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**An overview of Child Sexual Exploitation and the response by the Walsall
Safeguarding Children's Board to this issue**

Ward(s) All

Portfolios: Cllr B Cassidy – Portfolio Holder for Children's Services

Executive Summary:

This report provides an overview of the issue of child sexual exploitation (CSE), including the national and regional response activity around this significant priority. It outlines the response to this issue in Walsall, led by the Walsall Children's Safeguarding Board.

Reason for scrutiny:

The report was requested by Members of the Children's Services Scrutiny Panel to enable them to fulfil their key responsibilities and duties in holding the Council and its Partners to account for its work in protecting children and young people from harm through CSE in Walsall. This report builds on the report on CSE presented to Scrutiny on 14 October 2014.

Recommendation:

Scrutiny notes and supports the contents of the report and the current activity to protect Walsall children and young people from the risk of child sexual exploitation, to pursue perpetrators and to disrupt their activities, including through prosecution.

Background papers:

The following reports provide an overview into the issues of CSE nationally and regionally.

- Working Together to Safeguard Children A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, March 2013
- 'If only someone had listened': the Office of the Children's Commissioner inquiry into child sexual exploitation in gangs and groups report, November 2013
- The Jay Report: Independent Enquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham, August 2014
- The Sexual Exploitation of Children: It Couldn't Happen Here, Could It? A thematic report by Ofsted, November 2014

- The Louise Casey Report of an Inspection of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, February 2015
- Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation across the West Midlands Assessment, 18 March 2015

Resource and legal considerations:

Responding to children at risk of significant harm is a statutory duty placed on Local Authority Chief Executives, Directors of Children's Services, LSCB Chairs and senior managers within organisations who commission and provide services for children and families, including social workers and professionals from health services, adult services, the police, Academy Trusts, education settings and the voluntary and community sector who have contact with children and families.

The resources required to respond to this statutory requirement come from within the existing resources across the partnership of organisations working in Walsall to protect vulnerable children and those at risk of harm.

Citizen impact:

The effective delivery of high quality services to protect children and young people from significant harm, including the risk of child sexual exploitation has a direct impact on the welfare and well being of children and young people in Walsall. It directly links to the corporate priority to Improve Health and Wellbeing and the Children's Services objective that all children in Walsall are safe and supported.

Environmental impact:

There is no environmental impact

Performance management:

The performance of the partnership in successfully supporting children and young people at risk of child sexual exploitation, prosecuting offenders and promoting disruption activity is monitored by the Walsall Safeguarding Children Board at every meeting.

Equality Implications:

The co-ordinated provision of services designed to address the protection of children and the disruption and prosecution of activities by adults provides specific support for those children and young people who are at risk of significant harm.

Consultation:

This report has been prepared collaboratively between Walsall Children's Service Social Care, the Independent Chair of Walsall Safeguarding Children Board members of the Board, particularly the Police and Health representatives and Stephen Rimmer, West Midlands Strategic Leader – Preventing Violence against Vulnerable People.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 CSE is a form of child abuse in which perpetrators develop total control over their victims. It starts with a grooming process, in which victims are showered with gifts and attention. They are treated like adults, for example, by being taken out in cars. The young person can believe that the perpetrator is their boyfriend and that they are in love. This is a powerful thing, especially for young children or young people who may have difficult family backgrounds and crave love and attention. As a result, they do not complain. The grooming process isolates the victim from friends and family.
- 1.2 At some point, drugs, alcohol and sex may be introduced. They are forced not only to have sex with their abuser but sometimes other men too. This is coupled with more overt coercion, threats and violence. By now, victims may be dependent on drugs and alcohol, afraid of their abuser, isolated from their family and scared that they will not be believed or that worse may happen to them or their families if they make a complaint.
- 1.3 The consequences of CSE are appalling. Victims suffer from suicidal feelings and often self-harm. Many become pregnant. Some have to manage the emotional consequences of miscarriages and abortions while others have children that they are unable to parent appropriately. The abuse and violence continues to affect victims into adulthood. Many enter violent and abusive relationships. Many suffer poor mental health and addiction.
- 1.4 The predators often target children with difficult backgrounds, including those in care, who are particularly vulnerable to grooming. But they are also sometimes able to exploit those from stable backgrounds. That families, despite their very best efforts, are unable to prevent the abuse reflects the power of the abusers and the degree of control they exert.
- 1.5 Tackling CSE is incredibly difficult. No one should underestimate this. It requires spotting the signs, helping young people to recognise their experience as abuse and 16 getting them to trust public services instead of their abusers, often in the face of serious threats.
- 1.6 Then it requires supporting victims through the criminal justice system, where they may have to 'relive' the experience again. There are challenges in gaining sufficient evidence for prosecution. When child sexual exploitation is happening on the scale that it did in Rotherham, there will be multiple perpetrators and victims, and establishing a complete picture by fully appreciating all the links and connections, will be difficult.

2. The National Response

- 2.1 There is currently no national strategy in relation to CSE although there have been a number of enquiries and reports into the challenge that CSE poses in keeping children and young people safe. These include:
 - 'If only someone had listened': the Office of the Children's Commissioner inquiry into child sexual exploitation in gangs and groups report in November 2013
 - The Jay Report: Independent Enquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham, August 2014

- The Sexual Exploitation of Children: It Couldn't Happen Here, Could It? A thematic report by Ofsted, November 2014
- The Louise Casey Report of an Inspection of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, February 2015

2.2 Following the publication of the Jay Report in August 2014 each partnership agency in Walsall considered the report's 14 recommendations and relevant amendments were made to Walsall's CSE action plan. In September 2014 the Chief Executive asked the Independent Chair of the WCSB to provide assurance from each agency that there are no historic or long standing issues relating to CSE that have not been brought to the attention of the appropriate Authorities. Assurance as far as is reasonably possible with the information available was provided by each agency. The Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services met with a cross section of long standing social work staff to identify any historic issues that they felt had not been brought to the attention of relevant senior staff. No such issues were identified.

2.3 In March 2015, HM Government published *Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation* in which it laid out actions the Government intends to take in response to the Jay Report and the Casey Report. These include:

- a new national Whistleblowing portal;
- the creation of a national taskforce and a centre of expertise to support areas deemed to be struggling to get their response right;
- consultation on an extension of a new offence of 'wilful neglect' to children's social care and education officers and elected members
- ensuring that every police force prioritises child sexual abuse by giving it the status of a national threat in the Strategic Policing Requirement.

3. The Regional Response

3.1 There is a considerable amount of work underway across the West Midlands Region, led by Stephen Rimmer, West Midlands Strategic Leader – Preventing Violence against Vulnerable People reporting to the Chief Executive's and Directors of Children's Services. A sub-regional CSE Strategy Group is in place and a CSE co-ordinators network is to be established. Walsall is an active participant in all Regional work on CSE.

3.2 It has been important to work regionally to effectively understand the scale of CSE. The seven West Midlands Councils, working together with West Midlands Police and Barnados have established a regional framework which sets out the functions, processes and a proposed structure that will assist the safeguarding of children and young people from CSE.

3.3 The West Midlands Metropolitan Area Child Sexual Exploitation Framework incorporates the 'See Me Hear Me' framework first laid out in the November 2013 report of the Office of the Children's Commissioner.

The overarching aim of this framework is to ensure that child sexual exploitation is responded to as a child protection and safeguarding issue as stated in the Working Together Guidance on child sexual exploitation (DCSF, 2009).

3.4 The regional framework has supported the establishment of Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing Operations Groups (CMOG). These are multi agency operational groups

that meet monthly to discuss and plan local action in relation to victims, potential (at risk) victims, offenders and locations of CSE activity. This enables practitioners locally to ensure support is made available to victims, to track offenders and to co-ordinate local disruption activity in any locally identified 'hot spots'. Steve Rimmer has recently observed the practice of Walsall's CMOG and reported positively about its effectiveness and impact.

- 3.5 This collaborative approach to work across the region has enabled the production of a regional assessment of the range and scale of the challenge of child sexual exploitation which was published on 18 March 2015 (Appendix 1).

This analysis used Local Authority and police data from January to June 2014. It provides a snapshot of the threat at that time.

This showed that in that period:

- 488 children or young people were identified by West Midlands Police and Local Authorities as sexually exploited or at risk of sexual exploitation across the West Midlands in the first six months of 2014;
- children and young people experiencing or at risk of CSE is greatest between 14 and 16 years of age. 87% of victims identified were female, 7% were male, leaving 6% not recorded. 54% of victims were recorded as White European, 19% African-Caribbean, 8% Asian, 2% other, 17% not recorded;
- there were named defendants or suspects recorded for 26% of the incidents reported to the police. 92% of offenders were male, 8% female, with an average age of 27;
- suspects are from a wide range of backgrounds, but there are disproportionate numbers from an Asian Pakistani background suspected of abuse and exploitation on the streets; in relation to online offending the suspects are primarily white males.

