

Threshold guidance

4: Vulnerable Child with Acute or Highly Complex Needs

Developmental needs of infant/child/young person

Health

- Has severe / chronic health problems
- Persistent substance misuse, smoking
- Developmental milestones unlikely to be met
- Early teenage pregnancy
- Serious mental health issues
- Dental decay and no access to treatment
- Sexual exploitation / abuse

Education and Learning

- Is out of school
- Permanently excluded from school or at risk of permanent exclusion
- Has no access to leisure activities

Emotional and Behavioural Development

- Regularly involved in anti-social / criminal activities
- Puts self or others in danger – missing
- Suffers from periods of depression
- Self-harming or suicide attempts

Identity

- Experiences persistent discrimination, eg on the basis of ethnicity, sexual orientation or disability
- Is socially isolated and lacks appropriate role models
- Alienates self from others

Family and Social Relationships

- Periods of being accommodated by Local Authority
- Family breakdown related in some way to child's behavioural difficulties
- Subject to physical, emotional or sexual abuse / neglect
- Is main carer for family member

Social Presentation

- Poor and inappropriate self-presentation

Self-care Skills

- Neglects to use self-care skills due to alternative priorities, eg substance misuse

Parent and Carer Factors

Basic Care

- Parents unable to provide “good enough” parenting that is adequate and safe
- Parents' mental health problems or substance misuse significantly affect care of child
- Parents unable to care for previous children

Ensuring Safety

- There is an instability and violence in the home continually
- Parents are involved in crime
- Parents unable to keep child safe
- Victim of crime

Emotional Warmth

- Parents inconsistent, highly critical or apathetic towards child

Stimulation

- No constructive leisure time or guided play

Guidance and Boundaries

- No effective boundaries set by parents
- Regularly behaves in an anti-social way in the neighbourhood

Stability

- Beyond parental control
- Has no-one to care for him/her

Family and Environment Factors

Family History and Functioning

- Significant parental discord and persistent domestic violence
- Poor relationships between siblings

Wider Family

- No effective support from extended family
- Destructive/ unhelpful involvement from extended family

Housing

- Physical accommodation places child in danger

Employment

- Chronic unemployment that has severely affected parents' own identities
- Family unable to gain employment due to significant lack of basic skills or long-term difficulties e.g. substance misuse

Income

- Extreme poverty / debt impacting on ability to care for child

Family's Social Integration

- Family chronically socially excluded
- No supportive network

Community Resources

- Poor quality services with long-term difficulties with accessing target populations

3: Vulnerable Child with Multiple and Complex Needs

Developmental needs of infant/child/young person

Health

- Concerns re: diet, hygiene, clothing
- Has some chronic health problems
- Missed routine and non-routine health appointments
- Overweight/ underweight/ enuresis
- Smokes, substance misuse
- Developmental milestones are unlikely to be met
- Some concerns around mental health

Education and Learning

- Identified learning needs and may have Statement of Special Ed. Needs Not achieving key stage benchmarks
- Poor school attendance/ punctuality
- Some fixed term exclusions
- No interests/ skills displayed

Emotional and Behavioural Development

- Difficulty coping with anger, frustration and upset
- Disruptive/ challenging behaviour
- Cannot manage change
- Unable to demonstrate empathy

Identity

- Subject to discrimination – racial, sexual or due to disabilities Demonstrates significantly low self-esteem in a range of situations

Family and Social Relationships

- Has lack of positive role models
- Misses school or leisure activities
- Peers also involved in challenging behaviour
- Involved in conflicts with peers / siblings
- Regularly needed to care for another family member

Social Presentation

- Is provocative in behaviour / appearance
- Clothing is regularly unwashed
- Hygiene problems

Self-care Skills

- Poor self-care for age – hygiene
- Precociously able to care for self

Parent and Carer Factors

Basic Care

- Difficult to engage parents with services
- Parent is struggling to provide adequate care
- Previously a LAC child
- Professionals have serious concerns

Ensuring Safety

- Perceived to be a problem by parent
- May be subject to neglect
- Experiencing unsafe situations

