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# Practice Standards

These practice standards support the use of Mind Of My Own and outline what is expected of workers and carers across the authority.

These standards are underpinned by the legal and regulatory framework outlined in:

* + Northamptonshire Children’s Trust Practice Standards
  + Northamptonshire Children’s Trust Quality Assurance Framework
  + Northamptonshire Children’s Trust Participation Strategy

Practice Standard 1: ACCESS FOR Children

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|  | STANDARD | OWNER | TIMESCALE |
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| 1.1 | All children using our services are made aware of the Mind of My Own app and helped to download the One app to use independently if they are able to. | All frontline workers | When first working with a child or young person. |
| 1.2 | Where children cannot use the app independently, workers use their own accounts to set up a profile for the child to have regular access to the app. | All frontline workers | When working with a child |
| 1.3 | The One app is offered to all children who are unhappy or dissatisfied with a service, as a constructive approach to resolving the issue via the scenario ‘sort a problem’ . | Participation, Children’s Rights officer, Advocate, Allocated worker, all workers in contact with child | When a child expresses dissatisfaction. |

Practice Standard 2: USING THE APP IN ALL RELEVANT SERVICES

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|  | STANDARD | OWNER | TIMESCALE |
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| 2.1 | Everyone working with or supporting children and young people who are using our services is responsible for knowing about and promoting Mind Of My Own apps with each young person they work with. This applies to the following:  All Social Workers / Family Support Workers  Practice/Team/Service Managers  Supervising Social Workers  Personal Advisors  Independent Reviewing Officers  Child protection Conference Chairs  YOS/CYPSS Case Managers / Case Workers  Family Time Workers  Residential Staff  Children’s Right Officers  Advocates  Independent Visitors  Education/Virtual School Officers  CFSS Practitioners  Other roles as appropriate | All frontline workers | When working with a child |

Practice Standard 3: Assigning Statements

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|  | STANDARD | OWNER | TIMESCALE |
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| 3.1 | **Assigning Statements**  The Service portal is monitored by an administrator throughout the working day. Statements are assigned to the workers for whom they are intended within 3 working hours of being sent by the young person or the next working day if sent outside of working hours. | Service Portal Administrator  And business support | Within 3 working hours |
| 3.2 | **Assigning: Complaints Officer**  Any statements regarding a complaint are assigned to the Complaints Team within 3 working hours. | Service Portal Administrator | Within 3 working hours |
| 3.3 | **Assigning when a worker is away**  If a worker is away from work, the administrator assigns the statement to either the named person providing cover or the worker’s manager. | Service Portal Administrator | A maximum of 24 hours |
| 3.4 | **Assigning when there is no allocated worker**  Any statements from children who do not have an allocated worker within the team are assigned to the relevant team manager. Team manager information is available via structure charts on Sharepoint. | Service Portal Administrator | Within 3 working hours |
| 3.5 | **Assigning a child is no longer worked with**  Where statements are received from children who are no longer worked with, they will be allocated to the MASH Front Door Service ([MASH@nctrust.co.uk](mailto:MASH@nctrust.co.uk)) for a response. The young person will be contacted by phone or in person by the most appropriate person to discuss their submission. | Service Portal Administrator | Within 3 working hours |

Practice Standard 4: Receiving Statements

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|  | STANDARD | OWNER | TIMESCALE |
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| 4.1 | **Response Times**  When the child’s statement is assigned to the correct person, they will receive an email from Mind Of My Own with the PDF statement. It must be downloaded, read and an acknowledgement sent to the child within 6 working hours. | Recipient (social worker, IRO, Team Manager, CFSS practitioners and managers etc.) | Within 1 working day |
| 4.2 | **Saving Statements**  The statement must be saved, by the worker receiving the statement, onto the child/young person’s electronic case file on Carefirst, Capita or other system. A case note should state that a child / young person’s statement has been received. | Recipient (social worker, IRO, Team Manager, CFSS practitioners and managers etc.) | Within 1 working day |
| 4.3 | **Unopened Statements / Re-assigned Statements**  If the statement has not been opened within 24 working hours (1 working day) the statement will be reassigned by the service portal administrator to the worker’s line manager, who will decide on the best course of action. | Service Portal Administrator  And business support | Within 24 hours (1 working day) |

