


Dimension 4 | Identification and Understanding of Need

	→ Informed	→ Skilled	→ Enhanced	→ Specialist
Identification of Need				
Knowledge	<p>Understand the role of the named person and lead professional as specified within the core components of the GIRFEC National Practice Model</p> <p>Know that the child or young person's view needs to be given appropriate weight when making decisions that concern them</p> <p>Be aware of the benefits of early identification of difficulties</p> <p>Be aware that the views and aims for intervention can vary significantly between children, parents, school and other professionals involved</p> <p>Be aware of the role and duties of the lead professional in relation to the development of the child's plan</p>	<p>Be aware that the initial assessment and plan should be regularly updated in response to progress, and being responsive to new information, and all stakeholders kept informed</p> <p>Know of the role of services and agencies in the assessment and development of a child's plan</p>	<p>Be aware that the initial assessment generates working hypotheses which may need to be updated or corrected in response to obtaining further information during the course of contact with the family</p> <p>Be aware that the assessment process can, in itself, be helpful as it provides an opportunity for new understanding</p>	<p>Knowledge of multiple theories and methods to make sense of complex mental health difficulties from a systemic perspective</p>
Skills	<p>Be able to identify any change in a child or young person's usual presentation and understand why it is important to record and take further action when required</p> <p>Share information for GIRFEC single or multi-agency wellbeing assessment</p>	<p>Be able to identify risk and protective factors</p> <p>Be able to draw together different strands of information to contribute to the child's assessment and plan</p> <p>Be able to use and apply the GIRFEC tools for a single agency wellbeing assessment and child's plan</p>	<p>Be able to co-ordinate a multidimensional assessment using multiple methods (observations, interviews, measures), sources (child, family, school) and levels (physical, emotional, cognitive, social, cultural)</p>	<p>Be able to recognise and address challenges to inter-agency work, such as, conflicts of interests, lack of clarity about roles, lack of trust, and address these to ensure good communication obtain good outcomes for children, young people and their families</p>

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Identification of Need continued				
Skills	<p>Maintain records at appropriate level, in line with GDPR guidance</p> <p>Work within boundaries of your professional role as outlined by your professional body and seek support/supervision where necessary</p>	<p>Be able to identify people, services and agencies who need to be included in the assessment and development of a child's plan and involve children and young people in all aspects of their care</p> <p>Be able to share information across agencies within the constraints of consent and confidentiality, on a 'need to know' basis and in a proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure manner with the aim of supporting children and young people and preventing the need for them to re-tell painful life-stories over and over again</p> <p>Work collaboratively with children and young people, using strength-based communication skills to promote their participation in gathering information and making decisions</p> <p>Document decisions that have been taken and ensure the evidence for taking these decisions is recorded</p>	<p>Acknowledge and evaluate the different views of the difficulties and aims for intervention (child, family, school)</p> <p>Be able to focus assessment, such as develop initial hypotheses and get more information from partner agencies in advance</p> <p>Be able to engage all family members in mental health assessment in an empathic, respectful and even-handed way</p> <p>Make explicit and value the unique perspective of each individual on the functioning of the family</p>	<p>Establish and maintain effective links with partner agencies, at both operational and strategic levels</p> <p>Contribute to the management of inter-agency concerns about the sharing of sensitive information</p>