4. Local Organisational Practice Oversight

- 4.1 All children who go missing in Walsall are offered a return interview. This has been provided by Barnados and, as of 1 April 2015, this service has been commissioned from Street Teams, a local third sector provider with whom Walsall has previously worked.
- 4.2 All return interviews include an assessment of the risk to the child of becoming a victim of CSE and copies of the return interviews are provided to Children's Services social care because they form an important part of the overall assessment of risk of CSE and the subsequent plans to mitigate the risks to the child or young person.
- 4.3 In February 2015 a dedicated CSE Police investigation team comprising of a CSE co-ordinator and 3 Detective Constables was introduced. The team focuses on progressing CSE investigations; an additional Detective is dedicated to identifying and implementing covert opportunities to bring CSE offenders to justice. Walsall is the only police area in the West Midlands to have dedicated this amount of resources and have a Borough focussed police investigation team incorporating victims, offenders and partnership working.
- 4.4 CMOG meets monthly and reports to the strategic Child Exploitation and Missing Committee (CMEC) of the Walsall Children's Safeguarding Board. In Walsall the CMOG is well supported by partners from across the wider children's partnership and includes representatives from the police, social care, the youth offending team, early help and the community safety partnership. Partners provide written and verbal updates on actions with victims and perpetrators as appropriate. Practitioners attend the meeting well prepared and ready to share information.

Where partners have intelligence relating to children from other Local Authorities being found in Walsall this information is shared across Local Authority Boundaries as appropriate.

- 4.5 The meeting is victim or potential victim focused and tracks activity. It also discusses offenders, both those identified by name and those known but not yet named. Police officers are able to discuss progress and provide partners with an overview of their

next steps. The meeting also discusses the potential opportunities to disrupt criminal activity in known locations.

4.6 When an individual case is giving rise to significant concerns, a multi agency professionals meeting takes place to discuss how best to protect the child, sharing information and intelligence. The meeting is chaired by the CSE coordinator and is designed to identify specific actions relating to the exploitation this child is at risk of experiencing. These meetings are attended by the police, school, social worker (if child has one), parents, health or anyone else that can share information around the child. A clear plan of action is put in place to protect the child and it becomes the responsibility of a named professional to ensure the actions are delivered and the intended impact and outcome is achieved.

5. How assured are we that the identification of – and response to – CSE in Walsall is comprehensive and effective?

5.1 The Walsall Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) has agreed a Child Sexual Exploitation strategy and action plan to tackle CSE and monitor the impact of that plan (Appendix 2). The work plan addresses prevention (including providing children and young people with information on safe and healthy relationships through a whole school approach to preventing CSE), protection and pursuit of perpetrators.

There are three particular components of an assured service:

- Training, information and practice
- Organisational/practice oversight
- Quality Assurance and Multi Agency Audit Activity

5.2 Training, Information and Practice

Through the Safeguarding Board's Multi-Agency Training Programme, and with the support of Barnardo's, we offer both foundation level (designed to raise awareness) and advanced training for all front line practitioners and workers. Topics covered in the foundation training include:

- Current CSE legislation and key issues
- Grooming
- Consent
- Vulnerability and protective factors
- Local context
- Casework support

On the advanced training topics include:

- Direct work tools and strategies
- Safety planning.

The training is designed to ensure practitioners are confident in identifying risk and vulnerability factors and know how to identify and respond to issues of CSE. It enables practitioners to discuss, share and influence practice and service delivery models. To date over 300 practitioners have accessed the training offered and attendance reflects participation from across key agencies including the voluntary sector.

The Board funds 'Gold Membership' to the CSE National Working Group. This will enable all members of the Board to access the full resources of the Group, including free access to special interest forums and e-learning for practitioners.

5.3 Organisational/Practice Oversight.

The WSCB has a specific Committee dedicated to CSE and Missing Children work (CEMC). This Strategic Committee meets bi-monthly and is chaired by a senior police officer with senior representatives from health, education, youth services, the police, licensing services, the community safety partnership, children's social care and the third sector (Street Teams). This is to be strengthened further with representation from Housing.

The tasks of CEMC include:

- recognising and addressing gaps in service provision to ensure a safe and effective response to children at risk or victims of CSE and/or those that are missing or absent from home;
- building an evidence base of the prevalence of CSE in Walsall and implementing targeted, intelligence-led public awareness campaigns with the support of Communication Teams across the Partnership;
- ensuring the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures across the Partnership and that effective and robust training arrangements are in place across the Partnership; this includes supporting the delivery of educational programmes across all agencies both internally and externally;
- ensuring appropriate support services are in place for parents and carers of children at risk;
- facilitating a Borough-wide multi-agency response to problem-solving within identified localities including the promotion of disruption of risk activity with a view to achieving prosecution of offenders;
- monitoring effectiveness against the objectives of the delivery plan by holding partner agencies to account via this Committee;
- ensuring the CMOG is responding effectively to the safeguarding of children of concern, tackling risk locations and offenders;
- develop effective data collection mechanisms and review of those data sets to understand demand and effectiveness of activity in achieving outcomes;
- ensuring that equal focus is given to both the child exploitation agenda and missing from home agenda;

CMEC reports directly to the Walsall Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB). This enables the Board to challenge and monitor progress across all partner agencies.

5.4 Quality Assurance and Multi-Agency Audit Activity

The WSCB commissions multi agency assurance and audit activity through a range of thematic audits. Our local response to CSE is one of these themes. Partners have audited files in respect of children for whom CSE was identified as a risk and as a result have been able to identify both single agency and some multi agency learning. This included fully capturing the details of a young person's known associates and

ensuring that the voice of the child or young person was sought and, where possible, factored into the planning to ensure their safety.

- 5.5 Responsibility for ensuring that individual single agency learning is shared within the relevant agency lies with the respective auditors. Progress against these actions plans is monitored via the WSCB's Quality Assurance & Performance Committee.

Thematic issues arising that affect more than one agency are also subject to further assurance activity and are picked up via partnership wide audits. A partnership wide audit is currently looking into ensuring that the voice of children and young people is sought and reflected in plans. The outcomes of this audit activity will be reported back to the July 2015 meeting of the WSCB.

- 5.6 The WSCB has recently appointed a CSE co-ordinator on a 12 month fixed term contract after securing funding from the Walsall Safer Community Partnership. The Co-ordinator will enhance the smooth running of the CMOG, creating space for some operational staff to focus even more on the direct work with children, young people, the parents and carers. The post holder has a key role in supporting the multi agency planning meetings for individual children.
- 5.7 The Chief Executive chairs a 6 weekly assurance meeting of the WSCB, attended by the Director of Children's Services, Cabinet Member (Children's Services), the Independent Board Chair, senior Health and Police representatives and an independent member to provide external challenge. The Chair holds the Board members to account and seeks assurance for the quality and impact of work on CSE.
- 5.8 Specific awareness raising has been provided for Elected Members through dedicated Members Briefings on CSE in March 2015. This has supported them in further developing their understanding of the issues and fully exercising their role as Corporate Parents and community leaders.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 Walsall Safeguarding Children's Board continues to provide leadership in this area. Partners across Walsall have made significant progress in embedding processes and practice that will enable children and young people who are at risk of CSE to be identified and supported. Processes are also in place to identify and deal with offenders.
- 6.2 Work continues to further embed the use of the CSE screening and risk assessment tools across all partner agencies to ensure victims and potential victims of CSE are identified and provided with support.
- 6.3 The current development of a Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub with Police, social care, health and the Probation Service will provide increased opportunities to ensure that information relating to children and the adults in their lives can be shared at the earliest opportunity. This will ensure that early decisions can be taken to convene the necessary strategy meetings to safeguard children and young people.
- 6.4 West Midlands Police in Walsall provide information in relation to children who go missing and those who are absent i.e. those children who are not where they should be, to Walsall Children's Services. This enables social care to identify those children

who are known to social care because they are looked after, currently subject to a child protection plan or already identified as a child in need.

Since February 2015 when assessing the risk to any child who has gone missing the Police have also include the question “Is this child at risk of CSE or known to Children’s Social Care”. This allows early identification of potential risk and for social care to consider this risk in the child’s plan.

- 6.5 The link between children who are missing from home, care or education and the risk of becoming a victim of CSE has been identified as area for further exploration and work is currently underway to increase the profile of children who go missing at CMOG. Discussing these children at CMOG will ensure that any patterns relating to where children are found or where they self report visiting on their return can be identified and appropriate actions taken.
- 6.6 The Troubled Families Partnership has funded a joint bid from the Police and Education Welfare Service (EWS) so that between 2nd March 2015 and 17th July 2015 there will be joint work to address truancy and irregular attendance through truancy patrols. It is operating in the central and west areas of Walsall and is managed by the Education Welfare Service. All children and young people stopped by the patrol will have follow up investigations and intervention to assess the risk and ensure the appropriate response. The patrols are designed to reduce truancy and the impact will be assessed over the summer period.
- 6.7 Further work is currently being undertaken to explore and understand the links between those children who are educated at home, in an alternative provision to a mainstream school or are subject to a part time timetable and CSE. The outcomes of this work will be reported back to CMEC and built into any future iteration of the CMEC work plan.

Attachments:

Appendix 1: Summary Document for West Mids Problem Profile V5

Appendix 2: WSCB Multi-Agency CSE Strategy V4



Preventing Violence against Vulnerable People in the West Midlands

Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation across the West Midlands

Assessment

18 March 2015

West Midlands Police, local authorities and Barnardo's have undertaken a detailed analysis into the nature and scale of child sexual exploitation (CSE) in the West Midlands. The work is part of a drive to improve the ability of public services to understand the issue and continually improve the response for victims and families while relentlessly pursuing offenders to bring them to justice. The analysis used local authority and police data from January – June 2014, and provides a snapshot of the threat at that time.

