



## **Children's Advice and Duty Service FAQ**

### **Does the MASH still exist?**

Yes, the MASH will continue and will provide vital cross agency checks for those children most at risk. The Children's Advice and Duty service will mean that the MASH will be able to get support to those children who need it the most.

### **What is the aim of the new Children's Advice and Duty Service?**

The aim is to get the right support to children and families first time. By talking through concerns and solutions with professionals we can work even better together and get support earlier to families.

The service will no longer take written referrals.

### **What is the number for CADS?**

All agencies and children service providers have been issued with contact details for the Children's Advice and Duty Service. If you are a professional and have concerns about a child that does not have a social worker or family practitioner, you can call **0344 800 8021**.

### **What number do members of the public call?**

They will continue to call our Customer Service Centre number **0344 800 8020**.

### **What information do I need to give when I call?**

You can use the Children's Advice and Duty Service **aide memoire** to prepare for your call. This includes details on what information the Consultant Social Worker handling your call might need.

### **What sort of things can I call the service about?**

If you are a professional working with children and families, you can call with any concern you might have about a child.

### **Do I have to get parents' consent before I make a call?**

Ideally yes, but you can make a call to the service without parents' consent. While it is good practice to seek consent, there are some exceptions when it comes to protecting children. For example, if having a conversation with the family would place the child, or another child, or someone else, or you the referrer, at increased risk of suffering harm you do not need consent. You also don't need consent if it might undermine the investigation of a serious crime. CADS will confirm this information with you when you call.

### **If there is no written referral, how do I evidence that I have made contact with Children's Services? How will information be recorded?**

It is best practice to keep a record of the contact you have made, the discussion and any decisions made within your own agency recording system. You should also record whether you have obtained parental consent and if not, why not.

CADS will provide written feedback from every conversation.



**What records of the conversation will be made and how will they be kept?**

This will depend on the individual discussion and the risks identified to a child. It will also depend on whether you have got consent from the child's parent.

However, we will record all of the conversations on our system; by having a record, we will also be able to see when there might be a repetition or accumulation of concerns about a child.

**What is the difference between a conversation, consultation and referral?**

All calls will result in a conversation. The outcome of the conversation will depend on the levels of concerns raised and the agreed course of action. We are moving away from the restrictions of terminology like consultation and referral, however, the Consultant Social Worker and caller will agree and record the outcome of any conversation.

**What are the opening hours of the Children's Advice and Duty Service?**

The service will run from 9am to 5pm.

**What do I do outside of these hours?**

You can continue to contact our Emergency Duty Team on 0344 800 8020.

**What happens if I disagree with what the social worker recommends?**

The aim of the new service is to work together to come up with the right support or service for a child or family. We hope that professional disagreements will be rare but if you wish to escalate you can follow the NSCP's [resolving professional disagreement policy](#).

**How can I provide feedback about the service?**

When the caller receives the record of the conversation, there will be a link included to a short survey so that all callers can feedback on the service provided.

**How can I contribute to the FAQs?**

This is an iterative document and will be reviewed monthly. Callers can email the NSCP Business Unit with questions as they arise on [nscb@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:nscb@norfolk.gov.uk) and they will be passed to the Children's Advice and Duty Service.