



Warrington Safeguarding Children Board Threshold Document



“Every child and young person in Warrington should be able to grow up safe from maltreatment, neglect, bullying, discrimination and crime -receiving help when they need it in a timely and effective manner”

Our Vision: “To ensure that every child and young person in Warrington is safe and has the opportunity to reach their potential.”

Multi-agency Thresholds for Safeguarding Children incorporating services for early help and protection

Introduction

Warrington Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) recognises that most children and young people in Warrington do well, but that there are some who need support at different times in their life. As a partnership we are ambitious for delivering joined up help and support to respond to the different levels of need of individual children, young people and their families.

In order to support families in understanding which different services are available we are pleased to present the **Warrington Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) Threshold Document 2014 - 2016**. The document provides clear criteria for taking action and providing the right help at the right time to children and young people and their families in order to effectively meet their needs. The document highlights that it is everyone's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of our children and young people and details an overview of Warrington's integrated working model including the thresholds for service involvement. The document will also support front-line practitioners and their managers across the partnership to work together in a coordinated manner across the continuum.

We want to ensure that thresholds are seen as a guide to inform professional decision-making and not as a barrier to accessing services. The WSCB will be sighted on practitioner delivery and management oversight to ensure that the thresholds are applied consistently and services are commissioned effectively in response to local needs assessments. We will give consideration to the impact of age, disability, ethnicity, faith or belief, gender identity, language, race and sexual orientation when undertaking assessments.

In evaluating the impact of our Threshold Document we want to put our children and young people at the centre of all we do and evidence the difference we have made by focusing on their experience and progress and listening to what they tell us.

The document incorporates the family support model that has been used for some time in Warrington and will be familiar to many practitioners. The Threshold document has also included thresholds for statutory intervention in compliance with Working Together to Safeguard Children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children 2015.

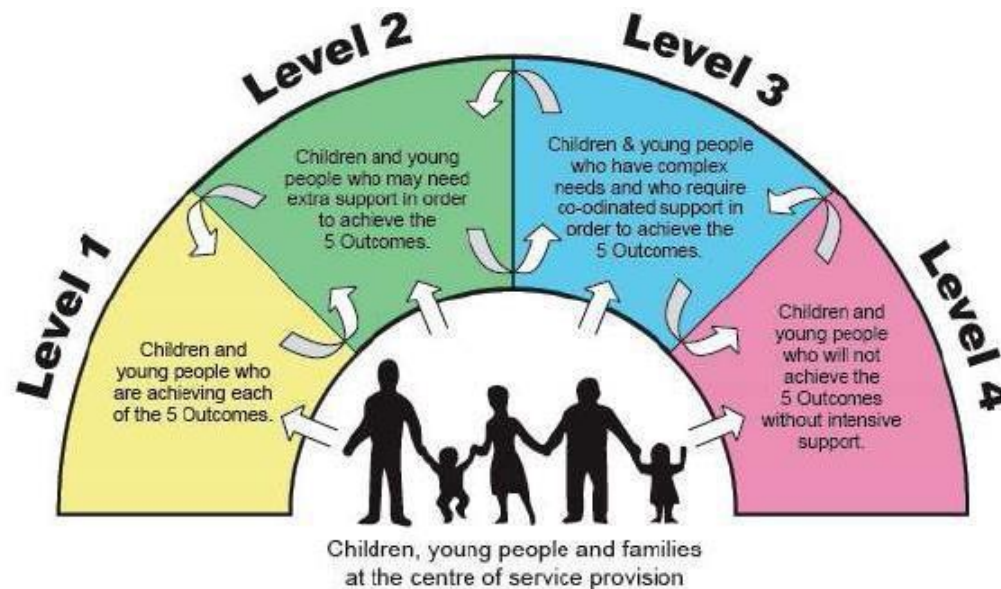
This document must be read in conjunction with “The Warrington Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) Escalation, which provides partner agencies with a quick and straightforward means of resolving professional differences of view in specific cases.

Thresholds

In Warrington, the Threshold Document delivers the model for integrated working and sets out the levels of need across a continuum. It aims to:

- provide a framework for multi-disciplinary working, setting clear procedures and a common language for interventions,
- include a focus on the early identification of children and young people with additional needs delivering early help assessments and early help services
- detail the criteria, including the level of need, for when a case should be referred to Warrington Borough Council Social Care for assessment and statutory services,
- promote a shared responsibility across all services in meeting the needs of children and young people and
- recognise that children young people and their families have differing levels of need and that service delivery should be responsive and proportionate to those needs.