What is CSE?

CSE is a form of abuse where children receive something (accommodation, drugs, affection, gifts, money, drugs) in 'exchange' for sexual activity. It is child abuse, involving the child being forced, coerced or intimidated, and sexual activity with a child under 16 is unlawful in any case. Often the victim is groomed into believing the abuser cares for them. The perpetrator is exploiting them through abuse of power, and many victims worry they won't be believed. There are many different methods and approaches to sexually exploit children and young people, which can be undertaken by an individual, peers, groups and gangs. While there is no specific criminal offence of 'CSE', common offences can include rape and other forms of sexual assault, trafficking and child abduction.

What does the snapshot tell us?

- 488 children or young people were identified by West Midlands Police and local authorities as sexually exploited or at risk of sexual exploitation across the West Midlands in the first 6 months of 2014.
- Children and young people experiencing CSE and /or at risk of CSE peak between the ages of 14 to 16 years of age. 87% of victims identified were female, 7% were male (6% not recorded). 54% of victims were recorded as White European, 19% African-Caribbean, 8% Asian, 2% other, 17% not recorded.
- There were named defendants or suspects recorded for 26% of the incidents reported to the police. 92% of offenders were male, 8% female, with an average age of 27. Suspects are from a wide range of backgrounds, but there are disproportionate

numbers from an Asian Pakistani background suspected of abuse and exploitation on the streets; and primarily white male suspects in relation to online offending.

- Based on data from a number of local authority areas, about a third of the children identified were in local authority care. Of those living at home, some 25 per cent had lived in a care home at some point.
- Going missing was a frequent factor for victims. Interviews taken when children return home show that victims are transported widely across the West Midlands and nationwide whilst missing, and are often abused by multiple men. Victims have been identified as having been trafficked to areas as dispersed as London, Greater Manchester, the West Country, Suffolk and North Wales.
- Victims of CSE were not typically resident in areas of high crime, deprivation and unemployment. They are often in social networks which are targeted by networks of offenders.

Detailed data provided by Solihull Local Authority has identified the following findings:

- One in six children or young people that are sexually exploited are coerced on-line.
- Children who are at significant risk of or experiencing CSE: have increased misuse of alcohol and drugs compared to low risk children and young people, have increased sexual health issues, and have all experienced domestic violence.

CSE offending typically takes place with multiple victims and offenders being involved at each incident, and victims are frequently trafficked by groups of males. The most common vulnerable and frequented CSE locations within the West Midlands are residential dwellings, hotels and parks – those at risk of sexual exploitation are frequently targeted and groomed at children's homes also.

How accurate a picture of CSE have we got?

Intelligence analysts in West Midlands Police have undertaken pieces of research on CSE in the West Midlands over the last 5 years which have been used to inform what action needs to be taken. We believe the number of victims over these first six months of last year is still a significant underestimate of the true scale of the problem in our region. Many victims worry they will not be believed or are threatened by the offenders and don't feel able to seek help. Many victims of grooming do not see themselves as victims of abuse as they have been so significantly manipulated by the perpetrators.

Since last summer, the number of identified victims and offenders has been growing, for example, 70 current CSE investigations are being conducted by the West Midlands Police – in relation to individuals, gangs, networks and organised crime groups - with 97 people currently on bail. Increasing numbers of identified victims is a positive step as we have been raising awareness of the issue, are getting better at spotting the warning signs and because

victims are developing greater confidence in services. However, we know we have more to do and we will be publishing a further update later in the year.

Are there variations across the region?

Analysis of the local authority data indicates that the number of victims at serious risk of CSE within Solihull was significantly greater proportionately than in the other six local authority areas. This is not because Solihull is a “hot spot” for CSE activity – it is because Solihull had particularly well-developed processes for identifying children at risk at this period, and we expect all local authorities to be generating greater numbers of identified children at risk through using these processes which have been coming into place over recent months.

Are there disproportionate ethnic groups of offenders?

Our profile of offenders is evolving as our understanding of the threat grows. The most common ethnic background for online predators remains white young and middle-aged adults. Offenders investigated for predominantly on-street activity are disproportionately but by no means exclusively of Asian-Pakistani origin. The risks of "peer on peer" abuse and exploitation - ie between boys and girls of similar ages - do not appear to have any particular ethnic bias. The common factor across all perpetrators is their manipulative and abusive attitudes and behaviours.

We need to work with schools, faith groups, communities, parents and young people themselves to address any factors which might generate unacceptable attitudes within any ethnic group. We will continue working closely with those neighbourhood bodies which recognise the risks of such cultural attitudes within some men and boys in their own communities and are ready to challenge such attitudes.

Will you publish more data?

Much of the data on which this assessment is based relates to personalised information and intelligence. West Midlands Police will consider whether any additional material can be produced without compromising sensitive investigations and without providing information of use to perpetrators.

What are we doing?

- Since July last year, local councils, police, health, the Crown Prosecution Service and charities across the West Midlands began working to the same common standards and same framework. This is designed to ensure everyone is working in the same way and is able to share necessary information to identify children at risk as well as offenders. This approach will increasingly demonstrate effective action against perpetrators, with more victims having the confidence to come forward and reduced risk to children vulnerable to exploitation. **These figures are from the period before this framework was in place.**
- There are specialist services for young people and victims, providing advocacy, counselling and other forms of practical support, these can be found <http://www.seeme-hearme.org.uk/help-advice-and-support/>

- West Midlands Police has doubled its investment into its Public Protection Unit to over 800 officers, including dedicated CSE officers. The Unit specialises in domestic abuse, sexual offences and child abuse. There are police CSE coordinators in each area, and a specialist team for investigating CSE offenders and bringing them to justice.
- We are increasingly taking innovative steps to stop offenders, including taking out civil injunctions against suspects, and using the full force of the criminal justice system where appropriate. Recent examples include:
 - securing a 6 year 8 month prison sentence for a 21 year old Asian male who was convicted of raping a 14 year old and sexually assaulting a 13 year old after grooming them in Stourbridge, Dudley (February 2015).
 - a 27 year old White male was jailed for four and a half years for five counts of sexual activity with a child following repeatedly luring a 14 year old girl into his van as she walked to school in Coventry.
 - obtaining civil injunctions against ten men in Birmingham suspected of perpetrating CSE, banning them from contact with females under 18 (November 2014).
- A continuing regional awareness raising campaign to help parents, young people and communities to spot the signs of abuse <http://www.seeme-hearme.org.uk/> The campaign has included:
 - using adverts on radio and buses, awareness raising films,
 - going out to different communities to raise awareness, such as through events hosted by community centres and schools.
 - a programme of training and events for professionals, including with schools, health workers, and community based professions such as taxi drivers and hotels.
 - producing major resources for schools – including films and accompanying resource packs, such as “[Anybody’s Child](#)”, “[BAIT](#)” and “[Jasmin’s Story](#)”.
- Each local authority area has a team of professionals which is directly responsible for safeguarding children at risk of CSE, for tracking perpetrators, and ensuring all agencies are sharing the right intelligence and information.
- Each local authority area in the West Midlands has a CSE and Missing Operations Group – chaired by an experienced and senior police investigator – identifying and tracking all children at serious risk of CSE, and taking action against perpetrators.

Next Steps

- As a region we will work closely together and with central government and local partners – to strengthen our support for those at risk and to make life increasingly uncomfortable for perpetrators.
- We will strengthen the work of the CSE operations groups and our wider ‘multi agency safeguarding hubs’ (MASHs), and related work, which bring all of our services together to identify and protect children at risk.

- We will work further with schools, particularly in developing effective mentoring to challenge inappropriate attitudes and behaviours.
- We will keep our operating arrangements under regular scrutiny and review, in concert with Local Safeguarding Children Boards.
- We will develop further our data collection systems to ensure consistency between key agencies, including councils the police and health services.
- We are committed to transparent and public sharing of information with communities – CSE thrives in the dark and we will expose it wherever we find it.
- We will publish an updated assessment later in the year.

18 March 2015



Preventing Violence against Vulnerable People in the West Midlands



Walsall Safeguarding Children Board Multi-Agency Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy

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NOTE TO READER

This Walsall Safeguarding Children Board Multi-Agency Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy was agreed by members of WSCB on 25 September 2013. This strategy has since been refreshed; to assist the reader identify changes made, the following areas have been altered/amended with references made to the page number of the original strategy:

- Creation of the Child Exploitation and Missing Committee as a sub-committee of Walsall Safeguarding Children Board (pg.7 and 13)
- Creation of the Child Exploitation and Missing Operational Group in replacement of the CARE Panel (pg. 8-9)
- Use of the CSE screening tool by frontline professionals provided in the 'Resource Pack' at Appendix A (pg.13-34)
- Walsall Safeguarding Children Board response to regional developments (pg.8).
- Removal of the Delivery Plan as presented in the previous strategy which was outdated and not reflective of future/proposed activity.
- Removal of risk indicators which did not match the risk level presented within the regionally agreed screening tool.

1. Introduction - definition, aims and purpose

This document sets out the strategy for Safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children from Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in Walsall. It sets out how through our partnerships we should assess, challenge and provide an enhanced, effective service to reduce the harm and threats posed to children and young people from CSE.

The Multi-Agency partnership has a duty to safeguard children and young people from sexual exploitation in accordance with the policies, procedures and guidance of the Walsall Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB).

This multi-agency strategy for safeguarding children who are abused or at risk of abuse through CSE draws on *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (DfE 2013), *Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation* (DCSF, 2009), the *Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan* (DfE, 2011) and *I thought I was the only one. The only one in the world: The Office of the Children's Commissioner's Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups*, (OCC 2012).

1.1. Aims & Objectives

The purpose of the strategy is to ensure a robust, coordinated multi-agency response to CSE in Walsall under three broad headings: Prevention; Protection and Prosecution. Taking a proactive approach focused on early identification and intervention can only be achieved through an integrated approach, with effective joint working and a shared understanding of the problem. A key aim of the document is to ensure that the multi-agency response is child centred.

2. What is child sexual exploitation?

2.1 The WSCB has adopted the definition of sexual exploitation that is set out in statutory guidance:

Sexual exploitation is child abuse and children and young people who become involved face huge risks to their physical, emotional and psychological health and well being.

Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, attention, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, or others performing on them, sexual acts or activities. Child sexual exploitation grooming can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability (The Department of Children, Schools and Families and the Home Office, July 2009)

2.2 Principles

- The principles underpinning a multi-agency response to the sexual exploitation of children include:
- Recognition - Sexual exploitation includes sexual, physical and emotional abuse, as well as, in some cases, neglect
- Children do not make informed choices to enter or remain in sexual exploitation, but do so from coercion, enticement, manipulation or desperation
- Children under sixteen cannot consent to sexual activity; sexual intercourse with children under the age of 13 is statutory rape
- Sexually exploited children should be treated as victims of abuse, not as offenders
- Children under sixteen will always be dealt with as actual or potential victims
- From sixteen to eighteen, consideration may be given, in very limited circumstances, and where all other options have failed, to the use of criminal justice action
- Many sexually exploited children have difficulty distinguishing between their own choices around sex and sexuality and the sexual activities they are coerced into
- The primary law enforcement effort must be against the coercers and sex abusers, who may be adult, but could also be the child's peers or young people who are older than the child

- Sexually exploited children are children in need of services under the Children Act 1989 and 2004. They are also children in need of protection
- A Multi-agency network or planning meeting/discussion should take place for all children considered at risk of sexual exploitation. Child Protection Procedures should be followed where:
 - The child is at immediate risk of significant harm and has other additional vulnerabilities
 - There is concern that the sexual exploitation is being facilitated by the child's parent/carer
 - There is concern that the sexual exploitation is facilitated by the child's parent/carer failing to protect
 - There is concern that a related or unrelated adult in a position of trust or responsibility to the child is organising or encouraging the sexual exploitation

3. Models of Child Sexual Exploitation

Barnardos has identified three different models of child sexual exploitation

Abuse Model 1

Inappropriate relationships

This usually involves one abuser who has inappropriate power – physical, emotional or financial – or control over a young person. The young person may believe they have a genuine friendship or loving relationship with their abuser.

“I was 12, maybe a wee bit older, and I remember my mummy run out of drink and she says to me, there was fellas in the house and she says to one of them to take me up the stairs and she got me to go with this man for a bottle of vodka for her” (Beckett 2011)

Abuse Model 2

Boyfriend Model and Peer Exploitation

The abuser grooms the victim by striking up a normal relationship with them, giving them gifts and meeting in cafes/ fast food outlets or shopping centres. A seemingly consensual sexual relationship develops but later turns abusive. Victims are required to attend parties and sleep with multiple men and threatened with violence if they try to

seek help. They may also be required to introduce their friends as new victims.

“There was a guy running parties for sex. What was described to me was someone initially looking after you, taking you out, buying you clothes, looking after you, giving you lots of emotion and care. Then there were parties where other girls were there and it became a going upstairs with one person type of thing, but then it came down to being the only girl with four or five men and it became quite frightening. There was also a separate pornography side to it, and they were getting pulled into that as well” (Beckett 2011)

Abuse Model 3

Organised exploitation and Trafficking

Young people are passed through networks, possibly over geographical distances, between towns and cities where they may be forced/ coerced into sexual activity with multiple men. Often this occurs at ‘sex parties’ and young people who are involved may be used as agents to recruit others into the network. Some of this activity is described as serious organised crime and can involve the organised buying and selling of young people by perpetrators.

Organised exploitation varies from spontaneous networking between groups of perpetrators to more serious organised crime where young people are effectively ‘sold’. These activities are described as ‘internal trafficking’ or ‘trafficking for child sexual exploitation’

They arranged for a car to pick them up and take them to a house and within an hour of them disappearing they were being plied with alcohol and cocaine and plans were being made to book hotel rooms and move them up there (Beckett 2011)

We have a young woman at the moment who is Eastern European and was trafficked here and continues to be exploited by people. She lives with her parents but we reckon she’s being sold on a regular basis. Well, she says she lives with her parents but we aren’t entirely sure if they are her parents. She is saying she is 17, but we suspect she’s more like 14 (Beckett 2011)

Young people from any of the models described above can be victim to extreme levels of intimidation and physical and sexual violence.

Victims of exploitation may also be used as agents to recruit other children and young people. In some cases a young person may be both a perpetrator and a victim of CSE.

Sexual Exploitation can be group and gang associated. Group associated sexual exploitation refers to the number of perpetrators involved in the violence and abuse. Gangs associated abuse is

Sexual exploitation that involves one or multiple perpetrators who are themselves gang associated and where the CSE takes place as a form of introduction or inter-gang related violence (Office of the Children's Commissioner 2012)

Online Grooming

Grooming using the internet and mobile technology is also becoming increasingly common. Along with a significant risk in the use of mobile phones, including Bluetooth technology, perpetrators target children and young people through these sites, alongside grooming and exploitation through texts and picture messaging.

Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) found that almost a third of children in their study admitted to having met someone whom they had previously only met online (CEOP 2009).

4. Risk Indicators and considerations are detailed within the Walsall Safeguarding Children Board's CSE, Child Trafficking and Young Runaways Resource Pack which can be found at Appendix A.

5. National and Local Context

The prevalence of CSE is difficult to ascertain with any accuracy due to:

- Low levels of reporting by young people
- Variable levels of awareness & confusion around definition
- Inadequate intelligence gathering & information sharing
- Inconsistent recording

Existing estimates are:

- 1875 cases localised grooming (CEOP 2011)
- 2409 confirmed victims over 14 month period; 16,500 at risk (OCC 2012)

- 3000 CSE service users (NWG 2010)
- 2379 offenders (CEOP 2011)

The figures build year on year and it is likely that these figures have now grown considerably and represent 'the tip of the iceberg'.

The majority of victims were identified as female though it is important to recognise that there is likely to be an even greater under representation of males due to difficulties in recognising sexual exploitation amongst boys and young men.

The average age when concerns are first identified is between 13-15 years. The average age of children referred to Walsall CARE Panel in the last twelve months was between 15-17 years.

Nationally victims known are from a range of ethnicities though the vast majority are white. CEOP's strategic overview found that 61% are white, 33% unknown, 3% Asian and 1% black (CEOP 2010). In Walsall, the victims known currently to the CARE Panel differ from the national trend in that there are cases relating to the exploitation of Asian females and there have been young boys referred to Panel.

The recently created Child Exploitation and Missing Committee is a sub-group of Walsall's Safeguarding Children Board and is responsible for ensuring the effective partnership working of key agencies who respond to children at risk of sexual exploitation, those being sexually exploited and/or those that are missing/absent from home.

There is a Child Exploitation and Missing Operational Group held monthly in Walsall where children at risk are discussed within a multi-agency setting. This Operational Group will extend to discuss and problem solve locations and offender management and will identify themes, patterns and gaps in service provision. Governance of the Operational Group is held by the Child Exploitation and Missing Committee.

Work continues at a regional level to develop shared priorities of which Walsall Local Authority and partners are actively involved. The Child Exploitation and Missing Committee are responsible for tracking regional developments and understanding impact locally. This CSE strategy is regularly reviewed to ensure it is fit for purpose and reflects changes in local, regional and national developments.

Between April 2012 and March 2013 there were 14 children or young people identified as being at risk of or being sexually exploited and their circumstances were discussed at Walsall CARE Panel. They were provided with a holistic support plan and targeted intervention to reduce the risk of harm.

A second proposal to WSCB was to continue the Short Life CSE Task group as a time limited CSE Steering Group to support and drive the implementation phase of the CSE strategy. This in turn has led to the creation of the Child Exploitation and Missing Committee Strategic Group which reports directly to Walsall Safeguarding Children Board and the refreshed approach to the previous Walsall CARE Panel now the Child Exploitation and Missing Operational Group.

6. Specific Areas of Strategy

The Child Exploitation and Missing Committee have a working Delivery Plan divided into the following sections:

- STRATEGIC
- PREVENTION
- PROTECTION
- JUSTICE

6.1 Strategic

In order to achieve an effective, multi-agency joined up response to CSE, it is important that the foundations of delivery are determined at a strategic level. The CEMC Committee Delivery Plan has the following strategic actions:

- Regular update and review of the CSE Strategy
- CSE Strategy is made available to all professionals
- Regularly review the terms of reference and membership of the CEMC Committee
- Clear links through governance and accountability with the Child Exploitation and Missing Operational Group
- Understand developments locally, regionally and nationally including learning from SCR
- Ensure data provision for the Learning and Improvement Framework
- Develop a multi-agency performance framework

6.2 Prevention

It is widely recognised that effective multi-agency preventative practices contribute to the safeguarding of children against the risks of CSE. The CEMC Committee Delivery Plan has targeted actions in the following areas:

- PHSE in schools and education settings
- WSCB training, encapsulating learning from SCR
- Information for parents and carers
- Up to date procedures reflecting national trends
- Regular local CSE profiling
- WSCB CSE awareness campaign
- Review of services available at risk/victims of CSE
- Safeguarding training for all frontline practitioners
- Effective Early Help provisions
- Regular self-assessment

6.3 Protection

Victims of CSE are extremely vulnerable and therefore require a trusting wrap-around approach which offers support. The CEMC Committee Delivery Plan has targeted actions in the following areas:

- Engagement with local communities
- Early identification of children at risk
- Effective intervention with 'high risk' children
- Improved response for victims of sexual offences
- Understand and address risk of children not in education, employment or training
- Provide a service for parents and carers
- Identify and address gang related CSE

6.4 Justice

It is vitally important that all efforts are taken to bring to justice perpetrators who exploit and abuse children. Victims do not always perceive themselves to be victims and may not see that they are being abused, therefore it is vital that all agencies seek to disrupt activity in a co-ordinated manner with criminal justice partners seeking opportunities to prosecute for other offences should there be insufficient evidence for sexual offences.

The CEMC Committee Delivery Plan has targeted actions in the following areas:

- Disruption and prosecution of perpetrators
- Maximising opportunities for prosecution
- Targeted activity across vulnerable locations
- Single and multi-agency training in regards to risk assessment and intelligence submission
- Multi-agency data collection
- Support for CSE victims who become offenders
- Information to WSCB regarding local investigations and CSE profiling
- CPS specialist lawyer(s) to prosecute CSE cases
- Effective interventions with CSE offenders
- Victim support throughout investigation / court process

7. Governance, Accountability and Monitoring

7.1 The multi-agency CSE strategy will be led and coordinated by the Child Exploitation and Missing Committee who are held accountable by Walsall Safeguarding Children Board.

7.2 Partnership agencies signing up to the strategy will be accountable to WSCB for this work.

7.3 The work will be evaluated by the WSCB through a Performance Framework, reports, case reviews and multi-agency audits.

8. Key Contacts, Reports and Guidance

8.1 Key Contacts

Walsall Safeguarding Children Board
01922 659520

MAST Team – initial referral team
01922 658170

Police Emergency
999
Police non emergency
101

Targeted Youth Support
01922 714966

Walsall Street Teams
01922 621208

Link to WSCB website www.wlscb.org.uk

8.2 Reports and Guidance

Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation: Supplementary Guidance to Working Together to Safeguard Children, DCSF, 2009

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/Safeguarding_CPY_from_sexual_exploitation.pdf

Tackling child sexual exploitation - Action plan, DfE, 2011

<http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/c/tackling%20child%20sexual%20exploitation%20action%20plan.pdf>

Working Together to Safeguarding Children, DfE 2013

<http://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/chapters/contents.html>

CEOP thematic assessment 'Out of Sight, Out of Mind – breaking down the barriers to child sexual exploitation', 2011

http://www.ceop.police.uk/Documents/ceopdocs/ceop_thematic_assessment_executive_summary.pdf

Spot the signs – New advice for parents, professionals and young people on the signs of sexual exploitation and how to keep safe, Barnardos (undated).

http://www.barnardos.org.uk/spot_the_signs_professionals.pdf

"I thought I was the only one. The only one in the world": The Office of the Children's Commissioner's Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups, OCC 2012

http://cscb.org.uk/downloads/new_publications/The%20Office%20of%20the%20Children%20Commissioner%20Inquiry2012.pdf

Not a World Away: The Sexual Exploitation of Children and Young People in Northern Ireland, Helen Beckett, Barnardos 2011

http://www.barnardos.org.uk/13932_not_a_world_away_full_report.pdf



Resource Pack

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child Trafficking

Young Runaways

Resource Pack includes

Introduction

Child Sexual Exploitation – Information Pages

Department for Education Guidance

CSE Screening Tool

Threshold Document

Information Report Tool

Human Trafficking – Information Pages

Runaways – Information Pages

Developed in partnership with West Midlands Regional Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy Group

Introduction

The purpose of the screening tool (**Appendix 1**) is to enable professionals to assess a child's level of risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE) in a quick and consistent manner. The screening tool can be applied to all children (male and female) under the age of 18 years.

Who is this the screening toolkit for?

This Screening toolkit is to be used by anyone who has a concern that a child may be being sexually exploited.

Important points to remember when considering CSE;

- Both girls and boys can be victims of child sexual exploitation and are equally vulnerable.
- The coercer(s) and perpetrator(s) are usually an adult(s), but can be children and young people can also act in a sexually abusive way towards other young people or exert power e.g. group/gang members of either gender.
- Children and young people may exchange or sell sex as a result of constrained choices such as poverty, isolation and historic abuse.
- Although it is rare, parents/carers may be involved in the sexual exploitation of their children.
- Groups of children and multiple perpetrators may be involved (organised abuse).
- No child under 13 years should be assessed as Low Risk if behaviours indicate risk of CSE.
- Children with additional needs require special consideration up to the age of 21 years.
- No child with a learning disability should be assessed as Low Risk if behaviours indicate involvement in or risk of CSE.
- Be aware: disclosure of information by the child may take time and evident risks may only emerge during ongoing assessment, support and interventions with the child and/or family.

Guidance on the use of the screening tool

Completion of the Screening Tool: (**Appendix 1**) by the professional identifying the concerns should involve liaison with other agencies to ensure that there is multi-agency information sharing and support. The screening tool is intended to assist the exercise of professional judgment. The indicators of child sexual exploitation and vulnerability factors should assist professionals to consider the risk of harm to a child professionals are encouraged to go beyond the child's presenting behavior e.g. missing episodes and to assure themselves what is going on for this children/young person.

If a child presents with **one indicator**, action is required. Early intervention improves the chances of positive outcomes. One indicator is unlikely to require Social Care or specialist services intervention unless it is a Significant Risk category.

Each professional should ensure a record is kept of the outcome of the application of the screening tool and ensure support is secured for the child/young person in accordance with their LSCB procedures.

Assessing or screening for child sexual exploitation should not be seen as a one off event.

Young people can move very quickly between the risk categories, therefore regular assessment should be undertaken using the **Screening Tool (Appendix 1)**. Any escalation of risk should be dealt with in accordance with LSCB procedures.
www.wlscb.org.uk

Where risk is assessed as 'medium or significant', a referral/discussion **must** take place with Children's Social Care duty services or the allocated Social Worker where the Child is already known.

The level of intervention required depends on the assessed level of risk. WSCB procedures set out the pathway to be followed dependent on the level of assessed risk. A summary can be found at App 1a.

Disruption and prosecution of perpetrator/s is also of significant importance therefore, any information which comes to light about the victim/s or perpetrator/s (however insignificant this may seem) should be passed on to the police via **Information Report Forms (Appendix 2)**.

Child Sexual Exploitation

Information for Children's Workforce Induction

Definition

Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child abuse which is complex and can manifest itself in different ways. Essentially it involves children and young people (boys and girls) receiving something – for example accommodation, food, drugs and alcohol, gifts, money or affection – in exchange for sexual activity or having others perform sexual activities on them.

It can occur through use of technology without the child's immediate recognition, for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones.

In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources.

Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

It is abuse against children and young people under 18 – a young person can consent to sex at 16, but they cannot consent to sexual abuse/exploitation. They are still children in Law and should be protected.

Extent and nature of child sexual exploitation

- It is difficult to quantify how many children are sexually exploited. Children and young people usually do not recognise that they are being exploited and there are many situations where young people can be enticed into Sexual Exploitation.
- Perpetrators target areas where young people gather including shopping, centres, cafés, takeaways, pubs, bus/train stations, parks, taxi ranks, residential units and schools.
- Perpetrators may use other young people to build initial relationships
- Perpetrators can operate individually as well as part of a group/organised
- Young people can be groomed and sexually exploited by their peers
- Young people may be groomed into 'party' lifestyles where they go to houses/flats with numerous adults and other young people. These parties introduce young people to alcohol and drugs as a means to exploit them
- The majority of sexually exploited children will be hidden from public view. They are more likely to be in private houses/flats.
- Sexual exploitation also takes place over the internet, through mobile phones, online gaming and instant messaging, with social networking sites and mobile technology usually playing a role in the grooming process

Key Risks/Vulnerabilities

The following factors may make a child/young person vulnerable to sexual exploitation. But any child can be vulnerable regardless of background or circumstance. Abusive adults will look out for vulnerability in selecting a child to target.

- Running away/Missing Episodes
- In Care

- Disengaged from Education
- Involved with criminal justice system (victims and offenders)
- Childhood abuse, including sexual abuse
- Family issues including Domestic Violence, Family drug/alcohol misuse, Family mental health problems, Family breakdown/disrupted family life
- Isolated from peers/family/social networks
- Low self esteem
- Lack of awareness of keeping safe, including special needs (eg autism, learning difficulties)

Indicators

Young people with the following characteristics are likely to be at high risk of sexual exploitation:

- Going missing for periods of time or regularly returning home late
- Regularly missing school or not taking part in education
- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections
- Uncharacteristic and significant mood swings or changes in emotional well being
- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour
- Use of mobile phone and internet that causes concern

What should I do?

