**Neglect in early years settings audit 2023-24**

This audit is intended to raise awareness of neglect, as well as support your existing action plans (e.g. Safeguarding Self-Assessment Audit).

Record evidence of where to find the relevant information within your early years setting to support your judgements to whether your setting is in the Common Practice, Best Practice or Exceptional Practice category. You are not expected to return this audit to The Early Years Team unlike the annual safeguarding self-assessment audit.

**Before completing this, it may be useful to start with the Knowledge and Understanding baseline questionnaire which can be found at the end of this document - Annex A.** This could be used as a paper activity with your staff, sent out as a Google form or Survey monkey and could then inform your action plans, CPD programme and next steps for the academic year.

For further information and reading about Neglect, please visit [OCSB](https://www.oscb.org.uk/safeguarding-themes/neglect/) pages on Neglect or [NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/advice-and-info/neglect-matters.pdf) Neglect matters information page.

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| 1: Knowledge and Training | Common Practice | Best Practice | Exceptional Practice | Evidence |
| * 1. Knowledge of neglect resources   Neglect resources on the [OCSB website](https://www.oscb.org.uk/safeguarding-themes/neglect/)  Awareness and use of the [Thrive: Child needs and parental responses](https://www.oscb.org.uk/documents/thrive-child-needs-and-parental-responses/)  [Threshold of Needs](https://trixcms.trixonline.co.uk/api/assets/oscb/11abde1c-5df0-417a-90fb-daf766aa8732/threshold-need.pdf?version=0)  The setting is part of the area neglect practitioner forum. | DSLs accesses the Neglect resources on the [OCSB website](https://www.oscb.org.uk/safeguarding-themes/neglect/)  DSLs know of the [Thrive: Child needs and parental responses](https://www.oscb.org.uk/documents/thrive-child-needs-and-parental-responses/)  Thresholds of needs is referred to by the DSL. | All staff know of the Thrive tool and Threshold of Needs and the importance of these to support their role.  DSL attends neglect practitioner forums (contact the Early Years Team for more information if you would like to attend).  Chronologies reference support/resources used to identify neglect e.g. Neglect resources on OSCB website. | All staff access and reference the Thrive Tool and the Threshold of Needs.  DSL contributes case studies for the Neglect Forum  DSLs actively use the resources available about neglect and use these to complete chronologies, signpost to support using a multi-agency approach where needed and action plan for the child/family based on these. | Specific examples where Thrive/Threshold of Needs/Neglect resources has been used |
| 1.2 There is evidence that Neglect is a focus for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) within the early years setting e.g. [Neglect OSCB training course](https://training.oscb.org.uk/events-list),  [Oral health training](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=BGTVb1eNdkuheiLEHw6uPYcHW8mOlyFLruSoOGm3QZhUOUZKWTBTSFJONUVWVlczMlZaOEUzSkZETi4u),  Trauma informed Training | DSLs undertake key courses e.g. Neglect OSCB training course. | There is a clear CPD focus on neglect.  There is a named Neglect Lead who supports the early years setting in their CPD needs around neglect.  Individual Courses are undertaken by key staff to support prevention around neglect e.g. Oral Health. These are then disseminated to key personnel in early years setting. | A clear and structured whole early years setting focus on neglect and a CPD programme is in place to support the setting’s development planning.  The Neglect lead is able to work across settings e.g. in a chain of nurseries or with neighbouring EY settings to develop best practice beyond their own early years setting.  Annual CPD is for all staff and prevention strategies for neglect are built into the setting’s improvement planning, to which the proprietor/management committee hold the early years setting accountable. | Training logs, CPD logs, committee minutes |
| * 1. Staff knowledge of signs of neglect   Gaps in knowledge will be identified through The Knowledge and Understanding questionnaire (Annex A). | All staff are able to identify the key areas of neglect and who they should report this to.  Gaps in knowledge and understanding are addressed through training.  Staff understand the importance of promoting good attendance.  Key personnel in the setting correctly and accurately access support for children and families where there is a concern. | The Knowledge and Understanding baseline questionnaire (Annex A) is completed annually with staff as part of safeguarding training - action planning developed from this.  Clear impact of work done to ensure staff’s understanding of neglect is secure e.g. baseline assessment (Annex A) re-done after training schedule has been implemented for the year. | Bespoke support and training given to ensure all staff are supported and able to recognise signs of neglect.  Significant improvements shown with identifying signs of neglect and reporting when baseline questionnaire is re-done after a year. | The Knowledge and Understanding Neglect questionnaire (Annex A) – baseline, action planning from this and re- evaluation |
| 1.4 Curriculum - Prevention – promotion of good self-care, protective behaviours etc. | Neglect areas are addressed through generic themes e.g. Healthy Eating week, visiting the dentist, role play.  Resources including books are available e.g. visiting the dentist, stories about bedtime routines  Staff understand about how to identify low levels of early language and how to address it e.g. through WellComm Screening Tool  The setting helps parents to understand about the importance of the Home Learning Environment. | The setting has a safeguarding plan and neglect is a key element identified within the plan.  Bespoke curriculum interventions are in place to address specific concerns e.g. poor dental hygiene | A curriculum is embedded which focuses on all areas of self-care and supports understanding of neglect in an age appropriate way.  Additional accreditation, such as Healthy Smiles Oral Health Accreditation are in place ([Healthy smiles - Community Dental Services](https://www.communitydentalservices.co.uk/oral-health-improvement/oxfordshire/healthy-smiles/)) | Curriculum plans, evidence of CPD, accreditation documents, promoting 50 Things to do before you are five app, use of WellComm |

