

Warwickshire THRESHOLDS FOR SERVICES

MEETING THE NEEDS OF
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN
WARWICKSHIRE

Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board April 2017

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Introduction

This Warwickshire Thresholds for Services Document is designed to help anyone living or working in Warwickshire to think about the needs of children and young people and work together to ensure that they get the most appropriate services to meet their needs. Universally available services are accessible to all children subject to their age e.g. schools. Some children and young people need more help at various times of their lives due to a wide range of issues. All additional, targeted, enhanced, and specialist services are provided so that children in need of services can achieve or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, and where their health and development will be significantly impaired, without the provision of services.

The 'windscreen' diagram on page 4 is a representation of how the extent and complexity of a child or young person's circumstances can move both up and down over time and provides a visual guide and a common language to discuss levels of need. To assist in this, the continuum of need is divided into 4 levels. The windscreen is followed by some descriptors of the levels of need as a quick reference guide which can be printed onto A3 paper and laminated for display in receptions and workplaces of service providers.

The principle of ensuring that children, young people and their families experience the right plan, at the right time with minimal disruption and change is crucial to service delivery. Developing a continuum of need has been important to how we deliver services and therefore we have arranged ourselves in order to ensure that we are better able to deliver. Services have been mapped across strategies and plans to enable practitioners to understand this.

The remainder of the document provides a more detailed explanation of when an Early Help Single Assessment and Early Help Family Support Plan are appropriate and when an assessment by Social Care should be considered.

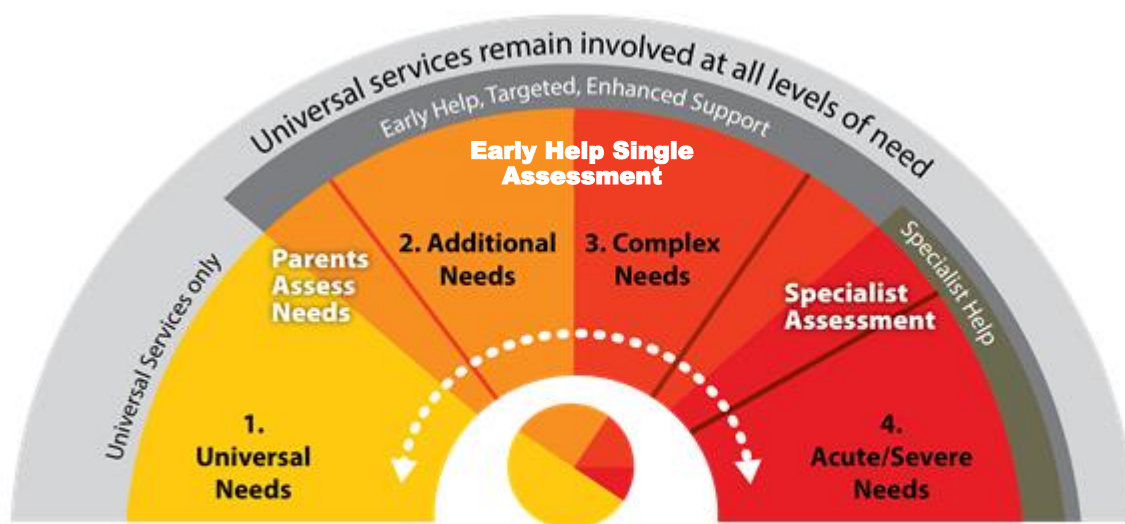
The LSCB are required to publish a multi-agency threshold document that includes:

- the process for the early help assessment and the type and level of early help services to be provided; and

- the criteria, including the level of need, for when a case should be referred to local authority children’s social care for assessment and for statutory services
- this should be read in conjunction with the Local Protocols for Assessment www.warwickshire.gov.uk/wscb
- as well as the WCC Single Assessment procedure.