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Able to use Different Methods to Obtain Information							
In addition to the knowledge contained in Dimensions 1 and 2							
Knowledge	Be aware that identification and understanding of mental health and wellbeing involves gathering information from a wide range of people, across a wide range of settings	Be aware of standardised questionnaires and assessments that help to gather information on strengths and difficulties of a child	Knowledge of the use, and interpretation of structured assessments	Have specialist knowledge of the use, limitations and interpretation of structured assessments			
Skills	<p>Be able to observe, describe and record the behaviour of the child in the context of where you work</p> <p>Recognise whether a child's level and type of play is broadly typical for their age</p> <p>Be able to recognise when a child or young person is experiencing signs linked to poor self-esteem, self-worth and confidence, and explore with them ways they can be supported</p>	<p>Using knowledge of developmental stages, including physical, emotional, interpersonal, cognitive, language and social milestones, identify if a child or young person's development is broadly typical for their age</p> <p>Be able to notice when a child or young person has regressed, or not made the progress expected of them</p> <p>Be able to observe and describe the interactions between a child or young person, and their family</p> <p>Be able to gather information from speaking to a child or young person and their family about their history</p> <p>Be able to use facilitation, empathy, clarification, and summary statements to gather information</p> <p>Be able to gather the views of all the members of the family</p>	<p>Observe, describe and interpret a child/young person's behaviour and interactions in the context of relevant theories</p> <p>Be able to use play as a therapeutic method including to assess the quality and nature of relationships between children and their parents</p> <p>Be able to conduct and interpret structured mental health, cognitive, functional, and developmental assessments and any neurodevelopmental assessments as appropriate</p> <p>Be able to take a history of the child's strengths and difficulties, development, family, school and medical history, within the family's social and cultural context</p> <p>Be able to ask about topics such as early family relationships in a sensitive non-blaming manner</p>	<p>Be able to use clinical judgement to integrate material from observation, mental state examination, research, clinical tools, history taking and other agencies</p> <p>Be able to conduct a physical health assessment to support a holistic assessment of mental health</p> <p>Be able to conduct and interpret structured mental health, cognitive, functional, and developmental assessments and any neurodevelopmental assessments as appropriate and to adapt these to suit children and their families who have very complex needs</p> <p>Be able to adapt questions or approaches where necessary to enable participation in, and completion of, the assessment</p>			

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Able to use Different Methods to Obtain Information continued				
Skills		<p>Be able to gather the views of the child on their wellbeing using developmentally appropriate means and the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators within the GIRFEC framework</p> <p>Be able to elicit specific, detailed and concrete examples of behaviour when assessing and exploring the concerns of family members</p> <p>Recognise the signs that a child may have experienced trauma through their behaviour, emotions and ability to relate to others</p> <p>Recognise when further assessment of the impact of trauma on a child's development is required and make requests for assistance as necessary</p> <p>Be able to describe features of possible neurodiversity and where to seek advice about diagnosis and supports</p>	<p>Explore with families their own understanding and beliefs about parenting, childhood, adolescence and the meaning of family</p> <p>Be able to draw on knowledge, theory and research about child and family development and mental health, to focus on topics which appear to be problematic or of particular significance for the child, such as taking a more detailed developmental history if there are indicators of developmental delays</p>	<p>Be able to supervise within-service assessments for mental health and neurodiversity and offer consultation to professionals outside that service</p>

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	Risk of Harm 			
Knowledge	<p>Be aware that all adults have a statutory responsibility to keep children and young people safe from harm, even if not working with them directly</p> <p>Be aware of the wide range of risks that could affect a child or young person: risk of harm to self (self-harm, suicide), self-neglect, harm from or neglect from others, harm to others, non-engagement in treatments (physical and mental health)</p> <p>Be aware that self-harm can take many forms, including suicidal and non-suicidal self-injury</p> <p>Be aware that self-harm may be used by a child or young person as a coping strategy</p> <p>Be aware that thoughts of self-harm and suicide are common in young people but much less common in children</p> <p>Be aware of the legal position regarding the physical punishment of children and young people</p> <p>Know local child protection standards, policies and procedures</p>	<p>Be aware of and understand the role partnership plays in safeguarding and have knowledge of the procedures adopted by partner agencies</p> <p>Be aware that an element of risk-taking behaviour is typical and necessary part of development</p> <p>Be aware that bullying can become a formal child protection issue</p> <p>Be aware of risk and protective factors for different forms of harm</p>	<p>Be aware that the assessment of risk may need to be an ongoing process due to the dynamic nature of some risk factors</p> <p>Know about assessment and management processes</p> <p>Have knowledge of risk assessment measures and their limitations</p> <p>Be aware of the cumulative and interactive nature of different types of risk, such as parental risk factors limiting the ability to support and protect a child or young person at risk of self-harm</p> <p>Know national and local policies, standards, procedures and legislation</p>	<p>Have an understanding of more specialist or inherently risky groups, such as children and young people presenting with forensic risk, eating disorders, and those at risk from multiple forms of harm</p> <p>Understand patterns of concern at individual level and clusters of concern at local population level such as sexualised behaviour, self-harm, suicide</p> <p>Know current and proposed policy, standards, guidance and recommendations that impact on children and young people and families, including in response to Case Reviews and Significant Case Reviews</p> <p>Ensure planning meets a child or young person's longer-term needs (including specialist and therapeutic support for recovery) as well as immediate safety</p>



