

Practice Standards - Engage

1 Who are the Engage Team?

1-1 - Engage work with children and young people in Blackburn with Darwen who are vulnerable to or may be experiencing child criminal exploitation (CCE) or child sexual exploitation (CSE), and children and young people who go missing.

1-2 – Engage support children of all ages in response to service need. If a child is open to Engage when they turn 18 Engage will remain involved with their consent and ensure a transition into appropriate adult services. Engage can support children open to Leaving Care until the age of 25.

Services offered include, but are not limited to:

- Completion of exploitation assessments, and the delivery of trauma-informed support and direct work interventions to work towards the child or young person being safer and to ensure that effective risk management is in place.
- Engage management oversight of all cases where CCE/CSE identified as a risk.
- Return Home Interviews offered and completed to all young people within 72 hours.
- Professional awareness raising and support offered to Social Workers and Team Managers, reflective and joint case supervisions offered with Children's Social Care.
- Contribution to risk management planning and Children's Social Care care planning
- Parents also offered support from the PACE Parent Liaison Officer to develop their understanding of child exploitation and how they can respond effectively to it

2 - Referrals

2-1 - Please refer to the '*Co Working Protocol for cases where there are concerns regarding Child Sexual Exploitation or Child Criminal Exploitation*'. (Available on TRI:X).

3 - Assessment

3-1 - Once the consultation process / referral has been completed a Contact Record will be created to initiate Engage involvement.

3-2 – The referral information will be inputted within the Contact Record which will then generate an assessment.

3-2 - Reasons for the assessment should be clear in respect of the exploitation concerns, but the scope of the assessment should also extend beyond the presenting issues and should include consideration of historical information, wider family support, environmental issues and contextual safeguarding concerns.

3-3 – Once the assessment has been initiated Engage Management will add an 'Initial CE Management Oversight' case note, which provides advice and guidance for the Engage Young People's Worker. Within this case note, it is highlighted that a joint visit should take place with the allocated Social Worker/Personal Advisor (PA) at the earliest opportunity. This should be within 5 working days of allocation to the Engage Team.

3-4 – The timescales for an Engage exploitation assessment to be completed is within 15 working days.

3-5 – Within the assessment period the Young People’s Worker will liaise with all agencies working with the child / young person / family to ascertain all relevant and up to date information. This should include discussions within the multi-agency Engage team to include; Police, PACE and Health. A health analysis will also be included within the assessment.

3-6- Information gathering is clear:

Clinical methods: relevant people have been spoken to, such as friends, family and professionals, making it clear who has been spoken to and what has been shared. Observations are used to inform the assessment and are clearly recorded.

Actuarial methods: records of past involvement have been scrutinised and taken into account, quality and relevance of the chronology is important to inform the assessment and identify patterns of behaviours, relationships and interactions.

3-7 - Consideration and impact of age, disability, neurodiversity, ethnicity, faith or belief, gender, identity, spirituality, language, race and sexual orientation is evident (issues of difference) and issues of social inclusion/exclusion. Feelings of belonging and acceptance by family, peers and wider society (including other cultural groups) and family narratives/relationships are considered. This is not an exhaustive list and within the Engage assessment other identified needs and unmet need should be considered.

3-8 - There should be focus on the patterns of connections and communications in families and how this influences the family script and functioning in the wider context.

3-9 - The child or young person has been seen alone, and appropriate tools used to gain the child /young person’s views and wishes. This gives the child/ young person the opportunity to participate in their assessment and enables the Engage Young People’s Worker to articulate their lived experience. Given the context of the exploitation concerns, any discussions with the child / young person will need to be sensitive and take a trauma informed approach. We need to acknowledge that the child / young person may not be able to tell us about harm they have experienced due to not feeling safe, and this therefore needs to be taken into consideration as part of the assessment if the child / young person’s voice is limited.

3-11 – Within the assessment there is evidence of appropriate professional curiosity whilst balancing possible barriers to effective partnership whilst working with families and also professionals.

4 - Analysis and Recommendation

4-1 - There is rigorous interrogation of assessment information.

4-2 - There are explicit statements of the child’s unmet needs.

4-3 - There are explicit statements identifying strengths and resilience within the family and environment.

4-4 - The analysis of the assessment provides a holistic overview of the child’s lived experience. This will include, the harm they may have experienced through exploitation, other contextual factors which may be impacting on their safety and how their family situation and functioning may also be contributing to their vulnerabilities.

4-5 – Once all evidence and information has been collated a robust analysis will be offered. Consideration at this stage will be given to assessing whether a National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is required if we are concerned that the child or young person is a victim of trafficking (Please refer to the *‘BwD NRM Protocol’* for further guidance).

4-6 – Within the analysis section the Young People’s Worker will provide a professional judgement and rationale to evidence whether the child / young person should remain open to the Engage Team for ongoing intervention. In the event it is identified that the child / young person is at ongoing risk of harm through exploitation, then consideration is given to whether or not a referral to MACE (Multi Agency Child Exploitation meeting) is required through discussion with the Engage Sergeant.

