

Families and Children's Services - changes to the way we work with you

Latest news

We are making changes to ensure children and young people continue to have the right support early to avoid longer term problems. We'd like to share these with you through this regular newsletter. Sept 2017

Message from Terence Herbert

Welcome to this first newsletter designed to provide you with useful information as we introduce a new service for families and children in Wiltshire. We're excited to announce our new "Support and Safeguarding Service" which launches Monday 2 October 2017. Do take a minute to read through and if you have any questions do please get in touch.

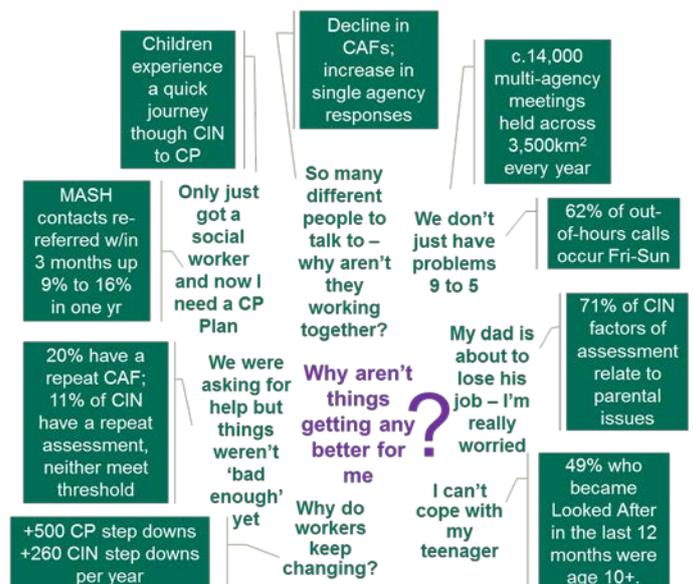


Over the last 18 months we have spoken with families, partners, staff and other local authorities regarding continuing to improve our provision for families and children. Since March this year this work has been called Children's Services Integration (CSI). Phase 1 has had an internal focus on integrating our early help and safeguarding services; in Phase 2 we'll be widening discussions with

you and other partners to look at further opportunities for improvement – and we're very much looking forward to working together with you on this.

Why have we done this?

We've made great improvements to supporting families and children as they transition between social care and early help support. However, we know we're not yet where we need to be:



CIN = Child in Need under Section 17 of the Children's Act 2004
CP = Child Protection

Families have also told us they want:

- Help quicker/earlier and before things get bad.
- More time with us and support for longer.

- Fewer professionals involved at once.
- Professionals do what they need then go.
- Support for the whole family.
- Praise for what they have done well.
- To be kept informed, always.
- To be spoken too and things explained.
- More than a tick box approach.
- To be told what is going to happen next.

So, what's changing?

We are:

- Introducing a new Family Keyworker role - a consistent person working with families to ensure sustained change.
- Improving workflow and reducing bureaucracy to maximise time available to spend with families.
- Moving to a more holistic, whole family-based approach; launching a new relationship-based model of practice and supporting our staff with a new training and development programme.
- Developing a “one front door” model to access our services – supported by our new online “DART” (Digital Assessment & Referral Tool) launching later this year.
- Implementing a fully integrated IT system (with potential for electronic co-working with partner agencies - to be explored).

What can I expect on day one?

Our staff are transferring into the service with existing cases and these will remain with that member of staff until the work is concluded. This allows us to transition to new cases and new ways of working with families and children smoothly, safely and gradually over the coming months. This means you may not notice a huge difference on day one (or indeed immediately after). Over time we'll see a shift in culture and practice which should also be felt by families and children.

How do I access Families and Children's Services?

MASH referrals for children at risk of significant harm should continue as they do now – via 0300 456 0108 or by emailing securely to MASH@wiltshire.gcsx.gov.uk (999 in an emergency). MASH will make a threshold decision for support from the new Support & Safeguarding Service.

It is our intention to phase out our Single Agency Referral Forms (SARFs) and replace them with our new Digital Assessment & Referral Tool (DART). In the interim please continue to use SARFs as you currently do.

Referral for CAF level cases requiring intensive support now need to be sent to MASH from 2nd October rather than our Gateway Panel. Gateway Panel will continue to function in the interim to 1) Act as a means of keeping partners up to date 2) Act as a forum for specific cases referred in by MASH but which don't meet threshold for our new Safeguarding & Support Service 3) Ensure that local community resources are known about e.g. parenting programmes. We'll be talking with you soon about reviewing Gateway Panel and developing more localised meetings in your area.

