



ContactPoint

Shielded Records and Emergency Shielding Override

Version 2.0

25 February 2009

This document supports the following criteria for Organisational Accreditation	
OA08	Policy and Process for Shielding
OA18	Policy and Process for Emergency Shielding Override Investigations

Document History

Issue	Date	Author	Change history
1.0	24/10/08	Jane Dobinson	First Draft
1.1	31/10/08	Jane Dobinson	Addition of Shielded Records Panel Section
2.0	25/02/09	Jane Dobinson	Addition of Shielded Records Request Forms and Process

References

Reference Name	Date/Version	Author
ContactPoint Organisational Accreditation	03/07/08/v1.1	DCSF
Shielded Records	02/10/2008/v1.1	Michael Convey/Stoke-on-Trent

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Shielded Records and Emergency Shielding Override

1 Introduction

ContactPoint has the facility to hide or 'shield' data from ContactPoint users. This is principally intended to prevent the whereabouts of a child being identified either through:

- Visibility of the address details from ContactPoint, or;
- ContactPoint providing enough information for a likely whereabouts to be deduced (e.g., a service address).

In order for the system to work effectively and for children and young people to receive the benefits offered by ContactPoint, a shielded record will only show the ContactPoint unique identity number, the child's or young person's names, their gender and their date of birth.

Determining whether to protect a child's whereabouts by shielding a child record can only be done by a Local Authority (LA) which is under a duty to consider the views of the person to whom the record relates, the views of their parent/carer and of any Schedule 4 or 5 body (Children Act 2004 Information Database (England) Regulations 2007) involved with the child or young person.

2 Shielding

2.1 Rationale

It is vital that shielding (and thereby disclosing the whereabouts of a child or young person) is only applied where there are strong reasons, for example, where a practitioner has reason to believe that not doing so is likely to:

- Place a child at increased risk of significant harm;
- Put a child's placement at risk (in the case of adoption);
- Place an adult at risk of significant harm, and/or
- Prejudice the prevention or detection of a serious crime.

Such cases could arise for example where:

- A child/young person is adopted where there is little or no contact with birth parent(s) or wider family members;
- A child/young person and/or their parent/carer, are fleeing abuse or domestic violence; and/or
- A child/young person and/or their parent/carer or family member are subject to police protection.

The need to shield a record may also arise for children/young people and or their parent/carer in a very limited number of unique circumstances not covered by these categories, for example, siblings or co-habiting children and young people. The necessity to shield a record must therefore be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

2.2 Requests for Shielding from Children, Young People, Parents and Carers

When assessing whether a child/young person's or their parent/carer's request to shield a child record are legitimate and to address their concerns appropriately, it is helpful to explain:

- The differences between shielding and sensitive services;
- The reasons why records are shielded, and
- The potential disadvantages of shielding records on ContactPoint

It would also be beneficial to consult with any lead professional and/or other practitioners involved with the child/young person, as well as line managers, for more information and/or professional advice.

2.3 Response

Act promptly if there are strong reasons to believe that a record needs to be shielded. Discuss this, where appropriate, with the child and/or their parent/carer. It is not appropriate to simply shield a record where there is an opposition to ContactPoint in principle.

Discuss decisions with line managers before making a shielding request, wherever this is possible.

Where appropriate, also consider the safeguarding of family members and/or co-resident children/young people as the records for these individuals may also need to be shielded. Also consider whether it would be useful for other practitioners to know that the record is being shielded on ContactPoint.

The Parent/Carer must complete a Parent /Carer Shielding Request Form (see page 13). Available for download from: www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/contactpoint.

2.4 Who can Shield?

Practitioners who are users can send a shielding request to the LA ContactPoint manager where they judge that a child record must be shielded.

To ensure that shielding is only applied where appropriate, the LA ContactPoint Management Team will review the shielding requests it receives and remove the shields when necessary.

Practitioners who do not have access rights to 'shield' a child record or child/young person or parent/carer can make applications to the LA ContactPoint Management Team to shield records. **Practitioners must complete a Practitioner Shielding Request Form (see Page 14).** Available for download from: www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/contactpoint.

Where a request to shield a child record is made directly to the LA ContactPoint Management Team from a practitioner who is not a user or a child/young person or their parent/carer, the request should be dealt with as a matter of urgency. The record should be shielded immediately and then a review of whether the shield should remain, taking into account the views of the child/young person or their parent/carer, and those of practitioners working with the child or young person must occur.

3 Obligations to Shielded Records

Practitioners will identify cases in which the whereabouts of a child should be protected either in light of their own knowledge of a child/young person and/or their parents, wider family or carer(s), or because concerns are raised by family or carer(s).

To ensure that the shielding facility is used and managed appropriately, the LA ContactPoint Management Team will undertake an initial review within seven days of the shield being requested, to determine whether or not the record should be shielded. Periodical reviews of the shielded record will be undertaken every six months thereafter (see page 12 Shielded Records Panel). These reviews will seek views from the child/young person, their parent/carers and any relevant involved practitioners.

ContactPoint will not hold any details of the shield. The LA ContactPoint Management Team will keep a log of shielding requests and decisions as part of the shielding review.

4 Un-shielding Records

LA ContactPoint managers can un-shield records only where all data sources or services no longer request that a record requires shielding.

To limit the cases in which a child record is left shielded unnecessarily, the LA ContactPoint Management Team should be advised when, in professional opinion, a shield is no longer required.

A record can only be unshielded with the authorisation of the Shielded Records Panel (see page 12 Shielded Records Panel).

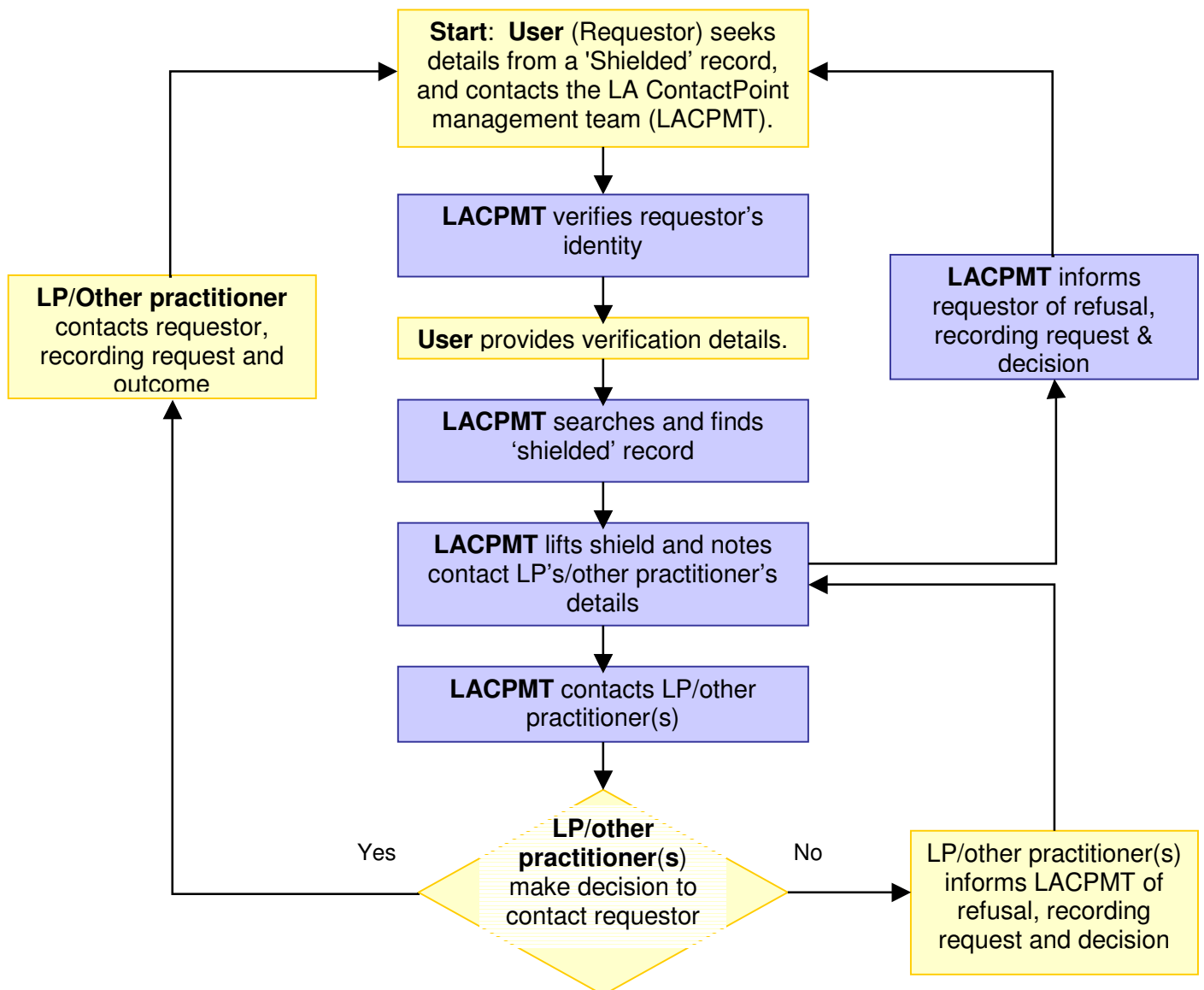
Only the LA ContactPoint Management Team will be authorised to unshield records.