5 - Outcome

5 -1 - In the event the outcome of the assessment is for the child / young person to close to the Team then a step down plan will be created. If the outcome of the assessment is for ongoing intervention then a CE child exploitation plan will be developed. The views of the child/young person and their family are clearly reflected in the plan and they have been given the opportunity to participate in the development of intervention strategies.

5-2 - The CE plan is relevant, current and purposeful, being outcome focused and containing explicit desired outcomes with timescales for actions (SMART). The plan clearly evidences expectations to demonstrate how we will know that the outcomes have been achieved, which has been shared with the child and family.

5-3 – Once the CE plan has been developed this should be incorporated into the relevant plan for the child / young person i.e. CIN / CP / CLA or Pathway Plan.

5- 4 – The plan should consider all identified needs in respect of exploitation for the child / young person. This should include detail of direct support to the child from the Engage Young People’s worker (including frequency of visits) and Engage Health where relevant. If other needs are identified then Engage Young People’s Worker will have discussions with the allocated Social Worker with regard to a referral to Adolescent Panel.

5-5 – The plan should consider identified needs of the support required by parents or carers from services such as PACE and/or Family Support to support with maintaining the safety of the child / young person.

5-6 – The plan should also consider contextual safeguarding strategies and disruption activity with other safeguarding partners for example, Police, Education, Community Safety and Youth Justice Service; however this is not an exhaustive list of services.

5-7 – Quality of management oversight is evident which should take into consideration the assessment, analysis / recommendations and outcome.

6 - Monitoring and Management Oversight

6-1 – The child is seen regularly, spoken to and seen alone as appropriate dependent on their age and/or disability - with evidence of effective direct work reflected within casenotes. This will be conducted in line with the child / young person’s wishes and feelings, and a trauma informed approach will be used.

6-2 – Supervision records demonstrate

- Regular supervision in line with policy.
- Case development has been influenced by management oversight and driving cases/plans forward.
- Records of supervision are recorded on the agreed template.
- Supervisions should also allow the Engage Young People’s worker space to be reflective and to develop hypotheses. This will promote professional curiosity as their

knowledge of the child / young person and contextual safeguarding concerns start to develop through their direct work.

- Within supervision the child / young person's voice should be clear which should inform the development of ongoing support.

6-3 - Decision making process in relation to case management is clear (e.g. closure/escalation/de-escalation) at all points of the child's journey whilst open to Engage.

6-4 – Engage Young People's Workers should be invited and attend all meetings relating to the child / young person.

6-5 – If the child / young person has been referred to MACE then they will be heard at the monthly MACE meeting which is chaired by Engage Sergeant / Engage Management. The discussions from this meeting and outcomes will be documented within a casenote on the child's Protocol file.

7 – Missing from Home Practice Standards

7-1 – In the event a child / young person within Blackburn with Darwen has been reported and classed as 'Missing' by Police, they will be offered a Return Home Interview (RHI) by the Engage Team. If Police have classed the child / young person as a 'Concern For Safety', then Engage will add a case note on the child's file on Protocol for information sharing purposes. Please see the BwD '*One Minute Guide for Missing From Home*' for further details of the Missing From Home (MFH) / Concern For Safety (CFS) process.

7-2 - All case recordings in respect of missing episodes, including RHI forms, are contained within the 'Additional tab' on the child's Protocol file.

7-3 – A RHI should be completed within 72 hours of the child / young person being found. Prior to this being offered, consideration needs to be given depending on the child / young person's age and circumstances, regarding consent from parent or carers for the RHI.

7-4 – A parent or carer can decline the offer of a RHI. When this occurs all attempts should be made to engage them in the process and consideration should be given to referrals to other services such as Early Intervention support if required.

7-5 - If a child / young person declines a RHI then all attempts should be made to gather information from other sources to help inform our understanding of the MFH episode. This can help prevent to further MFH's, in such circumstances a 'RHI not completed form' would be used to evidence information gathered. If there is no other information available from other sources regarding the missing episode then this will be reflected within case notes.

7-6 – If a child or young person accepts the offer of a RHI then a RHI form will be completed to evidence the information shared. As part of this discussions with parents, carers and other relevant professionals should be ascertained and included.

7-8 – Each RHI will conclude with analysis, professional judgement and recommendations for further actions. Within this, if a referral to CADS or other services is required then the worker completing the RHI form will seek management advice and complete relevant actions.

7-9 – Upon completion of the RHI forms, management oversight will be evidenced. Reference will be made to any actions required in line with the *Pan Lancashire Missing From Home Protocol* (<https://www.safeguardingpartnership.org.uk/missing-from-home-protocol-trigger-plan/>)

7-10 – Once RHI forms are finalised then these are shared with the Police MFH Coordinator.