



Briefing Note 4th December 2015: Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Introduction

A new hub to improve the safeguarding response for children, young people and vulnerable adults in Dudley borough is being developed.

The Dudley Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) will bring together key professionals from organisations across the borough, including the council, police, probation, NHS and the voluntary sector.

Why are we setting one up?

Working together to protect and safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults is our top priority. We know there are inconsistencies in how information is currently gathered and how long it can take for decisions to be made. The MASH will change all that.

Working together, under one roof, partner agencies can securely share relevant information they have on the child/family or vulnerable adult who has been referred and then swiftly decide on the best course of action to take.

This multi-agency working is key to early and effective identification of risk, improved information sharing, joint decision making and co-ordinated action, leading to improved outcomes.

The MASH will:

- Act as a single point of entry for referrals
- Triage referrals
- Enable thorough research of each case to identify potential risk
- Share information between agencies
- Facilitate early intervention – to prevent the need for more intensive interventions at a later stage
- Manage cases through co-ordinated interventions

The need for effective multi-agency working and the sharing of information to ensure better safeguarding outcomes has been raised in a number of reviews and statutory

guidance. The failure of agencies to adequately share information is a common theme in serious care reviews. High profile national cases, such as the death of four-year-old Daniel Pelka, have highlighted the tragic consequences of when crucial information indicating risk is held by just one agency and is not appropriately shared with others.

MASHs have already been established in a number of areas across the country and the West Midlands, including Sandwell, Coventry and Birmingham, Solihull and Walsall.

Who will be in the MASH?

Staff from:

Dudley Council's children's social care

West Midlands Police

Dudley Council's adults social care

Dudley Council's housing services

Education representatives

Health colleagues

Virtual links will exist to other services and agencies, such as:

Probation

Mental health

Early intervention

Young people's services

Timescales

The MASH is due to be launched in April 2016 with an initial focus on children and young people, but is due to expand to include vulnerable adults within a year.

For further information please contact: Stefan Chapleo, Interim Head of Assessment & Referral on 01384 816088 or by email Stefan.Chapleo@dudley.gov.uk

Deanne Fishbourne (Interim Lead for Educational Outcomes)

Merlin Joseph (Chief Officer, Children's Services)