

Barnsley Children's Integrated Assessment & Investigation Service including a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Barnsley Council and South Yorkshire Police have co-located their children's social care assessment and police investigation teams and have created a MASH, including partner agencies.

MASH means Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub.

MASH functions have been around nationally for a number of years. In simple terms, MASH involves the co-location of agencies around the Children's Social Care front door, and a collaborated approach to information sharing and decision making in relation to children's social care referrals. The Home Office published the final report of the Multi-Agency Working and Information Sharing Project in 2014, which provide detail and evaluation in relation to the range of multi-agency models across the country and will provide useful background. The report can be found at www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/.../MASH.pdf.

The Children's Integrated Assessment & Investigation Service including a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is based at the Worsborough lift building.

The MASH has been operational from 18th July 2013

The services and functions located in the Children's Integrated Assessment & Investigation Service are as follows:

- Children's Social Care Screening & Duty Team
- The MASH
- The CSE Team
- Police Protection Vulnerable Persons Team
- Children's Social Care Assessment Teams

The wider assessment and investigation personnel (both Social Work and Police Protecting Vulnerable Person Team) are co-located on the same premises to ensure close links and timely, joined up co-ordinated interventions for children who need them.

The services and functions located in the MASH will be as follows:

- Children's screening social workers;
- Police screening personnel;
- Dedicated Health post

Virtual links have been created including with early help services, education professionals, housing services and adult's social care services.

The reason for creating the MASH in Barnsley is in order to improve the timeliness and quality of information sharing across agencies, informing multi-agency decision making in relation to the children in need of safeguarding in the borough.

The process for making referrals will remain the same.

For schools staff making referrals, the process remains the same as currently (Request for Service form completed and / or telephone conversation with screening Social Worker). Once the referral is received, where complex multi-agency information needs to be understood and analysed, this will be initiated by the collection of agency representatives within the MASH. For schools, it is likely that they will have reasonably consistent contact from the Designated Education MASH representative in relation to social care referrals. That post holder will search the education information held around children in the borough and will contribute on behalf of schools to the decision making function around which children require social work interventions based on that information.

For health practitioners making referrals, the process remains the same as currently (Request for Service form completed and / or telephone conversation with screening Social Worker). The Designated Health practitioner will search and make enquiries with health agencies, to gather information held around children in the borough and will contribute to the decision making function in respect of children who require social work interventions based on that information

The processes for the public to make referrals remain unchanged.

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