For further detail see

NES: Mental Health Improvement and Suicide Prevention Framework
 NES: Core Competency Framework for the Protection of Children

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Risk of Harm continued				
Knowledge	<p>Know who to report concerns to within GIRFEC framework</p> <p>Know that some children and young people are more at risk than others, such as care-experienced children</p>			
Skills	<p>Be able to give a child or young person a safe space and the time to talk about their feelings by asking and listening</p> <p>Be able to ask child about risky behaviours that they may be showing or referring to</p> <p>Act urgently, in conjunction with other professional colleagues, to protect a child where there is evidence of immediate risk</p> <p>Use the GIRFEC National Practice Model including the wellbeing indicators and My World Triangle as a frame of reference to inform judgments about any areas of risk and unmet need</p> <p>Be able to jointly decide with the child or young person who and what else could help</p> <p>Adopt a trauma informed approach underpinned by the five principles of trauma Informed practice (safety, choice, collaboration, trust and empowerment)</p>	<p>Identify families at risk of multiple adversities and refer to appropriate services in a timely manner</p> <p>Work with other professionals to manage and mitigate risk and to boost protective factors</p> <p>Contribute to the development of a risk plan by attending and contributing to multi-agency meetings including case conferences, and core group meetings</p> <p>Practice in a non-discriminatory manner to respect and support parental autonomy, while always prioritising safety and welfare</p> <p>Be able to support children who have experienced adversity through child protection processes, advocacy and relationship-based approaches designed to create external and internal safety and reduce risk</p>	<p>Be able to carry out a comprehensive risk assessment which combines information from multiple sources including such as clinical interviews, measures, observations, other family members and other agencies</p> <p>Be able to conduct a risk formulation which identifies factors which are likely to increase the risk of harm, and factors which are likely to decrease the risk of harm</p> <p>Be able to conduct risk management planning in collaboration with children, young people and families and inter-agency colleagues</p> <p>Be able to escalate concerns (within own or other agencies) when the implementation of the risk management plan is problematic and where necessary, express a concern or position that is different from the views of others and do so during (rather than subsequent to) any meeting</p>	<p>Be able to use specialist multi-disciplinary/agency risk assessments for different specialist service settings, such as in-patient facilities</p> <p>Be able to use structured professional judgement approaches</p> <p>Develop and lead on the implementation of an overall risk assessment plan including identifying and addressing barriers to the delivery of appropriate, timely and proportionate support, at both operational and strategic levels</p> <p>Take a lead role in quality assurance and self-evaluation processes by reviewing local risk assessment procedures and auditing local operational systems and procedures</p>

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Risk of Harm continued				
Skills	<p>Recognise limits of own skills and service setting and escalate concerns as appropriate</p> <p>Seek advice and support where parental practice may seem in conflict with the need to safeguard the child or young person</p> <p>Identify concerns of fitness to practice responding promptly when there is evidence that the actions of a colleague put a child or young person or another colleague, at risk of harm</p>		<p>Be able to highlight when information is missing, contradictory or unclear</p> <p>Record and report on interventions/ any part of the plan that the clinician is responsible for</p> <p>Be able to refer to, and work with, more specialised agencies, such as inpatient units or forensic services, in line with local referral protocols</p> <p>Work with others to enact Mental Health Act legislation if required</p>	<p>Be able to recognise risk to physical health associated with mental disorder and/or trauma and how best to manage this, for example, provide direct treatment/monitoring or referral to appropriate services</p>
Impact on Staff of Working with Children and Young People at Risk of Harm				
Knowledge	<p>Be aware of the emotional impact on you of working with children and young people at risk of harm</p>	<p>Be aware of the ongoing need to reflect on your own practice while working with children and young people at risk of harm</p>	<p>Know theories of supervision regarding how best to provide support for workers including supporting critical thinking and self-awareness for self and others</p>	<p>Know the role of different professionals carrying out risk assessment and the impact on both the practitioners and on those supervising them</p>
Additional skills in Dimension 5: Coaching, Supervision and Reflective Practice				
Skills	<p>Be able to seek support from a work colleague to talk through your feelings and reactions about doing this work</p> <p>Be able to seek further support to manage the impact of this work on yourself, such as, from your line manager</p>	<p>Seek support to enhance both your practice and for you to manage your emotional response to working with children and young people at risk of harm</p>	<p>Provide support and guidance for others working with children and young people at risk of harm</p>	<p>Facilitate provision of appropriate specialist support, supervision and consultation across traditional professional and organisational boundaries for all staff doing this work</p>