Managers and workers in all services for children, young people and their families, whether they are run by Local Authority, Health, Schools, Commissioned or Voluntary Sector organisations have a responsibility to ensure that they are working within these threshold guidelines and understand where their provision sits in meeting the needs of children and young people in Warwickshire. (See [Single Assessment Strategy](#))

THRESHOLDS FOR SERVICES



The windscreen is a visual representation of the 4 tiers of needs. They are as follows:

Threshold descriptions

| | |
|--|---|
| Level 1 | Children and young people Has needs that are met within universal provision (such as through their GP or School) |
| Services | Universal Services |
| <p>All children and young people require universal services at Tier 1 such as maternity services at birth, health visiting and Children’s Centre in early years, school and youth services for older children.</p> <p>Universal Services seek, together with parents, carers and families to meet all the needs of children and young people so that they are happy and healthy and able to learn and develop securely. Universal services are provided as of right to all children including those with additional and intensive needs.</p> | |

The Family Information Service can provide information on the range of services available in your area <http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/fis> 01926 742274 or 0845 0

| | |
|--|--|
| Level 2 | Children and young people with Additional Needs that can be met through a single agency response and/or partnership working |
| Services | Universal Services plus some additional help and support |
| <p>Many children and young people require some additional support. Parent(s)/carer(s) usually access these services for their children by applying directly to them or by asking the relevant universal service to help them. Some services can be accessed directly by young people. Children with ‘<i>additional</i>’ needs are best supported by those who already work with them, such as Children’s Centres or schools, organising additional support with local partners as needed.</p> <p>Where the needs are such that there are a number of services involved it will be advisable to assess the child or young person’s needs under Early Help Single Assessment with an appointed Lead Professional.</p> <p>The child requires help that would not ordinarily be provided to every child but can be provided by universal services. This additional help should be recorded on a plan and its effectiveness be reviewed on a regular basis.</p> | |

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Level 3 | Children and young people with Complex and Specialist needs or Child In Need requiring a coordinated response with a Lead Professional |
| Services | Universal Services plus Early Help, Targeted and Enhanced Support |

Some children and young people and their families have more complex needs requiring the provision of coordinated, targeted and enhanced services following an Early Help Single Assessment or in some circumstances a Social Work Single Assessment.

Where targeted or enhanced services are required, a Lead Professional will co-ordinate the child's plan, to support the child, young person and parent(s).

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Level 4 | Children and Young People with Acute or Severe needs or is a child in the need of protection |
| Services | Universal plus Early Help, Targeted, Enhanced and Specialist Services |

Specialist services are where the needs of the child are so great that statutory and/or specialist intervention is required to keep them safe or to ensure their continued development. This will usually include Children's Social Care, Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) Tier 3 & 4 or Youth Offending Service.

By working together effectively with children with additional needs and by providing co-ordinated multi-disciplinary/agency support and services for those with intensive needs, we seek to prevent more children and young people requiring statutory interventions and reactive specialist services.

Where Social Care is involved the allocated Social Worker will take the role of lead professional in co-ordinating the multi-agency plan to support the parent(s)/carer(s) which may include services delivered by Early Help to ensure that children and young people are receiving the services they need. This will be through the child's plan as 'in need', in 'need of protection' or as a Child Looked After

Within assessment practitioners should be able to describe areas of risk, and harm as well as need, strengths and resilience factors within the child's circumstances

It is important that children and young people have access to services at the right time and are able to move between the levels of service including stepping down when the levels of need or risk diminish. Equally important in the safeguarding of children and young people are practitioners who work collaboratively and are able to keep their judgments under constant critical review being willing to respond and challenge new information

