

**Durham**

Safeguarding Children Partnership



# **Harm Outside the Home Multi-Agency Procedures**

**Local Policy and Guidance**

# Contents

<a href="#">Introduction</a>	3
<a href="#">What is Harm Outside the Home?</a>	5
<a href="#">Signs / Indicators of Harm Outside the Home</a>	7
<a href="#">Child Exploitation Matrix</a>	9
<a href="#">Pathways in Response to Harm Outside the Home</a>	12
<a href="#">Child Exploitation Vulnerability Triage (CEVT)</a>	16
<a href="#">Operational Child Exploitation Group (CEG)</a>	17
<a href="#">Strategic Child Exploitation Group</a>	18
<a href="#">People of Concern</a>	20
<a href="#">Places and Spaces</a>	21
<a href="#">Specialist Services</a>	22
<a href="#">Interventions</a>	24
<a href="#">Children in Care Living in Another Area</a>	26
<a href="#">Transitional Safeguarding</a>	27
<a href="#">National Referral Mechanism</a>	28
<a href="#">Disruption Measures</a>	29
<a href="#">Civil Orders and Other Means of Controlling Behaviour</a>	30
<a href="#">Information Sharing</a>	33
<a href="#">Appendices:</a>	
<a href="#">Safety Planning Guidance</a>	34-38
<a href="#">Strategic CEG Terms of Reference</a>	39-41

# INTRODUCTION

*“Some children experience abuse and exploitation outside the home. This is often referred to as “extra-familial harm”. Harm can occur in a range of extra-familial contexts, including school and other educational settings, peer groups, or within community/public spaces, and/or online. Children may experience this type of harm from other children and/or from adults. Forms of extra-familial harm include exploitation by criminal and organised crime groups and individuals (such as county lines and financial exploitation), serious violence, modern slavery and trafficking, online harm, sexual exploitation, teenage relationship abuse, and the influences of extremism which could lead to radicalisation. Children of all ages can experience extra-familial harm.*

*Where there are concerns that a child is experiencing extra-familial harm, practitioners should consider all the needs and vulnerabilities of the child. Some children will have vulnerabilities that can be exploited by others and will require support appropriate to their needs to minimise the potential for exploitation. All children, including those who may be causing harm to others, should receive a safeguarding response first and practitioners should work with them to understand their experiences and what will reduce the likelihood of harm to themselves and others.*

*Practitioners will need to build an understanding of the context in which the harm is occurring and draw on relevant knowledge and information from the children and wider partners to decide on the most appropriate interventions. Practitioners should consider the influence of groups or individuals perpetrating harm, including where this takes place online, and identify patterns of harm, risk and protective factors in these contexts.”*

[\(Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023: Statutory Guidance\)](#)

Durham Safeguarding Childrens Partnership (DSCP) is committed to ensuring all young people in Durham who are vulnerable and at risk of, or are a victim of exploitation or go missing are offered support to reduce vulnerability and build resilience to exploitation. We aim to implement systems to best respond to harm happening in contexts beyond the home. To achieve this, we work in partnership to help raise young people’s awareness of exploitation, reduce/irradicate the risk of exploitation and support young people on their journey to a positive and healthy future.

In Durham we are dedicated to reducing the risk of harm outside the home through understanding and disrupting opportunities of children and young people to go missing and / be exploited. We understand that when young people reach adolescence, their world has grown significantly, through education, peer

relationships in the community, the online world and so on. Therefore, young people are part of a much wider network of peers, neighbourhoods, and other influences. It is important that when we consider some of the issues affecting our children and young people that we understand these influences. We also need to consider not only the physical, real world, influences, but the wider groupings found within social media.

**Durham Safeguarding Partnership's ambition is to work collaboratively across Durham to prevent harm outside the home with three overarching strategic outcomes:**

- ✚ **Child/Children or Young Person(s) focus:** partners are committed to the identification, risk assessment and risk management of those children identified as being at risk of missing and child exploitation. Children are at the centre of what we do:
- ✚ **Context focus:** partners are committed to targeting spaces and places and people of concern who pose a risk to or are exploiting children and young people.
- ✚ **Early Identification focused:** Partners are committed to educating children to recognise the risks of harm outside the home. Partners will support parents, carers, and practitioners to understand the signs of harm outside the home.

It is essential that all partners working with children or adults experiencing or at risk of harm outside the home understand what harm outside the home is, how it differs from other forms of abuse, and when and how to respond to concerns. This understanding is also applicable to the wider public.

# WHAT IS HARM OUTSIDE THE HOME?

## OUR DEFINITIONS:

**Child exploitation** is when someone uses a child for financial gain, sexual gratification, labour or personal advantage. Using cruel and violent treatment to force a child to take part in criminal or sexual activities often leads to physical and emotional harm to the child, to the detriment of their physical and mental health, education, and moral or social development.

*“The exploitation of children can take a number of different forms and perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse at the same time, such as criminal exploitation (including county lines) and sexual exploitation.”* The Home Office, 2019 (updated 2022)

**Child Criminal Exploitation** “occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence.”

“They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.”

**Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)** is a form of sexual abuse. In return for gifts, money, drugs, affection, and status, children and young people are coerced, manipulated and deceived into performing sexual activities. It is not just something that affects teenage girls or specific groups and can happen in and out of school. Children and young people can be tricked into believing they are part of a loving and consensual relationship that could be framed as friendship, mentoring or romantic.

**County Lines** are illegal drug dealing networks between large urban centres, small towns and rural locations. Children and young people are coerced, using intimidation, blackmail and violence, to transport and sell drugs, cash and weapons across the country via dedicated mobile phone lines which may be referred to as “deal lines”.

**Modern Day Slavery and Tracking** is the exploitation of people who have been forced, deceived, or coerced into a life of labour and servitude. It is a crime hidden from society where victims are subjected to abuse, inhumane and degrading treatment.

Trafficking is the movement of humans from one place to another for the purposes of forced labour, slavery or sexual exploitation is understood to be one of the fastest-growing areas of transnational criminal organisations and has devastating effects on the victims.

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 establishes that a person commits an offence if the person arranges or facilitates the travel of another with a view to being exploited. See link for further information [modern slavery training resource](#)

**Financial Exploitation** is the term used to describe the action of using a young person's bank account to move money obtained from illegal sources. Through the process of money laundering, criminals will introduce the proceeds of their crimes into the banking system as a way of attempting to disguise its origin, making it appear as though it has come from a legitimate source.

### **Children Missing from Home:**

The APP College of Policing (2023) Missing People defines missing as 'anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established will be considered as missing until located and their well-being or otherwise confirmed.' All reports of missing people sit within a continuum of risk from 'no apparent risk (absent)' through to high-risk case that requires immediate, intensive action.

The DSCP have a joint protocol between Durham Police, Durham County Council (DCC) and themselves. The protocol relates to all children and young people in Durham County who go missing from home or care. This includes children and young people looked after by another Local Authority and placed in a home, care or residential school within Durham County.

[Children Missing from Home and Care](#)

### **The contexts in which Harm outside the Home take place include:**

- Online and in the digital world
- Amongst peer groups
- Within schools and places of learning
- Within and between communities and Local Authority boundaries
- On and around public transport
- Wider community setting

# SIGNS/INDICATORS OF HARM OUTSIDE THE HOME

Any child/young person can become a victim of exploitation, so it is important that practitioners are aware of the possible warning signs and indicators that could suggest the child/young person is at risk or is being harmed.

Some behaviours may simply be part of normal child and teenage development. However, it's important to pay attention to changes that seem unusual for a child/young person. Often, a shift in behaviour, especially if it is out of character, can be one of the most significant signs that something might be going on.

## Possible Signs/Indicators of exploitation

### Changes in Behaviour and Mood

- Increased secrecy: The child/young person may become unusually private, avoiding discussions about their day or whereabouts.
- Mood swings: Noticeable shifts in emotions, such as sudden anger, sadness, or withdrawal.
- Fearfulness: Expressing fear or anxiety about certain individuals or situations.

### Physical Indicators

- Unexplained injuries: Bruises, cuts, or burns without a clear explanation.
- Sexualised behaviour: Engaging in or exhibiting inappropriate sexual behaviours or knowledge beyond their age.
- Physical marks: Signs of restraint or injury, such as rope burns or bite marks.

### Social and Peer Group Changes

- New relationships: Associating with older individuals or unfamiliar peers.
- Isolation: Distancing from family and long-standing friends.
- Unexplained absences: Frequently going missing from home or school without clear reasons.

### Financial and Material Changes

- Unaccounted-for possessions: Receiving gifts or items like mobile phones, clothing, or money without clear sources.
- Sudden wealth: Displaying expensive items that the child couldn't afford.

### Online and Digital Behaviour

- Secretive online activity: Guarding their digital devices and accounts or engaging in online interactions with strangers.

- Increased screen time: Spending more time online, often late at night or by themselves.
- Using new or different language for example, slang or code words related to drugs, sex, or gangs.

### **Academic and Social Withdrawal**

- Decline in school performance: Deterioration in grades and non-engagement in educational activities.
- Loss of interest: Abandoning hobbies or interests they previously enjoyed.
- Engaging in criminal activities: Involvement in theft, vandalism, or other unlawful behaviours.

# CHILD EXPLOITATION MATRIX

## Identification & Screening of Harm Outside the Home

The Child Exploitation Matrix (CE Matrix) is a tool that the DSCP has developed for all partners to use to support them to determine if a child is at risk of exploitation. The CE Matrix is designed to be completed with the child, family and other partners. It can be used from universal services through to targeted specialist support.

The purpose of the CE matrix is to:

- Understand the level of risk posed to individual children and young people, what level of threat the risks present to the child's wellbeing and how well these can be managed so the level of risk is reduced and safely managed.
- Support the development of robust plans to manage and reduce level of risk
- Support a referral to children's services (First Contact)

The CE Matrix should be used in line with local Safeguarding Partnership Procedures. If the Matrix suggests the child/young person is at moderate or significant risk of harm, then a referral **must** be made to First Contact.

The Child Exploitation Matrix can be accessed via the following Link: [DSCP Child Exploitation Matrix](#)

The Child Exploitation Matrix should be used alongside and complement any other assessments and plans for the child/young person.

**On completing the CE Matrix, practitioners should make an initial judgment about the level of risk of exploitation for the child/young person:**

### No Risk

The child/young person may be vulnerable and in need of support and service intervention, but circumstances do not increase the child's risk of exploitation over and above "normal" adolescent behaviour (Not Adopted/flagged). Lead practitioner to continue to support the child.

### Low Risk

The indicators and assessment raise some concerns that the child/young person is vulnerable to being targeted and groomed for exploitative means. Warning signs and

multiple indicators leading to a suspicion of Child Exploitation but no known offences and there are strengths (protective factors) in the child/young person's life.

- Access to universal services and early intervention for the child
- Consultation with Harm Outside of the Home Practice Champion for advice and support
- A Safety Plan will be completed by the Lead practitioner / Social Worker
- Share information / concerns with Police using the Partnership Information Sharing Form - [Partnership Information Sharing](#)

### **Moderate Risk**

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The assessment provides evidence or suspicion of the child/young person being groomed or targeted for the purposes of exploitation, is at risk of future exploitation and suspected to be in direct or indirect physical or sexual contact with at least one or multiple perpetrators (older adults, peers online or offline) and further work is required to understand the risk involved. There is evidence the young person may be a risk of opportunistic abuse, or is being targeted or groomed, but there are no immediate or urgent safeguarding concerns.

- If the child is not already open to children's social care, referral to be made to First Contact, including a copy of the CE Matrix
- CE Matrix is to be submitted to [cevt@durham.police.uk](mailto:cevt@durham.police.uk) and will be reviewed in the Child Exploitation Vulnerability Triage (CEVT) meeting within 3-working days
- CEVT will consider the need to allocate a Child Exploitation (CE) Worker from the ERASE team.
- Share information / concerns with Police using the Partnership Information Sharing Form [Partnership Information Sharing](#)
- A Safety Plan will be completed by the Lead practitioner/ Social Worker

### **Significant Risk**

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Indicators, assessment, evidence, disclosure suggests that the young person is being, or at significant risk of being exploited. Such as, sexually and or physically e.g. drug trafficking, trafficking for sexual purposes or other, modern-day slavery (including organised begging), online, with one or multiple perpetrators (older adults, peers) and where coercion or control is likely to be but not exclusively implicit.

The assessment leads us to suspect that a child IS a victim of exploitation OR is in imminent danger of being exploited

Significant Risk must not be held at an early help level and requires Statutory Intervention. A Strategy meeting must be initiated.

- If the child is not already open to children's social care, referral to be made to the Front Door (First Contact), including a copy of the CE Matrix requesting a strategy meeting.
- CE Matrix is to be submitted to [cevt@durham.police.uk](mailto:cevt@durham.police.uk) and will be reviewed in CEVT within 2-working days
- ERASE will allocate a CE Worker
- Consider the need for National Referral Mechanism (NRM) where modern slavery is suspected
- Consider whether threshold is met for Strategy Meeting
- Share information / concerns with Police using the Partnership Information Sharing Form [Partnership Information Sharing](#)
- A Safety Plan will be completed by the Lead practitioner/ Social Worker

A Child Exploitation Matrix must always be used to assess risk of exploitation when:

- They have been in custody overnight
- They have been referred to drug and alcohol support services
- They are at risk of permanent exclusion from school
- They commit 'Serious Youth Violence', i.e. threats or actual use of violence on a child/young person under 18
- They have 3 or more missing episodes in a 30-day period, or they are missing for over 72 hours
- They presented to A&E with unexplained injuries that could be indicative of exploitation, for example bruises, cuts, wounds or burns
- There are concerns about anti-social behaviour / offending

If practitioners are unsure about whether a CE Matrix has already been started or completed for a child/young person, they should check with First Contact for more information.

The CE Matrix should still be updated when the concerns above arise.

# PATHWAYS IN RESPONSE TO HARM OUTSIDE THE HOME

## Step One:

Where the concerns for a young person safety lie outside the home, the Child Exploitation matrix must be completed, by those practitioners who identify the concerns. The Matrix will support agencies to understand risks and provide targeted intervention. This may be as a single agency or coordinated by a lead practitioner.

DSCP link to CE Matrix [DSCP Child Exploitation Matrix](#)

Where a CE matrix identifies that a child/young person is moderate or high risk of exploitation, it should be forwarded to [cevt@durham.police.uk](mailto:cevt@durham.police.uk). Where a child/young person isn't open to Childrens Services you must also complete a referral via First Contact.

The referral form for First Contact can be found at: [concerned-about-a-child](#)

The Child Exploitation matrix needs to be completed alongside the referral form and sent to [firstcontact@durham.gov.uk](mailto:firstcontact@durham.gov.uk)

**Note:** For Police this step will be made through completing a SAF. First contact will consider next steps.

### Informing Parents of the Need for a Referral

It is good practice to be open at the outset with the parents/carers about concerns, and the need for a referral. Where the concerns are related to risk of harm outside the home, we recognise that this extends beyond the parents/families' capacity to protect, and we aim to work with parents as partners where it is safe to do so.

All reasonable efforts should be made to inform parents/carers prior to making the referral, however, a referral should not be delayed if you are unable to discuss the concerns with the parents or sharing the concerns may increase risk to the child.

### First Contact

Where a referral is received for a young person that highlights safeguarding risks outside the home, it will be recommended for multi-agency information gathering to determine threshold and allocation.

First contact will refer to the multi-agency threshold document to inform the level of action needed. Please see [Durham Threshold Guidance](#)

## **Early Help and Children Services**

Durham Children Services Harm outside the Home approach will be taken in situations where:

- A child/young person or family would benefit from coordinated support from more than one organisation or agency through the provision of Early Help services.
- Where there are more complex needs, and the child/young person is deemed to be a Child in Need under section 17 of the Children Act (1989) and / or
- Following a Strategy Discussion/Meeting and enquiries under section 47, concerns of significant harm are not substantiated, but the child/young person's needs require further planning under a Child in Need plan.

AND

- The primary risk faced by the child is outside the family home.

This approach provides an additional element to Early Help services or Child in Need assessment and planning, with a focus on assessing and intervening in contexts outside of the home. The approach has the same duties and responsibilities as any other Early Help or Child in Need plan with the Lead Practitioner chairing meetings.

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that the child/young person is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, there should be a Strategy Discussion/Meeting and the statutory procedures followed, ensuring relevant partners who are able to provide information about people and places of concern and are invited.

## **Child and Family Assessment: One Point / Childrens Social Care**

Durham Children Services recognises that as young people develop their needs change and risk expands beyond the family home, with teenagers spending a significant amount of time outside the family home and beyond their parents' control. Therefore, our assessments include the wider contexts beyond the home, we explore the child's life, what is working well, the worries, and what needs to happen to make life better. We explore this across home, with family, with friends, in school and in the community.

All assessments of young people will include the wider context and assess risk beyond the home, and the assessment will balance the risks and strengths both within and outside the family to determine if a young person is at risk of significant harm.

The assessment will utilise guidance and tools developed through the contextual safeguarding network found here [Contextual Safeguarding Research Durham University](#)

Where there are concerns about harm outside the home and a CE Matrix was not completed at the point of referral, the CE Matrix will be completed as part of the Child and Family assessment.

Where the CE Matrix indicates that the child/young person is at moderate or significant risk of exploitation, the child/young person should be discussed in Child Exploitation Vulnerability Triage (CEVT).

## Step Two:

Upon receipt of the CE Matrix the Child Exploitation Vulnerability Triage (CEVT) will hold a multi-agency review, screen CE Matrices, and agree the assessed risk level for each child. CEVT will:

- Refer all children/young people assessed as High on to the Operational Child Exploitation Group.
- Provide advice to Lead practitioner / Social Worker for those children scored Moderate and Low risk, to complete as part of their existing plan.
- If the child/young person is not known to services, the lead practitioner making the referral will be offered advice on support available for the child.
- Ensure oversight of all child exploitation screenings submitted for data/local exploitation profile purposes, to identify any themes or hotspots and in the context of information sharing between the police and children and families. Children's social care practitioner to support the child/young person and consider any urgent disruption activity.

## Step Three:

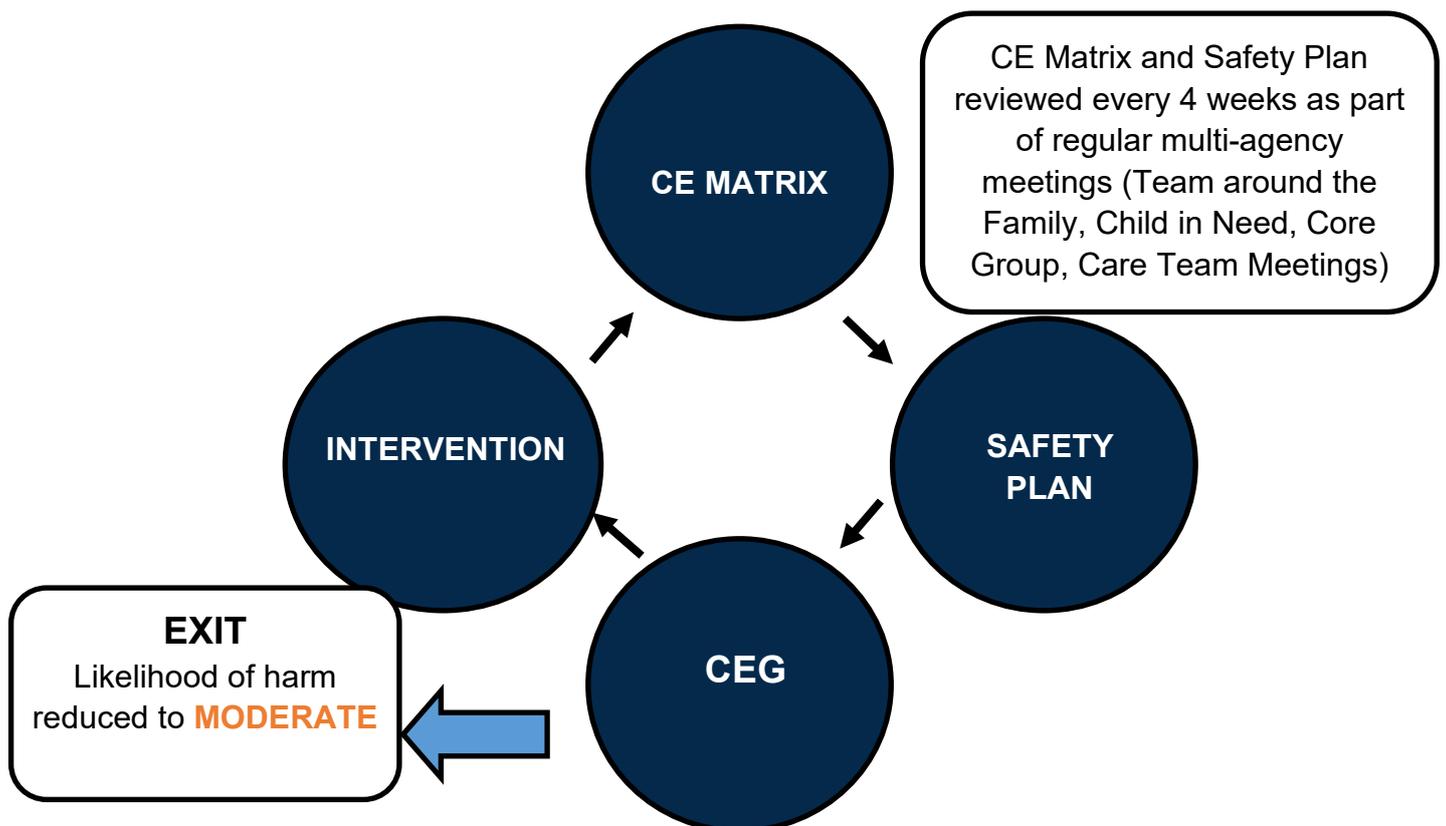
Where there is concern about harm outside the home the child/young person will be heard at the Operational multi-agency Child Exploitation Group (CEG) which is held monthly, in each of the three localities. The allocated lead practitioner and ERASE worker will attend CEG to discuss progress on the intervention and improved outcomes for the child/young person.

The meeting will review the updated CE Matrix and intervention to ensure appropriate response to concerns and that there is a robust safety plan in place. This will run concurrently with, and feed into, the child's existing multi-agency care planning meetings (i.e. TAF, CIN Reviews, Core Groups and Care Team Meetings).

Assessments for children and young people presented at CEG need to consider peer associates, and it is the responsibility of everyone working with the child/young person to understand who their associates are and the strength and worries about those relationships. Peer/Group Mapping may then be necessary to understand the nature, scale and seriousness of risks posed by peer groups, individuals and particular locations.

Individual mapping must be carried out first, to inform the peer/group mapping exercise. Group Mapping does not replace any statutory safeguarding meetings i.e. Strategy Meetings but can be used to support the identification of effective safeguarding interventions from a multi-agency perspective.

The level of risk of exploitation will be reviewed at each CEG and partners with the lead practitioner will determine if the young person is still at significant risk of exploitation. Those that are deemed to be a moderate or lower risk will be stepped out. Those that remain significant risk will have a review date set.



# CHILD EXPLOITATION VULNERABILITY TRIAGE

The CEVT meeting is held daily and attended by partners from Police, Children's Services, Education, Health, Youth Justice, Waythrough and Changing Lives.

CEVT is not a MASH process, it is expected that all children and young people who are discussed at CEVT must have been processed through First Contact (MASH), be stepped up from Early Help or open to Children Services.

CEVT is a gatekeeper of Operational CEG (Child Exploitation Group), and the criteria to be heard at CEG are those children 'where the assessment leads us to suspect that a child IS a victim of exploitation OR is in imminent danger of being exploited'.

Functions of CEVT:

- ✚ Review all children/young people identified as risk of/being exploited, referred by all agencies, screened by First Contact and where the Child Exploitation matrix has been completed
- ✚ Consider those children/young people referred by Children's Social Care following completion of the Child Exploitation Matrix
- ✚ Review missing children/young people, discuss those where there are escalating concerns and consider any which require discussion at CEG
- ✚ Where children/young people referred are not considered appropriate for CEG the relevant rationale will be given to the initial referrer along with contextual safeguarding advice.
- ✚ Provide additional advice to frontline practitioners on where additional actions are required in the care planning process prior to further consideration for CEG and/or where there needs to be a clearer rationale from the frontline practitioner and partners for their referral to CEG

The ERASE Children Services Team Manager will take referrals from CEVT where children/young people are identified as high risk of exploitation and allocate an Exploitation Worker. In some cases, it may also be appropriate to allocate an ERASE worker to those assessed as moderate risk.

For those who are not allocated an Exploitation Worker (low/moderate risk) advice is given to the lead practitioner on the most appropriate intervention for the child's unique circumstances.

## OPERATIONAL CHILD EXPLOITATION GROUP

The CEG framework provides strategic oversight and does not replace existing safeguarding review and monitoring arrangements. It is important that concerns in respect of exploitation and harm outside of the home should be incorporated into the child/young person's assessments and plans that are managed through existing statutory arrangements via TAFs, Core Groups, Care Teams and relevant Review Meetings.

The CEG has strategic oversight of all children/young people assessed as high or significant risk of exploitation and their disruption plans. The CEG meetings are held monthly and there is one in each of the 3 localities (East, South and North / West).

The CEG will consider safeguarding for the child, people, places and spaces where harm occurs (context of the significant harm).

## STRATEGIC CHILD EXPLOITATION GROUP (CEG)

This is a joint group with members of both Durham and Darlington Safeguarding Partnerships.

The primary purpose of the Strategic Child Exploitation Group is to monitor, improve and evaluate the strategic response of partner agencies in tackling children missing from home, care and education and the reduction of child exploitation across Durham and Darlington.

Membership reflects the multi-agency involvement of both Darlington and Durham Safeguarding Partnerships. Agencies are represented at a level of seniority that enables attendees to speak with authority on behalf of their service or organisation.

