

Making a Child Protection Referral

Oldham Local Safeguarding Children Board

quick guide

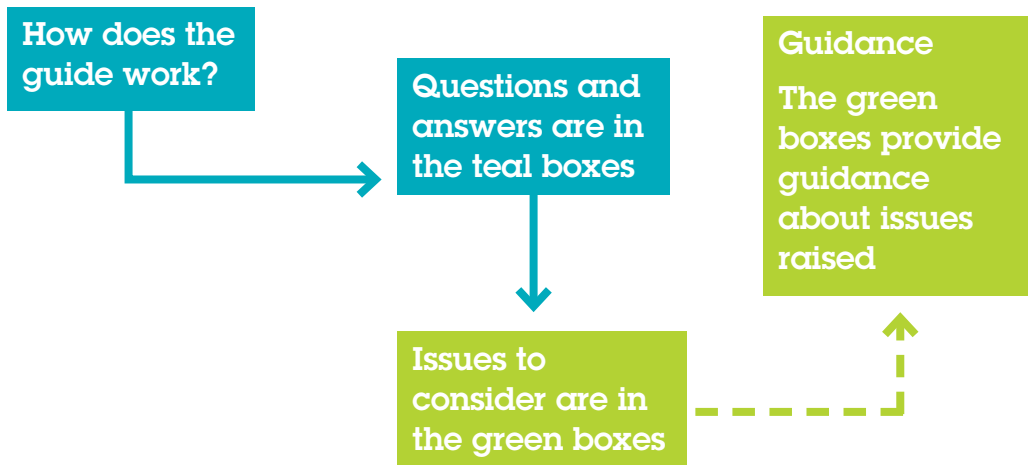
This quick guide has been developed to help ensure that anyone concerned about the safety and welfare of a child can easily make a referral. This will help you to understand what you need to know and what you need to do in order to make an appropriate referral.

But if in doubt phone the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and/or the Police. Don't leave it to chance. The safety and welfare of the child must come first.



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This Quick Guide to making a Child Protection referral is intended to act as a basic reference tool. Detailed Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures are available on the Oldham LSCB website.



Informing parents

Do I have to inform parents about my concerns?



This Quick Guide to making a Child Protection referral is intended to act as a basic reference tool. Detailed Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures are available on the Oldham LSCB website.

What if I can't see the parents to tell them?



You should inform parents about a referral which is to be made about their child **unless any of these situations apply in which case the MASH** will make the decision about when and how to inform parents.

Make a written record of your observations and actions.

Guidance

It is important at the outset to be as open and honest as possible with parents about the concerns, the possible need of a referral to MASH and the accompanying Child Protection Check that needs to be made. However an inability to inform parents should not prevent a referral being made.

- Sexual Abuse is suspected
- Organised or Multiple Abuse is suspected
- Factitious illness by proxy, fabricated or induced illness is suspected
- Contacting the parents would place the child, yourself or others at risk
- Child may be intimidated into changing, or preventing them from giving, information about the abuse
- Risk of forced marriage and female genital mutilation

If you have any doubts or need to seek further clarification you should contact MASH immediately.

Physical abuse

Does the child have a physical injury?

No →

Does the child allege an injury but there is no physical evidence?

Yes
↓

Refer to MASH.

Yes
↓

Is there a satisfactory explanation for the injury?

Yes →

If the child requires medical treatment take appropriate action. Otherwise no further child protection action.

No
↓

Does the child require urgent and immediate medical treatment?

No →

Contact MASH as soon as possible.

Yes
↓

Make appropriate arrangements for the child to receive medical attention and inform parents (unless it puts the child at risk).

Guidance

Make a written record of your observations and actions.

Always ask open questions: what, where, when.

Urgent and immediate =

Serious or life threatening injuries

If you have any doubts or need to seek further clarification you should contact MASH immediately.

Sexual abuse or sexual exploitation

Do you suspect or have concerns about sexual abuse or has the child made allegations about sexual abuse or sexual exploitation?



Inform MASH or the Police immediately.
Do not inform parents.