Practice Standard 6: SAFETY LINK ACTIONS

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|  | STANDARD | OWNER | TIMESCALE |
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| 6.1 | If a statement appears in the ‘Safety Link’ list then it means a child is feeling unsafe, unhappy, or scared. These statements must be downloaded and sent to relevant The Team and Service Managers immediately using the normal email system. | Service Portal Administrator | Immediate |
| 6.2 | Managers receiving a statement where the safety link has been triggered should have a conversation with the allocated worker to decide if safeguarding procedures apply and whether urgent action is required. | Manager | Immediately upon receipt. |

Practice Standard 7: Children and Family Support Services, Children IN NEED, CHILD PROTECTION

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|  | STANDARD | OWNER | TIMESCALE |
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| 7.1 | **Children, Young People & Family Support Services**  Mind Of My Own apps are introduced to all children and young people who are receiving Children and Family Support Services from the local authority. The apps should be used to help capture the child’s views in:   * Early Help Assessments * Early Help plans * Team Around the Family Meetings * CFSS Visits * Family Network Meetings | CFSS Practitioners | In the introductory meeting with the child. |
| 7.2 | **Child in Need**  Mind Of My Own apps are introduced to all children and young people (including those who are disabled) who are receiving services as a child in need (CIN). The apps should be used to help capture the child’s views in:   * Assessments * CIN Meetings * Family Group Conferences * Family Network Meetings * Social Work visits * Signs of Safety plans | Allocated Social Worker | In the introductory meeting with the child. |
| 7.3 | **Child Protection**  Where appropriate Mind Of My Own apps are introduced to the child / young people to help them understand and contribute to the initial child protection conference and all subsequent review conferences. | Allocated Social Worker and the CP Chair | Within one week of the case being allocated.  Checked a minimum of 7 days prior to the ICPC  A minimum of 20 working days prior to 2nd and subsequent RCPCs |
| 7.4 | Mind Of My Own apps should be used to help the child / young person to share their wishes and feelings in:   * Child Protection Investigations * Core Group Meetings * Child Protection Reviews * Family Group Conferences / Family Network Meetings * Social work / Practitioner visits * Signs of Safety plans * CFSS Visits | Allocated worker / IRO / CP Chair | Before a meeting |

Practice Standard 8: Children Looked After & Care leavers

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|  | STANDARD | OWNER | TIMESCALE |
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| 8.1 | As part of the reception into care procedures, all looked after children receive information about Mind Of My Own apps at the point they become looked after. The apps should be used to help children to share their wishes and feelings in or about:   * Assessments * Statutory social work visits * Statutory Looked After Reviews * Personal Education Planning * Health planning * Where they live * Life story work * Personal Advisor (PA) visits * Care and Pathway Planning | Social Worker  PA | Within one week of becoming looked after |
| 8.2 | The Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) speaks with the child/young person in private prior to the first review and before every subsequent review. This includes discussing the Mind of My Own app to the child, as an optional means of capturing the child’s voice to inform decisions about their future. | IRO | A minimum of 5 working days before the first statutory review.  A minimum of 15 working days prior to 6 monthly statutory reviews |
| 8.3 | **Prior to Statutory Reviews**  An invitation to make a statement for the review is sent to the child and family together with other consultation paperwork.  Templates and resources are available on the Mind of My Own Resource Library. | SQAS Business Support | At least 10 working days prior to 2nd and subsequent reviews |
| 8.4 | The IRO must check that the child or young person’s views have been evidenced through a statement, and should encourage this if they haven’t. | IRO | At least 5 working days prior to the review |
| 8.5 | **During the Review**  A copy of the child / young person’s statement is taken to the meeting by the IRO or social worker who received it. | Recipient e.g. IRO, social worker, advocate | At the review |
| 8.6 | At the statutory review the IRO is responsible for asking whether the child has been introduced to Mind Of My Own apps. This should be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. | IRO | At the review |
| 8.7 | If the child has not been given information before their Looked After review the child’s IRO will ask the allocated social worker to ensure that this happens during the next statutory visit. | IRO  Social worker | Next statutory visit. |
| 8.8 | **Residential Care Staff**  Children’s Homes use the Mind of My Own apps to help inform their care of the child. The app should be used to inform:   * Key worker sessions * Residents meetings * Promote feedback   Residential staff also support the child / young person to use the app to contribute to other care processes such as meetings with their social worker, reviews, PEP meetings etc. | Registered Managers  Residential Care Staff | At appropriate times |
| 8.9 | **Foster Carers**  The Mind of My Own apps form part of all foster carers’ training.  Foster carers are encouraged to support a child/ young person in their care to use the app to share their wishes and feelings and to contribute to care processes such as meetings with their social worker, reviews, PEP meetings etc. | Foster Carers | At appropriate times |

