Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
A guide for professionals

h&f
hammersmith & fulham

THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA

City of Westminster
What is the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub?

The purpose of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is to improve the quality of information sharing between professionals in order to make timely and informed decisions about risk based on accurate and up-to-date information. With this information the MASH is able to provide a brief risk assessment and recommendation to the front door services in Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster to assist in improving the quality of safeguarding decisions for children and their families and provide them with the most appropriate support and services as soon as possible.

The MASH comprises of representatives from Children’s Social Care alongside co-located professionals from the Met Police and the NHS. The MASH also has virtual links to other partners such as Education, Housing, Probation, YOT and UKBA.

Who can make a referral to the MASH?

The MASH is a unique service which sits separately but alongside the front door services of Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster Children’s Services. Referrals to the MASH Service are made via these boroughs or via police reports.

Social Care Referrals

Due to the MASH sitting separately from each front door service, direct referrals from professionals or members of the local community are not received by the MASH team. Where there are concerns for the safety and welfare of a child, the general public or any other professional body must make contact with the appropriate contact within the Local Authority where the child resides. These referrals will be screened and then sent to MASH if further checks are needed to inform the decision around service provision.

All numbers needed to make a referral are listed on the back of this leaflet.

Police Referrals

When children come into contact with the police and vulnerabilities are identified, the police work with MASH partners to assess the level of risk and will route safeguarding concerns to the relevant borough via the MASH. Referrals that are made by the police to the MASH are screened by managers in the MASH and allocated for MASH checks if needed.
**What is the threshold for referrals to the MASH?**

MASH Checks are usually undertaken on referrals when it is not clear what service provision is required. For example, the level of risk may be unclear and it is not possible to determine whether a case requires a social work assessment or not. If it is clear that a social work assessment is required, MASH will not undertake checks as it should be part of the assessment process.

**Do I need to obtain consent before making a referral to MASH?**

For Social Care referrals, it is the responsibility of the Front Doors to ensure that parents are aware of referrals and establish consent for checks. Any person aged 16 and over must provide consent for themselves when this is appropriate and/or possible.

It is acknowledged that there may be times where a child’s safety or welfare may be compromised by trying to obtain consent. Where MASH undertakes full or partial checks without consent having been obtained, the justification for doing so will be recorded and assessed to be proportionate.

**Does MASH work directly with families?**

Responsibility for planning and providing services continues to rest with the borough in which the child is resident.

For police referrals, MASH workers will attempt to establish contact with families via the telephone to verify information, obtain further details and request consent for MASH checks.
What does BRAG refer to?
BRAG refers to a colour-coded level of safeguarding risk that has been assigned to a case:

- **Blue** no safeguarding risk identified.
- **Red** Child or young person appears to be at risk of immediate and/or serious harm. MASH checks, where undertaken are considered urgent and to be completed within 4 hours.
- **Amber** Child or young person at risk of harm but not imminent and possibly less serious. MASH information checks to be completed within 24 hours.
- **Green** Concerns about the wellbeing of a child or young person, which if not addressed, may lead to poor outcomes. MASH information checks to be completed within 3 working days.

Is information shared outside of MASH?
Only information that is relevant to the safeguarding of the child is shared with the Front Door Teams in Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea, and Westminster. The information provided by MASH partners is for immediate risk assessment purposes only and is not used for any subsequent assessments outside the MASH process.

The information provided by partners is generally a brief snapshot of the current situation and if social work assessments are required, it is expected that updating information is obtained first hand by the assessing social worker.

Make a social care referral
If you want to report any abuse or discuss concerns in relation to children and young people please contact:

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**Hammersmith & Fulham**

- Email: familyservices@lbhf.gov.uk
- Phone: 020 8753 6600

**Kensington and Chelsea**

- Email: socialservices@rbkc.gov.uk
- Phone: 020 7361 3013

**Westminster**

- Email: accessstochildrensservices@westminster.gov.uk
- Phone: 020 7641 4000

**MASH**

- Phone: 0207 641 3991