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| Evaluation and Next Steps: |

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| 2: Reporting and recording | Common Practice | Best Practice | Exceptional Practice | Evidence |
| 2.1. Systems for recording and reporting neglect | Every member of staff understands the importance of reporting every neglect concern which builds into a chronology. | Records show a clear chronology of neglect concerns and actions contributed to by key persons.  DSLs or Neglect Lead build chronologies accurately which show multi-agency work. | Records show systematic recording of neglect and neglect sub-category alongside actions taken within a suitable time scale.  On-going review and welfare checks are recorded as part of the records. All children, where there are concerns relating to neglect, will have a multi-agency chronology in place. | Internal early years setting records/ monthly or termly reports are scrutinised to identify any emerging trends or to identify any individuals in need of pre-emptive work.  Safeguarding reports are shared regularly and discussed in senior management meetings including an overview of the current context in relation to neglect. |
| 2.2 Staff understand how to report neglect and are confident in naming neglect | Ongoing noticing and discussions with manager/DSL by staff working directly with children. | Neglect concerns discussed at regular supervision meetings. | Specific questions asked about neglect asked at supervision meetings. | Staff survey |
| 2.3 Staff Meetings with a specific focus on neglect happen | Neglect is raised as a concern to DSLs outside of meetings.  DSL will take a lead where there are concerns through the relevant pathway e.g. Early Help Strengths and Needs, TAF meetings | Neglect is regularly discussed with colleagues so that it remains high on everyone’s radar.  Clear planning for strategic support for children. | Neglect Lead supports other educational settings to develop their understanding of neglect | Internal records/meeting notes/chronologies / Early Years mentor. |

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| Evaluation and Next Steps: |

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| 3: Monitoring, evaluation and impact | Common Practice | Best Practice | Exceptional Practice | Evidence |
| 3.1 Early years setting systems for monitoring and evaluating neglect | Neglect is discussed as a distinct item in Safeguarding Review meetings | Named neglect lead/DSL regularly review concern forms to identify neglect | Neglect actions within the strategic plan are evaluated and evidenced | In-house recording systems |
| 3.2 Learning from neglect cases over time will inform best practice within the early years setting | [Learning summaries from OSCB](https://www.oscb.org.uk/learning-zone/learning-from-audits/case-reviews/) are read by DSL/Neglect lead and improvements made to internal systems based on these | Learning from previous cases of neglect underpins practice and training needs | Sharing information with staff about best practice –Staff meetings will have a focus on the learning summaries from OSCB and there will be a whole setting approach to how to improve the early years setting’s own practice in relation to these | CPD, curriculum, early years setting improvement plans |

