**Graded Care Profile 2**

**Guidance and Frequently Asked Questions**

Birmingham Safeguarding Children Partnership has introduced the NSPCC Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2) tool to assess the quality of care a child is receiving where there is known or suspected neglect.

**Guidance for GCP2 use in Birmingham**

* GCP2 supports timely and effective assessment and intervention in cases where there is identified or suspected neglect.
* Neglect encompasses any area where a child’s needs are not being met and this is likely to lead to harm in terms of their health or development. This includes (but not limited to) a child’s physical, medical, educational, and emotional needs. The [Birmingham Neglect Toolkit](https://www.lscpbirmingham.org.uk/recent-publications/birmingham-neglect-strategy-2022-26) can help practitioners to understand neglect and its impact.
* A brief [Neglect Screening Tool](https://www.lscpbirmingham.org.uk/recent-publications/birmingham-neglect-strategy-2022-26) has been developed as part of the Neglect Toolkit to help practitioners identify if a child is at risk of neglect and would benefit from GCP2. A pre-birth version is also available.
* Where neglect is identified or suspected, GCP2 should be used by any agency working with the family, including to support referrals to other agencies, Family Connect Forms or Requests for Support made to the Children’s Advice & Support Service (CASS).
* Where immediate action is required to safeguard a child and practitioners have not had an opportunity to undertake a GCP2, this should not prevent a Request for Support being made or accepted.
* GCP2 can be completed by an individual practitioner or a group of practitioners working together.
* GCP2 scores can be reviewed to measure progress and plan interventions. Where there are no improvements in the quality of care provided to a child, GCP2 can support practitioners where appropriate to escalate their concerns.
* Parental consent is required to undertake and share a GCP2 assessment where the threshold for significant harm has not been met. [Right Help, Right Time](https://lscpbirmingham.org.uk/delivering-effective-support) includes guidance on thresholds.

**GCP2 training can be booked via** [**BSCP website**](https://booking.lscpbirmingham.org.uk/events-list)

**GCP2 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

## **What is the Graded Care Profile 2?**

The Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2) is a licensed tool developed by the NSPCC. It is a strengths-based tool that measures the quality of care being provided to a child, helping practitioners to identify neglect, and put in place support and interventions to address areas of concern.

## **Why do we need GCP2?**

Neglect is the most common reason for children in Birmingham to need support or protection, but it can be very hard to identify and measure. If children’s needs are neglected over a period of time, this can cause significant and long term harm and even death. In most cases, parents love their children and want the best for them, but many factors can impact on their parenting (such as poverty, mental health issues, learning disability, drug and alcohol misuse, domestic abuse, and childhood trauma). Many parents do not understand what ‘good’ care looks like and may not realise the care they are providing is negatively impacting on their child’s health, development, safety, or wellbeing.

The GCP2 and other resources in the Neglect Toolkit can help practitioners measure the quality of care a child is receiving and help parents to understand what their strengths are and where they can make changes to improve outcomes for their children.

## **What does the GCP2 measure?**

The GPC2 measures the quality of care given to a child over a short window of time (it tells us what life is like for the child currently). The care in different areas is graded between 1 (best) and 5 (worst). The scores have accompanying Red, Amber or Green ratings, making it easy to see where there are strengths and where there are concerns that need addressing.

The four areas of care are based on Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs. The GCP2 does not explore underlying reasons why a particular level of care is given to a child. However, it encourages further exploration of the reasons at the analysis stage, and this is supported by the practitioner’s report and other assessments and records.

## **Who can use GCP2?**

Any practitioner who understands child development and safeguarding, who has access to work with families and who has completed GCP2 training can use the tool. This includes (but not limited to):

* Health Visitors
* School Nurses
* Social Workers
* Family Support Workers
* Nursery Practitioners
* Designated Safeguarding Leads and Pastoral Staff in Schools
* Children’s Centre Practitioners
* Midwives
* Youth Workers
* Substance Misuse Workers
* Domestic Abuse Specialists
* Voluntary Sector partners

## **There are several practitioners working with a family – who should complete the GCP2?**

Only those who have received the GCP2 training and been assessed as competent to undertake assessments using the GCP2 can use the tool. However once trained, any accredited practitioner can use the tool in circumstances where neglect is known or is suspected. Where there is a multi-agency group of practitioners working with a family (eg Early Help plan or a Core Group), those practitioners may wish to explore who is best placed to lead on the GCP2 tool, often the person who has the best relationship with the family. Equally professionals could do the GCP2 assessment together, either co-working the whole assessment or dividing up the assessment between practitioners

## **Is it the same as the original Graded Care Profile?**

The GCP2 is an updated version based on NSPCC’s evaluation of the original GCP. It has the same core concept, design, and structure but some of the language has changed to make it more accessible. It has been updated to make it easier to use and the new tool can be used more flexibly. There are also some new areas for assessment such as online safety. The original GCP is in the public domain but the GCP2 is licensed, meaning practitioners need to be trained to use it. This ensures consistency, validity, and quality of assessments.

## **I have used the original GCP so can I use this new version?**

The updated GCP2 is a licensed tool so you are not able to use it without being an accredited practitioner (on successfully completing the training). This ensures that the tool is being used consistently and families are being assessed by practitioners who have been evaluated in their understanding the tool.

## **I have completed the GCP2 training. Where can I access copies of the tool and other resources?**

After successfully completing training, you will have been sent electronic copies of the GCP2 materials. If you are unable to access these, email [GCP2@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk](mailto:GCP2@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk) and copies can be resent.

