

**Redbridge Local Safeguarding
Children Board (LSCB)**

Are you worried about a child?

**How to access early help, and
thresholds for referral to children's
social care**

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Introduction

This document sets out the “thresholds for referral” which Redbridge Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) has agreed for use by all agencies and professionals who are worried or concerned about a child’s safety or welfare.

It describes the ‘levels of need’ which will be applied to determine whether the child and family can be appropriately and safely helped by early intervention and family support services, or whether the level of need and risk is such that statutory social care involvement is required. It describes how to access services for children with different levels of need, and what kind of response can be expected.

It must be emphasised that these threshold criteria can only be indicative. They give examples of what is meant by different levels of need, but are in no way intended to be exhaustive. They cannot describe every issue or combination of issues which may arise. They do not replace professional judgement, either on the part of referrers or of those considering the appropriate response to a referral. They are intended to provide helpful guidance for those wishing to share a concern about a child or young person and to progress the provision of services to the child or young person and family, and to give some clarity about what response can be expected.

Redbridge LSCB has adopted, in common with all London boroughs, the Pan London Child Protection Procedures agreed by the London Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) - [London Child Protection \(CP\) Procedures and Guidance, 5th Edition, 2016](#).

You can also access through this link specific guidance, revised in March 2016, on:

- [Safeguarding children at risk of sexual exploitation](#);
- [Safeguarding children exposed to extremist ideology](#);
- [Safeguarding children at risk of abuse through female genital mutilation \(FGM\)](#).

This updated guidance includes further very helpful information on indicators of different levels of need and risk in these specific areas.

In this threshold document four different levels of need are identified.

Levels of Need

Level 1: Children with no additional needs

Children with no additional needs are children whose health and developmental needs will be met by good parental care and the universal services that are available to all children – health services, education etc. Information about other resources available to families can be through the Redbridge Family Services Directory FIND

<http://find.redbridge.gov.uk/kb5/redbridge/fsd/home.page>.

Level 2: Children with additional needs

Children with additional needs are children who require additional support to ensure that their health and developmental needs are met. They may be vulnerable and showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect, but often their needs are not clear, not known or not being met. Additional support may be provided by a single agency, or by a number of different agencies working together, with a lead professional co-ordinating the work. Additional services from providers such as family support services, parenting programmes and children's centres may be required. This kind of support is described as 'early help' or 'early intervention', as it seeks to provide help and support to children, young people and their families in the early stages when concerns are identified, and to avoid those concerns escalating. However, the level of need or risk is not such that involvement by statutory children's social care services is required.

