



**Standard Operating Procedure for the Children and Families Hub and the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub**

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| **Document Purpose** | Standard Operating Procedure – Children and Families Hub and Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub Operating Procedures |  |
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| **Circulation List** | Membership of the Children and Families Hub & MASH Operational Group Membership of the Children and Families Hub & MASH Strategic Board |
| **Description** | This document provides the operational procedure for the Children and Families Hub Front Door Service and the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub  |
| **Linked Policies** | [Jersey's Children First (gov.je)](https://www.gov.je/caring/jerseyschildrenfirst/Pages/index.aspx)[Continuum-of-Childrens-Needs-Guidance-2024- (safeguarding.je)](https://safeguarding.je/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Continuum-of-Childrens-Needs-Guidance-2024-Final.pdf)[Children and Young People's Plan 2024 to 2027 (gov.je)](https://www.gov.je/caring/children/strategicplanning/pages/childrensplan.aspx)[Children and Young People Jersey Law 2022 Statutory Guidance (gov.je)](https://www.gov.je/Caring/Children/ChildrenWelfare/Pages/ChildrenAndYoungPeopleJerseyLaw2022StatutoryGuidance.aspx#InformationSharing) |
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3. **Introduction**

The Jersey’s Children First practice framework sets out the responsibility for everyone working with children to notice when a child has emerging needs for help and support and to do something about this. This may be as straightforward as having a conversation with the child and their family to check out how they are and if they need extra help or support. It may mean starting an early help wellbeing assessment to understand their needs and strengths and identify additional support that may be needed.

When practitioners identify additional support needs for a child or have a safeguarding concern, they may submit a request for support to the Children and Families Hub. Children and young people, parents, other family members and the wider community can also contact the Children and Families Hub.

The Children and Families Hub provides a single point of contact and referral for children, young people and families who require additional support, to ensure they are appropriately safeguarded, protected and offered the right help at the right time. The Children and Families Hub Decision Maker triages all requests informed by the Safeguarding Partnership Board’s Continuum of Children’s Needs guidance[[1]](#footnote-1)to determine the appropriate response which could be:

1. An early help response
2. A Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) response
3. A CAMHS response

MASH provides the safeguarding function that sits behind the Children and Families Hub. For requests that are triaged as requiring a MASH response, the MASH decision maker may decide to gather information from a range of partner agencies relevant to each individual case, assess the information returned to determine the level of actual or potential risk/harm and recommend appropriate action to safeguard the child and/or promote their welfare. MASH also undertakes agency checks about children and families requested by the Courts and the Probation Service

The Children and Families Hub and MASH operate between 8.30 and 17.00 Monday to Thursday and between 8.30 and 16.30 on Friday. Emails and submissions of request for support forms that are submitted outside of working hours are dealt with on the next working day.

Outside these hours, practitioners and members of the public with an urgent concern can call the hospital switchboard (01534 442000) and request to speak to the out of hours Children’s Social Care Manager. Alternatively, if there is concern for an immediate risk to a child, the Police should be contacted (01534 612612 or 999).

1. **Scope**

This Standard operating Procedure describes the processes and procedures of the Children and Families Hub Front Door Team and the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub. This document applies to all staff employed by the Government of Jersey or contracted to provide service for the Government of Jersey (including those employed on an agency basis) working within the Children and Families Hub Front Door Team and the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub.

1. **An overview of response to an enquiry**



1. **Response to an initial enquiry**

***4.1 Children & Families Hub Initial Enquiry***

The Children & Families Hub Responder receives all initial enquiries including phone calls, emails, online request for support forms submitted through the Mosaic portal and notifications from States of Jersey Police.

For telephone calls, the Hub Responder gathers information to inform the response required.

For requests for a parent programme or targeted short break provision, the Hub Responder processes the request.

For requests for information on services, the Hub responder provides signposting to relevant sources of support.

The Hub Responder can request support from one of the Front Door Teams Senior Practitioners at any point when responding to an initial enquiry

For more complex needs including all submissions received from practitioners using the online request for support form and notifications from States of Jersey Police, the Hub Responder completes a contact and referral form and submits this for Senior Practitioner triage.

In the event of urgent, immediate or potential safeguarding concerns being received in an initial enquiry, the Hub Responder immediately alerts a Senior Practitioner.