Strategic CEG will meet quarterly. Meetings will be quorate if at least three different agencies are represented from each local authority (Durham & Darlington). Any member of the group may propose agenda items. Any proposed agenda items should be proposed 2 weeks prior to the meeting. The Chair, Durham Police & Deputy Chair, Children's Social Care will confirm and agree the final agenda.

Strategic CEG is accountable to the Durham Executive and Darlington Executive Statutory Safeguarding Partners.

- to provide a joined-up approach to raising awareness of online harm, child exploitation, risks to missing children, county lines and modern slavery to enable practitioners to spot the signs to prevent further harm.
- to ensure there are formal strategies and procedures, (including clear thresholds and timeframes) in place for Children Missing from Home, Care and Education and Child Exploitation.
- to ensure that where issues of concern are not resolved at a local level, they are escalated to the Strategic CEG and if required to the Executive/Statutory Safeguarding Partners to understand the local picture of missing children, Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation.
- to understand the contextualised safeguarding model.
- to understand what the gaps and barriers are to work together through audits and quality assurance processes to identify learning and provide appropriate responses, solutions and toolkits.
- to monitor an agreed partnership performance scorecard relating to missing children, child exploitation, Child Exploitation Vulnerability Tracker (CEVT) and

education data to gain an understanding of changing trends, needs and risk factors.

- to use time-limited working groups for any identified project work requested by the group.
- Oversight of the operational groups by exception reporting.

# PEOPLE OF CONCERN

'People of concern' includes anyone who could be exploiting or otherwise causing harm to the child/young person outside of their home. This could be older young people or adults, and it may include other children and young people of a similar age to the child/young person.

Practitioners need to identify and share intelligence with the police regarding people of concern, so intelligence can be developed to assist with police enquires. This means those people of concern can be dealt with through criminal proceedings and / or appropriate sanctions applied to restrict / disrupt their actions that exploit children and young people. Partners should use the following [Partnership Information Sharing](#) form to share intelligence

People of concern may be identified through (not limited to) analysis of return home interviews, safeguarding referrals, CE Matrices and exploitation interventions, the child's education provision or Youth Justice Services.

When people of concern are identified, the Durham Police analyst will identify any known links through Safeguarding Reports and Intelligence Reports and present an overview to the People of Concern Meeting.

## **The purpose of the People of Concern Meeting is to:**

- Identify and gather intelligence on people of concern to support police disruption while safeguarding those linked children
- Ensure that children in contact with known people of concern have a robust safeguarding response and oversight of risks from key partners
- Identify children linked to these people of concern and identify which practitioners are working with them and how we share this intelligence and act on it
- All partners are aware and identify activity they can do to disrupt any harm being caused
- Consider existing meetings – where this can be monitored and fed into to evidence impact

# PLACES AND SPACES

'Places and spaces' refer to places where children and young people may be at risk of or be coming to harm outside the home due to the people spending time there and the anti-social or criminal activities happening in these spaces.

Example of places and spaces may include, but is not limited to:

- Online
- Parks
- Taxis
- Fast food outlets
- Caravan parks
- Hotels
- Shops

When practitioners identify 'places and spaces' of concern this will mainly be through Community Safety and Housing partners.

MAPS (multi agency problem solving) meetings are held by the Community Safety Team within each locality and will identify through their core business places and spaces of concern, linked to children/young people. The information will be fed into CEG (Child Exploitation Group) and can pull together key practitioners to undertake a location assessment to determine the potential risk of children/young people being exploited and develop a plan to make it safer.

The aim of this is to develop robust locality partnership action plans to develop intelligence, pursue and prosecute perpetrators and disrupt exploitation activity within communities.

It is recognised that targeting spaces and places of concern compliments the focused work with children/young people and perpetrators. The DSCP is aware that spaces and places requires strategic sign-up and commitment to have the impact required on Harm outside the Home through the joining up of the Safeguarding and Community Safety Partnerships.

## SPECIALIST SERVICES

### **DCC Specialist Services:**

DCC recognises that children and young peoples' lived experience requires practitioners to have knowledge and experience of harm outside the home and therefore has bespoke specialist services that have been developed to work with children/young people at risk of exploitation and missing.

### **The Adolescent Safeguarding and Exploitation Team (ASET):**

Where threshold is met for Social Work intervention and the concerns are harm outside the home the young person may be allocated a social worker from the ASET team.

The team has developed a wealth of experience and knowledge of issues relating to harm outside of the home, and they strive to bring partners together to address the issues impacting on young people that increases their risk of harm.

Our vision is a future where young people feel safe beyond their own homes because their communities and our safeguarding system can, and will, protect them from harm.

ASET will provide assessment and care-planning in line with statutory safeguarding procedures and deliver interventions to young people aged 14-17 who are victims or at risk of harm outside the home or experiencing complex issues such as mental health and homelessness.

### **ERASE: child missing and exploitation:**

ERASE is Durham Children Services specialist child missing and exploitation team. The team was initially established in January 2016 as a partnership between Durham Police and Durham Children Services to tackle child sexual exploitation at this time ERASE was an acronym for Educate, Raise Awareness of Sexual Exploitation.

The reports evidence the success of the collaborative work, however as we have evolved so has our knowledge and we recognise exploitation is wider than sexual exploitation, so the ERASE team has widened its remit in line with national research and local developments. We continue to be committed to the ERASE brand, using the true sense of the word as ERASE: child missing and exploitation.

The ERASE missing and exploitation team is made up of a Team manager, Missing Return Home Interview workers and Child exploitation Workers. The team completes return home interviews on all children who have been missing except for those open

to early help. The team works with children who have been identified as high risk of exploitation, who have an allocated social worker in ASET / Families First or Children in Care Services.

The Child Exploitation worker will work closely with the child / family / carers, the social worker and TAF / Core Group / Care team, to support the understanding of exploitation concerns and help develop a robust intervention plan to address exploitation. The team will provide specialist advice and guidance to practitioners across the service.

ASET and ERASE are specialist knowledge hubs that provide advice and guidance and support the delivery of evidence-based practice while supporting the upskilling of the wider workforce.

# INTERVENTIONS

## **Safety planning (missing and exploitation)**

The type of plan a child/young person is made subject of will be determined by their assessment. This could be an Early Help plan, Child in Need plan, Child Protection plan or Care plan.

Where there are concerns about harm outside the home, the plan needs to outline both engagement and disruption activities with the young person, their parents / carers, partners and those causing harm.