Emotional Warmth

- Receives erratic/inconsistent care
- Care is often poor quality
- Parental instability affects capacity to nurture
- Has no other positive relationships

Stimulation

- Not receiving positive stimulation – lack of new experiences or activities

Guidance and Boundaries

- Erratic/ inadequate guidance provided
- Parent not a good role model by behaving in an antisocial way

Stability

- Has multiple carers
- Has been a LAC child

Family and Environment Factors

Family History and Functioning

- Incidents of domestic violence between parents
- Acrimonious divorce/ separation
- Family have serious physical and mental health difficulties

Wider Family

- Family has poor relationship with extended family/ little communication
- Family is socially isolated

Housing

- Poor state of repair, temporary or overcrowded

Employment

- Parents stressed due to “overworking” or unemployment
- Parents find it difficult to obtain employment due to poor basic skills

Income

- Serious debts/ poverty impact on ability to have basic needs met

Family's Social Integration

- Parents socially excluded
- Lack of a support network

Community Resources

- Poor quality universal resources and access problems to these and targeted services

2: Vulnerable Child with Some Additional Needs

Development needs of child/ young person

Health

- Defaulting on immunisations/checks
- Is susceptible to minor health problems
- Slow in reaching developmental milestones
- Minor concerns re diet/ hygiene/clothing
- Starting to default on health appointments

Education and Learning

- Have some identified learning needs that place him/her on “School Action” or “School Action Plus” of the Code of Practice
- Poor punctuality
- Pattern of regular school absences
- Not always engaged in learning, e.g. poor concentration, low motivation and interest
- Not thought to be reaching educational potential
- Reduced access to books/ toys

Emotional and Behavioural Development

- Some difficulties with peer group relationships and with some adults Some evidence of inappropriate responses and actions
- Can find managing change difficult
- Starting to show difficulties expressing empathy

Identity

- Some insecurities around identity expressed, e.g. low self-esteem for learning
- May experience bullying around ‘difference’

Family and Social Relationships

- Some support from family and friends
- Has some difficulties sustaining relationships

Social Presentation

- Can be over-friendly or withdrawn with strangers
- Can be provocative in appearance and behaviour
- Personal hygiene starting to be a problem

Self-care Skills

- Not always adequate self-care – poor hygiene
- Slow to develop age appropriate self-care skills

Parent and Carer Factors

Basic Care

- Parental engagement with services is poor
- Parent requires advice on parenting issues
- Professionals are beginning to have some concerns around child’s physical needs being met

Ensuring Safety

- Some exposure to dangerous situations in home/community Parental stresses starting to affect ability to ensure child’s safety

Emotional Warmth

- Inconsistent responses to child by parents
- Able to develop other positive relationships

Stimulation

- Spends much time alone
- Child not exposed to new experiences

Guidance and Boundaries

- Can behave in an anti-social way
- Inconsistent boundaries offered

Stability

- Key relationships with family members not always kept up
- May have different carers
- Difficulties with attachments

Family and Environment Factors

Family History and Functioning

- Parents have some conflicts/ difficulty that can involve the children Experienced loss of significant adult
- May look after younger siblings
- Parent has health difficulties

Wider Family

- Some support from family/ friends

Housing

- Adequate/ poor housing
- Family seeking asylum or refugees

Employment

- Wage earner has periods of no work
- Parents have limited formal education
- Parents stressed by unemployment

Income

- Low income

Family’s Social Integration

- Family may be new to the area
- Some social exclusion problems

Community Resources

- Adequate universal resources but family may have access issues

1: Child Achieving Expected Outcomes - has no current additional needs

Development needs of child/ young person

Health

- Physically well
- Adequate diet/ hygiene/ clothing
- Developmental checks/ immunisations up to date
- Dental and optical care as needed
- Health appointments are kept
- Developmental milestones appropriate
- Speech and language development met
- Appropriate height and weight
- Healthy lifestyle
- Sexual activity appropriate for age
- Good state of mental health

Education and Learning

- Skills/Interests
- Success/achievement
- Cognitive development
- Access to books/toys, play

Emotional and Behavioural Development

- Feelings and actions demonstrate appropriate responses
- Good quality early attachment
- Able to adapt to change
- Able to demonstrate empathy

