

Recording Concerns of Neglect

Remember, the definition of neglect includes the key concepts of '**persistence**' and a 'failure to meet a child's needs ... likely to result in **serious impairment to their health or development.**' So, your records need to convey this. See <https://neglect.lgfl.net> for more information about neglect, including the 6 different forms.

Here are some general points to also consider:

- Be as **specific** as you can be, using clear examples and language that paints a picture of what the child is experiencing
- **Frequency** of concern/s – How long have you been concerned? How often are the concerns occurring? Are there any patterns?
- **Severity** - How have the concerns impacted on the child or what is the likely impact? Consider all domains of child development including what we understand about cumulative harm and what a child's behaviour may be telling you.
- Include the **child's voice** either through their language and/or behaviour
- Any **vulnerabilities** associated with the child.
- Any **protective factors**.

The following pages provide examples of how to strengthen written descriptions about concerns of neglect, however this guidance and the tips above can be related to all safeguarding reports.

HOW COULD WE IMPROVE THIS RECORD?

Mike has had recurring episodes of nits this term.

Example
1

Not ideal

Always quantify if possible

Mike has had recurring episodes of nits this term.

Better

School staff have noted that Mike has had 4 episodes of nits in the past 6 weeks.
He has found it hard to concentrate in class due to the itching

Not a guess

Impact

No ambiguity on how often; harder to ignore

HOW COULD WE IMPROVE THIS RECORD?

Lin is at risk of harm due to not being taken to his asthma clinic appointments.

Example
2

Not ideal

Be clear about the impact or likely impact on a child's health/development

Lin is at risk of harm due to not being taken to his asthma clinic appointments.

Better

Quantified so less open to interpretation

Lin has not been taken to the past 3 asthma clinic appointments (in a 6-month period). Lin's asthma is severe and he regularly uses his inhaler at school due to being unable to catch his breath. Lin has missed 10 days of school this month due to having recurring chest infections. By not being taken to these medical appointments we are concerned that Lin is not getting the medical treatment and support he requires and believe he is at high risk of further absences from school (leading to him becoming more behind in his learning) and worsening physical illness.

Much more detail about the individual impact on the child

HOW COULD WE IMPROVE THIS RECORD?

Cara is smelly and dirty when she arrives at school.

Example
3

Not ideal

Avoid ambiguous or vague language, and be clear about impact

Cara is smelly and dirty when she arrives at school.

Better

Quantified so
less open to
interpretation

Every day for the past term school staff have noted that Cara has greasy hair, strong body odour, long dirty fingernails and yellow teeth. Consequently, her peers have been heard teasing her and despite trying to stop this, staff have noticed that Cara is becoming upset on a daily basis and withdrawn from her peers.

Clearer perceived
impact

Gives a clearer and more specific picture
of what 'dirty' means so the child's lived
experience is better understood

HOW COULD WE IMPROVE THIS RECORD?

We have had concerns about mum shouting at Kiran when dropping off and picking up at school.

Example
4

Not ideal



Describe the child's experience

What is the evidence?

We have had concerns about mum shouting at Kiran when dropping off and picking up at school.

Better

Clearly evidenced

On 12.01.23 Mrs Jessup saw Kiran's mum shout at him "If you don't pick up your school coat I'm going to wallop you so hard." Kiran's mum was very angry and bent down so she was a very short distance from Kiran's face when she shouted. This was interpreted by Mrs Jessup as feeling intimidating and frightening. Kiran did not look at his mum but picked up his coat and was silent.

Less vague. Specific examples given with sufficient detail to understand the impact

HOW COULD WE IMPROVE THIS RECORD?

I believe that Sameer is being ignored and emotionally neglected by his parents.

Example
5

Not ideal

What is the evidence?

Give examples and avoid woolly descriptions



I believe that Sameer is being ignored and emotionally neglected by his parents.

Better

- ✓ Evidenced
- ✓ Examples
- ✓ Child's voice
- ✓ Impact

The school have concerns that Sameer is experiencing emotional neglect, which is impacting on his mental wellbeing, in particular his self-confidence and esteem. On 27.01.23 Sameer disclosed to staff that at the weekends his parents are often 'drunk' and he spends all his time playing on his X-Box in his bedroom. Sameer said that when his parents are asleep he looks after himself and makes his own meals.

It has been noticed that Sameer has been a lot more withdrawn this term. Staff have observed on the following occasions.... Etc.

HOW COULD WE IMPROVE THIS RECORD?

Jan's attendance at school has been 60% for the past 2 terms and his attainment in all areas has been dropping.

Example
6

Not ideal

Convey how events impact a child

Talk about any accumulation of harm rather individual issues



Jan's attendance at school has been 60% for the past 2 terms and his attainment in all areas has been dropping.

Better

- ✓ Child's voice
- ✓ Impact of cumulative harm

Jan's attendance at school has been 60% for the past 2 terms. Most of these absences are explained as Jan being unwell or parent's illness. This has had a significant impact on his learning and he is now far below ARE in Reading, Writing and Maths (this has dropped from X to Y). He is also struggling to maintain friendships and is noted to spend a lot of time on his own during playtimes as he is finding it difficult to play with others. This has changed significantly in the past 6 months. Jan has told staff that "I don't have any friends here. No one likes playing with me." Etc....

HOW COULD WE IMPROVE THIS RECORD?

Jessie has been wearing very ill-fitting clothes for the past term and staff have noted concerns about her looking as though she has lost weight and she does not look 'well'.

Example
7

Not ideal

Be explicit with descriptions

Better

- ✓ Context
- ✓ Demonstrates actions taken by school
- ✓ More specific

Jessie has been wearing very ill-fitting clothes for the past term and staff have noted concerns about her looking as though she has lost weight and she does not look 'well'.

Jessie's mum is a single parent, caring for 3 young children and does not work. She has recently confided in school staff that she is struggling to make ends meet and some days is going without food to ensure that the children can eat something. The school have directed mum to the local food bank and a local charity who can help provide financial advice, but concerns still remain about Jessie's physical appearance. Jessie has shoes that look too small for her and are broken on the sole. School have provided uniform that now fits well. It is school staff's impression that Jessie has lost weight over the past term as her clothes look baggier, and her complexion looks grey with dark skin around her eyes and greasy hair. This has been the case for the past 6 weeks.

HOW COULD WE IMPROVE THIS RECORD?

When staff speak to Lily's dad, he is not very kind about her.

Example
8

Not ideal



SafeguardED

Expand 'vague' terms with specific examples

When staff speak to Lily's dad, he is not very kind about her.

Better

- ✓ Evidence based
- ✓ Unpicks terms that could be subjective with examples

When staff speak to Lily's dad his tone is often cold and dismissive about Lily. On 23 February Mrs Walker spoke to him about concerns relating to Lily not meeting age related expectations with her reading skills. Mr Walker called Lily 'stupid' and said he doesn't 'bother reading with her at home as it is a waste of time'. Most days when Lily's dad picks her up from school he ignores her. She will walk some distance behind him and there is no communication.

Not ideal

When staff speak to Lily's dad, he is cold and aloof.

To consider

Things to observe and describe regarding a parent meeting a child's emotional needs:

- Tone of voice
- Non-verbal communication towards child (eye contact, distance, touch, body language etc.)
- Warmth towards child – facial expressions, tone, listening to the child, being interested in them, reassuring and comforting the child
- Being responsive to the child - emotionally and during interactions
- Back and forth interactions
- Being positive towards and about the child
- Praises and encourages
- Accepts the child
- Supportive and nurturing the child in order for them to flourish