Description of the MASH

The London Borough of Hounslow Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub ("MASH") is made up of both virtual and onsite partners ("partners"). Onsite partners include dedicated representatives from Children’s Social Care ("CSC"), Metropolitan Police ("MPS"), Duty Education Welfare ("EWOs"), Hounslow Housing ("Housing"), Hounslow Youth Offending Team ("YOT") and Health Visitors from the National Health Service ("Health"). The MASH also has onsite access to Early Help Coordinators, the Domestic Abuse Coordinator, the Children Affected by Domestic Abuse Project ("CADA") and Hounslow Safeguarding Children’s Board Vulnerability & Exploitation Leads. The MASH has virtual links including with the No Recourse to Public Funds Network ("NRPF Network"), the National Probation Service Hounslow, Kingston & Richmond Office ("Probation") and the London Community Rehabilitation Company Limited ("CRC").

If there are other agencies that we know or suspect that hold information about your family ("other agencies"), these may be contacted for information either directly or through the relevant MASH representative.

Purpose of the MASH

The purpose of the MASH is to improve the quality of information sharing between professionals, to make timely and informed decisions about risk based on accurate and up to date information. The MASH is a service within the Hounslow Front Door in the London Borough of Hounslow. The “Front Door” refers to the service within CSC that receives referrals for a wide range of children with a wide range of needs, but particularly children at risk of poor outcomes, children in need and children at risk of significant harm. The MASH receives and reviews most referrals received by the Front Door, its role to determine threshold and escalate or deescalate to applicable services. The core functions of the MASH are:

- Assist the Front Door in ensuring the quality of safeguarding decisions about children and their families, including providing them with the most appropriate support and services in a timely manner.
- To act as a conduit to partner agencies when commencing contextual protective steps or actions that should be shared with these agencies.

Information sharing within the MASH and between the MASH, its partners and other agencies

Information sharing may take place within the MASH, or between the MASH and partners referred to herein. Information may be sought by MASH and received from partners and other agencies in written, electronic or verbal form.

Personal information, for example, your name, address, gender, DOB, ethnicity, and relationships within the extended family and the family home may be collected and shared within the MASH.

The MASH receives enquiries or referrals about children or families. These are received from professionals or members of the public. The MASH may seek further information from partners or other agencies to make appropriate, timely and informed decisions any service that a child may require. Partners have signed a MASH Information Sharing Agreement which governs the processing of data after it is received by the MASH.

The parent or carer will normally be informed before an enquiry is made by the MASH, unless this could place the child or someone else at further risk or undermine a police investigation.

Using all the information it receives, the MASH will do a brief risk or needs assessment, which will make recommendations on the next steps which can include:

- Providing advice and guidance
- Recommending or referring directly to early help services
- Escalating to children’s social care for further inquiries

The legal justification for sharing information

Information will be processed by the MASH under strict protocols in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 ("DPA"), the General Data Protection Regulation ("GDPR") and other relevant legislation. Each situation is considered individually, and only relevant and proportionate checks are undertaken. Information will be held securely and only be used and shared with partners on a strict need to know basis, for the purposes of:

- Keeping children or young people safe or ensuring they get the best services that they need.
- Crime prevention or detection.
- Maintaining public safety
We will only use your personal information when the law allows us to most commonly under:

- GDPR Article 6(1)(c) “processing is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation to which the controller is subject”
  The legal obligation arises from the DPA and other acts of parliament including:
  - Children’s Act 1989
  - Human Rights Act 1998
  - Crime and Disorder Act 1998
  - Data Protection Act 1998
  - Criminal Justice and Court Service Act 2000
  - Children’s Act 2004
  - Health and Social Care Act 2012
- GDPR Article 6(1)(e) “processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller”

The Editorial Board of the London Child Protection Procedures has published guidance for London local authorities at: http://www.londoncp.co.uk/

How long do we keep your information?

Once your personal information is no longer required it will be securely deleted. The date that data is deleted is determined by the London Borough of Hounslow retention schedule which can be provided on request.

Your rights and access to your information

The data protection law gives you the following rights:

- The right to be informed.
- The right of access.
- The right to rectification.
- The right to erasure.
- The right to restrict processing.
- The right to data portability.
- The right to object.
- Rights in relation to automated decision making and profiling.

Depending on the lawful basis on which the Council relies on for processing your personal data you may not always be able to exercise some of these rights. For more information about your rights please visit the ICO’s website.

The Council tries to be as open as it can be in terms of giving people access to their personal information. Individuals can find out if we hold any personal information by making a Subject Access Request (“SAR”). You can make a SAR to the Council by completing the online form or emailing the Customer Relations team.

You may contact the Council if you have further questions or concerns about how we use your data at:

Hounslow MASH Front Door Supervisor
Hounslow House,
7 Bath Road,
Hounslow TW3 3EB
Email: childrensocialcare@hounslow.gov.uk

Data Protection Officer

The Council’s Data Protection Officer can be contacted on:

Information Governance Team
Hounslow House
7 Bath Road
Hounslow
Middlesex
TW3 3EB
Email: informationgovernance@hounslow.gov.uk
The Information Commissioner

The Information Commissioner is the UK’s independent body set up to uphold information rights. If you have any concerns regarding privacy practices or about exercising your data protection rights, you may contact the Information Commissioner’s Office at:

Information Commissioner’s Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane, Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545 745
Website: https://ico.org.uk/
Email: casework@ico.org.uk

Changes in your circumstances

We strongly recommend that you promptly notify us of any changes in your circumstances or personal details, so we can maintain an accurate and up to date record of your information.

Review of this Privacy Notice

This Privacy Notice was agreed by the MASH Strategic Board (“Board”) in July 2019 and will be reviewed every 12 months thereafter by the Board, who are responsible for governance of the Hounslow MASH.