## **In what circumstances should a GCP2 be used in Birmingham?**

Research about neglect shows that early intervention is the most effective way to achieve better outcomes for children. Therefore, it is important the GCP2 is adopted as a universal tool that is used by practitioners at all layers of need and not just by Social Workers. The GCP2 should be used in the following circumstances (see also your agency’s policy):

* Where there is a case ‘open’ to any agency and there are concerns that a child’s needs are not being met.
* Where there is an open Early Help Assessment and concerns or suspicions of neglect.
* To accompany a Request for Support (referral) to CASS where there are concerns or suspicions of neglect, unless urgent action is needed before the tool can be completed.
* Where children are subject to a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan due to concerns about the quality of care they are receiving.

## **Do parents have to consent to a GCP2?**

Yes, parental consent is required to undertake and to share a GCP2 assessment where the threshold of significant harm (section 47) has not been met. Where consent is needed from the parents to undertake the GCP2, and that consent isn’t given, then the tool could still be used by a professional as a framework for analysing their concerns, discussing with their manager, and deciding on any next steps, including supporting a referral where the threshold for significant harm is met. Where parents do not consent, this should be noted and contribute to the ongoing assessment/analysis of the child’s circumstances and safety.

## **Can I use GCP2 for more than one child?**

Each child in the family should have their individual needs considered when a GCP2 assessment is undertaken. This recognises that different children in the same family are at different ages and stages of development and therefore the care that parents/carers need to provide to them will need to be different. Even where children are at very similar age and stage, parents/carers may provide differing types of care to each child.

However, it is possible for assessments and sections for more than one child in a family to be undertaken at the same time, e.g. when an observation of the parent offering care to all their children is being undertaken. Or where the care is observed to be the same for each child, the same information may be used.

## **Can I complete some parts of the GCP2 and not others?**

The GCP2 measures care given to a child across the whole continuum of a child’s needs. This supports planning and intervention and can highlight concerns which otherwise may have been missed. As such the whole of the GCP2 should be considered to ensure there is a clear and balanced view about how children’s needs are being met. It is important to highlight strengths and not just look at areas of concern.

However, if there are areas you have been unable to assess or aspects which are not relevant for a particular parent or child, then that area can be left out. It may be that some areas of the tool are focused on more than others, for example telling parents how well they are doing in one area but spending a session looking at an area of concern in more detail as part of an intervention.

Sometimes a practitioner will only be able to contribute to one or a few parts of the tool and it is important that they can contribute their knowledge to the completion of the tool. Then other agencies can contribute to other areas of the tool more relevant to them and their role with the family.

## **Do parents need to score the tool?**

No, the tool can be scored on professional judgement only. The tool can be used effectively as an intervention with parents/carers scoring the tool alongside practitioners. However, this may not be appropriate for all situations and the tool can also be completed by the professional working with the family and then the outcome shared, and a plan created with the family.

## **What are the timescales for using GCP2?**

The GCP2 tool is a ‘snapshot’ of the child’s current experience. Therefore, it is important to use observations and information gathered in a short window of time. This should be a maximum of 12 weeks. The tool can then be repeated after 3-6 months to measure any progress and whether interventions have been successful.

There is not a set number of sessions needed to complete the GCP2 as this will depend on the family circumstances and the purpose of completing the assessment. Different interactions with the family can contribute towards this, for example home visits, observations of parent/child interactions, direct work with children and meetings with parents in a neutral setting. As a general rule, the GCP2 usually takes 2-6 sessions to complete. These can form part of the work you already do with a family; it does not need to be an extra visit.

## **How do I gather the information for the GCP2?**

The best way to gather information is by your observations of the family such as the home environment, the child’s presentation, their interactions with parents. You can also use information provided by other professionals as long as it is current as well as information provided by parents and children as long as it is reliable.

## **How do I book GCP2 training?**

GCP2 training is available free of charge for all practitioners who work with children and families in Birmingham via the [BSCP training site](https://booking.lscpbirmingham.org.uk/events-list).

## **I completed GCP2 training in another Local Authority – do I have to do it again?**

No. You do not need to repeat the course if you have already been licensed to use GCP2 and can evidence this by providing a certificate. If you send a copy of your GCP2 certificate to [GCP2@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk](mailto:GCP2@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk) you can be added to the database in Birmingham and will receive regular updates.

## **What if I don’t have enough contact with a family to complete a GCP2 but I still have concerns about a child?**

A Birmingham Neglect Screening Tool has been developed which can be used by practitioners who have limited contact with children and families. This can be used to identify signs of neglect and then be discussed with a manager or Safeguarding Lead to consider next steps. The Neglect Screening Tool can be downloaded from the [BSCP website](https://www.lscpbirmingham.org.uk/recent-publications/birmingham-neglect-strategy-2022-26).

## **What do I do with my completed GCP2 assessment?**

If you use ECINS to record your work, a GCP2 form has been built in and you can ask your manager to open this.

If you do not use ECINS, you can upload the GCP2 Score Sheet to your system and you also need to send a copy to [GCP2@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk](mailto:GCP2@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk) for monitoring. The scores can be used to complete a report using the GCP2 report template or can feed into other assessments such as an Early Help Assessment or Family Assessment.

A completed GCP2 assessment should inform planning and intervention for the family; any scores that are 4 or 5 indicate areas that should be addressed, and progress monitored.

## **Where can I go if I have any other questions?**

If you have any questions or comments about GCP2 in Birmingham email [GCP2@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk](mailto:GCP2@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk)