

Early Help and Safeguarding HUB (EHASH)

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Introduction

This handbook has been created to support everyone whether in a statutory or voluntary capacity, who work with and support children, young people and families.

As a Safeguarding Partnership we want to promote effective multi-agency working, relational and strengths based practice, to deliver the right support at the right time to children, young people and families. This handbook explains how together we will act as soon as problems emerge, share information and provide effective, timely support to empower children, young people and families to remain in control of their problems, to overcome difficulties, build resilience, prevent escalation, and to be able to continue to manage future life challenges independently.

Partnership working with families, young people and children is at the heart of any intervention within early help or statutory services. We know that the vast majority of families can, with support from their communities and networks cope with adverse or challenging situations. For others additional support is needed from agencies to assist at the earliest opportunity to enable families to regain control and to minimise the negative impact of problems.

EHASH Overview

The Early Help and Safeguarding HUB (EHASH) is the single point of contact for members of the public and professionals seeking advice and/or services, to support and protect vulnerable children, young people and their families who need support at levels 2 or above in line with Rochdale Childrens Needs and Response Framework. EHASH is the referral gateway for Children’s Social Care (including services for children with disabilities).

The EHASH follows the following principles and aims to ensure:

- Professionals and families do not experience barriers or delay in accessing services.
- Children have easier access to the most appropriate service to meet their presenting needs.
- Children’s needs are identified efficiently and decisions are not delayed because of bureaucracy and/or differences in service thresholds.

- Information sharing between agencies and early identification of risk and harm is improved, to safeguard vulnerable children.
- Services are targeted at the most vulnerable children.
- Professionals work together creatively, share knowledge and expertise and discuss and reflect together whilst applying professional judgement
- The EHASH accepts there is no single response for all families and is premised on making the right decisions, at the right time for the right and proportionate reasons,

In accordance with Working Together to safeguard Children 2018 the lead safeguarding partners, the Local Authority, the CCG and the Police have a shared and equal responsibility to safeguard children in the Rochdale area and will work with relevant partners as defined by Working Together to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

The EHASH is managed by Rochdale children's Service and consists of a team of co-located and virtual professionals from a range of safeguarding partner agencies, where required carry out enhanced information gathering and sharing at the point of contact, to enable informed decisions to be made about presenting need and risk.

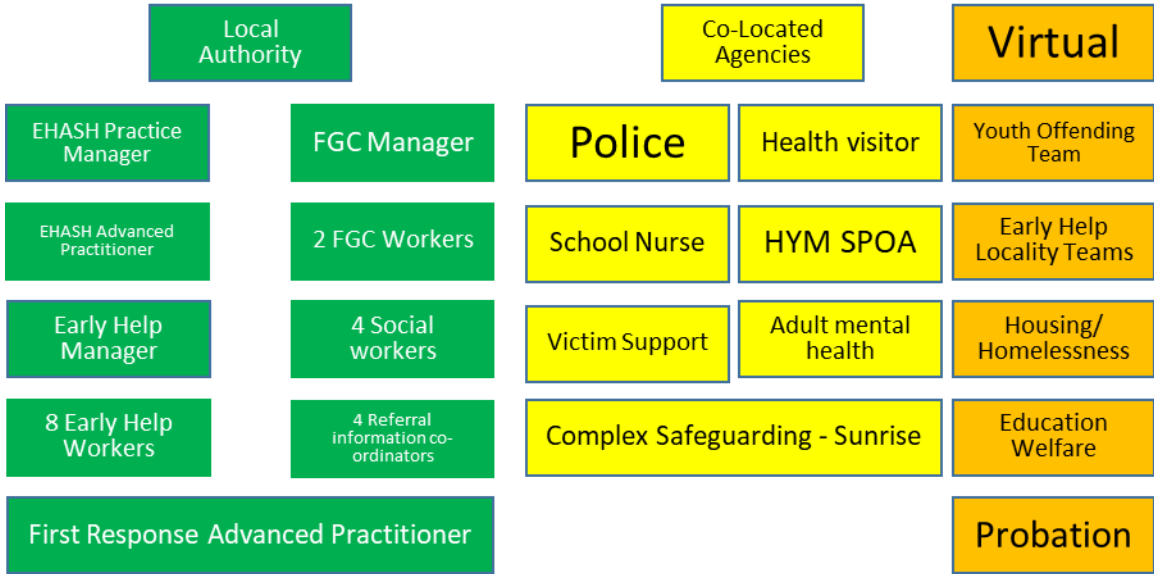
The following agencies and professionals are Co-located in the police station:

- **Social Work Practice Manager**
- **2 Social Work Advanced Practitioner**
- **4 Social Workers**
- **5 Referral information co-ordinator**
- **Early Help Manager**
- **3 Early Help Lead practitioners**
- **7 Early help workers**
- **FGC Manager**
- **2 FGC Early Help Workers**
- **Greater Manchester Police**
- **Healthy Young Minds, Single point of access**
- **1 health visitor & 1 School nurse**
- **Complex Safeguarding**

The following agencies offer virtual support

- **Youth offending team**
- **Early help Locality teams**
- **Housing/homelessness**
- **Education Welfare**
- **Probation**
- **Adult Social Care**

EHASH Structure



Making contact with the EHASH

The EHASH provides a services between 8.30am and 4.45pm Monday to Friday. Outside of these hours from 4.45pm and 8.30 including weekends and bank holidays an emergency only service is available in partnership with Bury Children Services.

The EHASH can be contacted by:

- Telephone on 0300 303 0440
- Email to EHASH@Rochdale.gov.uk

The Emergency Duty team can be reached by telephone only on 0300 303 8875

If you are a professional making contact with the EHASH by way of an email it is expected that you complete and attach a multi-agency referral form which can be found **here**.

Contact is made with the EHASH
0300 303 0440/ EHASH@Rochdale.gov.uk

Contact is received by a social worker at point of contact.

Basic and Enhanced Screening takes place as required

Referral is triaged by social worker, acknowledging receipt of referral, and deciding on the next course of action **within one working day**

Feedback provided to referrer on next course of action where appropriate

Safeguarding response
Referral made to children social care first response team whereby assessment required under section 17 or section 47 of the Children Act 1989

Early Help Information Gathering
Where there is increasing risk or complexity not deemed to require a safeguarding response the EHASH will explore the information over a 7 working day period. With a view to organizing an early help package of support

Early Help Response
Provide help and support to child and family from universal and targeted services

Provide help and support to child and family from universal and targeted services

What happens when you make contact

All contacts with the EHASH are initially received and screened by a duty pod. A duty pod in the EHASH consists of two professionals involving a Social Worker and a Referral Information Coordinator to review and screen the contact.

Consultation and Advice

The EHASH offers a telephone consultation service whereby if you are unsure of what to do and believe you may have identified a potential safeguarding concern, or are worried about the wellbeing and or welfare of a child, you can call the EHASH on 0300 303 0440 and speak to a social worker to discuss the information, who will provide a consultation about whether or not the child should be referred for a service. If at this point the person seeking the consultation shares the child details, a basic screening may be conducted as part of the consultation process. A consultation can be provided about a child without the child's details being shared. In these circumstances, no screening checks will be undertaken and the advice given will be based solely on the information provided by the person seeking the consultation.

Screening – Basic and Enhanced

- Upon receipt of a contact in to the EHASH a basic screening takes place by a duty pod, checking both social care and early help records to confirm if the child has received or is currently receiving either service. Further checks take place to confirm identifying details for the child and family to prevent duplication of services. If screening checks show the child is already receiving a service from children social care, the information will immediately be forwarded on to the allocated worker and team manager.

- If the child or family is not currently receiving a service, the contact information will be progressed by the Duty Pod to review. At this point an enhanced screening takes place by the duty pod to establish the following information as far as possible:
 - Full names, dates of birth and gender of children;
 - Family address and, where relevant, school/college/nursery attended;
 - Identity of those with parental responsibility
 - Names and dates of births or all members in the household
 - Ethnicity, first language and religion of children and parents;
 - Any special needs of the children including the means in which they communicate;
 - Any significant recent or past events;
 - Cause for concern including details of allegations, their sources, timing and location;
 - The child's current location and emotional and physical condition;
 - Whether the child needs immediate protection;
 - Details of any alleged perpetrator;
 - Referrer's relationship with and knowledge of the child and his or her family;
 - Known involvement of other agencies;
 - Information regarding parents' knowledge and agreement to referral.

