov.uk**](mailto:admin.sbu@herefordshire.gov.uk)

1. See Day in my Life - Access from the Child Neglect Tab on the [Professional Resources page of the HSCP website](https://www.herefordshiresafeguardingboards.org.uk/professional-resources/childrens-policies-guidance) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Practitioners need to complete GCP2 training to use the tool. Access training at [www.herefordshirecpd.co.uk](http://www.herefordshirecpd.co.uk) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)