

Stepped Approach for working with Non-Engaging Families

This pathway should be used for families with children and young people who are failing to engage with services leading to professional concern about unknown or emerging risk. These steps should be taken when you consider a family not to be engaging. For example: after 3 failed attempts at contact or if the child has not been seen for 1 week. At every step, you should be discussing each non engaging family with your Manager / Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Note: If at any time significant harm is identified, West Yorkshire Child Protection procedures should be followed and a referral to MAST or the Police. ([Reporting a Concern](#))

Step 1: Follow own agency policy and procedures for engaging with families.

- Complete a full review of records to complete a single agency chronology and analysis of events/concerns
- Identify other agencies involved (previously and currently)
- Establish if family is still living at the known address and any change in family or home circumstances
- **Send own agency letter with expected timescale for a response (Guide: within 1 week)**
- If there is no contact from the family within date given in the letter, proceed to step 2

Step 2: If no contact from family within timescale specified in letter.

- Liaise with other universal or partner agencies that are known to be or have been involved with the family.
- Continue compiling single agency chronology. Compile a [multi-agency chronology](#) if multi-agency meetings are already established.
- If there are no concerns after analysis of the information gathered, continue to follow own agency procedures
- **This stage should take no longer than 2 weeks**

Step 3: If risk is unable to be assessed or further safeguarding risks are identified

- Send [Non Engaging letter to parents](#) advising of [Professionals meeting](#)
- Invite all agencies known to be currently or previously involved with family and those who have received referrals but with whom family has not engaged. Any agency unable to attend should send written or verbal report.
- Each agency to bring single agency chronology to combine or update multi-agency chronology if available.

Step 4: Professionals Meeting (see also guidance on Professionals Meetings)

Consider information from each agency (analysis of single agency chronologies and compilation of multi-agency chronology) to identify risk and unmet needs and implications for children/young people of families non-engagement with services.

- Identify a 'lead professional' to continue to coordinate information.
- Form an action plan in response to the multi-agency assessment of risk agreed upon at the meeting (consider using [Strengthening Families Framework](#) to structure the discussion) This may include: immediate action being taken to ensure safety of the child/ren e.g. safe and well check undertaken by the Police; review by Early Intervention Panel if parental consent previously given; establishing a multi-agency plan to assess ongoing and emerging risk which will include a timescale for completion and review; seeking advice from MAST.
- Consider a contingency plan should the family disengage again after a period of cooperation.