We are currently introducing a “one front door” model using phone technology to help direct you to the right place first time. There will be a new central number available in due course but for now please continue to use the usual team numbers or, wherever possible, continue to contact our staff direct. This is especially important for open cases allocated to our staff, who should provide you with their direct number.

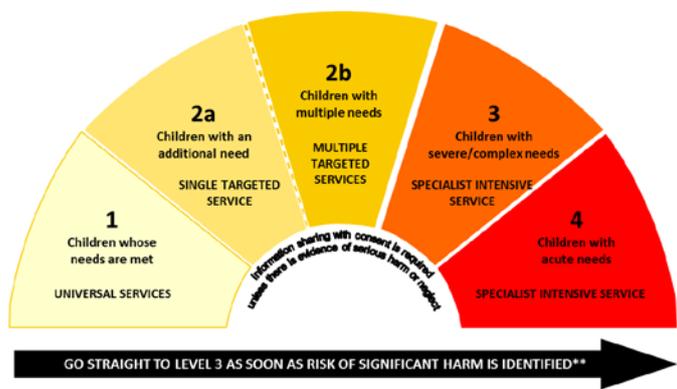
How will cases be allocated?

Our diverse and skilled staff bring their knowledge and expertise into the new service

so cases can be allocated swiftly to the right person. We have also been developing a comprehensive training and development programme so all staff will have the skills to the right level in all required areas.

...and safeguarding thresholds...are they changing?

No, Child In Need and Child Protection thresholds remain exactly the same as prescribed by the Children Act 2004. Our trained Family Keyworkers will work with families and children who would fall into the “high level complex CAF” level of need where there is history or risk of needing statutory support from social care.



Who's who in my area?

We have consolidated some of our existing early help posts into new Family Keyworker and Senior Family Keyworker roles. These include:

- NEET Personal Advisors (Not in Education, Employment and Training)
- Youth Support Workers
- All roles within the Intensive Family Intervention Service

Other existing roles have changed slightly (e.g. the CAFCO role has become “Early Intervention Advisor”) and other roles have transferred into our existing Special Educational Needs and Disability Service (SEND). Social Workers linked to specific schools remain unchanged. We have included a service level structure chart at the end of the newsletter to show these changes.

What next?

The first phase of developing children’s services concludes with the launch of the new Support and Safeguarding Service on Monday 2 October. Also on the horizon is a discussion with partners on the future of the CAF (and especially how it relates to the development of the DART) and how best to support and develop local decision making and advice on cases including those which do not meet our threshold for our new service. We want this next phase to be about finding opportunities and ideas together and we’ll use these partner newsletters to help communicate jointly run events and workshops. Senior Officers from partner organisations are coming together in October to consider the next steps and future opportunities.

Contact details

We hope you’ve found this first newsletter helpful and informative. If you have any queries or comments, please email CSI@wiltshire.gov.uk.

To contact Wiltshire Families and Children’s Services (which includes the new Support and Safeguarding Service) call 0300 456 0108 (automatic phone diverts may be in place to make contact as easy as possible).

**Families and Children's Service
(formerly Operational Children's Services)
Lucy Townsend – Interim Associate Director**

Placement Services
Martin Davis
Head of service

- Adoption
- Fostering
- Children in Care
- Care Leavers
- Virtual School
- Children's Emergency Duty Service (out of hours)

Quality Assurance and Principal Social Worker
Claudia Megele
Head of service

- Conference and Reviewing Service
- Independent Visitor Scheme

Support and Safeguarding Service
Jen Salter
Interim Head of Service

- MASH
- Care Proceedings
- Contact and Assessment (Court Mandated)
- Support and Safeguarding
- Early Years Inclusion
- Early Intervention Advisors (previously CAFCO)
- Education Welfare and Penalty Notices

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Service
Nick Breakwell
Head of service

- SEND Support
- Specialist SEN/SEN Inclusion Support
- Educational Psychology
- Behaviour Support
- Traveller Education
- Ethnic Minority Achievement
- Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) – including Medical Needs and Primary Tuition

Strategic Development
Mal Munday
Head of service

- Youth Offending and Prevention