Children’s Social Work Services are changing

From the 26th October 2015, Children’s Social Work Services will be implementing their Team Around the Relationship model and moving to small social work teams, or ‘pods’, which will support children from the assessment stage through the whole of their journey across social work services.

Why are we changing?

**Children and families have told us:** that they want social workers who are honest and open and that they do not want to have to keep changing social workers.

**Our social workers have told us:** that they want to spend more time working directly with families, that they want to develop their expertise, and that they want reflective support and guidance.

We have, therefore, created our Team Around the Relationship model of practice to support social workers to build relationships with families that provide opportunities for families to change and which are also clear about the consequences if change cannot be achieved.

We believe this model will help us to support safe and stable family lives by:

- Enhancing the experience of children and families
- Developing the skills and satisfaction of our workforce
- Improving the rating of our service against key performance indicators
- And, most importantly, safeguarding children by supporting the right child in the right place at the right time.

How are we changing?

In order to support the change to our practice Children’s Social Work Services will be re-designed into small social work teams, or ‘Pods’, consisting of:

- 1 FTE Pod Manager
- Up to 2 FTE Senior Social Workers
- Up to 5 FTE Social Workers
- At least 1 Social Worker in Training
- Business Support Officer
Children’s Services Briefing: The Team Around the Relationship

Social Work Pods – A Team Around the Relationship

The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) will remain as it is. MASH will continue to be the front door for children’s social work and all safeguarding concerns should be reported to them (see below for details).

There will be 16 Pods which will support children from the assessment stage through the whole of their journey across Children’s Social Work Services thus providing continuity for children and families. Each Pod will work in a collaborative way, so that children have a named keyworker but all the social workers in the Pod know each case and use their skills to support all of the children within the Pod and their colleagues to ensure families experience consistent social work involvement.

This sense of collective responsibility will also be fostered by group supervision which will ensure that all cases are reviewed regularly to prevent drift or the needs of some children being lost due to the priorities for other families.

What does this mean for other professionals?

Other professionals working with children will benefit from the continuity and consistency provided by the Pods as this will facilitate information sharing, assessment and planning to meet the needs of children. Social workers will continue to work with the children they are currently supporting, so the children you are working with should not have to change social worker. The location where the social worker is based, the social worker’s manager and the phone number for their team may change, but the social worker will make sure that everyone knows these new details and their own contact details will not change.

If you have any worries about the changes please talk to the child’s current social worker or contact our offices:

- Whitehawk Community Hub: 01273 295920
- Lavender Street Hub: 01273 295400
- Moulsecoomb Hub South: 01273 294470

How do I Make a Referral?

If you are worried about a child and need to make a referral, you should still contact our Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) who will continue to deal with all children’s safeguarding referrals.

Contact the MASH on 01273 290400 or Email MASH@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk.

If a child requires a social work assessment following a referral this will be passed on to the children’s social work services pods by the MASH.