

Single Point of Access



The *Single Point of Access (SPA)* acts as a single gateway for all incoming contacts into The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames' Children's Services, providing telephone and web-based support to professionals, children, young people and parents.

The Single Point of Access is the first point of contact for all new referrals and contacts regarding the safeguarding and protection of children.

The SPA works closely with the Initial Response Team and Richmond's Targeted Family and Youth Service which encompasses the Targeted Youth Support Team, the Family Support Team and the Youth Offending Team. The SPA also supports the work of the CAF Co-ordinator, Education Welfare Service, Primary Mental Health, Early Years and Children's Centres, Health Visitors and GP's and the Police.

The SPA acts as a central information hub which co-ordinates information from a range of sources on children with additional needs, as well as offer signposting to universal provision

The SPA service is managed by the Initial Contact Project Manager and has a team of 4 full time Customer Advisers. The team is also supported by a Senior Practitioner from Specialist Children's Services who is responsible for making the decisions on enquiries received and the thresholds of cases reaching the team, and by the CAF Coordinator,, who is responsible for supporting practitioners with the CAF process and providing strategic leadership around integrated working in the borough.

Initial Contact Project Manager

The role of the Initial Contact Project Manager is to ensure that the service is fully operational at all times and that the team delivers the excellent customer service expected by its customers.

Senior Social Worker

The role of the Senior Social Worker within the SPA is to make decisions on contacts received in to the team in consultation, where necessary, with the manager of the Initial Response Team. The Senior Social Worker also works closely with other agencies, using the London Continuum's Four Levels of Need to assess necessary next steps and actions for cases.

CAF Co-ordinator

The role of the CAF Co-ordinator within the SPA is to facilitate the implementation of Integrated Working and the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), including cross-border working, by supporting practitioners from across all agencies as needed.

Customer Service Advisers

The team runs a duty system and is responsible for:

- receiving all initial contacts regarding children and young people;
- gathering information by liaising with other agencies and professionals who may know the child, young person or family;
- checking to see if a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) has already been completed on a child or young person;
- supporting professionals with the CAF process and to co-ordinate team around the child meetings;
- dealing with [Police 78s](#) and other Police related information;
- providing advice and support in identifying additional needs to the public and professionals;
- signposting families and children to universal and support services;
- handling initial enquiries on the provision of childcare and family information enquiries; and
- identifying gaps in service provision to help further service development.

Customer Contact Standards

The team aims to respond to enquiries in line with the Richmond upon Thames corporate customer service standards as follows:

When you telephone us:

- We aim to answer at least 80% of telephone calls within 20 seconds.
- We will take a message and get back to you within one working day if we cannot resolve your enquiry straight away or the person you want is not available.
- If we pass your enquiry on to another department, we will pass on your details and the nature of your query so that you do not have to repeat it to another person.

When you write to or email us:

- We will acknowledge your letter or email within two working days and where possible include in the acknowledgement any decision made on your enquiry.
- Where we are unable to provide a decision on your enquiry as above we will inform you of the reason why.

Decision making:

- All decisions upon cases or enquiries received into the Single Point of Access are made by the Senior Social Worker and decisions are aimed to be made within two working days of receiving the enquiry.
- Where we are unable to provide a decision on your enquiry within two working days we will inform you of the reason why.
- Where the case meets the appropriate thresholds and the decision is to refer the case to the Initial Response Team this will be done immediately.
- Where the case meets the appropriate thresholds and the decision is to refer the case to other support services for children we aim to refer the case within two working days and the support service will make contact with the family or child within seven working days of the case being passed to the team.

Single Point of Access Process