- Attend Walsall Safeguarding Children Board CSE Briefings and Training: www.wlscb.org.uk/wscbtraining
- Get to know the signs of sexual exploitation
- Share this information with your colleagues
- Think of ways you might be able to help raise awareness of these issues with young people – and what support there could be if a young person shared any concerns.
- Identify opportunities to educate young people and their parents about healthy relationships and about sexual exploitation
- Look beyond the problem behaviours and challenges.
- Ask the questions that help you identify the vulnerabilities and risks.

If I am worried?

- Child Sexual Exploitation is a child protection issue. Children **CANNOT** consent to their own abuse. Talk to your safeguarding lead.
- Refer to Walsall Safeguarding Children Board Procedures www.wlscb.org.uk/wscbtraining
- Don't dismiss concerns about these children on the basis that they are 'choosing' this lifestyle. They are skilfully manipulated either not to recognise that they are being exploited, or are controlled through threats and violence.

- Think about reporting your concerns even if you don't think you have firm evidence of sexual exploitation. In most cases, there is no firm evidence – it is a collection of risk indicators and vulnerabilities that we recognise.
- Remember that 16 & 17 year olds are children too. They can consent to sex but they can't consent to abuse and exploitation.
- Don't forget parents/carers. Some may contribute to the problems but most parents are equal partners in wanting to secure their child's safety, will be supportive and protective, and are part of the solution.

Induction Checklist CSE

Question	Answer	Date achieved	Further reading	Managers signature on completion
How do I recognise Child Sexual Exploitation				
What is my initial response if I think a child is being sexually exploited?				
Who are the key contacts and agencies, in this area, for me to use when I identify that a child has been sexually exploited?				

Further Information – Child Sexual Exploitation

Walsall MAST Team - for referrals to Childrens services 01922 658170

St Teams- offer direct support to children at risk of Sexual Exploitation. 01922 621208

PACE- Parents against Child Sexual Exploitation, offering advice and support to parents and carers in Walsall 0113 240 340 www.paceuk.info.

ISVA Service - Independent Sexual Violence Advisor service offering support to victims of rape, sexual assault and abuse 01922 476153

[DfE Safeguarding children and young people from sexual exploitation: supplementary guidance 2009](#)

CEOP (thinkuknow) <http://ceop.police.uk>

NWG National Working Group <http://www.nationalworkinggroup.org/>

Barnardo's <http://www.barnardos.org.uk/>



What to do if you suspect a child is being sexually exploited

A step-by-step guide for frontline practitioners

1. This step-by-step guide complements, and should be read in conjunction with, the *Safeguarding children and young people from sexual exploitation*¹ statutory guidance published in 2009. It is intended for frontline practitioners in the statutory and voluntary and community sectors (VCS). It outlines the actions they should take, as a minimum, if they suspect that a child they are in contact with is being sexually exploited.
2. Child sexual exploitation is a form of child abuse which involves children and young people (male and female, of a range of ethnic origins and ages, in some cases as young as 10) receiving something in exchange for sexual activity. Perpetrators of child sexual exploitation are found in all parts of the country and are not restricted to particular ethnic groups.
3. Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) are responsible for ensuring that appropriate local procedures are in place to tackle child sexual exploitation. All frontline practitioners need to be aware of those procedures (including ones for early help) and how they relate to their own areas of responsibility. LSCBs and frontline practitioners should ensure that actions to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people who are sexually exploited focus on the needs of the child.

Step 1: Identifying cases

4. Frontline practitioners from voluntary and statutory sector organisations (including, for example, health and education) should be aware of the key indicators² of children being sexually exploited which can include:
 - going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late;
 - regularly missing school or education or not taking part in education;
 - appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
 - associating with other young people involved in exploitation;
 - having older boyfriends or girlfriends;
 - suffering from sexually transmitted infections;
 - mood swings or changes in emotional wellbeing;
 - drug and alcohol misuse; and
 - displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour.

Practitioners should also be aware that many children and young people who are victims of sexual exploitation do not recognise themselves as such.

¹ *Safeguarding children and young people from sexual exploitation* statutory guidance
<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DCSF-00689-2009>

² This checklist, which is not intended to be comprehensive, is based on advice to parents and carers published by Barnardo's in August 2011:
<http://www.barnardos.org.uk/cutthemfree/spotthesigns>.

5. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point. Return interviews for young runaways can help in establishing why a young person ran away and the subsequent support that may be required, as well as preventing repeat incidents. The information gathered from return interviews can be used to inform the identification, referral and assessment of any child sexual exploitation cases.

6. In assessing whether a child or young person is a victim of sexual exploitation, or at risk of becoming a victim, careful consideration should be given to the issue of consent. It is important to bear in mind that:

- a child under the age of 13 is not legally capable of consenting to sex (it is statutory rape) or any other type of sexual touching;
- sexual activity with a child under 16 is also an offence;
- it is an offence for a person to have a sexual relationship with a 16 or 17 year old if they hold a position of trust or authority in relation to them;
- where sexual activity with a 16 or 17 year old does not result in an offence being committed, it may still result in harm, or the likelihood of harm being suffered;
- non consensual sex is rape whatever the age of the victim; and
- if the victim is incapacitated through drink or drugs, or the victim or his or her family has been subject to violence or the threat of it, they cannot be considered to have given true consent and therefore offences may have been committed.

Child sexual exploitation is therefore potentially a child protection issue for all children under the age of 18 years and not just those in a specific age group.

Step 2: Referring cases

7. Where child sexual exploitation, or the risk of it, is suspected, frontline practitioners should discuss the case with a manager or the designated member of staff for child protection. If after discussion there remain concerns, local safeguarding procedures should be triggered, including referral to local authority (LA) children's social care and the police, regardless of whether the victim is engaging with services or not.

Step 3: Assessment

8. On receipt of a referral to LA children's social care, a qualified social worker should discuss the case with other services and professionals that they consider relevant and decide on a course of action within one working day of the referral. Where there is a risk to the life of a child or a likelihood of serious immediate harm, an agency with statutory child protection powers must act quickly to secure the immediate safety of the child.

9. An assessment under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 must be undertaken in all cases where child sexual exploitation, or the likelihood of it, is suspected. The local authority, health and other partners must follow the process set out in the Framework for assessment of children in need and their families³. The assessment is not an end or a process in itself, but the means of informing the planning and delivery of effective services for children. The need to make timely, proportionate assessments to understand a child's needs and circumstances is critical to secure good outcomes for the most vulnerable children and young people. The assessment should contain a conclusion as to whether the child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.

10. If a section 17 enquiry shows that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, the social worker should hold a strategy discussion involving the police, health and other relevant statutory and VCS organisations to consider whether a section 47 enquiry is

required. If the decision is taken to initiate a section 47 enquiry, the social worker should convene a child protection conference.

11. The child or young person's wishes and feelings should be considered when determining what services to provide and before making decisions about action to be taken to protect individual children.

12. Where the child or young person is not deemed to be in need, the social worker must consider onward referral to agencies who provide services for children and young people with additional needs (for example, a VCS or health organisation; see Step 4 below).

Step 4: Supporting victims out of CSE and in recovery

13. Statutory agencies and voluntary sector organisations should reach agreement on the services to be provided to the child or young person and on how they will be co-ordinated. The types of intervention offered should be appropriate to the needs of the child or young person. They should take full account of both the identified risk factors and the child or young person's family and wider circumstances. The latter might, for example, include previous abuse, running away from home or care, involvement in gangs and groups and/or child trafficking. The health services provided might include sexual health services and mental health services or counselling.

14. Because the effects of child sexual exploitation can last well into adulthood, such support may be needed over a long period of time. For this reason, effective links should be made between children and adult services and between statutory and VCS organisations.

15. Consideration should also be given to supporting the families of victims, including through the work of organisations like the Coalition for the Removal of Pimping.

Step 5: Identifying and prosecuting perpetrators

16. The police and criminal justice agencies lead on the identification and prosecution of perpetrators. All frontline practitioners involved with victims of child sexual exploitation should continually gather, record and share information with the police as soon as practicable, including data on running or missing episodes.

Step 6: Ensuring child victims are supported through related legal proceedings

17. Child victims should be supported throughout the prosecution process and beyond, including through the use of special measures where appropriate⁴. Independent Sexual Violence Advisers⁵ or specialist VCS services, where available, may also have an important role to play.

Further information

18. Further information on child sexual exploitation can be found on the Department for Education website⁶.

³The Framework for assessment of children in need and their families can be found at: http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4003256. A draft revised framework was published for consultation on 12 June 2012. The final version will be published on the Department for Education website following the consultation.

⁴See the Victims and Witnesses section of the Crown Prosecution Service website: www.cps.gov.uk.

⁵Further information on Independent Sexual Violence Advisers can be found at: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime/violence-against-women-girls/sexual-violence/isva/>

⁶Further information on child sexual exploitation can be found at: www.education.gov.uk/tackling-child-sexual-exploitation

APPENDIX 1, or if a new referral the WSCB 1 should be used.



Sexual exploitation screening tool

Name:		Also known as:	
Date of Birth:		Gender:	
Ethnicity:		Disability:	

Address:	
Contact number:	
Lives with:	
Parental Responsibility:	
Relationship to young person:	

Referrer's details Name: Agency: Telephone: Email: Address:

Reason for screening tool:

Child Sexual Exploitation Screening Tool

This Tool has been developed to enable the identification of children and young people at risk of sexual exploitation. Child sexual exploitation is a form of abuse. It involves children being forced or manipulated into sexual activity in exchange for something - money, gifts or accommodation, or less tangible goods such as affection or status. The sexual activity and exchange may be seen as consensual, but is based on an imbalance of power which severely limits victims' options.

Agencies should apply their guidance with regards to consent from young people and parents to share information which does not meet a child protection threshold.

Name of child/young person: _____

Significant Risk Indicators	Current or during the past 6 months:	Prior to 6 months ago:
Periods of absence/missing (day and/or night)		
Relationship of concern with a controlling adult (male or female) or young person, which might involve physical and/or emotional abuse and/or gang activity		
Entering/leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults (not car theft)		
Unexplained amounts of money, expensive clothes or other items		
Frequenting areas known for risky activities		
Groomed/abused via the Internet and mobile technology		
Having unexplained contact with hotels, taxi companies or fast food outlets		

Medium Risk Indicators	Please tick
Whereabouts unclear or unknown – day and/or night	
Absences/exclusion from school or not engaged in school/college/ training/work	
Regular/Multiple contacts from unknown adults/young people	
Physical injuries without plausible explanation	
Sexually transmitted infections/ Pregnancies / termination of pregnancies	
Drugs Misuse	
Alcohol Misuse	
Self-harming/challenging behaviours/suicide attempts/ eating disorders/aggression	
Use of a mobile phone which causes concern – including sexting/multiple phones/sims	
Unsafe use of internet	
Has been sexually assaulted	
Disclosure of sexual/physical assault followed by withdrawal of allegation	
Risky/inappropriate sexual behaviour	
Lack of awareness/understanding of being safe	
Peers involved in sexual exploitation/risky or concerning behaviours	
Living independently and failing to respond to attempts by workers to keep in touch	
A&E attendance because of alcohol/drug misuse	
Being accompanied to appointments by an unknown person that causes concern	
Association with gang members that suggests sexual exploitation is a possibility	

Vulnerability Factors	Please tick
Unsuitable/inappropriate accommodation/sofa surfing/financially unsupported/migrant/refugee	
Isolated from peers/family/social networks	
Learning disabilities/special needs or mental health issues	
History of Local Authority Care	
Involvement in criminal activities and/or at risk of gang involvement	
Family conflict, breakdown, lack of love/security, death, loss, illness of a significant person in child's life	
History of Child Protection involvement in relation to neglect, physical sexual or emotional abuse	
Family history of domestic abuse and/or substance misuse and/or mental health difficulties	

The framework includes three categories of risk and is intended to inform appropriate responses in relation to children's safeguarding needs. The presence of one significant risk indicator will necessitate action as described.

Please use your professional judgement to reflect upon the indicators you have ticked above and consider the health, welfare and safety of the child in question. (NB: A 'child' is any person under the age of 18, male and female, and older children can be equally as vulnerable)

	Description	Associated actions
	Low risk A child who is at risk of being groomed for sexual exploitation.	Delivered as a single agency or integrated into existing multi-agency plan. Educate to stay safe. Work with children, young people and families to develop an awareness of the risks that can lead to a situation in which they may be exposed to sexual exploitation. Ongoing review of risk required particularly if there are significant changes in circumstances.
	Medium risk A child who is targeted for abuse through exchange of sex for affection, drugs, accommodation and goods etc. The likelihood of coercion and control is significant	A multi-agency approach is likely to be needed. Follow local procedures WSCB Safeguarding Procedures for Children at Risk of Sexual Exploitation (Section 10.3) Work on risk awareness and staying safe should be undertaken with children and young people. A planned programme to raise awareness of sexual exploitation and to provide tools for children and young people to self-protect is required. Ongoing review of risk required particularly if there are significant changes in circumstances.
	Significant risk A child who is entrenched in sexual exploitation, but often does not recognise the nature or self denies the nature of their abuse often in denial, and where coercion/control is implicit.	Follow the WSCB Safeguarding Procedures for Children at Risk of Sexual Exploitation (Section 10.3). A referral will be needed and a Strategy meeting should be convened in relation to children and young people assessed as at 'significant risk'. Participants of the meeting should agree a protection plan and action to include long-term intensive direct work with the individual child or young person. Risk should be closely monitored and regularly reassessed as part of the risk reduction process. The Plan is to include actions in relation to perpetrators.

Where to refer/discuss concerns:

If the screening tool indicates that the child/ young person is likely to be at medium or high risk of sexual exploitation you should contact Children's Social Care or the Police, alongside any action that is taken - Strategy Discussion/ CSE meeting they will then be discussed at the Multi Agency CSE and Missing Panel.

For children not known to Childrens Services the MAST team should be contacted on 01922 658170.

For children with allocated workers this tool should be discussed with and sent to them.

Safeguarding and Family Support 0845 111 2837

Corporate Parenting and TLC 01922 650000

Children with Disabilities Team. 01922

ERT- out of hours service, weekends and public holidays. 0845 111 2836

Police- Central Referral Unit 08451135000- Emergency 999 or 101.

You can also seek advice from the designated lead person for safeguarding within your organisation or contact the Hollies- Review and Child Protection Unit on 01922 646640.

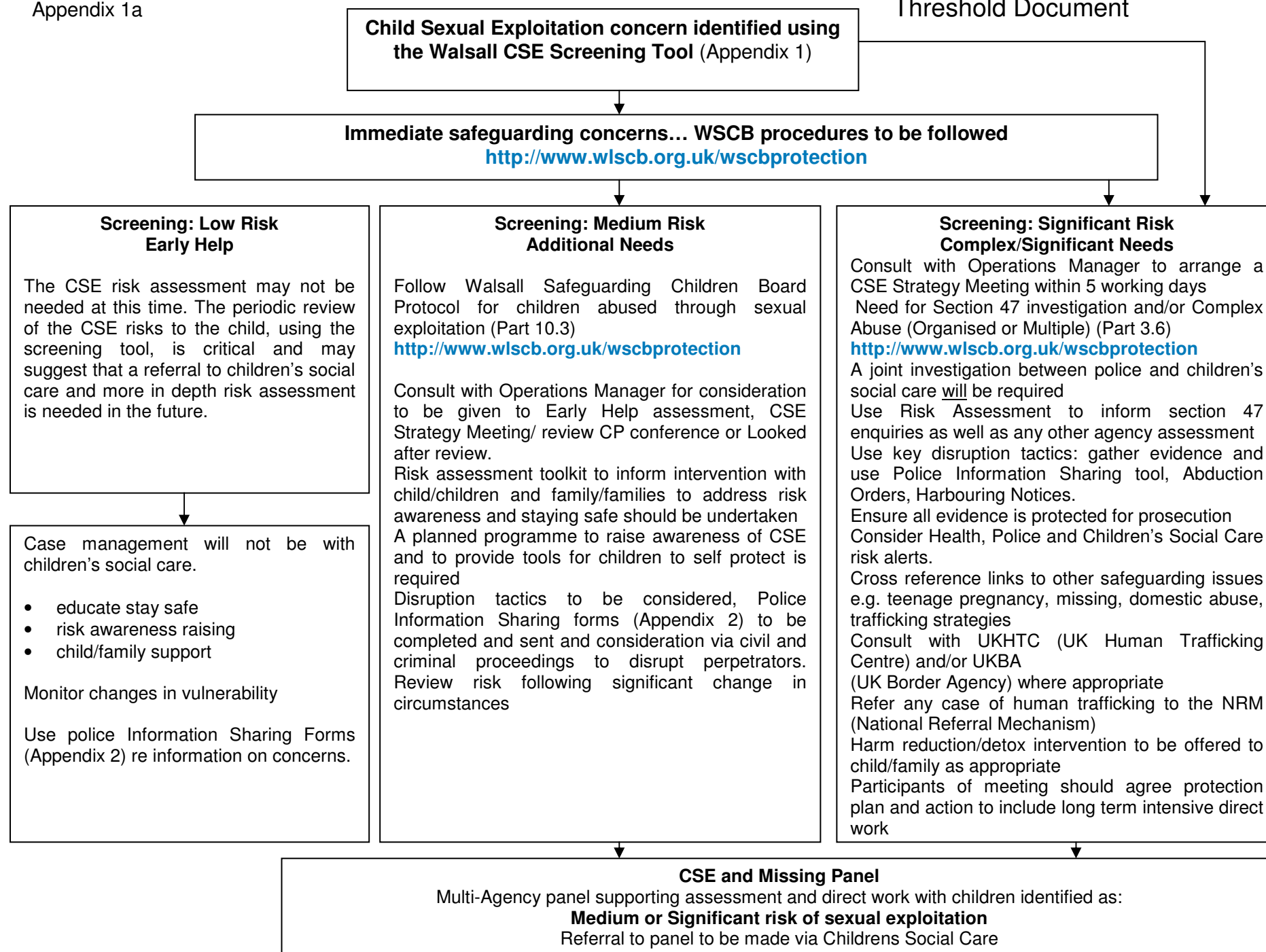
Where to get more information.