Triage and decision making

A triage is different to screening as this involves an analytical review led by the social worker in the duty pod to make a threshold decision. Where required the duty pod will consult with, share and

request information from the most relevant service or services as part of the EHASH structure to make an informed threshold decision. This can also involve having conversations with parents, and other universal services not represented in the EHASH such as education and or GP practices. Once a fuller picture has been established by the duty pod the EHASH Advanced practitioner and or Practice Managers will decide on the most appropriate decision to take.

In line with Working together to safeguard children 2018 the EHASH will conclude and make a threshold decision within 1 working day.

Upon conclusion of the triage when a contact has been received there are the following outcomes available to the EHASH:-

- **Single Agency Response** – this outcome is usually received where a single agency can complete a piece of work or further actions to continue to support a child and family.
- **Provision of information and advice** – In some instances the social workers in the EHASH will make contact with parents and or the professional making contact to sign post to relevant services
- **Progress to early help assessment** – Where under level 2 of the Children’s Needs and Response Framework the triage concludes that an early help assessment would be beneficial and parental consent is in place. The EHASH triangulate and support the formation of an early help assessment to support children and families.
- **Link to early help assessment** – If an early help assessment is already in place, the EHASH may reach an outcome for this level of support to continue. Where required the EHASH will offer advice and guidance on how to strengthen this package of support.
- **Referral to Children Social Care** – Where an immediate risk of harm is identified to a child at any point from screening through to triaging a referral is made to children social care. As part of this referral the EHASH will request police information, housing and health to accompany the referral. The EHASH will also support with the preliminary sharing of information between agencies to ensure a swift response to immediate concerns.
- **MASH Gathering** This is a unique concept to the EHASH in Rochdale and is not to be confused with the contact triage that takes place following the screening checks. The purpose of the MASH gathering is to follow on from the social work triage that has taken place, to gather further information, and to complete more detailed triangulation of information, in partnership with children and families to ensure an effective delivery of support takes place. This takes place where there are cumulative concerns impacting on a child or young person but where there is no significant ‘event’ such as neglect cases. It is expected that such contacts will be accompanied with an early help assessment. Consideration is given to previous MASH gatherings in considering whether a MASH gathering is indicated and repeated MASH gatherings are not considered necessary unless the contact is about a new or different issues. Following the conclusion of the MASH gathering all the previous outcomes can still be reached. It is the EHASH practice manager that makes the final decision for referrals to children social care and all other outcomes can be agreed by the early help manager.

Note: The EHASH takes in to consideration all previous contacts, involvement from Children Social Care, Early Help Assessments available and previous MASH gatherings when completing a triage to ensure timely decisions are reached.

Note: **The gathering of information is premised upon having consent in place. In instances, where there is increasing risk and partner or other agency information is required the EHASH practice manager can dispense with consent to gather information to inform decision making.**

Feedback

The EHASH will provide verbal feedback by way of a telephone call, or written feedback by way of an email to all referrers within 24 hours. In accordance with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. Feedback will be given by EHASH to the referrer on the decisions taken. Where appropriate, this feedback will include the reasons why a case may not meet the statutory threshold for safeguarding under level 3 or level 4 and offer suggestions for other sources of more suitable support.

Note: **Practitioners should always follow up their concerns if they are not satisfied with the EHASH response and should escalate their concerns if they remain dissatisfied. The complaints procedure can be found in section 10 of the Childrens Needs and Response Framework**

Governance of the EHASH

The EHASH is governed by the EHASH strategic group which is composed of Managers within the safeguarding partnership and links in to both Family Services Model Strategic Partnership and Safeguarding Liaison Group.

EARLY HELP AND SAFEGUARDING HUB GOVERNANCE

