



LEARNING AND IMPROVEMENT BULLETIN – NEGLECT

SUMMARY:

The Ofsted thematic inspection of professional responses to neglect looked at the effectiveness of arrangements to safeguard children who experience neglect.

WHAT IS NEGLECT?

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013) defines neglect as:

‘The persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing or shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.’

KEY FINDINGS OF THE REPORT:

1. Determining levels of neglect and their impact on the child requires professional judgment based on sound assessments and analysis. Drift and delay must be avoided by taking timely and decisive action.
2. Assessments should avoid focusing exclusively on the adults’ needs. All professionals, including those working with the adults in the family, should be aware of the need to consider and analyse the impact of adults’ behaviours upon the child. The likelihood of neglect is increased by factors such as maternal mental health difficulties, material deprivation, poor quality housing and parental illness.
3. Referrals to CSC should set out clearly:
 - The concerns and the reasons why it has been felt necessary to escalate the case by way of referral to CSC;
 - The nature and extent of involvement with the family, including what support has been offered to the family and whether they have consistently accepted and engaged with that support.
4. All professionals must be aware of the duty to escalate concerns when they consider a child is not appropriately protected and/or is suffering from neglect. The multi-agency escalation process can be found in an appendix to the Safeguarding Children Procedures – see below.

MORE INFORMATION:

http://nottinghamshirescb.proceduresonline.com/appendices/p_conflict_res.html

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/childs-time-professional-responses-neglect>