The RD&E is committed to safeguarding all children. This means that RD&E Trust staff must do all they can to ensure that children are kept safe – in their homes, at school, in hospital and in the wider community.

Therefore if a staff member is worried about the care or welfare of a child, they may share those concerns with their line manager or members of the trust safeguarding team and consider making an enquiry to the Multi –Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

What is the MASH?

The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub is a partnership between Devon County Council children’s social care, education and youth services, NHS health services, police and probation services working together to safeguard children.

MASH will look into concerns about a child and decide whether:

■ A child is being harmed or may be harmed in the future
■ A child or their family would benefit from help and support
■ A crime has been committed or could be committed in the future

What else might happen if RD&E staff are worried about your child?

Usually staff will explain to you what our concerns are and the actions we need to take. You may be asked your permission to contact MASH.

As part of the process a children’s doctor may need to examine your child and perhaps order tests to help decide how best to care for your child. This will be discussed with you.

Sometimes after we and social workers have completed investigations, the concerns are shown to be unfounded.

What sort of information will the nurse or doctor share?

We are required to share all concerns about your child and all relevant information.

We want to assure you that we only share information about your child with other professionals who work with children and who are relevant to your child’s case.

The amount and type of information that we share will depend on the level of concern.

Can information be shared without my permission?

Yes. Information can be shared without your permission if:

■ Someone has or is being harmed or may be harmed in the future
■ The information may help to stop or solve a crime

What happens after an enquiry is made to MASH?

If the child is thought to have been harmed or could be harmed in the future, they will be referred onto the children's social care team. This team may contact you and tell you what they
have to do next. Information will also be given to the police if it is necessary to help stop or solve a crime.

If your child has not been harmed but they or your family would benefit from extra help, their details may be given to the Early Help Hubs who will be able to provide support and advice about early help services.

MASH will also write to the child and you explaining the outcome of the enquiry within 10 working days.

How can I find more information?

You can discuss any concerns about this process with a senior paediatric nurse or doctor or with PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service).

You can read the RD&E Trust Safeguarding Children Policy – ask a member of staff.

You can find out more about MASH from www.devonchildrenandfamiliespartnership.org.uk

Remember – if you are concerned about a child or young person in Devon and want to speak to someone, contact MASH on 0345 155 1071.