Has a child disclosed that they've been contacted by someone on the internet, or arranged to meet someone?



Contact Child Exploitation And Online Protection (CEOP) or police.

Guidance

You may suspect this because you have observed behaviour such as; sexual knowledge which is not age appropriate, sexualised or provocative' behaviour, hinting at sexual activity through words, play, drawings etc. Or a young person is receiving gifts from older boyfriend/girlfriend/friend which could indicate sexual exploitation.

MASH and/or the Police will decide when it is appropriate to inform parents when sexual abuse is suspected organised or multiple abuse is suspected.

If you have any doubts or need to seek further clarification you should contact MASH immediately.

Make a written record of your observations and actions.

Neglect

Is there evidence of neglect and are there grounds for concern?



Inform MASH immediately.



Make a written record of your observations and actions.

Guidance

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs

If you have any doubts or need to seek further clarification you should contact MASH immediately.

Emotional abuse

Is there evidence of emotional Abuse and are there grounds for concern?



Inform MASH immediately.

Make a written record of your observations and actions.

If you have any doubts or need to seek further clarification you should contact MASH immediately.

Guidance

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.

These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types.

Making a referral

Who should I make the referral to?

You should contact MASH.

Following your referral an assessment will be made by the MASH who will then make decisions about subsequent action.

What should I do next?

Having made the referral by telephone you must follow up with a written referral within 24 hours. MASH will tell you what they are doing about the referral.

Guidance

- MASH 0161 770 7777
- Outside work hours contact the EDT on 0161 770 6936

- Written referrals are required from professionals. Referrals from professionals cannot be made on an anonymous basis.
- Written referrals from members of the public are welcomed and will, if required, be kept anonymous. visit Oldham LSCB website for referral form 'Referral & Assessment' page.

If you have any doubts or need to seek further clarification.

Make a written record of your observations and actions.

Making the referral

What information will I be expected to provide?



Obviously, the more factual information you can provide the more speedily and efficiently MASH will be able to deal with the referral.



Regardless of whether you have this information or not you must make a referral if you have concerns for a child.

Make a written record of your observations and actions.


Guidance

Listed below is the data that MASH needs to help them do their work. It would be helpful if you could give as much information as you have when making a referral.


- Full names and dates of birth of the child, carers and any other family members
- Child's full address and telephone number
- Daytime address and contact telephone numbers for parents/carers
- Ethnic origin, religion and cultural background
- Reason for the referral, including description of any injuries observed, details of allegations made, discussions with the child or others, details of any witnesses. Including any relevant dates/times/ places of alleged incidents
- Action taken and people contacted since concern arose
- Any immediate or impending danger to the child
- Previous concerns and any relevant background information
- Based on your knowledge of the child and family, you may well have an opinion about how the family are likely to react to the referral and any subsequent child protection enquiries, including any factors which may place the child or others at further risk (e.g. where there is domestic violence)
- Are the parents or child aware of the referral to MASH

After making a referral


What happens after I've made the referral?



What can I do if I am unhappy about the outcome of my referral?



You should contact the MASH Team Manager and discuss your concerns.



If you have any doubts or need to seek further clarification you should contact MASH.

Make a written record of your observations and actions.

Guidance

Examples of possible action following a referral are:

- Action taken to ensure the immediate safety of the child
- Make Child protection Enquiries (under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989)
- Decision is made if it is appropriate to call a Child Protection Conference
- Offer services to the family to relieve need or reduce risk
- Refer the family to another agency
- Take No Further Action

If after this discussion you are still not satisfied, you should put your concerns in writing to the Team Manager and send a copy to the relevant Children Services Service Manager and the Service Manager for Safeguarding.

Guidance Link to GM escalation policy –
http://greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_resolv_prof_dis.html

Useful contact numbers

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Work hours 9–5pm	0161 770 7777
Emergency Duty Team (Out of hours)	0161 770 6936
Police uniformed	101
Forced Marriage Unit	020 7008 0151
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	0161 770 8870
CEOP website	ceop.police.uk



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