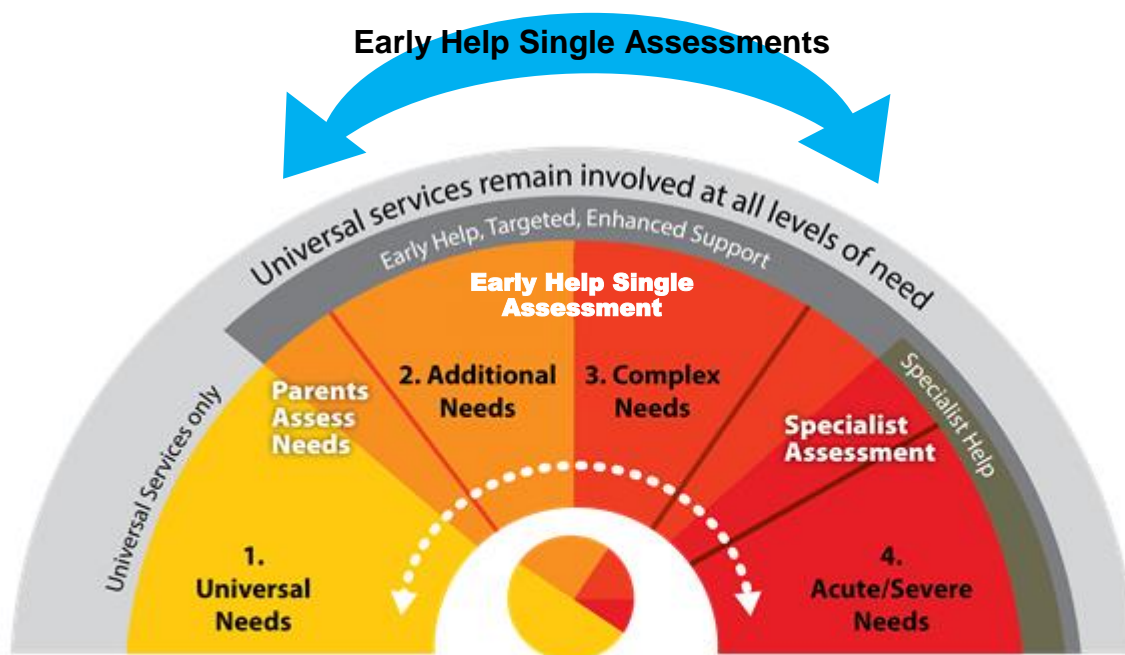
This multi- agency threshold document is informed by the Statutory Framework, Legislation and Working Together Guidance 2015

Locality Panels

Locality Panels are multi-agency panels designed to act as a single point of service allocation to children, young people and families where additional needs at level 2 and 3 of the Threshold Criteria have been identified and established joint working processes via the professional support system and Early help (CAF) are not sufficient to improve outcomes, but where there are no immediate safeguarding concerns. ([See Locality Panels Leaflet](#))

Early Help (Single Assessment formally known as CAF)

An Early Help Single Assessment co-ordinated by a Lead Professional enables those professionals working closely with children and young people, to ensure that children, young people and families get the help they need.



An Early Help Single Assessment can be initiated by any professional who has attended the Warwickshire training. This will enable the needs of the child or young person and their family to be identified and the best services to be co-ordinated to meet their needs. The Lead Professional will organise a Family Support Meeting with the parent(s) young people and relevant services to co-ordinate the Family Support Plan.

Effective Early Help relies upon local agencies working together and using the Early

Help Single Assessment to:-

- Identify children and young people and their families who would benefit from early help;
- Undertake a Single Assessment of the need for early help; and
- Provide additional, targeted or enhanced early help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family which focus on activity to significantly improve the outcomes for the child.

Before determining what services are to be provided for a particular child or young person, so far as is reasonably practicable and consistent with the child's welfare, professionals will consider the child or young person's perception of their circumstances and what they want to change and any ideas they have about what will help.

Where parents or a young person do not consent to Early Help, or do not use the services offered, then the Lead Professional should make a judgement as to whether, without significant help, the needs of the child will escalate. If so, a referral into Local Authority MASH may be necessary.

Where a child or young person or their family has very complex needs or the Early Help Family Support Plan has not resulted in the desired improvement outcomes for the child or young person, an assessment by a Local Authority Social Care may be appropriate and can be referred under the 'step-up procedures'.

Professionals can consult with a children's Social Worker in the Local Authority if they are unsure whether a Social Work Assessment is necessary and this can be done directly to the Locality Children's Team but if a referral is to be made, this should be done through the MASH.

A new Early Help Assessment is not required if there is a recent assessment completed by Children's Social Care or a current multi-agency plan which can then be used to 'step-down services' to be delivered by Early Help.

If you have concern that a child or young person may be in need of protection, then the designated/named child protection lead for your service should be consulted and contact made with MASH on 01926 414144 and/or the police (in an emergency on 999 or on 101) Emergency Out of Hours Social Work Service Tel. 01926 886922

Please see WSCB Safeguarding Procedures online (These have replaced the Blue Book) for more information. <http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/wscbresources>.

Child in Need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health and

development will be significantly impaired, without the provision of services; or a child with a disability.