### **Examples of engagement include:**

- Building relationships with children/young people and their parents/carers
- Building children/young people's self-esteem
- Involving the wider family network in creating plans to keep children/young people safe
- Educating children/young people, their parents/carers and wider family network on the signs of exploitation
- Sign posting to or providing direct support, for example to improve emotional wellbeing, parenting strategies, sexual health etc

### **Examples of disruption include:**

- Arresting and charging perpetrators – bail conditions / Remand into Custody (RIC)
- Court orders
- Increased policing in 'places and spaces' of concern
- Licence conditions preventing contact
- Recalling offenders to prison for breach of licence

Where the safeguarding concern is outside the home, we actively promote parents as partners as we recognise that by working together, we can create stronger, more supportive plans that keep children and young people safer from exploitation. This means treating parents with respect, building trust and working 'with' rather than 'doing to'.

See Appendix 1 for **Child Exploitation & Missing Safety Plan Practice Guidance**

## **Mapping Meetings**

In Durham we hold regular partnership mapping meetings, that allow practitioners to see both risks and safety within peer networks and social circles, as well as in spaces and places outside of their home.

Through peer mapping exercises, practitioners can identify and understand the nature and extent of the harm outside the home, which can then be addressed from a multi-agency perspective, supporting individual safety plans and care plans. The intention is to reduce the risk of children/young people being exploited by increasing their safety outside of the home.

There are 3 levels of mapping meetings:

- Mapping 1:1 with a young person to understand their peer network
- Mapping with a group of young people who 'associate'
- Mapping with partner agencies to bring together the child/young person's voice, the intelligence on people of concern and spaces and places of concern.

The level of mapping required is linked to presenting concern, and we would expect to see mapping with partner agencies to be actioned and followed through the Operational CEG (child exploitation group).

## CHILDREN IN CARE LIVING IN ANOTHER AREA

The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review statutory guidance (Out of Authority placement of Children in Care Children: Supplement to The Children Act 1989 Volume 2: Care Planning, Placement and Care Review Guidance) and the associated regulations updated in 2013, outline the duties on Local Authorities to notify other Local Authorities if they place a Child in Care within their area.

This legislation also requires children's homes to notify their host Local Authority when a child is placed with them by another authority. Where a child who is not looked after is placed in a health or education placement for three months or more, or with that intention, the placing authority or organisation also has a duty to notify the host Local Authority prior to the placement or as soon as practicable thereafter. The host Local Authority supported by relevant agencies must ensure that education and health partners are provided with information about placements of children in care into and out of their area.

There are many Out of Area Children in Care (OOA CIC) who are placed into County Durham by other Local Authorities. County Durham has many specialist providers that have established Private Residential Settings and placements can involve children who are identified as high risk of exploitation or missing.

All OOA CIC placed in County Durham remain the responsibility of the placing Local Authority. Anyone with information relating to a safeguarding concern or risk to any specific non-Durham County Council Children in Care should notify the relevant responsible authority for that child without delay. The information should also be shared with DCC First Contact in order that local risk determination can take place.

Any practitioner who has concerns regarding the action or lack of action by any placing local authority to manage an ongoing risk to a child placed in County Durham should escalate this through their own agency child safeguarding leads and the DCC Business Unit should be notified. If there are immediate safeguarding concerns relating to a child placed in County Durham, then the referral process outlined above should be followed.

# TRANSITIONAL SAFEGUARDING

Transitional Safeguarding is a term coined by Research in Practice following recognition of the need to improve the safeguarding responses for older teenagers and young adults. Research by Sawyer et al. (2018) identified emerging evidence that adolescence extends into the early/mid-twenties and children who are vulnerable to or being exploited at age 17 do not suddenly become less vulnerable the day they reach their 18th birthday. There is recognition that the support needs of those young people entering adulthood needs to be well planned and requires a fluid transition between child and adult services.

There is also emerging evidence that meeting the needs of young people and young adults more effectively early on, can significantly reduce the need for costly later interventions for example involvement in the criminal justice system, accessing health services, drug and alcohol treatments etc. (Rees et al, 2017).

# NATIONAL REFERRAL MECHANISM

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support. Modern slavery is a complex crime and may involve multiple forms of exploitation.

It encompasses:

- Human trafficking
- Slavery, servitude, and
- Forced or compulsory labour

An individual could have been a victim of human trafficking and/or slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Victims may not be aware that they are being trafficked or exploited, and may have consented to elements of their exploitation, or accepted their situation.

If you think that modern slavery has taken place, the case should be referred to the NRM so that the Single Competent Authority (SCA) can fully consider the case. You do not need to be certain that someone is a victim.

## **Public Health England defines modern slavery as:**

*“The recruitment, movement, harbouring or receiving of children, women or men, through the use of force, coercion, abuse of vulnerability, deception or other means for the purpose of exploitation. It is a crime under the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and includes holding a person in a position of slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour, or facilitating their travel with the intention of exploiting them soon after”.*

[Report Modern Slavery](#)

[NSPCC Information - Protecting children from trafficking and modern slavery.](#)

# DISRUPTION MEASURES

Child exploitation may be associated with other crimes, or perpetrators may be involved in other criminal activity. In these instances, there are several civil measures that can be used to disrupt the activities of individuals also involved with child criminal exploitation, alongside criminal and civil processes that directly address offending and other child protection procedures.

**The range of formal and informal disruption measures that may be used to help tackle child exploitation include:**

- Obtaining orders on an identified individual.
- Investigation of other crime types such as drugs or theft.
- Increased Police attention on an individual (checking car tax, road worthiness of car etc.).
- Increased Police presence in suspected hotspots (online or offline).
- Working with internet providers to address online harm; and
- Use of licensing laws and powers to obtain guest information or to close down premises associated with child exploitation.
- Use of licence conditions or requirements linked to community orders to protect victims and restrict movement of perpetrators
- Requesting licence enforcement including recall when offenders have breached their licence conditions
- Multi-agency meetings to discuss risks and strategies to manage risk
- Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) referrals for those perpetrators considered dangerous and a risk to children
- Use of closure powers to close houses or business (domestic and commercial) where there is evidence of ongoing significant anti-social behaviour

Where applicable, an effective disruption strategy may use a range of these methods in conjunction with one another to address individual perpetrator behaviour, protect victims and address wider contexts of concern. In developing an effective disruption strategy, local partners including the Police, Probation and Local Authorities should work together to consider the full range of powers available. An effective disruption strategy will also involve work with children and young people to address the issues contributing to their vulnerability and to provide them with alternative options.

