

**All Service/Partner Briefing
First Response Service
Fully Operational as of the 9th April**

9th April 2018

To All

Medway Children's Services is extremely pleased to announce the launch of the First Response Service, the Front Door for accessing support and intervention for children, young people and the families of Medway.

The First Response Service includes the Single Point of Access, the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and the Assessment Teams, which will be **fully operational as of the 9th April 2018**, and will include new safeguarding reporting arrangements.

Most children and young people have a number of basic needs that can be supported through a range of universal services. These services include education, early years, health, housing, youth services, leisure facilities and services provided by voluntary organisations. However, some children have more complex needs and may require access to specialist services to support them. As of Monday 9th April **all contacts and referrals** concerning children and young people will be received by the First Response Service and screened by the **Single Point of Access (SPA)** before being passed to the most appropriate service.

Any member of the public, including children and young people, can call First Response when they have concerns about a child. For professionals, in the majority of cases, you will have had a discussion with parents, children and young people, and obtained their consent to make contact with Children's Services. Consent **should be gained** prior to submitting a concern to First Response, **unless when to do so would place any child or young person at risk of harm**, in which case a full explanation of the circumstances must be given when making contact either via the portal or via telephone.

A new referral and contact form has been designed for members of the public and professionals to report any safeguarding concerns about a child or young person you may have. The form once submitted will be reviewed and assessed to enable the correct action to be taken.

The Contact and Referral form can be found [Here](#)
Or at the following address

https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200170/children_and_families/600/worried_about_a_child/1

If however you consider the child to be at significant risk or harm please contact Children's Services First Response Service

on

01634 334466

This is the daytime number for anyone to call when they have concerns about a child.

For concerns out of hours the contact number is

03000419191

In the case of emergencies, call the Police: **999**

Children's Services will consider all the information provided at the point of contact using the ***Inter-Agency Threshold Criteria for Children in Need*** and may:

- Make suggestions about alternative services including signposting to other agencies,
- Refer to the Early Help Hub where child or young persons needs can be met by a multi agency response at Level 2 to 3, or
- Refer to Children's Services First Response Assessment Service when the information indicates the likelihood that the child or young persons needs require a response at Level 4.

For those cases which need more in depth consideration for a decision to be made will be considered by a social worker within the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), which will also benefit from the expertise of partner agencies, who we are really pleased to welcome, in order to provide the most appropriate level of safeguarding information, advice, guidance, support and intervention to enable the best possible outcomes for Medway's children, young people and their families.

All of the staff and partners are very excited about these developments of the MASH itself. We will be more than happy to speak with you directly about any questions that you may have during the course of a contact or referral.

It is hoped you will find this new and innovative service extremely useful and enable confidence and certainty when working with safeguarding issues to help protect and support children and young people in need.

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