London **MASH** Project
The five core elements

1. **All notifications relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children to go through the hub.**

   All concerns of whatever level must be routed through the hub to ensure that low level repeat concerns from a variety of partners can be identified in the MASH and prevent these from being masked through volume or lost in the bureaucracy of a partnership. This focuses on anything with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This will enable effective interventions at the earliest opportunity. Having one route in and one decision making process ensures a standard of risk assessment and decision making that can be regularly base-lined and audited. This approach was strongly endorsed by the Ofsted report, *'Good Practice by Local Safeguarding Children Boards'* and *'The Munro Review of Child Protection'*.

2. **A collocated team of professionals from core agencies*delivering an integrated service with the aim to research, interpret and determine what is proportionate and relevant to share.**

   This is critical to ensuring all partners have the confidence and trust to engage fully in effective working. The duty of care for agency information remains with the 'owner' at all times and the decisions to share information are made on a case by case basis within the statutory framework to ensure information is available upon which to make the best decision. All information should be disclosed within the security of the hub.

3. **The hub is fire walled, keeping MASH activity confidential and separate from operational activity and providing a confidential record system of activity to support this.**

   This provision is required to ensure sensitive information will remain in a confidential environment where only those who actually need to know get to see the information. Information is disclosed on a strictly 'need to know basis'.

4. **An agreed process for analysing and assessing risk, based on the fullest information picture and dissemination of a suitable information product to the most appropriate agency for necessary action.**

   Essentially this is a partnership giving itself the best opportunity to make effective and efficient decisions through having the most complete information at the earliest stage.

   By utilising a standardised risk assessment and threshold model a consistency and clarity of decision making will be achieved. MASH will provide proportionate and relevant information to the most appropriate agencies.

5. **A process to identify victims and emerging harm through research and analysis.**

   MASH provides a secure environment where information is subjected to ongoing research and analysis. This will identify victims and perpetrators by understanding repeat notifications and the identification of individuals who will suffer increasing levels of harm in the future. The identification of these individuals and the families around them will enable services to intervene at a much earlier time thereby providing opportunities to reduce harm and long term costs. The provision of analysis within the MASH enables the commissioning and prioritisation of resources to improve safeguarding provision.

London **MASH** Project
The five core elements

Further to the five core elements, it is recommended that all areas identify a Project Manager and named agency leads for local MASH implementation, and develop self-evaluation processes to contribute to the ongoing pan-London evaluation.

* Core partners / agencies required as co-located in the MASH:

- Children's social care

- Police

- Health

- Education

- Probation

- Housing

- Youth Offending Service

N.B. The assignation of '*Core' to specific agencies / functions is not intended as a limit to further co-location or involvement of other key local partners or specialists from within pan London or local organisations. UKBA would be such an example and also the inclusion of Adult Social Care or information / sharing functions of specialist police units. It is entirely possible for MASHs to operate from the start or incrementally develop with these units embedded to reflect local priorities, resources and opportunities.