5 Access to Shielded Records

In order to ensure that ContactPoint does not inadvertently confirm or indicate the whereabouts of a child or young person with a shielded record, a practitioner will only be able to find a child record by inputting information that is visible on a shielded record. No records will be returned if a search is made using information from any non-visible field.

If a shielded record is returned as part of a search, the shielded record will only show minimal information, and none which will identify the child's whereabouts.

LA ContactPoint Management teams will have access rights to view hidden information on shielded records so they can, where there are child protection concerns, 'broker' contact (see flowchart below), between users working with the same child. No other users will have access rights to hidden information on shielded records, apart from those with 'emergency shielding override' rights.



6 Subject Access Requests to a Shielded Record

Information should only be released with extreme caution. Even confirming the correct spelling of a child's name may confirm the whereabouts of a child. Such decisions need to be made on a case-by-case involving the LA Data Protection Officer, taking into account the requestor's identity and the nature of the shielding decision and the views of any practitioners working with the child.

7 Emergency Shielding Override

Provision has been made in legislation for some users to have emergency shielding override rights. This access will be restricted to child protection workers such as police officers or social services duty workers where gaining access to information held in ContactPoint may help inform their decision about the appropriate action to take or which practitioners to talk to. Invoking the emergency shielding override will immediately trigger an investigation into the reasons for doing so. Examples of when such access might be required include:

- When a multi-agency meeting or risk assessment is needed (MARAC);
- To fulfil legislative requirements or the functions of (for example) the LSCB;
- A&E attendance;
- Serious illness/accident;
- 'Missing' or 'Found' child;
- A review carried out under section 47 of the Children Act 1989;
- Serious case review;
- Child death enquiry, and
- An investigation of a crime toward or by the child/young person.

If a user needs to access a 'shielded' record out-of-hours they may invoke the emergency shielding override and the hidden details will be available to them for this one time only. No other ContactPoint users will be able to access the non-visible data in a shielded record unless they too invoke the emergency shielding override function.

A user who has invoked an emergency shielding override must assist the investigation which follows and be able to explain their reasons for accessing the 'shielded' record.

If a shielded record has been accessed the LA ContactPoint Management Team must immediately begin an investigation in order to confirm the legitimacy of the action. At the start of the review the manager of the user who has invoked the emergency shielding override will be contacted to find out whether the access to the record was appropriate.

The practitioners/organisation who initially requested the shield will also be contacted so that the necessary safeguarding/child protection procedures are initiated.

8 Shielded Records Panel (Process TBC in Cambridgeshire)

It is recommended that each LA convene a Shielded Records Panel (SRP). The purpose of the SRP is to review shielded records and to determine if a record should or should not remain shielded.

The SRP should be a multi-agency group. However, the LA is accountable for all activities in relation to ContactPoint.

The SRP will be the only body that is able to authorise the unshielding of a record. The LA ContactPoint Management Team will act as executors of the SRPs will in relation to shielded records.

Records can be unshielded for one of two reasons:

- All requests for shielding have been removed and the SRP give their approval for the shielding to be removed
- The SRP determines that a record is inappropriately shielded and authorises its unshielding

The SRP will meet on a monthly basis and review all records



- That have been shielded for six months or for a multiple of six months
- All records that have had all requests for shielding removed from them

Reviews to determine shielding may, where appropriate, consult:

- any practitioner who has requested shielding
- the practitioner's line manager who would need to confirm that shielding is appropriate
- other practitioners involved with the child
- child/young person and/or parents/carers
- The Local Children Safeguarding Board (LSCB).

