



CSCP

CROYDON SAFEGUARDING
CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP



Duty comes into force

**30 Sept
2026**

New statutory guidance for safeguarding
organisations and practitioners.

Information Sharing Duty

Shifting the thinking from *"Can I share?"* to *"What happens if I don't?"*

Donna Swirski, CSCP Business Manager | Sept 2026



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here to read full review



What has changed?

This is not just new guidance. It creates a legal duty to share relevant information when it may help safeguard or promote a child's welfare.



Key phrase

The test is whether information may help another relevant organisation carry out safeguarding or welfare functions.



Use the 'may help' test

Before you decide not to share, ask these four questions.

1



2



3



4

Assess need

Would this help another agency understand the child's needs?

Assess risk

Could this reveal harm, vulnerability, escalation or a pattern?

Make a decision

Could this inform thresholds, planning or next steps

Support or action

Could this help someone support, intervene or protect sooner?

If the answer is yes, there is likely to be a duty to share — unless sharing would be more detrimental to the **child** than not sharing.



Relevant information is wider than people think

Practitioners often discount information because it feels too old, incomplete or low-level. The duty recognises that another agency may hold the missing pieces.



Historical

Past concerns, previous referrals, recurring family patterns



Partial

A concern, observation or disclosure that is not yet complete



Contextual

Environment, peer group, family stressors, community risk



Pattern-based

Small pieces that matter when seen together

Lunch-and-learn prompt

What information in your service is currently treated as ‘not enough’ but could help another agency build the picture?



Who is in scope?

The duty applies to specified organisations and providers delivering safeguarding or welfare functions under arrangements with them.

Local authority	Children's social care, education, housing and commissioned functions
Health	NHS England, ICBs, NHS trusts, primary care including GPs and dentists
Police & justice	Police, probation, youth justice, prisons and youth custody
Education & childcare	Designated agencies are statutory participants, not just consultees
Commissioned providers	Where delivering safeguarding or welfare functions

Education and childcare: equal safeguarding partners



Sharing Information ≠ Referring to MASH

One of the biggest implementation risks:

The Information Sharing Duty is **not a duty to refer everything to Children's Social Care.**



Child's asthma affected by mould



Escalating school absence



Unmet health needs



Housing instability

Share information to the organisation most able to:

- ✓ Understand it
- ✓ Act on it
- ✓ Improve the child's situation

Success is not measured by how much information reaches MASH
Success is measured by whether information reaches the right agency sooner



The Right Place Test

Before sharing information ask:



“Who can make sense of it?.”

Which organisation may already hold part of the picture?.



“Who can act on it?”

Which organisation can change the child’s circumstances?



“Who can support the family?.”

Who can offer help, intervention or practical support?.



“Does Children’s Social care also need to know?.”

Are there wider safeguarding concerns which meet threshold for early help/safeguarding?

The Information Sharing Duty closes information gaps – it does not tell us to send everything to one place.



Common blockers to challenge

The duty does not remove professional judgement — it changes the starting point.



“We need consent first.”

Consent is not always required where sharing is lawful and proportionate.



“It is only a request duty.”

The duty also supports proactive sharing where your information may help.



“It is not serious enough.”

The test is whether it may help — not whether significant harm is already proven.



“It is too old or incomplete.”

Historical, partial and contextual information can be relevant.

Good practice: record what was shared, why, with whom, when — and any decision not to share.



What does this mean for your team?

Use the final 10 minutes to turn the duty into local practice changes.



Check your forms

Do they prompt the 'may help' test and proactive sharing?



Review your pathways

Where could information get delayed, siloed or downgraded?



Support confident challenge

Can practitioners challenge non-sharing safely and consistently?



Record decisions

Can you evidence the reason for sharing or not sharing?

Read the statutory guidance