The levels of need are:



	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Need	Children and young people who are achieving each of the 5 Every Child Matters Outcome	Children and young people who may need extra support in order to achieve the 5 Every Child Matters Outcomes	Children and young people who have complex needs and who require co-ordinated support in order to achieve the 5 Every Child Matters Outcomes.	Children and young people who are not achieving or who will not achieve the 5 Every Child Matters Outcomes without intensive support and may be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.
Provision	Universal Services	Extra provision within individual agencies and Multi agency provision co-ordinated through CAF assessment	Multi agency provision co-ordinated through CAF assessment	Multi agency provision co-ordinated through Children and Young People's Targeted Services (social work)

Further guidance and resources can be accessed [online](#) in the Practitioner's Toolkit where required early help documents and referral documents to statutory social work services can be downloaded: If you cannot access the internet to download documents, you can request a hard copy by contacting the Families Information Service on 01925 443400.

Universal Services (Level 1)

Children and young people who are well cared for and do not have additional needs. Accessing universal services including health, Sure Start, leisure, education and a range of services delivered by voluntary, faith and private providers

Early Help (Levels 2 & 3)

- Children and young people with additional needs (CAF assessments family support plans, early help and troubled families services)
- Young people with additional needs (drug and alcohol or CAF assessments, support plans and a range of youth services including 1:1 interventions)
- Children and young people with Disabilities (CAF assessments family support plans and early help services)
- Children and young people with Disabilities or additional needs(education and health care plans)
- Young carers (CAF assessments family support plans and early help services.)
- Children vulnerable to Child Sexual Exploitation
- Children missing from home or care
- Children returned home to their family from care
- Children who may undergo Female Genital Mutilation
- Children at risk of being radicalised

Protection (Level 4)

- Children and young people with additional needs (Assessments, plans and services under Children in Need section 17 Children Act (CA)1989)
- Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that children and young people are suffering or a likely to suffer significant harm (Assessments, plans and services under S47 CA 1989)
- Children and young people in care (Assessments, plans and services under statutory intervention S31 care orders)
- Children and young people in care (Assessments, plans and services under S20 - duty to accommodate- CA 1989)
- Children at risk of and victims of Child Sexual Exploitation
- Children missing from home or care
- Children returned home to their family from care
- Children who have undergone Female Genital mutilation
- Children who have been radicalised
- Care Leavers

Level 1: Universal: Children and young people at Level 1 are achieving their outcomes and making good progress. They are healthy, meeting developmental and academic milestones, and are well cared for by parents or carers.

These children and young people are accessing universal services and require no additional support to continue to achieve their full potential.

Level 1 - Local procedures

At this level, services are 'universal' meaning that they are available to all children and young people. Families and young people can use these services without the need for a referral or assessment. Examples of universal services in Warrington include schools, GP surgeries, children's centres, libraries and leisure centres, health services and a range of services provided by private, voluntary and independent services.

For more information about what is available from universal services, visit:
<http://www.warringtonchildren.org/> or telephone 01925 443400.

Level 2: Early Help: Children and young people at Level 2 may need extra support to help them achieve their outcomes and to make good progress. They might make frequent visits to the GP or A&E; they may be slow to reach expected developmental or academic milestones, or their parents/carers may be struggling financially or have their own physical or mental health concerns which could affect their ability to care effectively. They may also be vulnerable to sexual exploitation.

These children and young people may be more vulnerable than their peers and may require additional support to help them to achieve their full potential.

Often, at Level 2, support can be offered by a single specialist service. However, when there are a range of concerns at Level 2, a CAF assessment or family CAF will be completed and services will work together to assess needs and co-ordinate support and early help services. At this level, if needs are ignored and if support is not offered, issues may develop into more worrying concerns and the opportunity to provide help early on will be lost.

Level 2 - Local procedures

At this level, a range of services are available to support children, young people and families with any additional needs. These services often work alongside universal services and access is often by referral or special request. Many services across Warrington will accept referrals on the FSM01 Referral Form.

Practitioners will work with families to understand their needs and agree which services will most effectively deliver improvements for their children and young people evidenced by their experience and progress.

A CAF assessment will identify needs and further advice and guidance on which services could become involved.