The Local Authority has a general duty to provide services to children who are children in need by providing a range and level of services appropriate to those children's needs <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/section/17> although those services may be provided by a range of agencies

Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 requires each local authority to make arrangements to promote cooperation between the authority, each of the authority's relevant partners and such other persons or bodies working with children in the local authority's area as the authority considers appropriate. The arrangements are to be made with a view to improving the wellbeing of all children in the authority's area, which includes protection from harm and neglect.

Where Social Care carry out an assessment of a child's needs due to the complexity of needs or high levels of professional concern about a child's welfare this will also be carried out under the general duties of Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 unless the threshold for enquiries under Section 47 are met.

Local authorities, with the help of other organisations, have a duty to make enquiries that a child or young person is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, to enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare. This Local Authority duty must be carried out by a Social Worker and will follow a Strategy Discussion to plan the enquiries jointly with the Police and health as appropriate.

There may be a need for immediate protection whilst the assessment is carried out, which might require the Police to take the child into Police Protection for up to 72 hours, or the Local Authority Social Worker may apply to the court for an Emergency Protection Order.

Some children in need may require Accommodation under **Section 20** of the Children Act 1989 because there is no one who has parental responsibility for them, because they are lost or abandoned or because the person who has been caring for them is prevented from providing them with suitable accommodation or care. The decision to seek a legal order or offer accommodation under Section 20 will be done in accordance with the department's procedures with the development of a child's plan designed to meet the specific level of need and risk.

Where the risk to the child means that it is unsafe for them to return home while the parent(s) are supported to make the changes required in order to provide safe care for their children, the Local Authority Social Worker can make an application under **Section 31** of the Children Act 1989, for the child to be made the subject of an Care Order. The Local Authority, as a Corporate Parent, sharing Parental Responsibility with the parent, must assess the child's needs and draw up a Care Plan which sets out the

services which will be provided to meet the child's identified needs including how their parents will be supported to make the changes necessary for the child to return safely to their care.

At every level of need, the aim of the multi-agency plan for the child is to improve the life experiences and outcomes for the children and young people, by providing them and their families with the services they need in order to reduce their need for additional services. Following successful work with a family at level 4, it is likely that a lead professional and Early Help Family Support Plan of level 3 or 2 support will continue to be necessary for a period of time to help the family sustain the changes made and can be met following the 'step-down' procedures. The use of Locality Panels will enable practitioners to share information and children, young people and families to move between tiers more seamlessly. Referrals on new cases and closed cases should be made to the Warwickshire MASH who will assess, triage and decide what further action should be taken.

MASH Consultation Service

Each agency will have its own safeguarding procedures which will detail how to identify and assess safeguarding concerns. However, further advice about thresholds and when to make a referral can be obtained from professionals own agency safeguarding leads or by calling the MASH. Professionals contacting the MASH cannot remain anonymous when seeking advice and children discussed should be identified to ensure effective advice is provided.

The Consultation Service aims to:

- Offer quick access via the telephone to Children's Safeguarding and Social Care advice.
- Provide advice on Children's Safeguarding and Social Care thresholds.
- Improve information sharing about universal and target services providing early help.
- Allow professionals the opportunity to talk through situations that are raising concern to help determine what an appropriate response might be, without the need for formal referral

How the Consultation Service works:

Consultation will be offered by MASH members of staff for all professionals seeking advice about children who they are concerned about. To undertake a consultation professionals should telephone the MASH on 01926 414144. The MASH will record the consultation against the child's details. The contacting professional is expected to follow the record keeping and information guidelines for their own agency, to record they have held a consultation. The MASH will not contact the family discussed but do

expect professionals to discuss any concerns they have with the people who have parental responsibility for the child.

Training

The Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board ensures that individual agencies provide workers with access to appropriate safeguarding training within their own agencies. The Board also provides a range of multi-agency safeguarding training. www.warwickshire.gov.uk/wscb

The Warwickshire Early Help Team provide multi-agency training for professionals in assessing children and young people's needs and co-ordinating services as a Lead Professional using Single Assessment and the child's plan.

Understanding Thresholds

Good background information and professional judgement are important in determining whether thresholds are met.

Consultation and dialogue can resolve most threshold issues between services but there is a [WSCB escalation procedure](#) for addressing contested thresholds at appendix13 of the WSCB Safeguarding procedures online.

