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One Minute Guide: Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

What is it?

The Redbridge Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is shortly due to launch as a new central resource which will receive all safeguarding and child protection enquiries and referrals. It will be a major milestone in the drive to protect vulnerable children in Redbridge. MASH is an example of integrated working where professionals from Children's Social Care, Police, Health, Education, Probation, Housing and the Youth Offending Service work together to safeguarding children and young people and provide a joined up service for families.

The MASH will be the nerve centre tasked with identifying risks and addressing concerns. This will in turn ensure timely and necessary interventions improving outcomes for vulnerable children and young people.

The MASH will draw together the skills and knowledge of all the key agencies involved in child protection across Redbridge.

How will it be used?

The MASH will allow the multi-agency safeguarding team to carry out joint confidential screening, research and referral of vulnerable children and young people.

Using an agreed set of criteria, the Head of the MASH will decide whether a case would benefit from going through the MASH process.

The process?

Each case will be assigned to a social worker who will gather any information available about the child and family concerned from their colleagues in the multi-agency team.

The Head of MASH will set deadlines on each case with many turned around within four hours and most within 24 hours.

All information will be collated by the social worker who reviews, analyse and writes a summary of the MASH record. The social worker will then recommend any further action.

The Head of the MASH will then review and make a decision on the most appropriate action which could include referral to the Child Protection and Assessment Team (CPAT), more support from the Early Intervention and Family Support Service or no further action.

Three example case scenarios:

Case Study 1

A self-referral was made by a woman expressing concerns about her own and her children's safety due to domestic violence in the home. MASH police information revealed the woman's partner had previous convictions for violence.

School information showed that the children are presenting with behavioural difficulties in school and are struggling to concentrate in class. The multi-agency approach enabled children's social care to immediately address the safeguarding issues.

Case Study 2

A school contacted the MASH as it was concerned about a pupil who recently came to school with marks on her body that looked like bruising and cigarette burns.

Information gathered from health colleagues in the MASH showed that the child had just been diagnosed with a complex skin condition. The MASH was able to ascertain quickly that there were no immediate safeguarding concerns.

Case Study 3

An anonymous referral was received by the MASH from a resident concerned that a young child is regularly witnessing domestic violence at home. Additional research within the MASH revealed that there is a restraining order against the father at that address and that he is currently on probation.

The multi-agency approach enabled children's social care to immediately address the safeguarding issues and for the police to address the additional concerns.

What should you do if you are concerned about a child?

If you have a concern about the welfare or safety of a child you should contact the Redbridge MASH via:

Tel: 020 8708 3885
Fax: 020 8708 3886
Email: cpat.referrals@redbridge.gov.uk

For information go to the Council's website Redbridge i: www.redbridge.gov.uk/mash