[Child exploitation disruption toolkit - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

## CIVIL ORDERS AND OTHER MEANS OF CONTROLLING BEHAVIOUR

**Gang Injunction** a gang injunction is a civil tool that allows the Police or a local authority to apply to the County Court, High Court or Youth Court for an injunction against an individual to prevent gang related violence and gang related drug dealing. By imposing a range of prohibitions and requirements on the respondent, a gang injunction aims to prevent the respondent from engaging in, or encouraging or assisting, gang related violence or gang related drug dealing activity and / or to protect the respondent from gang related violence or gang related drug dealing activity.

**Child Abduction Warning Notices (CAWNs)** formerly known as Harbourers' Warnings. These can be issued by the Police and used with individuals over 18 to let them know (and record that they have been told) that they are not allowed to associate with or contact a named child (under 16, or under 18 if in care). CAWNs have no statutory basis in and of themselves but are very useful in providing evidence to support the prosecution of other offences by, for example, registering that a suspect knew the child was 15, thereby taking away the age defence in criminal cases.

**Sexual Harm Prevention Orders (SHPOs)** can be applied for by the Police or the National Crime Agency. They can be used to impose restrictions on an individual who has been convicted or cautioned of a sexual or violent offence, where there is reasonable cause to believe that the imposition of such an order is necessary to protect an individual or the wider public from harm. Restrictions can include things like preventing them from approaching or being alone with a named child and prohibiting foreign travel. Breach of the order, without reasonable excuse, is an offence punishable by a fine and/or imprisonment.

**Sexual Risk Orders (SROs)** can also be applied for by the Police or the National Crime Agency. These are similar to Sexual Harm Prevention Orders, and can include similar restrictions, but do not require an individual to have been convicted or cautioned. SROs can be issued when an individual has carried out an act of a sexual nature and there is reasonable cause to believe that such an order is necessary to protect an individual or the wider public from harm. As with SHPOs, breach of the order is an offence punishable by a fine and/or imprisonment.

**Both SHPOs and SROs** may be used with children under 18, but recent Home Office guidance on Part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 states that the following principles should apply when considering this:

- The early consultation and participation of the youth offending team in the application process; That 14 to 17 year olds made subject to civil injunctions in relation to harmful sexual behaviour are offered appropriate interventions to reduce their harmful behaviour
- That the nature and extent of that support is based on a structured assessment that considers the needs of the young person and the imminent risk
- That the welfare of the child or young person is the paramount consideration, in line with local safeguarding procedures
- That the requirements of all other orders and sentences that may already be in existence are taken into account to ensure that any requirements made by these orders do not restrict a young person's ability to complete other current orders or sentences, and the combined burden of requirements is taken into account to ensure the young person has the capacity to comply (Home Office, 2015).

### **Slavery and Trafficking Prevention Orders / Slavery and Trafficking Risk Orders**

Where there are concerns that a child/young person has been trafficked as part of the child sexual exploitation (this can include movement from one area to another within England), Slavery and Trafficking Prevention Orders (STPOs) and Slavery and Trafficking Risk Orders (STROs) can also be considered. STPOs and STROs can be applied for by the Police, the National Crime Agency or an immigration officer. These were introduced under the Modern Slavery Act (2015) and, like the SHPOs and SROs outlined above, offer a means of placing restrictions on an individual's movements and actions.

A STPO can only be made against an individual who has been convicted of a slavery or human trafficking offence, while a STRO can be made against an individual who has acted in a way which means that there is a risk that they will commit a slavery or human trafficking offence. Both require reasonable belief that the individual may commit a modern slavery offence in the future and that application of the order is necessary to protect an individual or the wider public from harm.

**Notification Orders** are intended to protect the public from the risks posed by sex offenders in the UK who have been convicted or cautioned for sexual offences which have been committed overseas. A Notification Order makes the offender subject to notification requirements in the same way as if they had been convicted in the UK for a sexual or violent offence.

**Non-Molestation Orders** are civil injunctions that can be issued to protect named children from abuse from an individual and any third party acting on the behalf of that individual. The order only applies to those individual(s) 'associated' with the child. It is an offence if the order is breached.

**Exclusion Orders** can be sought upon the application for an Interim Care Order or Emergency Protection Order. The order can be taken where there is reasonable cause to believe that if an individual is excluded from a dwelling, house or defined area in which the child/young person lives, the child will cease to suffer, or cease to be likely to suffer, significant harm. The order cannot cover an unlimited area.

**A Wardship** is a civil injunction which can be used to prevent an 'undesirable association' between a child/young person and an individual(s). A local authority can make a Wardship application to the High Court to make a named child a ward of court and to seek an injunction against a named individual(s) to prevent that person from making any contact with the child/young person. An injunction can be used where there is reasonable cause to believe that the child/young person is likely to suffer significant harm without the court's intervention.

# INFORMATION SHARING

The DSCP's Information Sharing Agreement aims to provide a framework in which partners can exercise their duty to share information to safeguard children and young people, specifically when considering information relating to harm outside the home.

It sets out clear expectations of Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership, Safe Durham Partnership, community safety and other partnerships to work to a shared understanding of the importance of timely, informed, respectful and purposeful gathering and sharing of information. It is recognised by all partners that sharing information as it emerges, can help minimise risks to children and young people and enable the provision of the right help and the right time.

Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP) has highlighted harm outside of the home as a priority within the 2023 – 2026 business plan. This information sharing agreement has been agreed by all relevant partners to advance efficient and safe data sharing.

Information necessary for safeguarding decisions in relation to children and young people is held by numerous statutory and non-statutory agencies. To deliver the best safeguarding decisions that ensure timely, necessary and proportionate interventions, decision makers need the full information concerning a child and their circumstances to be available to them.

The full Information Sharing Agreement can be found here [Tier 2 HOTH Information Sharing Agreement](#)

**Appendix 1:**

## **Child Exploitation & Missing Safety Plan Practice Guidance**

Safety Plans should be actively reviewed and updated at every Multi-Agency Meeting. The Safety Plan should have SMART actions and targets, agreed by the young person and parents / carers. Set small targets monthly focussing on achieving positive change. The Care Team should identify a named practitioner (ideally named by the young person) who is their primary point of contact.

The updated Safety Plan should be circulated to the young person, parents / carers and relevant professionals within 5 working days of being updated.

The level of risk should be reviewed as part of every meeting and forms part of the record of each meeting, along with the Safety Plan.