* 1. ***Consultation***

The Children and Families Hub senior practitioners offer a consultation service for practitioners providing advice and guidance which may include information about a range of services including the voluntary and community sector, guidance on submitting a request for support form to the Children and Families Hub and how to involve parents.

Consultation does not replace discussion with the practitioner’s line manager or the relevant Safeguarding Lead for their agency. The practitioner normally seeks consent from the parent and when appropriate, older children before contacting the Children and Families Hub for a consultation unless to do so may increase risk of significant harm to a child.

Details of the children and families discussed in a consultation are not recorded by the Children and Families Hub and where safeguarding concerns are present, it is the responsibility of the practitioner to follow the consultation with submission of an online request for support form if one has not already been submitted.

* 1. ***Transparent Information Sharing***

The Children and Young People Jersey Law 2022 Statutory Guidance provides guidance on information sharing[[2]](#footnote-2) to assist practitioners to have confidence in their decision making around when to share information, and to help them understand and document their lawful basis for sharing the relevant information. The guidance also assists practitioners to ensure that the human rights of children, young people and family members are respected, and that any interference is justified as lawful and proportionate and achieved in the least intrusive way.

The Senior Practitioner ensures that parents/carers have been informed by the referring practitioner what information is being shared with the Children and Families Hub and why it is being shared. For a submission where parents/carers have not been informed, unless being transparent about information sharing could put the child at risk of harm, the Senior Practitioner advises the practitioner to inform the parent/carer of the submission.

In a high risk case where there may be a resultant Police investigation, the timing of when to inform those with parental responsibility about the concerns/request for support may be taken at a strategy discussion.

**5. Response for submissions where there are more complex needs**

Submissions received from practitioners using the online request for support form, notifications from States of Jersey Police and telephone and email contacts from members of the public where more complex needs are identified, are all recorded on a contact and referral form which is triaged by the Children and Families Hub decision maker.

If the child has been known to Children’s Social Care and closed within the last three months, the Children and Families Hub decision maker triages the request for a MASH response. The MASH decision maker considers whether to seek additional information from partner agencies or may refer back to the previous Children’s Social Care Team to provide consistency for the child and family for further assessment or intervention. The MASH decision maker may also conclude that further social care involvement is not required and an early help or universal support may be recommended.

For all other requests, the Children and Families Hub decision maker triages the request informed by the Children’s Continuum of Needs[[3]](#footnote-3) as requiring:

* An early help response (including support from universal services)
* Consideration of a specialist service response (e.g. specialist short break request or complex needs assessment)
* A MASH response
* A CAMHS response
* A combination of the above

The Children and Families Hub decision maker may request a joint triage with the MASH decision maker or the CAMHS decision maker.

There are a number of indicators which when present, the Children and Families Hub decision maker will request a joint triage with the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub decision maker:

* Sexual abuse – CSAE Pathway
* Query of non-accidental injury
* Allegation of physical abuse
* Allegation of emotional abuse
* Pattern of repeat/frequent referrals
* Recent Child Protection Plan
* Significant history of social care involvement including when the child has been closed to Children’s Social Care within the last three months
* Domestic abuse
* Child Protection Notification from the States of Jersey Police
* Previous child removed
* Pre-birth assessment requests
* Toxic trio present (substance misuse, parental mental ill-health, domestic abuse)
* Concerns about neglect for which early help work has not achieved sustained improvement
* Any concerns regarding potential child exploitation
* Amber or red harmful sexual behaviour – using Brook HSB indicator tool

This list is not exhaustive and the Children and Families Hub decision maker can request a joint triage at any point to ensure a robust response.

1. **Triage options**

**6.1 *When a request is triaged for an early help response***

The Children and Families Hub Senior Practitioner speaks to the parent(s)/carer(s) to understand the presenting need and discuss support options and may also consult with practitioners working with the family. The possible outcomes are:

* Recommendation of multi-agency early help with a partner agency lead worker
* Multi-agency early help with a Children and Families Hub community team’s lead worker
* Direct family work by one of the Children and Families Hub community teams
* Recommendation of single agency support
* Signposting, advice and guidance
* Letter to parent / carer
* No additional support needs identified
* Support declined

When triaged for an early help response, if the Senior Practitioner is unable to make telephone contact with the parent(s)/carer(s), a text message and/or letter is sent offering support and asking them to call the Children and Families Hub.