The tables which follow are intended to provide a quick reference, by giving examples of the types of need experienced by children and young people at each level of need.

The vulnerabilities/indicators and indicative services listed are illustrative examples and are not a comprehensive list.

THRESHOLDS DOCUMENT – ACCESSING SERVICES FOR CHILDREN IN WARWICKSHIRE

| | Early Help | | Targeted Services | Statutory Intervention |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| Threshold | Universal Services Tier 1 | Additional Support Tier 2 | Complex needs/ Specialist / Child In Need Tier 3 | Acute / Child Protection Tier 4 |
| A Stepped Approach to Intervention | | | | |
| The unborn child or young person.... | Has needs that are met within universal provision (such as through their GP or School) | Has additional needs that can be met through a single agency response and/or partnership working | Has multiple and complex needs requiring a coordinated response with a Lead Professional | Has a high level of unmet and complex needs or is a child in the need of protection |
| Practitioners should always use their professional judgement: the following circumstances and key features are for guidance and to generate dialogue for consultation. Children with SEND* will be represented across all 4 tiers | | | | |
| Circumstances and Key Features | <p>Child's Development Needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting Developmental Milestones Has good emotional wellbeing and resilience Forms and maintains healthy relationships/good bonding Has a positive or developing sense of identity Able to perform self-care duties as appropriate to age Ability to protect self and be protected Achieving learning targets Appropriate Educational Attendance | <p><i>In addition to Universal Services</i></p> <p>Child's Developmental Needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor attachments Language and communication difficulties SEND Absence / truancy / exclusions Incidence of absence / missing from home Potential for becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) Delay in meeting developmental milestones Missing health checks / immunisations Minor health problems Early signs of offending / anti-social behaviour Underage sexual activity Early signs of substance misuse Poor self-esteem / mental health issues Teenage Pregnancy | <p><i>Despite intervention at 2, evidence of continuing.....</i></p> <p>Child's Developmental Needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child not meeting some of their developmental milestones. Displaying some signs of emotional and behavioural disorder Chronic recurring health problems Missed appointments affecting developmental progress Disabilities affecting access to mainstream services Teenage pregnancy Risky sexual behaviour Risk of entering youth justice system Fixed term / permanent exclusions / no school place Persistent absence from school Missing from | <p><i>Persistent / continued / severe.....</i></p> <p>Child's Developmental Needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child not meeting development milestones Non-organic failure to thrive Displaying signs of emotional and behavioural disorder Complex mental health problems including self-harm Acute eating disorder – life threatening Fixed term exclusions / permanent exclusions / no school place Risk of entry into care system Chronic persistent absence from school No access to core services Teenage parent / pregnancy |

| | Early Help | | Targeted Services | Statutory Intervention |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| | | | school / home regularly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displaying extremist views • Continuing substance misuse • Very low self-esteem / eating disorders • High level mental health issues • Poor skills resulting in social exclusion • Poor / ill-fitting clothes | under age 13 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child sexual exploitation • Offending behaviour / entering youth justice system • Displaying harmful behaviours to other children • Engaging others in extremist views • Substance misuse severely impairing development. |
| | Parenting Capacity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional warmth • Protected by carers • Secure and caring home • Receive and act on information advice and guidance • Appropriate boundaries maintained | Parenting Capacity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistent care arrangements • Poor supervision by parent / carer • Inconsistent parenting • Poor response to emerging needs • Historic context of parents / carers own childhood. | Parenting Capacity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning or physical disability impacts on parenting • Substance misuse • Mental Health issues • Parent non-compliance / cooperation • Persistent poor / inconsistent parenting / care arrangements • Being prosecuted for offences under the Education Act • Historic context of parent / carers own childhood. | Parenting Capacity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspected / actual physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect • Parental encouragement of abusive / offending behaviour • Continuing poor supervision in the home • Parental non-compliance / disguised compliance • Inconsistent parenting affects child's development progress • Private fostering • Offences relating to Person who poses a risk of harm to children • Previous child |

