

REPORT TO: Children and Young People Policy and Performance Board
DATE: 20 October 2014
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise
PORTFOLIO: Children, Young People and Families
SUBJECT: Halton's Neglect Strategy for Children and Young People
WARD: Borough-wide

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present to members of Halton's Neglect Strategy which outlines the pattern and nature of neglect, analyses the prevalence of neglect in Halton by ward and makes recommendations supported by an action plan for the years 2014-2016.

The strategy has been endorsed by Halton Children's Safeguarding Board and by Halton Children's Trust. Halton Children's Safeguarding Board will be responsible for the accountability and monitoring of the strategy as part of its statutory duties.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members endorse the Halton's Neglect Strategy 2014-2016

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 As defined in national guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children, Department of Education (2013), neglect can be defined 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 and 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 care-givers)***
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment***

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs'.

A helpful reminder of neglect involves the failure to meet a child or young person's 'basic needs' and includes acts of "omission" (failure to recognise/act) and "commission" (deliberate/intentional):

- medical neglect
- nutritional neglect
- emotional neglect
- educational neglect
- physical neglect
- lack of supervision and guidance (Howarth, J 2007)¹.

Having an understanding of emotional abuse is important due to the overlap between emotional abuse and the many forms of child maltreatment. Being able to recognise and understand the impact of neglect is essential when working with children that are subject to neglectful situations.

- 3.2 The strategy outlines the different types of neglect and also analyses the prevalence of neglect in different wards in Halton. It highlights what is currently available as support across the Levels of Need framework and then outlines an action plan to address the areas for development that strategy has highlighted.
- 3.3 Ofsted has also made recommendations in their thematic inspection of neglect which have been addressed in the strategy.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

4.1 Children and Young People in Halton

Children who are affected by neglect can have their outcomes compromised in health and education and also be placed at risk of harm.

4.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Parents who have issues with drugs and alcohol, mental health issues or learning disabilities may not access employment, learning or education which may impact on their ability to meet their children's needs.

4.3 A Healthy Halton

Children affected by neglect may have their health needs adversely compromised as well; in addition, if their parent's health needs are not met that may impact on their ability to provide safe and consistent care.

4.4 A Safer Halton

See above

4.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

No direct implications

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

5.1 It is important to understand the nature and prevalence of neglect in Halton ensure the workforce is appropriately trained and services are designed and commissioned to meet the needs. Failure to do so mean that the impact of neglect goes unrecognised and leave children and young people exposed to harm.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

6.1 Neglect can occur in all communities; the strategy makes particular reference to the cultural and ethnic minority background issues that should be addressed as well the vulnerability of disabled children.

7. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Documents	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
As detailed below	Rutland House	Tracey Coffey

[Ofsted | Protecting disabled children: thematic inspection](#)

[Halton Neglect Strategy 2014-2016](#)