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Reaching a Shared Understanding or Formulation of Difficulties				
Knowledge	<p>Be aware that the aim of the assessment process is to help build an understanding of the child's strengths and needs to help guide intervention and improve the quality of life for child and family</p>	<p>Understand the aim is to reach an agreed description of the strengths and difficulties and to explain the development and maintenance of the child or young person's strengths and difficulties and provide options for intervention and supports</p> <p>Be aware the assessment process can be an emotional time for children, young people and their families</p>	<p>Knowledge of generic formulations including, predisposing, precipitating, maintaining and protective factors</p> <p>Knowledge of one relevant theoretical model</p> <p>Understand that the formulation may include an embedded mental health or neurodevelopmental diagnosis</p>	<p>Have knowledge of multiple theoretical methods of formulating</p> <p>Have knowledge of model specific formulations which conceptualise a presentation in relation to a specific therapeutic model (such as, psychodynamic, cognitive- behavioural or, systemic models) and which usually overlap the generic formulation</p> <p>Know how to unpack and diagnose/ formulate the contributions of trauma and adverse experiences and neurodiversity to a child's attachment/ mental health presentation</p>
Skills	<p>Understand your role in supporting a child or young person during assessment of need</p> <p>Encourage and support people to get help and support</p>	<p>Be able to seek the views of the child, young person and family throughout the process</p> <p>Support a child or young person to understand the outcome of any assessment</p>	<p>Within a coaching relationship, be able to identify and formulate mild to moderate mental health difficulties, within protocol driven programmes</p> <p>Integrate information from various sources and contexts</p> <p>Assess and respond to children, young people and families' understanding and beliefs regarding mental health</p> <p>Apply theoretical models, such as, psychodynamic, cognitive behaviour therapy, systemic therapy, to collaboratively develop, communicate formulations to guide intervention</p>	<p>Be able to integrate multiple theoretical models/approaches to collaboratively develop understanding and communicate this to relevant others, and plan interventions</p> <p>Be able to diagnose/formulate highly complex and ambiguous neurodevelopmental and mental health difficulties as appropriate and work with children, young people and their families to articulate and plan for support needs</p>

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Reaching a Shared Understanding or Formulation of Difficulties continued				
Skills			<p>Be able to contribute to a diagnostic assessment of neurodevelopmental and mental health difficulties, and consult with colleagues around whether diagnostic criteria are met</p> <p>Identify and describe a child's developmental needs, acknowledging gaps which may have occurred in developmental experiences and skill acquisition, for example, as a result of trauma and adversity</p> <p>Be able to discuss the use of diagnosis with a child or young person and their family</p> <p>Be able to consider the reasons for any different perspectives amongst the child, young person and their family, and all working with them, related to the formulation</p> <p>Able to adapt the pace and amount of information and level of complexity to the family's level of understanding and emotional readiness to accept the information</p> <p>Able to seek the views of the child and family throughout the feedback process</p>	<p>Be able to explore and reconcile different perspectives and opinions related to the formulation and diagnosis, with the group of professionals working with the children, young person and their family</p> <p>Be able to recognise and assess potential differential / additional diagnoses, such as ADHD, Dyspraxia, Learning Difficulties, Developmental Language Disorder</p> <p>As part of the formulation and intervention plan, address the risk of stigma and discrimination</p> <p>Develop and share individualised trauma and attachment-informed psychological formulations with parents to help them understand and connect with their child's needs</p>