Street Teams 01922 621208

PACE- (Parents against Child Exploitation) www.paceuk.info

Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) www.thinkyouknow.co.uk

Please access Walsall Safeguarding Board website for updates to this pack and safeguarding procedures www.wlscb.org.uk



Appendix 2

PLEASE NOTE –

- THIS IS NOT A REFERRAL TO THE POLICE- IN AN EMERGENCY PLEASE CALL 999- OR IN A NON EMERGENCY BUT YOU NEED TO SPEAK TO THE POLICE CALL 101.
- THIS IS NOT A REFERRAL TO CHILDRENS SERVICES - SHOULD YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD PLEASE CONTACT THE MAST TEAM ON 01922 658170.



Child Sexual Exploitation INFORMATION REPORT

Date/time of report.....

Name					
Post/Job Title					
Agency					
Contact details					
Witnessed incident		Professional		Member of the public	

If the information was supplied by someone other than yourself, on a scale of 1 – 5 how reliable do you think they are ?

(5 = always reliable and 1 = unreliable).....

How accurate is the information on a scale of 1 – 5 ?

(1 = known to be true without doubt to 5 suspected to be false).....

If you are not able to say re above two questions please state “don’t know” rather than guess

If the information is from a 3rd party would they be willing to engage with the police ? Yes No

Does this information involve a licensed service (e.g newsagents, takeaways, pubs, off licences, taxi’s etc)?

If yes please provide trading name and address of premises

.....
.....
.....

Please provide clear & accurate information: Include as much detail as possible re names/descriptions/nicknames/vehicle details/addresses etc: if providing details of specific incidents please put a date and time these were witnessed.

If the above information refers to a specific victim or perpetrator please ensure their details are entered below:

Perpetrator	Victim	(please tick)
Name.....	Name.....	Alias.....
D.O.B.....	D.O.B.....	
Address.....	Address.....	

Please send copies of this form to. c8_FIBDEPT@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk

Human Trafficking Information for Children's Workforce Induction

Definition

Human trafficking is the recruitment, movement and receipt of a person, with deception or coercion, into a situation of exploitation. Trafficking can be cross-border or internally within one country

The Palermo Protocol establishes children as a special case. Any child transported for exploitative reasons is considered to be a trafficking victim, whether or not they have been forced or deceived. This is partly because it is not considered possible for children to give informed consent. Even when a child understands what has happened, they may still appear to submit willingly to what they believe to be the will of their parents

"Child" shall mean any person under eighteen years of age.

Why do people traffic children?

Children are trafficked for many reasons, including sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, labour, benefit fraud and involvement in criminal activity such as pick-pocketing, theft and working in cannabis farms. There are a number of cases of minors being exploited in the sex industry.

How are children recruited and controlled?

- confiscating the child's identity documents;
- threatening to report the child to the authorities;
- violence, or threats of violence, towards the child;
- threats of violence towards members of the child's family;
- keeping the child socially isolated;
- keeping the child locked up;
- telling children that they owe large sums of money and must work to pay this off;
- depriving the child of money; and
- frightening children with threats based on cultural or belief systems, for example, witchcraft or spirit possession.

Safeguarding Children who may have been Trafficked Practice Guidance (DFE 2011)

Includes:

- Introduction
- Definitions
- The problem of child trafficking
- Role of Local Safeguarding Children Boards
- Role of specific agencies and services
- Support services
- Action for services

The United Kingdom Human Trafficking Centre [UKHTC] is a multi-agency centre that provides a central point for the development of expertise and cooperation in relation to the trafficking of human beings working together with other stakeholders from the governmental, non-governmental and inter-governmental sectors in the UK and abroad.

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a procedure that is managed and overseen by the UKHTC. The Government is committed to minimising the impact on child victims and to ensuring that child victims are not unnecessarily asked to recount their experiences to different agencies. The NRM provides a valuable and useful tool for agencies to gather and share information on potential victims and, through work aimed at raising the awareness of the NRM, this strategy will help to ensure that agencies coordinate and share information to ensure the needs of child victims are appropriately assessed and met.

What should I do? How to deal with disclosure

Your attitude and approach towards the child will be pivotal in whether the person feels able to disclose fully, and for you to direct them to the necessary sources for help. Think about your gender, appearance and behaviour and the effect of all three on the distressed and traumatised child. The difference between human trafficking cases and most other criminal investigations is the complex need to remain victim-focused, the safety and welfare of the child is paramount.

The child may:

- be suffering from post-traumatic shock
- be suspicious of your intentions
- be in fear of authority figures
- lie to you initially

The victim will be in fear of their traffickers, use non uniform personnel wherever possible.

- Demonstrate an acceptance of what is being disclosed
- Do not judge; Believe; Be supportive
- Listen and give the person time to talk, asking open and not closed questions
- Tell them that it is not their fault; they are not to blame
- Explain that you will want to ask a few questions about their experiences, so that you can direct them to the right help and support both in your own organisation and in the community
- Provide information about where to go for help, and refer to relevant agencies when and if requested
- Take detailed notes about the disclosure following agreement from the individual
- If appropriate, and agreed, refer the individual through the National Referral Mechanism.

Induction Checklist Child Trafficking

Question	Answer	Date achieved	Further reading	Managers signature on completion
How do I recognise a child who has been trafficked?				
What is my initial response if I think a child has been trafficked?				
Who are the key contacts and agencies, in this area, for me to use when I identify a child that has been trafficked?				

Further Information: Trafficking

Walsall MAST Team 01922 658170

The United Kingdom Human Trafficking Centre [UKHTC]
<http://www.soca.gov.uk/about-soca/about-the-ukhtc>

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP)
<http://ceop.police.uk>

Safeguarding Children Who May Have Been Trafficked – Practice Guidance (DFE 2011}
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/177033/DFE-00084-2011.pdf

ECPAT <http://www.ecpat.org.uk/>

Runaways

Information for Children's Workforce Induction

Definition

The term 'runaway' refers to a child under the age of 16 who has spent one night or more away from their home without parental permission. They may have decided to leave home or have been forced to leave, and they will face a range of potential harm and risks from having to find a place to stay and a way to survive.

A child aged 16 or over can leave home and live independently so is not considered to have run away, however we would want to ensure that where children are living at home, are in foster or residential homes or living supported housing options that we ensure that they are Safe and well. All children under 18 are subject to statutory safeguards as set out in the Children Act 1989. Consequently the definition used by the government in its guidance states: The terms 'young runaway' and 'missing' in this context refer to children and young people up to the age of 18 who have run away from their home or care placement, have been forced to leave, or whose whereabouts is unknown.

Extent and nature of running away

It is important to recognise that a child running away is not necessarily the same as a child going missing. This is because when a child goes missing it could be anything from getting lost while on a day trip to the most extreme cases of child abduction. The key distinction is that a child who has gone missing will have been reported to the police who will record it as a missing incident. This is simply not the case for most runaways.

The Children's Society research shows that a quarter of the 100,000 children who run away each year will be at serious risk of harm while away from home. They found that one in six said they slept rough, one in eight said they resorted to begging or stealing to survive and one in 12 said they were actually hurt or harmed.

Key risks and vulnerability

When children run away from home or care they will be in great danger of being physically or sexually abused or exploited. This is a common finding from all voluntary sector organisations. For example, Barnardo's services which work with children at risk of, or involved in sexual exploitation, say that more than half the children they support run away on a regular basis. The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre's recently published thematic assessment emphasised the clear links between children who run away from home and child sexual exploitation. The involvement of children in exploitation takes place over weeks and months and if a child is often running away, potential abusers can easily target them.

Mainstream services like schools and the police are often not sufficiently aware of all of the risks facing children who run away. Instead, if a child runs away regularly there is a tendency for agencies to become complacent about the child's ability to take care of themselves. A recent study conducted jointly by The Children's Society, NSPCC and the University of York found that professionals perceived older children

to be more competent and resilient in dealing with maltreatment than younger children. This included being able to escape abusive situations and seek help. **Older children can be equally as vulnerable!**

Disclosing ill treatment was found to be particularly difficult for older children. They are far more reluctant to develop trusting relationships with professionals and are fearful of the consequences. Also, they do not always have sufficient knowledge or information about how to get help. The reality is that most children who run away will not look for help from professional agencies. The Children's Society research found that eight out of 10 do not seek any help and those that do will usually ask friends or relatives. This indicates that running away remains largely hidden from all agencies – the police, children's social care, schools, youth services and health services.

What should I do if I think a Child is running away?

DO NOT underestimate the risk posed to children that runaway or go missing.

- o If a child is missing- where you do not know where they are and you have made attempts to find them you should inform the Police as soon as possible.
- o If a child tells you that they have, or are thinking about, running away then talk to the child to see why they are running, or thinking about, running away.
- o If you suspect that a child is running away but they are not talking to you see if there are any specialist services in the area that could help.

Induction Checklist: Runaways

Question	Answer	Date achieved	Further reading	Managers signature on completion
What are the common push and pull factors for young runaways?				
What are the risks associated with running away?				
How many children and young people runaway per year in your area?				
Who are the key contacts and agencies, in this area, for me to use when I come across a runaway				

Further Information - Runaways/Missing

If you are worried about a child contact Walsall MAST team 01922 658170

The Children's Society www.childrenssociety.org.uk

CEOP missing <http://ceop.police.uk>

DFE

<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/safeguardingchildren/a0066653/young-runaways>