Practice Standard 9: Managers

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|  | STANDARD | OWNER | TIMESCALE |
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| 9.1 | Managers are responsible for knowing about and promoting Mind Of My Own apps with members of their team. Managers should therefore ensure that they and their staff have received relevant training. | Line Managers. | Ongoing |
| 9.2 | Managers should ensure that all new staff receive a Mind of My Own workers account when they join the team. Mind of My Own training should also be part of the new staff member’s induction process. | Line Managers | When new staff are appointed |
| 9.3 | Managers should discuss the use of the Mind of My Own app in supervision with staff:   * Where appropriate use of the app might be an agreed action, recorded in supervision and the child’s records. * Managers should also ensure that children are receiving appropriate responses to their statements. | Line Managers | Monthly as appropriate |
| 9.4 | When workers are away, statements may be re-assigned to managers for action. It is important that managers respond appropriately to children if they receive one of these statements, even if it is just to explain that the worker is away and will get back to them on their return. | Line Managers | When receiving a statement from a child or young person. |
|  | See other relevant sections. In particular 2.1 (promoting the app); 6.1 (The Safety Link); and 10.2 (Auditing). |  |  |

Practice Standard 10: QUALITY ASSURANCE / PARTICIPATION

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|  | STANDARD | OWNER | TIMESCALE |
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| 10.1 | **Participation**  The Mind of My Own app is a fundamental component of our participation strategy. Usage is regularly monitored by the Lead Manager and Participation / Children’s Rights Officer to inform senior managers of uptake and children’s views. | Participation or Rights officer, | Quarterly Reports |
| 10.2 | **Quality Assurance / Auditing**  As part of the auditing procedures Mind of My Own statements and responses to children are assessed by auditors in all case file audits. These are used to establish the extent to which the child’s voice is heard and to ensure that the child has a say in the decisions impacting on their lives. | Auditors | Present in all children’s QA activity |

**Further Information and Support**

Mind of My Own is integral to our practice. Should you have any questions or queries, the departmental leads listed below can assist you further.

* **Your Mind Of My Own Leads**

Thomas Norford, Project Officer, Operational Lead

Abigail Marsden, Strategic Manager for Corporate Parenting, Strategic Lead

Emma Jessup, Participation Manager

* **Your Mind Of My Own Champions**

Amina Bismallah – Children in Care

Julie Jordan – Children in Care

Karen Siggars – Social Work Academy

Katie Randall – Children’s Support and Safeguarding

Bernadette Rate – Children’s Support and Safeguarding

Daishy Prickett – Children’s Support and Safeguarding

Louise Hart – Children’s Support and Safeguarding

Daniel Knight – Youth Offending Service

Sarah Fletcher – Adoption Post Order Support

Lorraine Sansome - IRO

**Mind Of My Own Champions Support -**  Champions will offer Mind Of My Own training or refresher sessions to staff. There will be monthly Champion support sessions, facilitated by the Operational Lead, Thomas Norford, Project Officer.

* **Mind Of My Own Steering Group**

The Mind Of My Own Steering Group is chaired by the Strategic or Operational Lead. The group comprises key stake holders in our service to implement Mind Of My Own in our services. Meetings are held every month to establish targets, review progress and ensure Mind Of My Own apps are fully imbedded within our services.

* **Mind Of My Own Administrator**

All Mind Of My Own statements sent via young people’s accounts are monitored and allocated to worker by the Mind of My Own service portal administrators, Thomas Norford, Kathryn Spencer (plus new member of staff being recruited).

The Mind Of My Own administration team can be contacted via [Mindofmyown@nctrust.co.uk](mailto:Mindofmyown@nctrust.co.uk).