1. **Background**

The threshold of need framework is a working tool to:

- Enable practitioners to identify the levels of risk and needs of children and their families
- To ensure that children and their families access the appropriate level of support according to their changing circumstances; across the four levels
- Provide a common understanding and language for multi-agency professionals
- Improve outcomes for children and their families in North East Lincolnshire

2. **Levels of Need**

1. **Universal.** Entitlement is for all children across threshold. Needs/risks are met by universal services
2. **Targeted and Coordinated Early Help.** Additional single or multi-agency help for vulnerable children. Needs met through the Early Help Assessment and Plan
3. **Child in Need (CIN).** Time limited intervention for children and young people in need or at risk of harm. A social worker is involved and it requires a multi-agency response
4. **Specialist Assessment (Immediate safeguarding).** Complex unmet needs. This is the threshold for Child Protection. Child may be ‘in need’, ‘at risk of significant harm’ or a ‘Child Looked After’ by the local authority. A multi-agency enquiry led by a social worker is needed to ensure children are protected and kept safe

All support uses the Signs of Safety model of practice

3. **Levels of Need Indicators**

- Helps create a common understanding and picture of the need for support
- Children can move up or down the levels depending on need. All children can access level 1, universal
- If there is a risk of significant harm go straight to Level 4
- Concerns at level 4 only don’t require consent for referrals to be made or information

4. **What to do to keep children safe**

- Consider life from the child’s perspective
- Listen to and respond to what the child tells you
- Think about the family’s strengths that keep the child safe
- Think about what makes it difficult for the family to address the concerns
- Consider any previous worries/concerns
- Practitioners supporting targeted early help can attend Collaborative, Support and Allocation Meetings (CSAM) in family hubs to reflect on the risks and plan a response if there is little progress to improve outcomes or non-engagement
- Always follow up your concerns if you are not satisfied that the child is safe.

5. **Worried about a child?**

- Where needs are clear at level 2 (Targeted Early Help) agencies requesting support should complete a contact form and send to ehsbusinesssup-port@nelincs.gov.uk. You may be asked to complete an Early Help Assessment if multi-agency support is needed
- Where needs are at level 3 and above (Child in Need, Child Protection or Safeguarding) then agencies should complete an online referral to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) MASH@nelincs.gov.uk or call tel: 01472 326292 (option 2)
- If a child is in immediate danger call 999
- If in doubt consult with your safeguarding lead or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): e-mail MASH@nelincs.gov.uk


6. **Further Information**

- Threshold of need and response 2019
- Threshold guidance 2019
- Prevention and Early Help Strategy
- Working Together 2018
- Young People’s Guide to Working Together 2018
- Young Person’s Guide to Keeping Children Safe
- Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures