



Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership Fact Sheet for Practitioners No.2 (06/21 Update)

Effective Communication: Checking Back

Introduction

Lack of robust information sharing is a recurrent theme in Serious Case Reviews and Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews. It is not necessarily the case, however, that when things have gone wrong it is because practitioners have made a conscious choice **not** to share information about a child or young person. More often attempts **have** been made to share information, but it has either not been heard as intended, or assumptions have been made about how it will be received, or there has not been explicit agreement about the actions to be taken as a result. In such cases the effectiveness or quality of the information exchange has been the problem, rather than a complete absence of information sharing.

Information sharing will take place in many different contexts, for example:

- Between practitioners who work for the same organisation
- Between practitioners who work for different organisations
- As part of panel discussions or within other decision making forums

The 'Ask– Do–Share–Record' model and the importance of checking back

The model overleaf emphasises the importance of actively checking back at each stage of the information sharing process to ensure that:

- Information provided by you has been heard and clearly understood
- There is a shared understanding of the issues or concerns
- There is clarity about the action to be taken, when and by whom
- Both parties understand when there is disagreement about the level of risk or the action to be taken

Recording

Record keeping is an essential component of effective communication between practitioners. Records need to be accurate, sufficiently detailed and completed in a timely way (as soon as possible or in accordance with your organisation's recording policy). Records need to be legible and readily available to other staff within your organisation in accordance with your agency's policies for storing information.

For the latest DfE guidance on information sharing (July 2018) go to:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>

The Ask-Do-Share-Record model is cyclical so has no start or end point.

Who else is working with the child/young person or parent/carer?

Do they have concerns? Am I more or less worried?

Who needs to know?

Do I have or need consent to share information?

Do I need advice?

Make sure you have:

- Not made any assumptions
- Understood what you have been told

ASK

Check
back

Check
back

Record

Clarity

Shared understanding

Clear decisions

SHARE

DO

Check
back

Decide what you need to share and with whom

Have all relevant detail available

Be clear and concise using straight forward language and avoiding the use of jargon

Provide examples where possible to illustrate what you mean

Note whether information has been shared with or without consent and the rationale for doing so

Make sure that:

- Your information has been heard and clearly understood by the recipient
- You have a shared understanding of the issues/ priorities

Agree what action will be taken, by whom and the time scales

Consider escalating concerns if you disagree with the decision