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I am pleased to present the Cheshire East Neglect Strategy 2017-19. This important multi-agency strategy has been developed by Cheshire East Safeguarding Children’s Board, in consultation with the Children and Young People’s Trust and, as such, applies to all agencies working within Cheshire East. It is expected that emerging or refreshed relevant agency policies and procedures will take into account the strategic priorities identified within this document.

I urge all agencies and professionals, along with the wider voluntary sector and community, to read the strategy, to sign up to it and to think about how you can make a purposeful contribution to its implementation.

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Whilst complex safeguarding i.e. child sexual exploitation, radicalisation etc are dominating the media, we must not lose sight of neglect. Neglect remains the most common form of child abuse across the UK and is usually the most common reason for a child being subject to a child protection plan. Numbers of recorded cruelty and neglect offences in England and Northern Ireland are now the highest they have been for a decade.

The impact of neglect on children and young people is enormous. Neglect causes great distress to children, leading to poor health, educational and social outcomes and is potentially fatal. Lives are destroyed, children’s abilities to make secure attachments are affected and their ability to attend and attain at school is reduced. Their emotional health and well-being is often compromised and this impacts on their success in adulthood and their ability to parent in the future.

This refreshed strategy builds on the achievements of the 2014-17 strategy and further demonstrates the commitment and ambition of partners in Cheshire East to maintain our focus to better identify children experiencing neglect and to more effectively join up the support offered to families in order to improve the outcomes for our children and young people

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