

# ContactPoint

A new way of helping  
children and young people



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All children and young people should get the best possible start in life. So, when they need help and support, they should get it quickly and in a co-ordinated way.

The key to making this happen is to make sure that all the people who work with children and young people know which services are involved, and how to get in touch with each other. This is where ContactPoint comes in.

ContactPoint is an online contacts list used by professionals to improve the way they help children and young people. ContactPoint will start up in Gateshead during 2009/10.

This leaflet should answer your questions about ContactPoint.



## What is ContactPoint?

ContactPoint is a simple electronic contacts list for people who work with children and young people. It provides them with a quick way to find out who else is working with the same child, making it easier for them to work as a team and deliver more co-ordinated support.

## What is on ContactPoint?

ContactPoint holds very basic information – already held by different services. Information on ContactPoint includes:

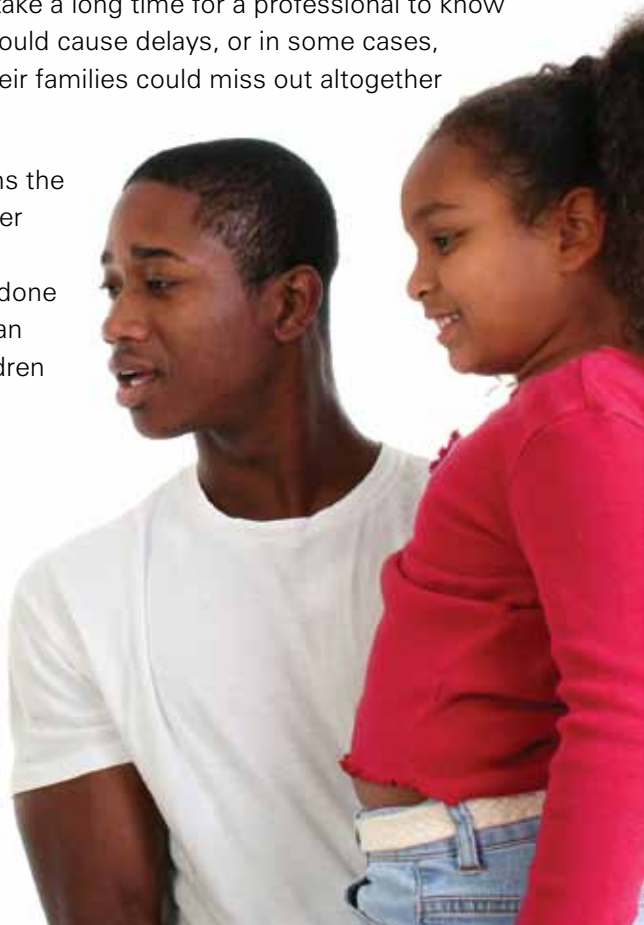
- The child or young person's name and their date of birth;
- The child's parents/carer's name and contact details;
- The school and doctor's name and contact details; and
- Contact details of other services, e.g. a youth worker or health visitor's name and contact details.

## Why do we need it?

Before ContactPoint, it could take a long time for a professional to know who else was involved. This could cause delays, or in some cases, children, young people and their families could miss out altogether on the services they need.

This simple contacts list means the right people can find each other quickly and won't waste time repeating work already being done by others. This means they can spend more time helping children and their families.

*ContactPoint will help to reduce the number of repeat assessments and referrals, which can be distressing for a child and their family.*



## Who can use it?

ContactPoint is only available to professionals who work with children and young people. People such as doctors, head teachers, or social workers will use ContactPoint to help them do their job. Before any professional can use ContactPoint they will have to pass strict security checks.

## How long is information kept on ContactPoint?

Once a child has reached 18, their record is removed (apart from some young people who can choose to stay on until they are 25).

## Can I see my ContactPoint record?

Yes, you can see the information held on ContactPoint and have something corrected if you believe it needs changing. To ask for this you can:

**Email:**

[informationrights@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:informationrights@gateshead.gov.uk)

or

**Write to:**

Information Rights Officer  
Gateshead Council  
Civic Centre  
Regent Street  
Gateshead  
NE8 1HH

*Doctors and teachers are able to access ContactPoint, but it does NOT hold medical notes or school records.*



## What if there is a serious risk of harm?

If you believe your child or children are at risk of serious harm, such as domestic violence, it is possible to request that your ContactPoint information is shielded. When a record is shielded all the address information is hidden. Usually the professionals involved with you or your family will have carried out this process before your information goes on to ContactPoint.

If you are concerned and believe a child or young person should be shielded on ContactPoint, you can contact Gateshead Council's ContactPoint Management team by:

**Phone:** 0191 433 3251

**Email:** [contactpoint@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:contactpoint@gateshead.gov.uk)

**Post:** ContactPoint Management team, Civic Centre, Regents Street, Gateshead, NE8 1HH

If you would like more information about ContactPoint you should:

**Phone:** 0870 000 2288

**Email:** [info@dcsf.gov.uk](mailto:info@dcsf.gov.uk)

**Web:** [www.ecm.gov.uk/contactpoint](http://www.ecm.gov.uk/contactpoint)

*ContactPoint will help professionals provide a better response to children's needs.*



# What professionals say about ContactPoint

*"The children and families we've worked with think ContactPoint has had a positive effect. They feel that things are being done to help them, quickly and as efficiently as possible."*

*Matthew, Head teacher,  
Primary School*

*"ContactPoint has been a huge benefit. It allows us to see who else we need to be working with, from social workers to health professionals. Now it takes very little time to arrange meetings and as a result a plan to help support the child and their family is sorted out much faster."*

*Carolyn, Neighbourhood  
schools officer*

*"Having ContactPoint means I have more time to dedicate to working with a child and their family. The families I work with get a service much sooner and with less hassle. I was able to contact the professionals involved with a child by looking on ContactPoint. Together we quickly got a clear idea of the child's situation and sorted out what we should do to help. The child's situation was quickly improved."*

*Annette, Social worker*

## **DIFFERENT FORMATS**

If you would like information about ContactPoint in a different format – large print, Braille, on CD/cassette or in a different language, please phone: 0191 433 3251.





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