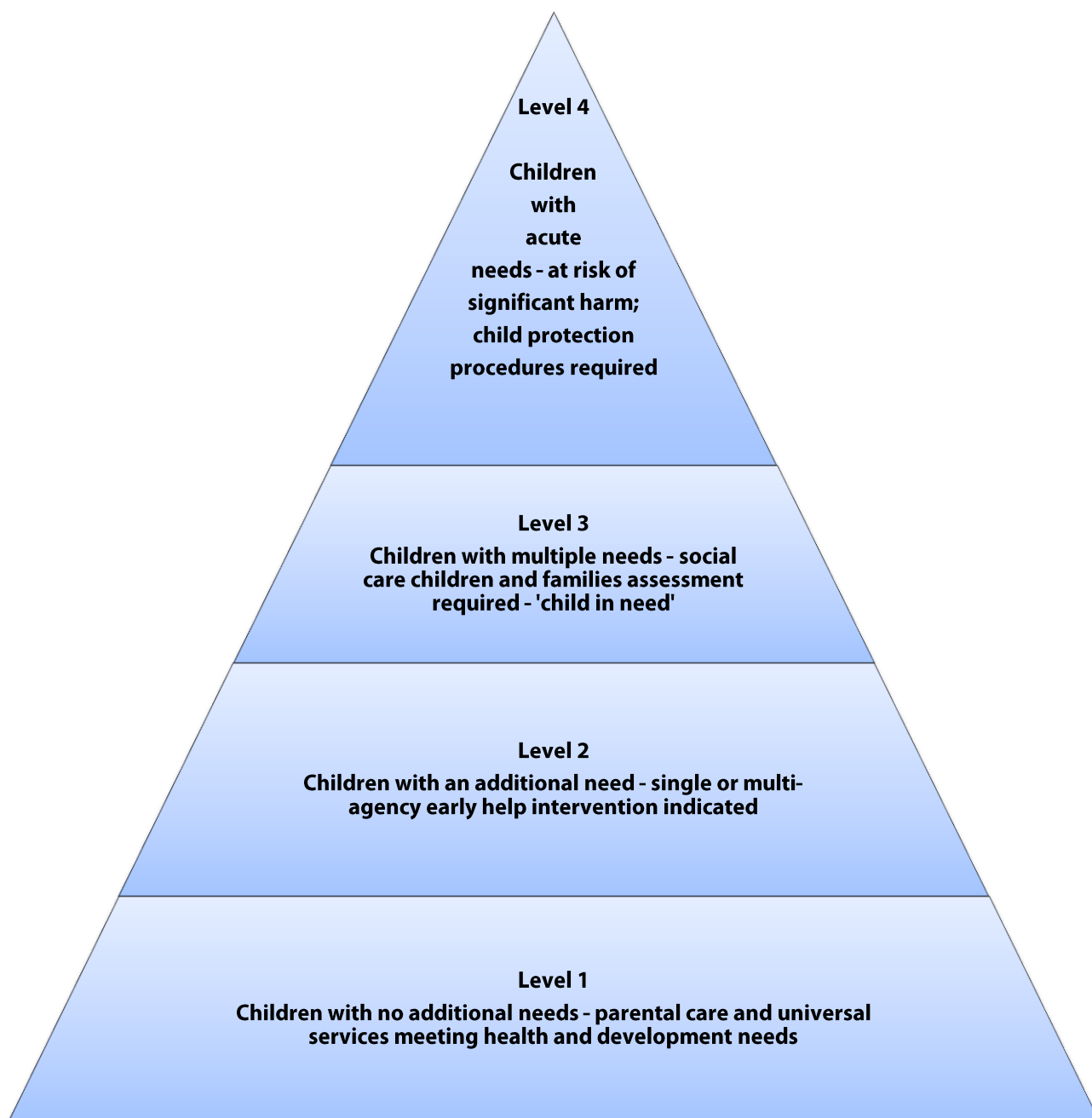
Level 3: Children with complex multiple needs

These children require specialist services in order to achieve or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development or to prevent significant impairment of their health and development and/or who are disabled. They may require longer term intervention from specialist services. This is the threshold for a children and families' assessment led by a qualified social worker under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989, although the assessments and services required may come from a range of provision outside of children's social care. If the conclusion of the assessment is that continued social care involvement is required to prevent impairment of the child's health or development suffering, a 'child in need plan' setting out the contribution of all agencies to meeting the child's needs will be drawn up and implemented.

Level 4: Children with acute needs

These are children where there is reasonable cause to suspect that they are suffering or are likely to suffer significant harm. For further discussion of the concept of 'significant harm', you should refer to [London CP Procedures, 1.1](#). Inquiries under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 will be undertaken, and if necessary emergency action to secure the child's safety will be taken. If the suspicion of significant harm is substantiated, a multi-agency child protection case conference will consider what further action is required to protect the child. This level also includes children in Level 4 health services which are very specialised services in residential, day patient or outpatient settings for children and adolescents with severe and /or complex health problems, and children remanded into custody.

Levels of Need Diagram



How to access services at Levels of Need 2, 3 and 4

Level 2 – children with additional needs

If it appears that the need for support can be met by your agency, discuss with child and family and put agreed support in place.

If it appears that the need for support can be met by another single agency, discuss with child/young person and/or parents or carers. Having obtained consent to do so, then discuss with and refer to that agency.

If a multi-agency package of support is required, please discuss your concerns with the child/young person and/or parents or carers and seek their consent to share information with other agencies. If consent is obtained, an assessment should be completed using the [Common Assessment Framework \(CAF\)](#). The CAF is an assessment that is completed with a child, young person and their family to decide what help is needed. Once the CAF is completed, it should be sent to the Redbridge CAF Coordinator via cafadmin@redbridge.gov.uk. They will then arrange a Team around the Child (TAC) Meeting where a professional will be identified to lead on organising support. CAFs can be completed on the Early Help Module (EHM) by those with access, or by downloading the [CAF Form](#). For guidance and support in considering or completing a CAF, contact the CAF Team on 020 8708 3885.