Identity

- Positive sense of self and abilities
- Demonstrates feelings of belonging and acceptance
- A sense of self
- An ability to express needs

Family and Social Relationships

- Stable and affectionate relationships with care givers
- Good relationships with siblings
- Positive relationships with peers

Social Presentation

- Appropriate dress for different settings
- Good level of personal hygiene

Self-care Skills

- Growing level of competencies in practical and emotional skills, such as feeding, dressing and independent living skills

Parent and Carer Factors

Basic Care

- Provide for child’s physical needs: food, drink, appropriate clothing, medical and dental care

Ensuring Safety

- Protect from danger or significant harm, in the home and elsewhere

Emotional Warmth

- Show warm regard, praise and encouragement

Stimulation

- Facilitates cognitive development through interaction and play
- Enable child to experience success

Guidance and Boundaries

- Provide guidance so that child can develop an appropriate internal model of values and conscience

Stability

- Ensure that secure attachments are not disrupted
- Provide consistency of emotional warmth over time

Family and Environment Factors

Family History and Functioning

- Good relationships within family, including when parents are separated
- Few significant changes in family composition

Wider Family

- Sense of larger family network and good friendships outside of the family unit

Housing

- Accommodation has basic amenities and appropriate facilities

Employment

- Parents able to manage the working or unemployment
- Arrangements and do not perceive them as unduly stressful

Income

- Reasonable income over time, with resources used appropriately to meet individual needs

