

## One Minute Guide Top Tips for a MASH Referral

July 2025

If a child is at imminent risk, then a referral will be taken over the phone, but it must always be followed up by a MARF (Multi-Agency Referral Form) within 24hrs.

### Making a good quality referral

#### **What is the family composition?**

Please include full names of everyone in the family, their current address (or any other they might use), if you know of any significant people and relationships in their life and any contact details you might have. Please include who holds Parental Responsibility for the child.

#### **What's happening right now which is causing concern?**

Be descriptive about what you see and hear is happening for the child, being clear about where there could be indication or evidence of significant harm. If you have been able to observe an impact to the child because of what is happening, please do include this and if you could reasonably predict what might happen if assessment or intervention is not provided, please state what you think might happen.

#### **What strengths and positive are you seeing?**

Have you been able to identify any areas of strength within the family, that may have demonstrated safety or prevented harm in the past. If there are safe people within the family or friends' network, these could be included, giving details about how they have promoted safety or been supportive.

#### **Suggested next steps:**

Tell us about the current support are you offering the children and their family? Please describe what support you believe, or they have told you that they might need?

#### **Informed consent or agreement for the referral:**

As the referrer, it is your responsibility to discuss your rationale for making this referral with the family. If you feel that by doing so this child would be placed at risk of significant harm, please contact us on 02476788555 to discuss this further. It is expected that all referrals made to MASH have been discussed before the referral is made with the family unless there is increased risk of significant harm for the child.

#### **Demonstrating evidence of threshold of harm:**

Having considered Coventry's threshold document, how have you applied what is happening right now which is causing concern to this guidance?

## How and where to make a referral

**To complete a referral, please click the link below:**

[Multi-agency referral and initial information - Introduction and Consent - Coventry City Council.](#)

If you have completed an Early Help Assessment, this should also be submitted as this will support us to better understand the detail of needs, risks and what has happened leading up to this referral.

### **Contact us:**

If there is no immediate danger or you need advice prior to making a referral, you should call the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub on 024 7678 8555 or email [MASH@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:MASH@coventry.gov.uk).

Outside of office hours, a social worker can be contacted on 024 7683 2222.

### **Threshold Documents:**

As outlined in Coventry's threshold guidance, where there are child protection or safeguarding concerns that fall into the Level 4 category of need, please refer to the MASH. Where concerns are categorised as Level 3, these can be referred to our Family Hubs. Please access our [Family Hubs](#) website to consider what is on at the hubs, who to contact to enable referral or appropriate sign posting for families.

## Safeguarding with respect

[Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility](#), and in Coventry we all want what is best for children, young people, adults and families. To achieve this, we need to work together to make decisions in keeping children and their families safe.

Children, young people and their families have a right to have '[respect for their private and family life](#)'. Any professional intervention is taken seriously, and the more information obtained with consent from the family and shared to inform the most proportionate intervention, the better the decision making will be for the child and their family.

In making a clear and concise referral, this will mean that a family does not have to re-tell their story multiple times in sometimes traumatic circumstances for them.

It is vital as professionals that we share the right information to enable a child and their family's lived experience to be captured respectfully and to ensure the right action is taken to protect children.

We don't want to involve ourselves in people's lives unnecessarily, so the information shared enables us to consider this alongside any other information we may have reasonable access to in order to build a considered understanding of the child and family's lived experience, which in turn will support us to measure risk, impact and threshold of support or safeguarding required.

## Further information

Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership: <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/cscp>

Coventry City Council Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH):

<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/childrens-social-care/coventrys-multi-agency-safeguarding-hub-mash>

Escalation Policy: <https://westmids-coventry.trixonline.co.uk/resources/local-guidance>

Effective Support Guidance: <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/file/45177/effective-support-for-children-families>