

Information Sharing Protocol and Guidance for Community or Council Identified Stakeholders and Community Guardians

2019



Introduction and scope

Sharing information is vital for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. It is essential for ensuring effective and efficient services are coordinated around the needs of children or young people, and their family or community.

In Hackney, we encourage a culture where information is shared with confidence as part of routine service delivery on community support and agree that:

'Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.'

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015

All information sharing needs to be managed in ways which respect a person's right to privacy and confidentiality and must be carried out in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1998.

What is a Community Stakeholder or Community Guardian

A Community Stakeholder is someone who cares about and wants to see good community relationships in a place where they live or work. Likewise, a Community Guardian is a person, service or organisation who has an agreement with the Council to contribute to the safety and well-being of children and young people in the area in which they live or work.

They are asked to undertake duties and be responsible for information sharing with the Council under Section 11 of the Children Act 2001, which places: *duties on a range of organisations, agencies and individuals to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.*

Community Stakeholders and Guardians are asked to share information with Hackney Children and Families Services in the event that there are worries about risk to a family, child, group of children or a location where harm may be happening to young people.

How community stakeholders and community guardians should share information with Hackney Children and Families Services.

In the event that concerns arise regarding harm or risk of harm, to a child or group of children in a location, Community Stakeholders and Guardians are required to contact the Hackney First Access Screening Team (FAST) on: **[telephone number]**

If there are worries about a child or young person in an emergency, the Police should be contacted using the 999 system.

Individual Child(ren) or Family Concern:

If the name of the child(ren) or family is known to you, your service or organisation, this should be shared with the duty worker at FAST.

Describe what you have seen, where you have seen it and what your worry is for the welfare of the child(ren) or family involved.

Concerns about a group of children or young people:

If the name(s) of the child(ren) or group is known to you, your service or organisation, this should be shared with the duty worker at FAST.

Describe what you have seen, where you have seen it and what your worry is for the welfare of the child(ren) or group.

Share any information that would allow for the identification and protection of members of the group like alias, nicknames heard or possible ages.

Share any information about group behaviour e.g whether any member of the group appears to be leading the behaviour or whether it is obvious that there are members forcing or bullying other members within the dynamics of the group.

Share whether there are other adults involved in the behaviour seen and name these adults, if they are known.

Concerns about a Location or Neighbourhood:

In the event there are worries or concerns about a location or Neighbourhood where there is a risk of harm to children or young people.

If the name(s) of the child(ren) or group is known to you, your service or organisation, this should be shared with the duty worker at FAST.

Describe what you have seen and what your worry is for the welfare of the child(ren) or group.

Share any information that would allow for the identification and protection of members of the group like alias', nicknames heard or possible ages.

Share any information about group behaviour e.g whether any member of the group appears to be leading the behaviour or whether it is obvious that there are members forcing or bullying other members within the dynamics of the group.

Share whether there are other adults involved in the behaviour seen and name these adults if they are known.

Describe whether there are design features of the location that are enabling harm to happen e.g. poor lighting, a secluded environment or open space that is regularly un-monitored by safe adults.

Share any patterns observed in relation to the time, usual day of the week, whether it is school term time or holidays etc., when harm to young people is occurring.

What the Council will do with the information shared.

Where there is sufficient information around risk to children and young people, the information provided will contribute to an assessment of the child or family, group of young people or location and support the development of a plan to create safety.

In order to protect your identity you, your service or organisation will **not** be named to those receiving the intervention as the referrer of concern unless you explicitly consent for this to happen.

Assessments

A Child and Family Assessment

In the event that the information provided relates to individual child(ren) or a family, an assessment may be carried out by the department. As a community stakeholder or community guardian you, your service or organisation are unlikely to be involved further in the assessment process and will not receive any feedback about the intervention or outcome. This is due to the need to safeguard the confidentiality of children, young people and families who may be experiencing harm.

An Assessment Related To Multiple Young People

In the event that the information provided relates to multiple young people, an assessment may be carried out by the department. As a community stakeholder or community guardian, given the need to protect young people's right to confidentiality and dependant on the connection between any issue and you, your service or organisation, you may not be involved further in the assessment process. Likewise, to protect the confidentiality of those involved, you, your service or organisation will not be given any child or family level information about any intervention with the group. You may be told on a need to know basis, whether or not an intervention will be taking place and for how long this will be for. You may also be asked to monitor the impact of the intervention by sharing whether any problematic behaviour continues or whether any new behaviour arise. This information should be shared with the assessor who will review the intervention.

A Location or Neighbourhood Assessment

In the event that the information provided relates to a location, an assessment may be carried out by the department. As a community stakeholder or Community Guardian during the assessment phase, you may be asked to help with tasks including, but not limited to: running a community survey or taking arms-length observations to contribute to information gathering.

At the end of the assessment, should it be concluded that this location is one in which young people are at risk of significant harm, you or a representative of your service or organisation may be invited to a Context Conference to consider the findings of the assessment and to contribute to a plan of intervention with the purpose of reducing harm to children and young people in the area. Any information shared at the Context Conference will be Private and Confidential and must not be disseminated further. You will be asked to sign a confidentiality

