

# Southwark Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

## A guide for professionals



### Fair process statement data sharing

All partners will sign up to information sharing agreement that specifies what data can be shared within the MASH, and what happens to that data once the MASH manager makes a decision about the case.

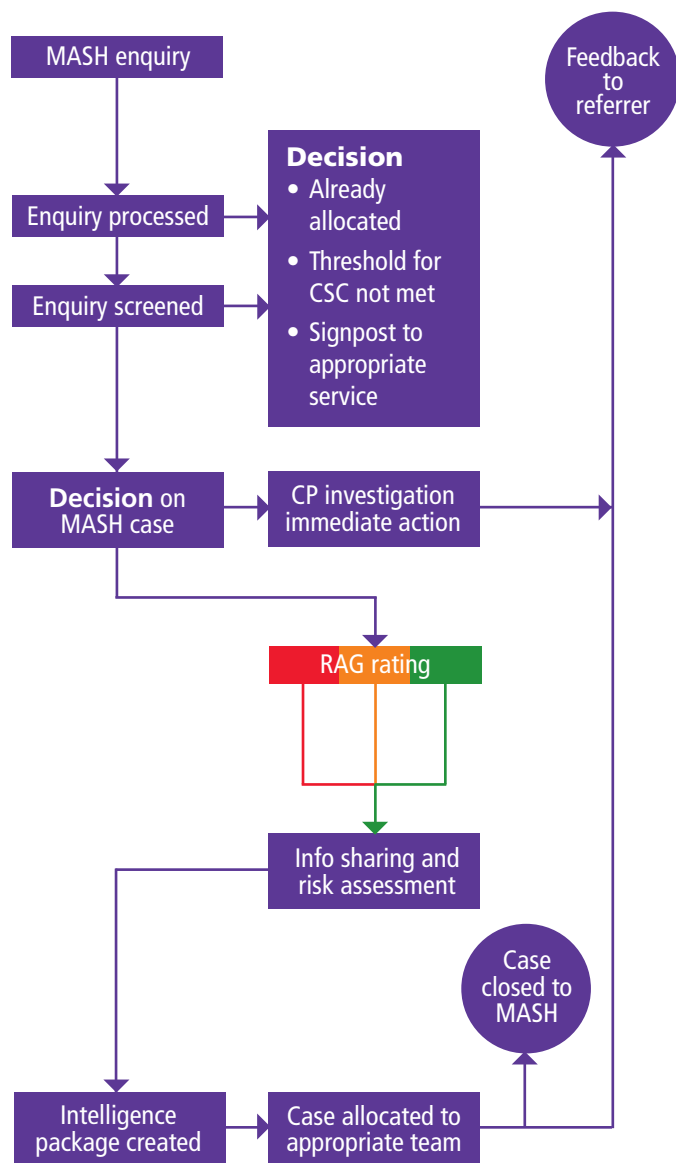
Each agency will assess whether it is appropriate for their information to be shared in line with the information sharing agreement on a case by case basis.

The data will be held securely and confidentially. The MASH will have physical, electronic and managerial safeguards to ensure that sensitive information is only accessed by those who 'need to know' about it.

Only relevant information disclosed during the MASH process will be passed to the non-MASH professionals receiving the case.

In some cases, a MASH worker may hold confidential information which the MASH manager may need to know to make a decision, but which is too sensitive to be shared elsewhere (for example, when an ongoing police investigation is taking place). In these cases the MASH system will indicate that there is confidential information held, but will not reveal the information itself.

### The MASH process



### Contact MASH

020 7525 1921 or [mash@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:mash@southwark.gov.uk)

**Core hours:** 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday  
Out of hours emergency contact 020 7525 5000

## What is MASH?

The local authority and partners have established a Multi-Agency Safeguarding hub (MASH) in Southwark.

The MASH brings together a team of multi disciplinary professionals from partner agencies into the same room to deal with all safeguarding concerns, where someone is concerned about the safety or wellbeing of a child.

Within the MASH, information from partner agencies will be collated to assess risk and decide what action to take. As a result, the agencies will be able to act quickly, in a coordinated and consistent way, ensuring that vulnerable children and families are kept safe.

## Where does the idea come from?

The MASH model originated in Devon County Council and has been replicated in a number of areas nationally, and is being implemented in every London borough. The MASH in Southwark has been developed from the best practice from these areas.

## What are the benefits of MASH?

The MASH process has the following benefits:

- Faster, more coordinated and consistent responses to safeguarding concerns about children and families
- An improved 'journey' for the child with greater emphasis on early intervention and better informed services provided at the right time
- Greater ability to identify potential vulnerability, enabling more preventative action to be taken and, dealing with cases before they escalate
- Closer partnership working, clearer accountability and less duplication of effort
- A reduction in the number of inappropriate referrals and rereferrals to children's social care

## Who is in MASH?

- Children's social care (inc: children with disabilities and integrated homeless team)
- Youth Offending Service
- Police
- Probation
- Early help service and specialist family focus team
- Housing
- Voluntary groups (Solace)
- Community health and midwifery
- Mental health services
- Substance misuse
- Adult social care

## What is the MASH process?

- A screening team of managers from partner agencies sitting in MASH will analyse contacts and jointly decide whether the contact goes into the MASH information sharing process
- The MASH team manager will prioritise those contacts for MASH information sharing using a RAG rating (Red/Amber/Green). More info on the RAG rating is shown in the diagram
- Staff from every agency in MASH will gather and share securely information to enable an informed decision to be made
- The MASH team manager will use the collected information to decide the most appropriate interventions for the child's identified needs
  - Assessment by children's social care
  - Signpost to agency service – such as early help or specialist family focus
  - Case closed, no further action
- The team receiving the case will receive a summary of the relevant information and feedback will be provided on outcome of MASH process to the referrer.

**For more information on MASH in Southwark please contact:  
mash@southwark.gov.uk or call  
020 7525 1921**