9 Appendices

Parent/Carer ContactPoint Shielding Request Form

 	
PARENT/CARER ContactPoint Shielding Request	
Name and contact details of Requestor	
First Name:	Family Name:
Landline phone number:	Mobile phone number:
Email address:	
Address (with postcode)	State proof of identity and address you wish to provide (see note overleaf for further information E.g. Passport, driving licence, utility bill, etc)
Please indicate whether home / work / other if other please specify:	Identity:
	Address:
Name and identity details of the child/young person	
First Name:	Family Name:
Date of birth (dd / mm / yyyy)	Gender:
Address with postcode (if different from above):	
If known, an identity number of child/young person (E.g. unique pupil number, NHS number, national insurance number):	
Please state the child/young persons relationship to requestor above and how this relationship can be proved (E.g. birth certificate):	Relationship:
	Evidence of relationship:
Shielding Request - please tick in the box below the reason you believe that to not shield the child record could lead to the following:	
Place the child at increased risk of significant harm	<input type="checkbox"/>
Place an adult at risk of significant harm	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prejudice the prevention or detection of serious crime	<input type="checkbox"/>
In the case of adoption, put a child's placement at risk	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please provide any supporting information for the reason above or any other reason which you believe without shielding will place the child/young person at increased risk of significant harm	We will not be able to act on your request without information from those that we can consider. If a GP, school teacher or other professional can confirm the circumstances please supply their contact details.
Signature of requestor	Date of signature
Office use only	
Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Initials <input type="checkbox"/> Shielded <input type="checkbox"/> Date: <input type="text"/>	Passed to Panel <input type="checkbox"/> Accepted by Panel <input type="checkbox"/> Date for review: <input type="text"/>
<small>S:\CONTACTPOINTS\4444\CONTACTPOINT SHIELDING\REQUESTOR_CAREER\ContactPointShieldingRequestForm.doc</small>	

ContactPoint Shielding Request - Cambridgeshire - Questions and answers

How do I submit the form so the details and documents are only seen by the right people? Preferably, in person - phone the ContactPoint Team on 01480 355974/355960 or e mail ContactPoint@cambridgeshire.gov.uk to arrange an appointment to meet a member of the ContactPoint Team. (Certified copies of documents bearing the professional contact details of a solicitor would be acceptable. Certified copies should bear the wording: 'I certify I have seen the original and this is a true copy' and should be signed and dated).

By post - The form and documents can be posted, double enveloped, by Insured Royal Mail recorded delivery. The outer envelope should be addressed to: Cambridgeshire ContactPoint Team, GPDC, 42 West Street, Godmanchester, PE29 3JJ. The inner envelope should contain the form and documents and be marked **confidential** and **only to be opened by a member of the ContactPoint Team**. Your documents will be returned to the requestor by Royal Mail Recorded. However, we may still need to talk to you further on the phone or in person in order to make the decision. We will not accept responsibility for your documents if lost if not sent as specified. We would always prefer to meet with you face to face, copy your documents and return them straight away

What if I am still worried about the security of the information I am providing? If you still have concerns you will need to speak to a member of the ContactPoint Team. We will take all reasonable steps to help identify and shield records for those children/young people and/or their parent/carers who could be placed at increased risk of harm if details of their whereabouts are not hidden on ContactPoint.

Why do I have to prove my identity/address and details of my child? Shielding a record will make it harder for other professionals to know about each other when working with your child. This significant step should only be taken if really required to safeguard welfare. The decision must be based on legitimate concerns from people who have a genuine interest in the child/young person affected. Therefore, we need to validate the identity of those requesting shielding and the child/young person in order to be acting professionally in the best interests of all children.

If my child's record is shielded is there anything that can still be seen on ContactPoint? Shielded records will only show: the child's/young persons name, their date of birth, their gender and the unique ContactPoint identification number given to every child on the database. Information that could help locate individuals at risk will not be visible.

Are there instances when you would not consider a request to shield the child's record? A request that a shield be applied on the basis that you object in principle to ContactPoint would not be sufficient reason.

How is the shielding decision made and reviewed?

- The shielding request form will be considered by a member of the ContactPoint team. In most cases the shield will be applied while a formal decision is being made within 7 days. The decision will then be communicated to the requestor.
- The first review of shielded records to check that the shield is still appropriate will be six months after the original decision. Any change to the original decision will be communicated to all interested parties including the original requestor.
- If the child or young person was not involved in the original decision their views may be considered in reviews if they become of sufficient age and understanding.
- The review decisions are made by a panel of up to 3 or 4 members & will consider the views of the original requestor and affected (where appropriate) other family members and other professionals now involved in providing services.

How to appeal or request a review of the shielding decision? In the first instance, please contact the ContactPoint team at ContactPoint@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or by phone on 01480 355974/355960. If you feel that this contact has not met your concerns then you can use the council's complaints procedure by visiting <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/council/customer/complaints/> or calling 0245 045 5200.