If at any point in the CAF process it appears that a child or young person meets the Level 3 or Level 4 threshold, the CAF will be referred to Children's Social Care.

Another route for children and young people with additional needs is via a direct referral to the Early Intervention Panel which can be made by parents or carers, or other agencies so that the case can be discussed by a multi-agency panel and a support package arranged as appropriate. The Early Intervention Panel Referral Form can be accessed on request from the Early.Intervention@redbridge.gov.uk,

The CAF Team is part of the Early Intervention and Family Support Service (EI&FSS). This Service provides one-to-one family support from a team of Family Support Workers (FSWs), as well as parenting programmes tailored to meet the needs of specific target groups. It also carries out a 'return home' interview for children and young people who have gone missing from home or care, to help them understand their behaviour and the risks they may have incurred and to develop alternative strategies to deal with the issues they may be dealing with.

The Hear and Now Counselling Service, provided by Redbridge CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services), offers confidential counselling services for all young people aged 11-17 who live, work or study in the Redbridge area. This service can be accessed by young people, professionals or parents directly. The service can be contacted at 1st Floor, Broadway Chambers, 1 Cranbrook Road, Ilford, IG1 4DU, email nem-tr.hearandnow@nhs.net, telephone 0300 555 1154 or view the website at <http://www.nelft.nhs.uk/services-redbridge-hear-now>.

Further information on Early Help in Redbridge is available on TriX: <http://redbridgechildcare.proceduresonline.com/hub/early.html>

Level 3 – children with multiple needs

You should discuss your concerns with the child or young person's parents or carers and seek their consent to share information, **unless** you have reasonable cause to believe that do would place the child at risk of significant harm. Guidance in relation to information sharing is available in the Government publication [Information sharing – advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers, March 2015](#).

If you believe that a child has needs at Level 3 which must be met if the child is to achieve or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development or to prevent significant impairment of their health and development you should refer to children's social care via a [Multi-Agency Referral Form \(MARF\)](#) to Redbridge CPAT (Child Protection and Assessment Team) on **0208 708 3885** – email CPAT.referrals@redbridge.gov.uk. If following consideration of all the information available, including multi-agency information obtained via the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), the referral is judged to meet the Level 3 threshold a social worker will undertake a children and families' assessment under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989. You will receive feedback on the outcome of your referral.

You may also consider a referral to MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) which is a forum in which information about high risk domestic abuse victims is shared between agencies and a risk focused, co-ordinated safety plan is drawn up to support the victim. To refer, you should send a completed [SafeLives DASH Risk Assessment Form](#) and [MARAC Referral Form](#) to the MARAC Coordinator, via marac@redbridge.gcsx.gov.uk , 0208 708 5082.

Following referral, if a case needs to be taken to MAPPA (Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements), this will be co-ordinated by CPAT and discussed with the MAPPA Chair.

Referrals relating to the risk of radicalisation should be made into CPAT via a [MARF](#). A discussion will then take place with the Prevent Co-ordinator to ascertain whether a referral needs to be made to Prevent or Channel.

You may also consider a referral to CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. Please note that:

- Referrals to Tier 3 services are accepted from professionals in health, education and children's services only.
- In the case of referrals from an educational service, consultation should have taken place before the referral is made with the appropriate person from that service e.g. educational psychologists, education welfare officers, school nurses or behaviour support teams.
- The address of the service is Redbridge CAMHS, Loxford Hall, Loxford Lane, Ilford, IG1 2PL, telephone 0300 555 1182.

Level 4 – children with acute needs, at risk of significant harm

If the child is at immediate risk, contact the police by calling 999.