1. Gain consent from the family
2. Request a background search from the CAF and Development Team by emailing CAF@warrington.gov.uk / CAF@warrington.gcsx.gov.uk
3. Complete a CAF (Common Assessment Framework) form
4. Send a copy of the signed, completed CAF form to the CAF and Development Team via email to the address above
5. Convene a Family Support Meeting to agree a support plan.

Service Allocation Meetings (SAM) which considers findings from the assessment can provide advice about the range of services available. To access advice via the SAM, please send an email to CAF@warrington.gov.uk / CAF@warrington.gcsx.gov.uk or telephone 01925 443136.

A full range of services in Warrington form part of a continuum of help and support responding to the individual needs of children and young people. Practitioners will provide advice and information about these services as part of their work with families.

Examples of Level 2 services in Warrington include:

- Attendance Team
- Inclusion Services - including Educational Psychology and Sensory Impairment Services and support services for children and young people with disabilities
- Sure Start services including Support Workers
- School-based family support (where available)
- Child Sexual Exploitation services (Catch 22)
- Health Visitors
- Youth Services - including drug / alcohol services and sexual health advice
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Early Years Support Panels
- Voluntary and faith sector services

For more information about what services are available to offer support, visit: <http://www.warringtonchildren.org/> or telephone 01925 443400.

Level 3: Early and Targeted Help: Children and young people at Level 3 have complex needs and require co-ordinated support to help them achieve their outcomes and to make good progress. They could suffer from poor mental health, they may have been excluded from school, or they may be engaging in anti-social behaviour or be a young carer or they may be vulnerable or at risk of sexual exploitation. At this level, it is also likely that there are wider issues affecting the family as a whole. The family may have debts, be at risk of eviction or repossession, and parents/carers and siblings may be affected by their own needs such as poor mental health, substance misuse and crime.

Children and young people living in these circumstances have complex needs and will require co-ordinated support to help them to achieve their full potential.

At Level 3, a CAF assessment is required and a lead professional will work with the family and other professionals to co-ordinate a family support plan. Although any worker can start the CAF assessment and act as a lead professional, at this level, specialist workers such as those from the Family Support Service, may be more likely to take on the role of lead professional, working with the whole family to assess their needs and offer a support plan.

At this level, if support is not helping to bring about positive changes or if issues get worse, the lead professional may seek support from social work teams to 'step up' the family into statutory social work services.

Level 3 - Local procedures

Where a child or young person is identified as having complex needs, any practitioner can work with the family to complete the CAF assessment process. They should:

1. Gain consent from the family
2. Request a background search from the CAF and Development Team by emailing CAF@warrington.gov.uk /
 - a. CAF@warrington.gcsx.gov.uk
3. Complete a CAF (Common Assessment Framework) form
4. Send a copy of the signed, completed CAF form to the CAF and Development Team via email to the address above
5. Convene a Family Support Meeting to agree a support plan
6. Send of copy of the signed, completed family support plan to the CAF and Development Team via email to the address above.

Service Allocation Meetings (SAM) which considers findings from the assessment can provide advice about the range of services available. To access advice via the SAM, please send an email to CAF@warrington.gov.uk / CAF@warrington.gcsx.gov.uk or telephone 01925 443136.

If a child or young person is living within a family where there are complex needs which require support for the whole family, a referral to the Family Support Service may also be appropriate. In particular, consider if there is:

- Domestic abuse
- Poor school attendance or anti-social behaviour
- Substance misuse
- Worklessness

Referrals to the Family Support Service will be considered on a weekly basis and as appropriate, will be allocated to a worker who will work with the whole family to assess their needs and act as lead professional in their support plan.

For more information about what services are available to offer support, visit: <http://www.warringtonchildren.org/> or telephone 01925 443400.

A full range of services in Warrington form part of a continuum of help and support responding to the individual needs of children and young people. Practitioners will provide advice and information about these services as part of their work with families.

Examples of Level 3 services in Warrington include:

- Complex family services – there is no single team that does this
- Family support services
- Drug and alcohol services
- Mental health services
- Child Sexual Exploitation services (Catch 22)
- School services
- Back to work services
- Debt counselling services
- Domestic abuse services
- Youth services
- Young carer services
- Specialist services

Transition between Level 3 and Level 4 “Step up and step down”

Children and young people supported at Level 3 may need statutory support at Level 4 from time to time. It is important that practitioners working at Level 3 are able to identify risk and take action to respond and reduce identified risks. If risks identified are about a child or young person's welfare they should step up a referral to Warrington Borough Council Social Care.

