

Your quick reference guide to safeguarding children in Lancashire

Some questions to ask yourself

We often remain focused on our original perception of a family and fail to consider the broader picture, or an alternative view about what is happening and why. Consider all the possibilities about what is happening and address each assumption, only discarding it when there is clear evidence to do so.

- Is what I am hearing/seeing what I would expect from any other child of a similar age?
- Does the parent's explanation for an injury sound plausible?
- Is it possible for a non-mobile baby to sustain this injury accidentally?
- Does this child have SEND as parents say, or is the challenging behaviour a result of poor parenting?
- How well do I know significant men in this child's life and is there more I can do to get to know them?
- When parents describe the child's behaviour at home am I seeing the same in the setting?
- Am I really listening to the children in my care? Remember there is verbal and non-verbal communication.
- Does the child's behaviour change when they are with different people? I wonder why this may be.
- 'Sometimes I just get a niggles that something isn't right'. What can I do? Discuss concerns with the Designated Lead Practitioner (DLP) and/or manager.
- Why do I feel nervous/intimidated around this person?
- Am I prioritising the needs of the child while still having sympathy for a parent's situation?
- Have I done all I can to support this family?
- Which other agencies may be able to support this family?
- Have I given myself time to make an accurate written record?
- Have I remembered to be professionally curious?

What action could I take?

There are people you can contact for advice and guidance.

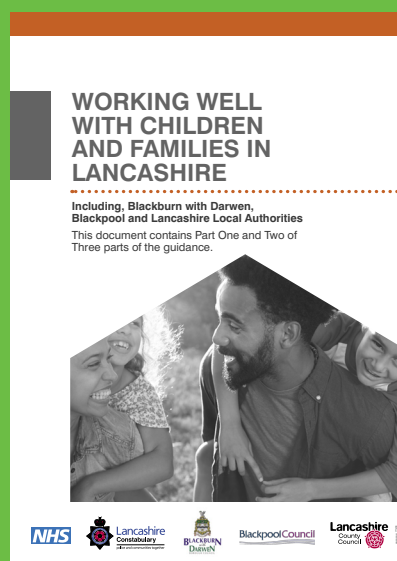
Your settings 'Designated Lead Practitioner'

Early Years Safeguarding Officer:

Catherine Isherwood - 07909 001 430

Children's Social Care
0300 123 6720 and
Out of Hours - 0300 123 6722

Local Authority Designated Officer
01772 536 694



Useful websites

NSPCC website for signs and symptoms of abuse and other useful resources
www.nspcc.org.uk

The Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership for the Levels of Need and Working Well with Children and Families in Lancashire booklet
www.safeguardingpartnership.org.uk

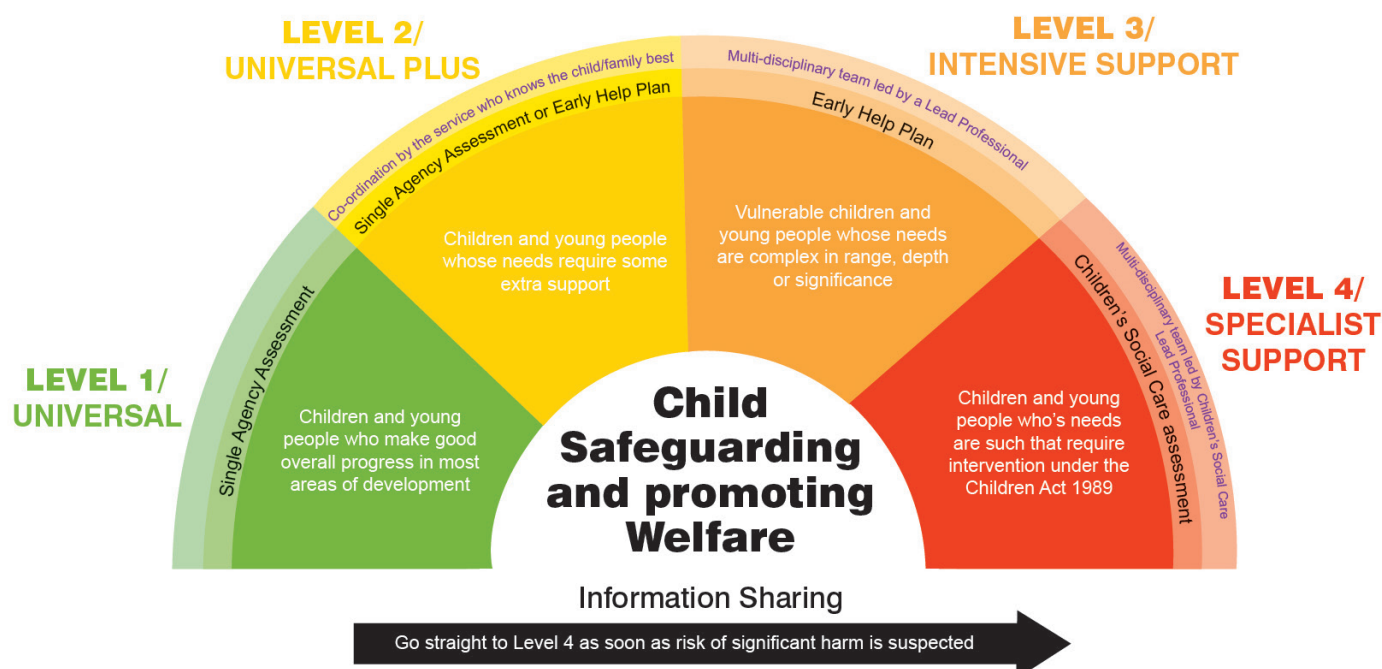
Lancashire County Council safeguarding information
www.lancashire.gov.uk/practitioners/supporting-children-and-families/



What is my responsibility?

Everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe. No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who has contact with them will have a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

Levels of Need – At a Glance



Be alert to possible signs of abuse and neglect

Below are listed the four main categories of abuse with some signs to look out for:

Physical Abuse

- Unexplained bruises (particularly if recurrent)
- Untreated injuries
- Child flinching at sudden movements
- Aggression towards others
- Arms and legs kept covered, even in hot weather
- Fear of going home

Emotional Abuse

- Physical/mental/emotional development delay
- Sudden speech disorders
- Extremes of passivity/aggression
- Over reaction to making a mistake
- Fear of new situations
- Enuresis (bedwetting) encopresis (soiling)

Neglect

- Poor personal hygiene
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance
- Untreated medical problems
- Scavenging for food
- Constant tiredness
- Low self-esteem

Sexual Abuse

- Explicit age inappropriate language/behaviour
- Person/situation specific fears i.e. men, bathing, changing
- Indiscriminate affection/contact/intimacy
- Fails to respond to boundaries set by an adult
- Associates normative 'sexual' exploration play with aggression, violence, force, coercion or bribery
- Chronic genito-urinary infections

An acronym to remember these categories is PENS. Each category has its own specific indicators, which you should be alert to. Working Together to Safeguard Children statutory guidance sets out full descriptions.