You should discuss your concerns with the child or young person's parents or carers and seek their consent to share information, **unless** you have reasonable cause to believe that to do so would place the child at risk of significant harm. If a child is at risk of significant harm information can be shared even if the parent refuses consent. Again, note the Government's March 2015 guidance, [Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers](#)

You should make a referral without delay to children's social care via a [Multi-Agency Referral Form \(MARF\)](#) to Redbridge CPAT (Child Protection and Assessment Team) on **0208 708 3885** – email CPAT.referrals@redbridge.gov.uk. Additional contact information can be found on page 14 and additional guidance on making a referral can be found in the [London Child Protection Procedures, 2. Referral and Assessment](#).

If following consideration of all the information available, including multi-agency information obtained via the [Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub \(MASH\)](#), the referral is judged to meet the Level 4 threshold, a multi-agency strategy meeting will be held to plan an inquiry under [Section 47 of the Children Act 1989](#). Emergency action will be taken if necessary to protect the child. You will receive feedback on the outcome of your referral.

Examples of Levels of Need 2, 3 and 4

Remember – this is not intended to be an exhaustive list. It can only give examples. It should also be borne in mind that if there is a combination of needs at Level Two, that may indicate that overall the need is at Level Three.

LEVEL TWO

Children with additional needs are children who require additional support to ensure that their health and developmental needs are met. This can include children and young people:

- Who have 'young carer' responsibilities
- Who exhibit low level behavioural problems
- Living in poor living conditions or with identified housing need
- Living in households under chronic financial pressures or without recourse to public funds
- With intermittent or persistent school absences or lateness
- With learning support needs
- Having mild or moderate disability
- With disabilities whose needs can be met with basic additional support (e.g. aids/adaptations)
- With disabilities whose needs can be met with sign posting to universal services (e.g. [Families Information Direct \(FiND\)](#) or [Redbridge Information and Advice Support Services \(RIASS\)](#), local offer services and short break information)
- At risk of or involved in low level crime/anti-social behaviour
- Living in households where parenting is compromised by parental illness or disability, mental health, substance abuse or domestic violence, but there are not indications that this is significantly impairing the child's health or development
- Who are experiencing intimidation or bullying behaviour or are at risk of isolation.
- Who exhibit self-harming behaviour
- Who send or receive inappropriate sexual material produced by themselves or other young people via digital or social media
- Who sometimes express extreme or intolerant views about those who do not share political or religious views, or support for extremist actions
- Who are involved in low-level substance misuse
- Who go missing occasionally from home or care

LEVEL THREE

Children and young people with multiple complex needs may include children and young people:

- Living in households with serious or persistent physical violence, including threats to harm mother or child(ren), stalking and/or harassment, excessive jealousy or possessiveness of abuser. For further indicators, see Level 3 of [Barnardo's Domestic Violence Risk Identification Matrix](#)
- In respect of whom there is an allegation of physical assault but with no visible or only minor injury (other than to a pre-or non-mobile child), or allegations of serious verbal threats
- Who experience a series of apparently accidental injuries or a minor non-accidental incident.
- In respect of whom there are repeatedly expressed minor concerns from one or more sources.
- With severe and profound disabilities in a range of developmental areas or in one significant area.
- Who have a disability and whose parents or carers are not meeting their developmental needs in areas such as feeding, use of equipment, communication, or engagement with professionals, or respecting their right to dignified and safe care
- Who are believed to be neglected or emotionally abused, and whose health and development are showing signs of impairment
- In respect of whom there are suspicions of sexual abuse (e.g. sexualised behaviour, medical concerns or referral by concerned relative, neighbour, carer).
- Who have no available parent or carer, and are in need of accommodation
- In respect of whom there are concerns that the child is being targeted and groomed for sexual exploitation, and 'warning signs' of exploitation have been identified, but there is no evidence at this stage of any offence
- Who demonstrate strong support for extremist ideologies, which may be encouraged by family or community networks
- Who are at risk of affiliation with gangs
- Who undertake intimate personal care for a parent or carer
- Who are privately fostered
- Who are at immediate risk of homelessness
- Who are heavily engaged in substance misuse
- Who repeatedly go missing from home or care

- Who are at risk from purported witchcraft or malign spirituality
- Who are pregnant under the age of 16 with additional vulnerabilities
- Where there is significant concern about parental ability to care for an unborn child

LEVEL FOUR

Children and young people who are suffering or are likely to experience significant harm will include children and young people:

- Where there is any allegation of abuse or any suspicious injury in a pre- or non-mobile child.
- Where there is any allegation of serious physical assault or suspicious injury
- Where there are two or more minor injuries to pre-mobile or non-verbal babies or children
- Who have a disability and whose health and development is likely to be significantly impaired by parental or carer failure to meet their needs
- Who live in a household experiencing Level 4 Domestic Violence on the [Barnardo's Domestic Violence Risk Identification Matrix](#) including threat to kill, attempted strangulation or rape.
- Whose health or development is likely to be seriously impaired by neglect or emotional abuse.
- Who makes an allegation of sexual abuse, or the abuser confesses to such abuse, or an allegation suggests connections between sexually abused children in different families or with more than one abuser.
- Who live in a household with an individual (adult or child) known to pose a risk to children.
- Who is the subject of a current Child Protection (CP) Plan or looked after by a local authority and the subject of suspicious injury or allegation of harm.
- Who has no available parent and the child is vulnerable to significant harm (e.g. an abandoned baby).
- Who is suspected to have suffered or to be at risk of significant harm due to fabricated or induced illness.
- Whose parent or carer has a severe mental illness or substance addiction the impact of which poses a serious risk that the child's health or development will be significantly impaired.
- Who has been sexually exploited, whether the abuse is opportunistic or habitual
- Who has been trafficked.
- Who lives in a household into which a registered sex offender or convicted violent offender subject to MAPPAs moves.
- Who is sexually active and aged 13 or below (statutory rape).

- Who discloses or is believed to be at risk of imminent female genital mutilation or at risk of honour based violence or forced marriage.
- Who is at risk of involvement in violent extremist activities, including travelling to or being taken abroad to participate in such activities, or expresses beliefs that are directly threatening to others e.g. child expresses strongly held beliefs that people should be killed because they have a different view.
- Who is affiliated with gangs.
- Who disclose harm from purported witchcraft or malign spirituality.

Useful Information and Contacts

London Child Protection Procedures, 5 th Edition, 2016			http://www.londoncp.co.uk/index.html
Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2015			https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2
Redbridge Children and Families Policies and Procedures			http://redbridgechildcare.proceduresonline.com/chapters/contents.html
Redbridge Local Children's Safeguarding Board (LSCB)			http://www.redbridgelscb.org.uk/
Redbridge Early Intervention and Common Assessment Framework (CAF) Guidance			http://redbridgechildcare.proceduresonline.com/hub/early.html
CAF Co-ordinator			Telephone 0208 708 9535
			E-mail cafadmin@redbridge.gov.uk
Redbridge Child Protection and Assessment Service (CPAT)			Telephone 0208 708 3885 (09:00 – 17:00) 0208 708 5897 (Evenings and weekend)
(*Contact details for the public and professionals to refer if there are concerns about a child or young person)			Email CPAT.referrals@redbridge.gov.uk
Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) Coordinator			Telephone 0208 708 5082
(*for professionals only)			Email marac@redbridge.gcsx.gov.uk
Early Intervention and Family Support Service (EI&FSS)			Telephone 0208 708 2611
Early Intervention (EI) Panel			Email Early.Intervention@redbridge.gov.uk
Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)			Address Redbridge CAMHS Loxford Hall Loxford Lane Ilford Essex
(*Referrals accepted from professionals in health, education			

and children's services only)		IG1 2PL
	Telephone	0300 555 1182
<p>Hear & Now Counselling Services</p> <p>(*Accessible by young people aged 11 – 17 who live, work or study in Redbridge. Parents and professionals may also refer)</p>	Address	Hear and Now 1 st Floor Broadway Chambers 1 Cranbrook Road Ilford Essex IG1 4DU
	Telephone	0300 555 1154
	Email	Nem-tr.hearandnow@nhs.net
	Website	http://www.nelft.nhs.uk/services-redbridge-hear-now
<p>Refuge – Redbridge Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Service</p> <p>Support to women, children and young people experiencing domestic violence via the provision of services, protection, and prevention work.</p>	Telephone	0800 169 7759
	Email	redbridgevawg@refuge.org.uk
	National Website	http://www.refuge.org.uk/