Anyone (partners, practitioners, the public or the child or young person themselves) who has a concern about a child or young person's welfare should make a referral to Warrington Borough Council Social Care. They should do this straight away even if there have not been any early help services offered previously.

When professionals refer a child or young person to Warrington Borough Council Social Care they must include information they have on the child or young person's developmental needs (physical, motor cognitive, language and social) and their attachments (assessed and commented on against expected norms). The referral should also include information on the capacity of the parent or carer to meet those needs. It is important that social workers understand what support has been in place so that they can respond appropriately to new risks and concerns. This information may be included in an early help assessment that has already been completed which can be used to support a referral. An early help assessment is, however, not a prerequisite for making a referral. Any lead professional should 'step up' a referral to social work teams when needs and risks increase.

Where a child or young person is not at risk of significant harm, the lead professional should invite a social worker to the next family support meeting - it may be necessary to convene a meeting sooner than planned. Lead professionals can invite social workers to attend family support meetings by sending an email to childreferral@warrington.gcsx.gov.uk along with a copy of the CAF assessment and most recent support plan.

If a lead professional is unsure about whether to 'step up' to social work teams or not, they can contact the Duty and Assessment Team for advice. Social workers will consider the risks and protective factors, giving advice as appropriate. Telephone 01925 443400 to speak to the Duty and Assessment Team. Conversely, if social workers have been supporting a family at Level 4, they may agree to 'step down' the family's support into lower level services once identified risks have been reduced. This should happen in a multi-agency meeting (for example at a child in need meeting) where the reasons for 'step down' should be explained along with the actions necessary should the family disengage from low level support. A new lead professional should be identified and support plan agreed. The lead professional will then be responsible for reviewing the support plan.

IMPORTANT: If at any time, you think a child or young person is at immediate risk of significant harm, or is injured, contact the Duty and Assessment Team on telephone 01925 443400 (out of hours on telephone 01925 444400). If there is immediate danger, ring the Emergency Services on 999.

Level 4: Protection: Children and young people at Level 4 have acute needs and require intensive, co-ordinated support to help them achieve their outcomes and to make good progress. They could suffer from a life-long or terminal illness, they may have withdrawn from education, or they may be working with criminal youth justice services. Children and young people at Level 4 may also be those with a named social worker, including children living in care or in need of protection or children being sexually exploited..

Children and young people living in these circumstances will require intensive and co-ordinated support to help them to achieve their full potential.

This is the most urgent level of need and practitioners must respond immediately to any concerns at this level with an immediate referral to intensive, specialist services, including children's social work teams.

At Level 4, statutory procedures will be followed. These could be those procedures used in social work, youth offending or through special educational needs (SEN) provision. Practitioners working at this level should ensure that they are working together to co-ordinate support and to share information.

At this level, if support has reduced risks, the lead worker may suggest that statutory, intensive support for the family is no longer required. If appropriate, the lead worker will seek support from other practitioners to 'step down' the family into lower level services where the family's needs can be supported and monitored by non-statutory services.

Where a child or young person is identified as having acute needs, practitioners must refer the child or young person to specialist services immediately - this includes where there are concerns about a child's safety.

To refer to children's social work services:

1. Inform the family (only if it will not put the child at risk in doing so)
2. Telephone the Duty and Assessment Team on 01925 443400 to outline your concerns and to make your referral
3. Follow up your referral in writing - complete the Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF) and email to childreferral@warrington.gcsx.gov.uk

Warrington Borough Council Social Care Targeted Services Social Work Teams have set out the threshold criteria for their services based on three areas of need within Level 4. These are:

- Level 4a - Children in Need of Targeted Support: Assessments, plans and services under Children in Need Section 17 Children Act 1989
- Level 4b - Children in Need of Safeguarding: Assessments, plans and services under Section 47 Children Act 1989
- Level 4c - Children in Need of Care: Assessments, plans and services under statutory intervention S31 care orders and assessments, plans and services under S20, duty to accommodate, Children Act 1989

Social work teams will also be able to provide advice on how to refer to specialist services such as those for disabled children, children in need of mental health support, and children missing from home or at risk of exploitation. Where there is immediate danger, dial 999.