| | Early Help | | Targeted Services | Statutory Intervention |
|---------------------------|--|---|---|---|
| | | | | removed. |
| | <p>Family and Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive relationships • Appropriate housing • Maintaining healthy lifestyle • Supportive networks • Access to positive activities • Adequate income | <p>Family and Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young Carers • Poor parent / child relationships • Children of prisoners / parents with community orders • Bullying • Poor housing and poor home environment impacting on child's health • Community harassment / discrimination • Low income affects achievement • Poor access to core services • Risk of relationship breakdown • Concerns about possible domestic abuse • Risk of social exclusion • Risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE) | <p>Family and Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic abuse • Overcrowding or temporary housing / hostel • Poverty / worklessness • Poor attachments • Socially excluded family / harassment/ discrimination • Child being asked to undertake caring role of parent • Privately fostered child • No recourse to public funds • Transient families not accessing services • Significant risk of CSE | <p>Family and Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic abuse resulting in child being at risk of significant harm • Combination of substance misuse / mental health issues / domestic abuse • Homeless child / Family internationally homeless • Community harassment / discrimination • Extreme poverty affecting child well-being • Child being asked to undertake caring role of parent • Forced marriage, Honour based Violence, Female Genital Mutilation • Child trafficking • Known CSE |
| What do I do next? | Go direct to universal service or use the Warwickshire Family Information Service (WFIS) for | Consider Early Help office – see WFIS website: Warwickshire.gov.uk/FIS Referral to single | Initiate a multi-agency early help response. Contact First Response using the Multi-Agency Referral | Contact First Response using the MARF Out of hour's emergency duty team, Police 999 |

| | Early Help | | Targeted Services | Statutory Intervention |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| | information on services: Warwickshire.gov.uk/FIS | agency to meet identified need. | Form (MARF) | if at immediate risk. |
| Level of assessment | | Pre Early Help Action Plan Early Help Single Assessment | Early Help Single Assessment Neglect and Risk Assessment Children & Family Assessment – Section 17 (Child in Need)* CAMHS assessment | Section 47 (child protection) enquiries*/child protection plan Public law Outline Section 31* Care proceedings Section 20* (provision of accommodation) CAMHS assessment |
| Examples of services who provide help | Schools/Colleges Community Led Youth Services Housing Primary Health Services (GP, Dentist, Pharmacy, Optician) Midwives Health Visitors School Nurses Children Centres Community Children’s groups (stay and Play) Community and Voluntary Organisations | Schools/Colleges Community Led Youth Services Housing Primary Health Services (GP, Dentist, Pharmacy, Optician). Health Visitors School Nurses Family Nurse Partnership Portage for children with special educational needs & disabilities Children Centres Community Children’s groups (stay and Play) Community and Voluntary Organisations | Schools/Colleges Community Led Youth Services Housing Primary Health Services (GP, Dentist, Pharmacy, Optician). Health Visitors School Nurses Family Nurse Partnership Portage for children with special educational needs & disabilities Children Centres Community Children’s groups (stay and play) | Services that can undertake statutory non-voluntary interventions: Social Care / Police / Domestic Abuse Officers (Police) Child Sexual Exploitation Team. Other Services: Youth Justice Service (YJS) /Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) / Barnardos CSE/ School Nurses – Universal partnership Plus / Health Visitors – Universal Partnership Plus Children Centres |

Information

Knowing when and how to share information isn't always easy. Usually parents say they are happy for you to talk to other professionals who can help them and their children.

'Effective sharing of information between professionals and local agencies is essential for effective identification, assessment and service provision'
(Working Together 2015)

The WSCB Information Sharing Protocol can be found at appendix 9 of the WSCB Interagency Safeguarding Procedures www.warwickshire.gov.uk/wscb

Seven Golden Rules

1. The Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately
2. Be open and honest with the person (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement
3. Seek advice from your manager if you are not sure
4. If someone requests that some information is kept confidential then their wishes should be respected unless the sharing of the information is overridden in the public interest. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case
5. Consider safety and well-being: Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the person and others who may be affected by their actions
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure: Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those people who need to have it, is accurate and up to date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose

(Adapted from 'Information Sharing Guidance for practitioners and managers', DCSF, 2008)

Contact Information

Family Information Service

[01926 742274](tel:01926742274)

fis@warwickshire.gov.uk

Early Help Team

[01926 414147](tel:01926414147)

feedback@warwickshire.gov.uk

MASH

[01926 414144](tel:01926414144)

mash@warwickshire.gcsx.gov.uk

EDT

[01926 886922](tel:01926886922)