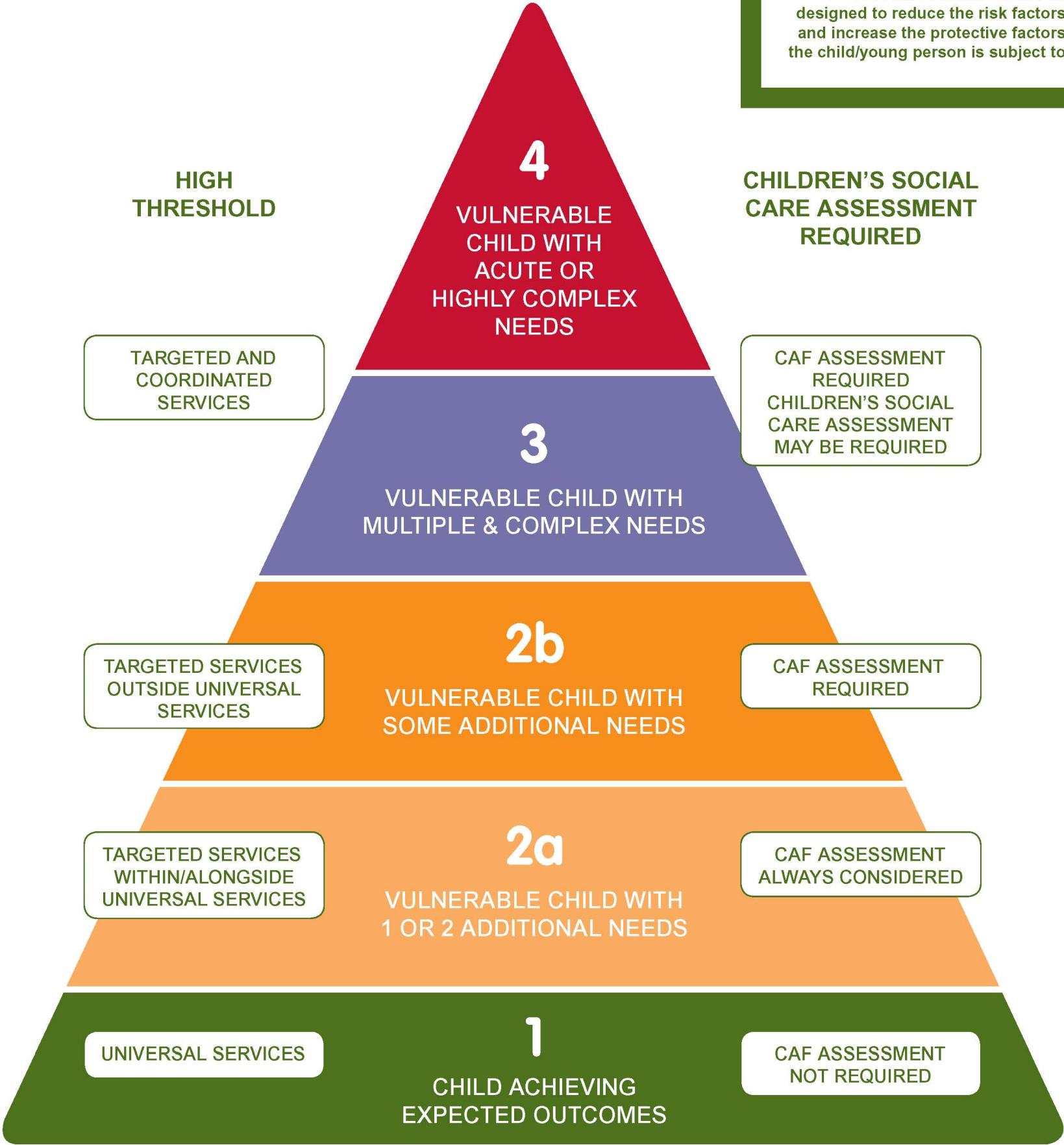
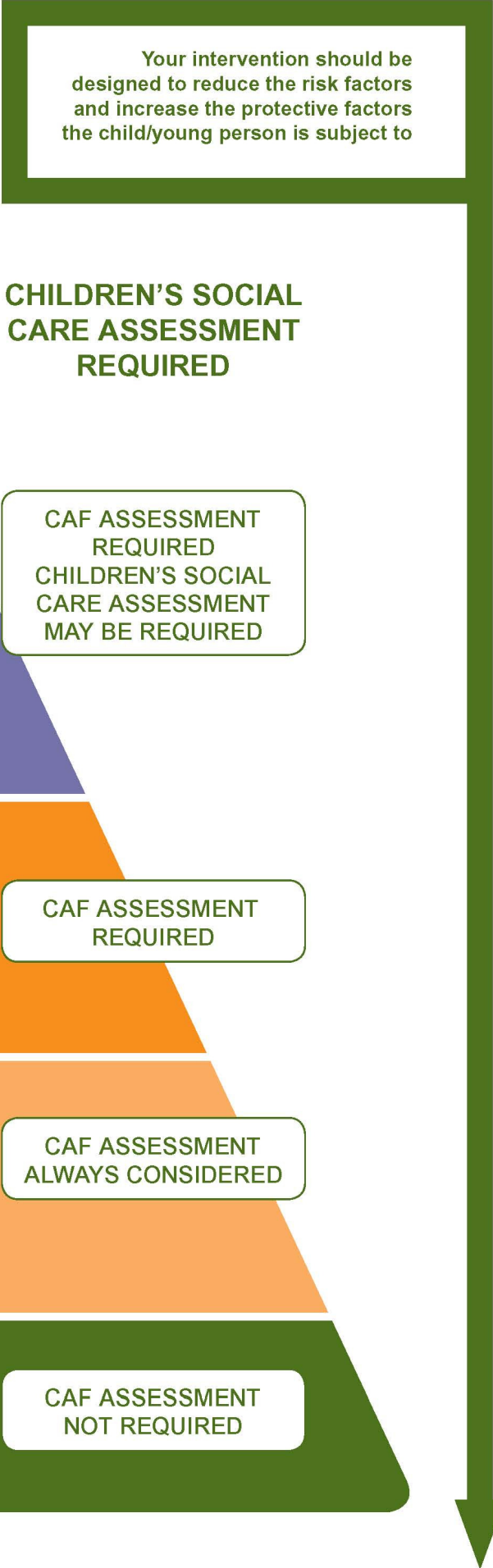
Family’s Social Integration

- Family feels integrated into the community
- Good social and friendship networks exist

Community Resources

- Good universal services in neighbourhood

Continuum of need and intervention



Refer directly to Children's Social Care (Level 4) straightaway with any concerns that a child/young person has suffered or may be at immediate or acute risk of suffering significant harm