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| 4: Communication and Response | Common Practice | Best Practice | Exceptional Practice | Evidence |
| 4.1: Relationships with parents and children | Records show that staff, through direct conversations with parents and via reports to Social Care (if relevant) identify and name neglect  DSL understands about disguised compliance.  DSLs are trained in Early Help – part of this is having difficult conversations  The DSLs have good relationships with parents and allow them opportunities to have open and honest conversations around neglect | Parents ask for support around their environmental needs  The staff have good relationships with parents and children and, where appropriate) allow them opportunities to have open and honest conversations around neglect  Early Help training shared with all staff  The setting has adopted a Restorative Practices approach | Conversations are proactive and preventative,  Outreach support is offered with other settings if needed on developing positive parental relationships  The early years setting has various structures in place to ensure that communication, relationships and support is strong within the early years setting community and beyond e.g. across settings – early years setting to Primary | Early Help Training/ Strengths and Needs completed/records of discussion with parents/ in-house recording systems which link to OCSB guidance and best practice |
| 4.2 External agencies and information sharing | DSLs are aware of signposting to relevant agencies including benefits, finances and parenting classes  Information is shared at key transition points e.g. starting school | Records show engagement of external agencies/sharing best practice and information across agencies  Concerns raised around neglect are shared with all settings where siblings may be on roll | Case studies reflect effective and timely support and close partnership working across agencies  Strong relationships with local settings ensure that concerns are raised to reduce the risk of neglect within a family that spans more than one setting. |  |
| 4.3 Communication with staff | Regular reminders - weekly briefing/emails  Management discussions will include neglect as an element within safeguarding | Active engagement with staff with supportive conversations around neglect | DSL feedback to staff member who raised the concern with outcomes and support strategies to ensure the best outcomes for the child and their family |  |

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| Evaluation and Next Steps: |

**Annex A:** For Staff

***The following questions can be used to support CPD and action planning around Neglect***

**Knowledge and Understanding of Neglect Baseline Questionnaire**

Neglect is… (please tick all those you think apply):

* + Failure to provide adequate food
  + Failure to provide enriching experiences
  + Failure to provide an outside space
  + Failure to provide adequate shelter
  + Failure to facilitate social interaction
  + Failure to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
  + Failure to buy new clothes and toys
  + Failure to ensure adequate supervision
  + Failure to access appropriate medical care or treatment
  + Being unresponsive to a child’s basic emotional needs
  + Failure to provide an education

How would you record concerns around neglect?

What do you understand as disguised compliance?

Which external agencies do you know of to report concerns about Neglect?

What systems could the setting/managers put in place to support your own understanding of neglect and/or raise the profile of neglect?

How can we educate children in their understanding of neglect?

**Annex B:** For managers/DSL to use for discussion around the neglect indicators

The table below is to help managers/DSL’s in their discussion with staff around indicators that might not necessarily lead to neglect

Neglect is… (please tick all those you think apply):

* + Failure to provide adequate food
  + Failure to provide enriching experiences
  + Failure to provide an outside space
  + Failure to provide adequate shelter
  + Failure to facilitate social interaction
  + Failure to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
  + Failure to buy new clothes and toys
  + Failure to ensure adequate supervision
  + Failure to access appropriate medical care or treatment
  + Being unresponsive to a child’s basic emotional needs
  + Failure to provide an education

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| **Ambiguous answer** | **What could be a sign of neglect** |
| Failure to buy new clothes and toys  *Key word here is ‘new’* | * The parent/caregiver does not promote the child’s access to books and toys. * The child or young person regularly has unclean, ill-fitting clothing that is not suited to the weather conditions |
| Failure to provide enriching experiences | * The parent/caregiver restricts opportunities for play and to develop social skills when their own (parent) needs come first |
| Failure to provide an outside space  (This may not be possible in the home; think about what other opportunities there may be for outside play e.g. a local park) | * Developmental delay; not meeting milestones e.g. crawling, sitting * Poor physical co-ordination/dexterity * Pale skin, poor hair/skin conditions * The parent/caregiver restricts opportunities for play and to develop social skills outside when their own (parent) needs come first |
| Failure to facilitate social interaction | * The child or young person lacks stable and secure friendships * Attendance at nursery/early years setting is irregular * The parent/caregiver restricts opportunities for play and to develop social skills when their own (parent) needs come first |