Level 4 - Local procedures

Where a child or young person is identified as having acute needs, practitioners must refer the child or young person to specialist services immediately - this includes where there are concerns about a child's safety.

To refer to children's social work services:

4. Inform the family (only if it will not put the child at risk in doing so)
5. Telephone the Duty and Assessment Team on 01925 443400 to outline your concerns and to make your referral
6. Follow up your referral in writing - complete the Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF) and email to childreferral@warrington.gcsx.gov.uk

Targeted Services Social Work Teams have set out the threshold criteria for their services based on three areas of need within Level 4. These are:

- Level 4a - Children in Need of Targeted Support
- Level 4b - Children in Need of Safeguarding
- Level 4c - Children in Need of Care

Social work teams will also be able to provide advice on how to refer to specialist services such as those for disabled children, children in need of mental health support, and children missing from home or at risk of exploitation. Where there is immediate danger, dial 999.

A full range of services in Warrington form part of a continuum of help and support responding to the individual needs of children and young people. Practitioners will provide advice and information about these services as part of their work with families.

Examples of Level 4 services in Warrington include:

- Child in Need Services
- Child Protection Services
- Child in Care Services
- Care Leaver Services
- Adoption Services
- Local Authority Services for management and oversight of allegations against people that work with children
- Foster Care Services
- Residential Care Services
- Child Sexual Exploitation Services (Catch 22)

Threshold criteria for the provision of services from Targeted Social Work Services: Details of Levels 4a, 4b and 4c.

Targeted Services Social Work Teams involvement at Level 4 is within three areas of need:

Level 4a: Children in Need of Targeted Support

Level 4b: Children in Need of Safeguarding

Level 4c: Children in Need of Care

The thresholds applying to these three areas of need are specified below. However children may move within these three areas according to their assessed needs and Children and Young People's Targeted Services response to that assessed need.

Children and Young People's Targeted Services thresholds should not therefore be viewed as exclusive to a particular category of need. Referral may be made of any child who meets the threshold of need within any of the three areas.

Level 4a: Children in Need of Targeted Support

<p>Definition of level of need</p>	<p>Disabled child with highly complex needs</p> <p>Children and young people who are experiencing poor parenting that may be causing them to suffer or be likely to suffer significant harm and have a need for multi-agency high level support including Children and Young People's Targeted Services</p> <p>There is a significant risk of family breakdown or of the child being harmed</p> <p>There is a likelihood of significant harm but the risk can be managed outside of a Child Protection Plan</p>
<p>Specific Threshold Criteria</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents not responding to intervention/advice at Levels 1 – 3 about protection, care, supervision of children putting children at risk of harm • Child is posing a risk to self or others that may, without multi-agency intervention, result in the need for a Child Protection Plan or the child coming into care e.g. Mental illness/self - harm/suicide risk or substance misuse • Family homeless/without financial means and not eligible for temporary housing/benefits • Children vulnerable to Child Sexual Exploitation • Children missing from home or care • Children returned home to their family from care • Children who may undergo Female Genital Mutilation • Children at risk of being radicalised • Child under 16 is looked after by a non-relative within the scope of the private fostering regulations • Child has highly complex needs related to disability and requires a multi-agency response including Children and Young People's Targeted Services • A Young Carer whose caring responsibilities are adversely affecting their welfare and development • Court request for Section 7/37 report where there has been significant current or previous involvement by CSC. • Highly vulnerable 16/17 yr olds who are homeless and children Home Alone • Adoption breakdown • Child previously looked after/subject to child protection plan and concerns have re-emerge • Significant parenting capacity problems impacting on child's development/ wellbeing to a level where this may result in the child coming into care e.g. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parental mental illness/substance abuse; 2. Serious/ frequent domestic violence 3. Parental criminal/ASB behaviour 4. Multiple/inappropriate carers