The Children and Families Hub Senior Practitioner maker contacts with the referring practitioner or parent/carer who has submitted the request for support to inform them of the early help outcome of the request for support.

**6.2 *When a request is triaged for a specialist service response***

Providing there are no safeguarding concerns, the request for support is sent directly to the Team Manager of the Complex Needs or Adoption Support team for allocation and the Children and Families Hub Senior Practitioner contacts the practitioner who has submitted the request for support to inform them of the outcome.

**6.3 *When a request is triaged for a MASH response***

A member of the MASH team speaks to the parent(s)/carer(s), and where appropriate the young person, to discuss the referral. The MASH decision maker may request partner agencies to complete research on their agencies’ involvement with the child/young person and associated adults using the MASH Information Request form. Each MASH agency representative is responsible for providing good quality information and analysis from their own agency and supporting their colleagues to understand the wider context of the concerns raised.

The MASH decision maker applies a RAG rating to the request for support which will determine the timeframe in which agencies are required to return their information. The RAG rating may be changed as new information is received.

**A red rating** is applied to a request for support when there appears to be urgent or high risk safeguarding concerns which may require immediate action to ensure the child/young person’s safety. Partner agencies are required to return their information within a timescale that allows a decision to be made within four hours of the request. Details of the red rated request are shared immediately with the Police Public Protection Unit (PPU) and the Children’s Social Care Assessment and Support Team. MASH research is collated simultaneously with any active Police and Children’s Social Care response. Any subsequent information gathered will be shared within the four hour period. If there is an immediate concern for the child’s welfare (Child in Need of Protection) MASH will refer immediately to Children’s Social Care and a Strategy Discussion will be convened with the relevant partners.

**An amber rating** is applied to a request for support where there are concerns for a child/young person’s welfare but immediate action is not required to ensure their safety. Partner agencies are required to return their information within one working day (24 hours) of the request. Requests from HMP la Moye for children to have contact with inmates are rated as amber to enable assessment of any risks from the contacts.

**A green rating** is applied to a request for support when following discussion with the family and relevant others, it is assessed that multi-agency information gathering is not required and needs can be managed through signposting, advice and guidance or through a single agency or multi-agency early help.

Following assessment of all information, the MASH decision maker determines the level of support or intervention required. The possible outcomes are:

* Referral to Children’s Social Work
* Referral to the Jersey Designated Officer (JDO) when concerns exist for persons in a position of trust
* Recommendation of multi-agency early help
* Recommendation of single agency support
* Signposting, advice and guidance
* No additional support needs identified
* Support declined

The outcome decision is shared by email by the MASH Co-ordinator with both the agency representatives that have collated MASH research and the referrer if this is a practitioner.

**6.4 *When a request is triaged for a CAMHS response***

The CAMHS decision maker may speak to the parent(s)/carer(s) to understand the presenting need and discuss support options and may also consult with practitioners working with the child and family. The possible outcomes are:

* CAMHS duty worker allocated
* CAMHS assessment
* Multi-disciplinary Neurodevelopmental meeting
* Referral to early help mental health and wellbeing support
* Signposting, advice and guidance
* No identified support needs identified

The CAMHS decision maker contacts the practitioner or parent/carer who has submitted the request for support by telephone or email to inform them of the outcome of the request for support.

For all requests from members of the public who are not parents/carers of the child, the Children and Families Hub provides an acknowledgement by telephone or email that the information they have provided has received attention.

If there is a disagreement about an outcome decision, practitioners follow the Safeguarding Partnership Board’s Resolving Professional Differences Escalation Policy[[4]](#footnote-4).

1. [Continuum-of-Childrens-Needs-Guidance-2024-Final.pdf (safeguarding.je)](https://safeguarding.je/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Continuum-of-Childrens-Needs-Guidance-2024-Final.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [Children and Young People Jersey Law 2022 Statutory Guidance (gov.je)](https://www.gov.je/Caring/Children/ChildrenWelfare/Pages/ChildrenAndYoungPeopleJerseyLaw2022StatutoryGuidance.aspx#InformationSharing) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. [Guidance | Jersey Safeguarding Partnership Board](https://safeguarding.je/document-category/guidance/) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. [Policies | Jersey Safeguarding Partnership Board](https://safeguarding.je/document-category/policies/) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)