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Practitioner Shielding Request Form



PRACTITIONER ContactPoint Shielding Request Name and Contact Details of Practitioner

First Name:	Family Name:
Landline phone number:	Mobile phone number:
Email address:	
Line Manager email address:	
Address (with postcode):	
Please indicate whether home / work / other If other please specify:	

Name and identity details of the child/young person

First Name:	Family Name:	
Date of birth (dd / mm / yyyy):	Gender:	
Home Address with postcode:		
One of the following		
Current school registration address (preferable):	Registered GP Practice (preferable):	Parent/Carer name:

Shielding Request Details

(please refer to the ContactPoint Shielding Factsheet at www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

Please tick in the box below, the reason you believe that to not shield the child record could lead to the following:

- Place the child at increased risk of significant harm
- Place an adult at risk of significant harm
- Prejudice the prevention or detection of serious crime
- In the case of adoption, put a child's placement at risk

Please provide any supporting information for the reason above or any other reason which you believe without shielding will place the child/young person at increased risk of significant harm	This will allow the LA to be fully informed of the facts when the shield comes up for review (please continue on a separate sheet if necessary).
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Practitioner signature:

Line Manager Signature:

Office use only
Accepted Initials Shielded Date: _____ Passed to Pan _____

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GUIDANCE NOTES FOR COMPLETION OF CONTACTPOINT SHIELDING REQUEST

This form needs to be completed in accordance with the ContactPoint Shielding Factsheet available online at www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/contactpoint.

How will I send this form securely to the local authority (LA)?

The preferred method of sending ContactPoint Shielding Request forms, is via email. The file (or collection of files) must be encrypted WinZip (i.e. NOT fax or phone or post) or, failing that, an alternative method may be agreed in exceptional cases in consultation with the LA ContactPoint Team. Phone the ContactPoint Team on 01480 355974/355960 or e mail ContactPoint@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

By email:

• Cambridgeshire LA is not currently GCSX registered, therefore to email the ContactPoint Shielding Request form the file must be encrypted in WinZip.

• See below for guidance on how to encrypt files in WinZip

Alternative method:

The LA ContactPoint team will consider alternative methods of transmitting this data on a case-by-case basis. Please contact Jane Dobinson on 01480 355974 or Roger Green on 01480 355960 or email ContactPoint@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Why do I need to provide the address of the child's school or GP?

Identification of a record on ContactPoint will be faster, the more data items known.

Where do I find the address of the child's school or GP?

This may be recorded on your Case Management System. If this is not available then please enter the parent/carer name.

How do I keep a record of shield requests sent to LAs?

This form must be signed and countersigned by all Practitioners and Line Managers and a copy kept as part of the case file and by the Line Manager in accordance with your own Case Recording and Information Assurance policies.

How and when will this shield be reviewed?

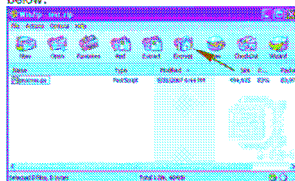
LAs will review shield requests within seven days of receipt and every six months thereafter. More information is available in the document 'ContactPoint - Shielded Records and Emergency Shielding Override' available at www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/contactpoint. Failure to appropriately shield a child's information, or failure to review the shield status will be viewed as inadequate safeguarding practice.

Encrypting Files with WinZip

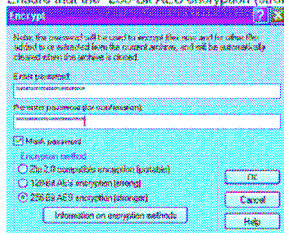
WinZip allows you to encrypt individual files (or collections of files) for secure storage on your computer or secure transmission via electronic mail. This software is to be used to transfer the ContactPoint Shielding Request form(s).

WinZip does not automatically encrypt files. You must follow this process to ensure the security of information:

1. If you do not have Winzip you can download a [free trial version from the WinZip site](#).
2. Start WinZip by clicking Start -> All Programs -> WinZip.
3. Click the "New" button to create a new archive. You will be asked to create a name for your archive and choose the storage location.
4. WinZip will then automatically take you to a window which allows you to add a file to the archive. Select the file you would like to encrypt and click Add.
5. You may add additional files to the archive by using the Add button on the main WinZip screen, if desired.
6. When you are finished adding files, click the large Encrypt button, shown by the arrow in the figure below:



7. Click OK to dismiss the Caution window.
8. The encryption window will then appear, asking you to specify the encryption options for your file. Provide a strong password by entering it twice.
9. Ensure that the "256-Bit AES encryption (stronger)" option is checked.



10. The archive will then be encrypted and stored in the ZIP file with the name and location you specified in step 3.

There are several important notes concerning the encryption process:

- The original files are not encrypted. Only the ZIP file is encrypted and safe to send over the Internet.
- If you send the file to someone else, they will need the password you specified in step 8 to open the file. It is not safe to send this password via e-mail. We recommend providing the password by telephone.

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