



A FIRST RESPONSE SERVICE AND SINGLE ASSESSMENT FOR NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S SAFEGUARDING AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

As you know in June this year, we implemented a revised Service Delivery Model for Safeguarding and Children's Services and launched the Safeguarding and Care Planning Teams, the new Looked after Children's Teams and the Permanence Teams.

As part of our Improvement Programme we have been reviewing the work of the Initial Assessment and S47 Teams to ensure we have the best model to deliver a timely and child focused service.

The Initial Assessment Team carries out all Initial Assessments for new referrals into the MASH that meet the threshold for a social work assessment.

The S47 Team carries out all new S47 Child Protection Enquiries for new referrals into the MASH that meet the threshold for either a single or joint Child Protection Enquiry.

From January 2016, we will merge the Initial Assessment and S47 Teams and create a County wide First Response Service.

The First Response Service will be the first response to all referrals that meet the threshold for a Social Work Assessment. The Service will carry out all new assessments under S17 and S47 of the Children Act 1989 using the new **Single Assessment**.

The First Response Service will work closely with Early Help and Prevention Services to ensure children, young people and their families receive the right services from the right people at the right time.

This new service will initially be a virtual team (John Dryden House and the Criminal Justice Centre) with a clear plan to move to a co-located Service early in 2016.

This change will have no impact on your referral pathways and the advice and support you receive from our MASH.

The Single Assessment will replace our initial assessment and core assessment within our assessment framework.

The Single Assessment will provide an opportunity to focus on the specific needs of children and young people and will allow more time within the assessment for reflection and direct work with



the child or young person to ensure a focused, balanced and analytical assessment. The Single Assessment is an ongoing assessment as part of a child or young person's journey within Safeguarding and Children's Services.

The Single Assessment will also be used as the Report for all Initial Child Protection Case Conferences, meaning that there will no longer be a separate report.

As always we will keep you updated with this important change to deliver an improved service to the County's children, young people and their families.