

Schools Safeguarding Forum

December 5th 2024 – Avion Grant

Changed Referral Pathways into MASH



**LAUNCH OF THE WEB BASED
REFERRALS for children requiring
Protection into the MASH on the 28th
October!**

**Your Feedback on user experience
would be helpful!**

Avion.grant@southwark.gov.uk

**Use of email address:
mash@southwark.gov.uk**

Yearly Data Overview of Referrals into MASH

- On average Southwark MASH continue to receive approximately 1000 referrals per month, with slight variations according to the period of the year and what is occurring seasonally ;
- Overall referrals into the MASH reduced by 20% when compared to the previous year;
- The agencies providing the highest proportion of contacts were Health (27%) and the Police (26%)
- Domestic Abuse continue to be the most referred issue into the MASH representing 15% of referrals;
- 10% of referrals were received from schools. However there was a 17% decrease in referrals from schools thus far;
- On average 28-30 % of referrals convert to a Child and Family Assessment;
- Until September 24, conversion rates for schools reduced by 33%
- Black and African ethnicity group continue to be the most referred cohort into MASH, accounting for 23.3% of referrals
- 29.6 % of referrals for this group are made by schools

Disproportionality Contacts per Agency per Ethnicity Q2 2024/25

- **29.6% of Contacts made by schools in Q2 were about Black African children and young people; 15.3 % were White British;**
- **The NOMIS (using 2021 census data) estimates that 24.1% of Southwark 0 – 18-year-olds are Black African. Therefore, the rate of contacts about Black African children from schools was 5.5 percentage points above the resident under-18's rate. In contrast, as contacts about Black African children across all agencies was 23.8% of all contacts in quarter, across all agencies the cohort was -0.3pp on the NOMIS rate;**
- **If we look at overall contacts about Black Caribbean children, at 10.4% of all contacts in quarter, compared to a 6.6% NOMIS rate, these children are over-represented in contacts by 3.7pp, in contacts from Individuals by 10pp, from LA services by 4.8pp and from the police by 4pp;**
- **By far the highest proportion of contacts from the police related to Black African children and young people (23.8%), whereas 14.6% of police contacts related to White British children. Therefore, compared to the under-18 Southwark population, the rate of White British contacts were 14.3pp below our resident rate, and whereas our rate of Black African contacts were comparable at just 0.3pp below. Of note among Police contacts for being above the cohort rate**

Common Referrals into MASH from Schools

- ❖ Disclosures of Physical Abuse/ Inappropriate Chastisement
- ❖ Disclosures of Domestic Abuse
- ❖ Neglect type concerns
- ❖ Sexual Abuse Child on Child
- ❖ Sexualised Behaviours in Children- *Do you use the NSPCC Brooke Traffic Lights System to understand the presenting behaviour?*
- ❖ Child Behavioural Challenges
- ❖ Private Fostering *(this is under-represented in the MASH require more referrals re PF)*
- ❖ Exploitation Vulnerabilities *(Impending change MASH will be formulating an exploitation risk checklist tool to support the schools with appropriate information gathering)*

What has Worked Well

- ❑ Schools are good at following up verbal referrals with written referrals;
- ❑ Schools have been good at using discretion around managing consent and informing parents in safeguarding referrals;
- ❑ Schools are increasingly using the new web platform for making referrals into the MASH
https://forms.southwark.gov.uk/ShowForm.asp?fm_fid=2264

Challenges in the Joint Working Relationship

- ❑ Schools requesting a Consultation when there are clear safeguarding issues which require a referral into MASH to be made;
- ❑ Varying quality in referral information around disclosures of physical abuse;
- ❑ General observation that less information is written in the web-referrals from agencies;
- ❑ In some instances where a safeguarding referral has been made, schools have undertaken risk assessments and decision making independent of Social Care;
- ❑ MASH have not routinely provided referral outcomes to schools;

How Do Good Quality Referrals Support our Processes



- **Providing the right level of information i.e. context and background to the concern or child's disclosure of harm; child's timelines of past harm; whether an implement has been used; use child's actual words rather than paraphrasing; your observations; summary of similar past welfare concerns; the child's communication needs; level of parental engagement support us to work with the referral within our RAG rating timelines;**
- **Making it clear as to whether the parents have been informed of the referral and consented with reasons why this step have not been followed accordingly;**
- **Providing full information about the family's ethnicity; language and cultural practices support us to collate important data, but also to understand the possible impacting factors on family functioning**

Reminders of What is Required when Making a Referral

- ❖ **Do Make the referral straight away MASH if there are concerns that the child is at risk of harm**
- ❖ **Do tell us whether the child has additional needs or special communication needs and how these are best supported;**
- ❖ **Do provide supporting examples of your concerns, such as what is the actual figure of the child's low attendance; what are the examples of the child's behaviours which make you worried about sexualized behaviors; what have you observed and for how long to cause concern about neglect;**
- ❖ **Do call the MASH team to make a telephone referral if you become worried about the child towards the end of school day and follow this up with a written referral within 24 hours**

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Reminders of What is Required when Making a Referral

- ❖ **Do call the MASH within 30 minutes of making a safeguarding referral for follow up should you not receive contact from the MASH team;**
- ❖ **Do not paraphrase the child's words as this can affect our risk assessment;**
- ❖ **Do not request that the child removes clothing as this can place you in a vulnerable position;**
- ❖ **Do ask clarifying questions as guided by the Social Worker but not leading questions;**
- ❖ **Do inform the parents that a referral has been made;**
- ❖ **Do take advice and guidance from MASH around the child remaining at school;**

When to make a referral into Southwark MASH or request a consultation

- Southwark Mash would always be available to speak you on **0207 525 1921** about your concern; whether you are following up on a referral; relaying urgent information to MASH or requesting guidance and advice on whether a referral should be made or you may just need guidance in managing a complex situation;
- Please indicate the purpose of your request when you call the MASH

Requesting a Consultation	Do Make a Referral to MASH
You want to discuss a child's case as you are uncertain about threshold for a referral;	Child makes a clear disclosure of experiencing harm
You may wish to call if you are managing a complex situation around exercising parental responsibility	There is good reason to be concerned about a child's sexualised behaviours
You may wish to know whether a child is known to Social Care	Child has complex and additional needs
	You feel that the family's concerns are situated within Tier 3 of the London Threshold Guidance
	You have witnessed a child being harmed on the school premises;

KEY Contacts:

MASH Line: 0207 525 1921

OUT OF HOURS: 0207 525 5000

**MASH SERVICE MANAGER: Avion Grant –
avion.grant@southwark.gov.uk**

MASH Referral link:

https://forms.southwark.gov.uk/ShowForm.asp?fm_fid=2264

Questions...

