

A guide on information sharing

What is Portsmouth MASH?

The Portsmouth Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) was established in 2016 to manage all safeguarding contacts in relation to a child's safety or wellbeing.

The Portsmouth MASH applies the locally agreed threshold criteria to determine whether statutory services should be provided by Children's Social Care or whether Early Help support should be offered to meet the child's identified needs.

The MASH uses the family safeguarding approach when working with families. This is relational and restorative practice model that is an evidence-based way of working that understands the quality of human experiences (individually and collectively) as directly correlating with positive experiences of making, maintaining and mending relationships.

Information Sharing

Portsmouth City Council and partners have an established information sharing framework which outlines responsibilities associated with information gathering, recording and sharing.

Practitioners should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess, and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children. (Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2023)

Information sharing is also essential for the identification of patterns of behaviour when a child has gone missing, when multiple children appear associated to the same context or locations of risk, or in relation to children in the secure estate where there may be multiple local authorities involved in a child's care.

Informing Parents and Carers about information sharing

In circumstances where there is evidence of a safeguarding concern (PSCP Threshold Document) you are required to share this with MASH.

Practitioners should aim to be as transparent as possible by informing families what information they are sharing and with whom, if it is safe to do so.

Therefore, it is good practice for practitioners to share concerns they have with parents or carers and inform them that they will be contacting Portsmouth MASH, unless to do so would put the child at further risk.

Why share information with parents or carers?

Portsmouth has developed and implemented a [model of family practice](#) founded on the principles of restorative and relational practice. This approach should be used by all agencies when working with children and families. Being honest and open with families benefits children and is supportive in leading to sustained change and effective multi-agency working.

Is data protection legislation a barrier to sharing information?

The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR **do not** prohibit the collection and sharing of personal information but rather provide a framework to ensure that personal information is shared appropriately. In particular, the Data Protection Act 2018 balances the rights of the information subject (the individual whom the information is about) and the possible need to share information about them.

Further Information

If you are concerned a child has been significantly harmed or is at risk of suffering significant harm please contact MASH via phone or email and follow up within 48 hours via the [Inter-Agency Contact Form](#)

MASH can be contacted on:

- During office hours - 0845 671 0271 or 023 9268 8793, mash@portsmouthcc.gov.uk
- Out of office hours (evenings, weekends and bank holidays) 0300 555 1373

This leaflet can be read in conjunction with the following guidance:

- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#)
- [Information Sharing - Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services for children, young people, parents and carers 2024](#)
- [Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Partnership Threshold Document](#)
- [Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth & Southampton \(HIPS\) procedures](#)
- [Portsmouth Multi-Agency Safeguarding Strategy 2023-2026](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(for those working in schools & colleges\)](#)