Level 4b: Children in Need of Safeguarding

Definition of Level of Need	<p>Children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm</p>
Specific Threshold Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child is physically harmed through a deliberate act, neglect or domestic violence • Child has been sexually abused or is being groomed for sexual purposes • Child to child sexual activity where children are of unequal age/capacity • Very young age pregnancy/dangerous sexual activity • Child is vulnerable to Child Sexual Exploitation • Child is missing from home or care • Child has returned home to their family from care • Child who may undergo or have undergone Female Genital Mutilation • Child at risk of being or have been radicalised • Significant developmental delay due to neglect/poor parenting • Significant emotional/ psychological problems due to neglect/poor parenting • Very poor home conditions/physical care due to lack of parental care e.g. no food, warmth, bedding, appropriate clothing, hygiene, stimulation • Lack of medical/dental care endangering/impairing child's life • Reported pregnancy where there have been previous child protection concerns • Fabricated Illness • Non-organic failure to thrive • Serious self - harm/suicide risk where parents are not working with professionals • Parent involved in serious criminal acts that may impact on the child e.g. child pornography, drug dealing • Sexual exploitation, including through the use of technology • An adult assessed as being a risk to children is having contact with/living with a child in the same household • Allegations of abuse against people who work with children

**Level of Intervention/
Assessment**

- Referral to Children and Young People's Targeted Services
- Allocation of social worker
- Combined Assessment
- Section 47 Enquiry
- Specialist Agency assessment

Possible outcomes

- Child Protection Conference
- Planned Intervention within a child protection plan

Level 4c: Children in Need of Care	
Definition of Level of Need	Children who need to become looked after by the local authority
Specific Threshold Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child has been abandoned and there are no family or friends option • Child is at risk of or the victims of Child Sexual Exploitation • Child has frequently been missing from home or care • Child has returned home to their family from care, but is subject to a care order • Child who has undergone Female Genital mutilation • Child who has been radicalised • Parents are deceased and there are no family/friends options • Parents are in prison and there are no family/friends options • Child whose welfare can only be safeguarded through provision of accommodation outside of the family home • Child whose parents are unable to provide care for physical, intellectual or emotional reasons • Child is beyond parental control placing themselves/ others at serious risk e.g. offending, regularly going missing, permanent exclusion from school, serious ASB, dangerous behaviour/risk taking • Child is an unaccompanied asylum seeker • Child meets criteria for secure accommodation • Child remanded to local authority care by the court • Short Break Care for disabled children exceeding 60 nights a year
Level of Intervention/ Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to Children and Young People's Targeted Services • Allocation of social worker • Combined Assessment • Section 20 Accommodation • Section 31 Care Proceedings • Care Planning • Permanence Planning • Specialist Agency assessment <p>Possible outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned intervention within a Care Plan • Plan for legal permanence

APPENDIX ONE- EXPLANATION/ EXAMPLE OF THRESHOLD DOCUMENT

- For each level of need within level 4, this document gives
 - A Definition of Level of Need
 - Specific Threshold criteria
- When considering if a referral to Targeted Services Social Work Teams is appropriate , professionals will themselves have a view about whether they feel the child or young person is in need of
 - Targeted Support (4a)
 - Safeguarding (4b)
 - Care (4c)
- They can then use this document to clarify for themselves whether this view meets with the criteria set out within this document. They can do this in the following way:-

Consult the threshold criteria within the area of need and see if one of the descriptors seems appropriate



If it is, review the “Definition of level of need”
Does this also seem appropriate?



If so – then make referral using Multi agency referral form
If not- then consider assessment using CAF if not already undertaken

If you are not sure- then contact either
ASC & ask for the Practice Manager Or
Duty & Assessment Team and ask for a Practice Manager or a Principal Manager
To discuss it further & get advice

Further Guidance and Training

This document and other useful information can be found online at:
www.warringtonlscb.org

Further Guidance and Training

www.warringtonlscb.org

For example, visit: www.warringtonlscb.org for:
information on multi-agency training, incorporating a variety of courses in both early help and protection; 2) useful links to local and regional procedures aimed at keeping children and young people safe; and 3) access to the Practitioner's Toolkit where various documents such as the CAF assessment form, referral forms, and information for parents, can be downloaded. For a hard copy of any of these forms, please contact the Families Information Service on telephone 01925 443400.

Useful Contacts

Warrington Safeguarding Children Board
Telephone: 01925 443126
Email: wscb@warrington.gov.uk
Website: www.warringtonlscb.org

Families Information Service
Telephone: 01925 443322
Email: FIS@warrington.gov.uk
Website: www.warringtonchildren.org

Duty and Assessment Team
Telephone: 01925 443400
Email: childreferral@warrington.gcsx.gov.uk

CAF and Development Team
Telephone: 01925 443136 / 443162
Email: CAF@warrington.gov.uk

Family Support Service
Email: familysupportservice@warrington.gov.uk

Emergency and Out of Hours Services
Emergency: 999
Out of Hours: 01925 444400