

**Warrington Safeguarding Children Board**

**Multi-agency Guidance**



**Concerns re Child Health and Development and Parental Mental Health or Learning Disability**

Practitioners working with children and their families who have concerns about the needs of a particular child or children should follow the advice and guidance contained within the Warrington Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) 'Warrington Thresholds of Need and Response Document'.

The 'Warrington Thresholds of Need and Response Document' has been designed to ensure that children's needs are responded to at an appropriate level and in a timely way, it sets out the procedures which all practitioners must follow in identifying, raising and responding to concerns about children when coming into contact with them, or receiving information about them.

Practitioners working with children and their families who have concerns about whether a parent's mental health or learning disability may be affecting their child's health and development should liaise with health colleagues at the outset of identification of concerns.

Any child whose health and development is not within normal parameters can be assessed either in the community or hospital, deciding who would do this assessment is dependent on the concerns being raised.

In the first instance if there are concerns regarding the child's health/development then the Health Visitor/School Nurse and GP practice should be approached in order to evidence through assessment whether the child's development is being delayed. This could be supported by specific assessments such as Ages and Stages (ASQ), speech and language, audiology, physiotherapy, ophthalmology etc.

Where there is a belief that any delay in child development is due to parental mental health or learning difficulty, then practitioners must liaise with health colleagues at the outset of identification of concerns and ensure the child is assessed thoroughly to exclude any systemic or organic reason for developmental delay alongside considering the impact of parental mental health or learning disability of achievement of milestones.

In determining if the delay is due to parental mental health or learning disability practitioners are reminded that a multi-agency response is required and evidence of neglect / under stimulation / poor health due to parental mental health or learning difficulty.

If there are concerns about the child's development then a referral to a Paediatrician can be made via the GP or Health Visitor. If however there are immediate concerns in respect of the child's health and development then child protection procedures need to be initiated and the child be subject to a child protection medical if appropriate.