Meetings should also seek to identify connections between young people, people posing a risk and locations of concern and consider referral for a Complex Strategy Meeting and / or to the CEVT (child exploitation vulnerability tracker)

**Please Note: Elements of this plan should be used in the child’s existing CIN/CP/- CIC plan where necessary.**

**This plan is NOT intended as a separate document.**

<b>For the duration of this Safety Plan all agencies should:</b>	
Gather information to assist prosecution and disruption of adults suspected of being involved in violence, gang activity, drugs and / or sexual exploitation.	
Complete and submit a police intelligence form with new information or intelligence about young people, people posing a risk or locations of concern: Partnership Information Sharing Form (durham-scp.org.uk) in addition to safeguarding procedures	
Obtain and share as much information as possible to identify associates and those who pose a risk to young people (good information includes full names, nick names, telephone numbers, addresses, car registrations, employment type and location, details of licensed bodies / properties)	
Record accurate, factual information on children's records, including the date and time relating to the information, all those involved in concerns, and the practitioner’s response	
<b>Consider the following actions for each young person’s Safety Plan</b>	
<b>Desired Outcome</b>	<b>Action: Recommendations</b>
<b>Disrupt contact with any person who poses a risk and/or is suspected of being involved in violence, drugs or sexual (CRIMINAL) exploitation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify who the young person is spending time with and recognise negative and positive relationships</li> <li>• Implement disruption tactics (Community Protection Notices; verbal / written warnings; disruption letters for parents / carers; Child Abduction Warning Notices; Cuckooing Notices)</li> <li>• Consider disruption tactics employable by other agencies such as Licensing, Fire Service / Housing / Probation</li> <li>• Prevent home visits and screen telephone calls from other young people who may deliberately or unwittingly be recruiting the</li> </ul>

	<p>young person or adults suspected of abusing, grooming, or recruiting the young person</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide additional patrols and disruption / detached outreach in named hotspots</li> <li>• Secure mobile phones and SIM cards, particularly if supplied by abusers and / or evidence of coercion, and pass to the Police. If we provide phones, take down the IMEI (handset) and number of the SIM (printed on the SIM ) as well as phone number, phone network</li> <li>• Consider removing mobile phones at night</li> <li>• Monitor call and text use and internet – laptop / tablet, phone and Xbox etc.</li> <li>• Use MAPPA and MARAC and risk management processes where appropriate</li> <li>• Share information with Police, Social Care and relevant practitioners via information report forms</li> <li>• Police and Social Care checks to be undertaken on any person who is deemed a risk</li> <li>• If coercion is evidenced complete subscriber checks on the telephone numbers provided for alleged perpetrators</li> <li>• Provide additional patrols and disruption/detached outreach in named hotspots</li> <li>• Monitor cars turning up at the home and share information via report forms</li> <li>• Engage the parents to ensure they act appropriately to safeguard the young person. Consider parenting contract if necessary</li> <li>• Identify who provides housing or postcode input on selective licencing website <a href="#">Selective licencing of privately rented properties - Durham County Council</a> / <a href="#">Housing associations - Durham County Council</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Raise awareness of exploitation, including relating to the young person’s specific circumstances</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• work on internet safety, sexting, consent, capacity and coercion, worrying behaviours and consequences</li> <li>• Complete healthy relationships and rights work (group or individual) – reframe understanding of relationships</li> <li>• Provide peer articles and booklets for self-directed learning</li> <li>• Share online resources targeted at young people</li> <li>• Facilitate peer mentoring by young people who have been through similar experiences and learnt how to cope and increase their safety</li> <li>• Work with school / college to raise awareness of risk</li> <li>• Identify a long-term key worker from any agency, ideally identified by the young person, to be their primary point of contact</li> <li>• Support worker to complete the same work with Parents</li> </ul>
<p><b>Empower parents and carers</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise awareness with parents / carers of relevant resources about exploitation, their responsibilities and options, procedures and legal powers</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider family support services e.g. support to implement and sustain age-appropriate behaviour management strategies, family contract – involving the young person in discussions too</li> <li>• Maintain active support of parents, carers and foster carers and help parents / carers to identify the signs of all forms of exploitation</li> <li>• Engage parents / carers to ensure they act appropriately to safeguard: actively engage them in searching for the young person, sharing information such as observed car registration numbers, named individuals, contact details shared by the young person</li> <li>• Consider Family Group Conference or Family Meeting</li> <li>• Parents to be aware of hotspots and implement a strict age-appropriate curfew and follow the 15 minute rule (if the child is not home or where they should be, ring or text them after 15 minutes - if they do not respond or their phone is switched off wait a further 15 minutes – try again, if still no answer ring the Police to report them missing)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Reduce the risk of missing episodes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify a trusted adult who the young person can contact out of hours</li> <li>• Primary contact to text the young person even if they don't respond to let them know they are in mind and people are worried about them</li> <li>• Provide 1-1 advice on risks associated with missing episodes</li> <li>• Consider a tracker on the young person's phone, with their consent</li> <li>• Place an Alert on Police MISPER system – highlight known addresses and who to contact in an emergency</li> <li>• Place an alert on walk-in health systems and emergency departments</li> <li>• Ensure parents / carers know how to contact EDT and Police to report missing</li> <li>• Ensure the Missing People Helpline and Childline numbers are in the young person's mobile phone address book or text the numbers to them</li> <li>• Follow up return home interviews with active support to ensure the young person sees the return interview as a positive experience</li> <li>• Improve attendance at school/college</li> <li>• Do not hang around in hotspots discussed today or go to other areas with peers or adults without parental permission</li> </ul>
<p><b>Promote physical safety</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify triggers and patterns of escalating behaviour and agree how this can be de-escalated and appropriate intervention when de-escalation has not been effective</li> <li>• Consider whether legal advice is required in order to secure the young person's safety</li> <li>• Consider use of police powers</li> <li>• Consider National Referral Mechanism criteria</li> </ul>

<p><b>Promote sexual health and reduce the risk of STI's, pregnancy and blood borne viruses</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommend a full sexual health screening with sexual health services</li> <li>• Provide advice and options on contraception</li> <li>• Seek consent and conduct medical investigations as appropriate</li> </ul>
<p><b>Support emotional needs and build self-esteem, including through diversionary activities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider referrals for support to specialist services regarding sexual exploitation; rape and sexual assault; domestic abuse; mental health; counselling; youth services</li> <li>• Take time to explain the issues and keep the young person informed</li> <li>• Involve the young person in looking at alternatives and decision making</li> <li>• Identify and encourage positive activities and encourage the young person to make positive contributions at home, school, leisure or work.</li> <li>• Raise aspirations with positive reinforcement</li> <li>• Arrange work experience opportunities and / or vocational training</li> <li>• Consider what can each agency offer (YOS, police, social care, education providers, voluntary sector)</li> <li>• Support the emotional needs of the child/YP and family</li> <li>• Referrals for support to CAMHS/Counselling etc.</li> <li>• Offer bereavement counselling to family and child</li> <li>• Support YP regarding self-harming</li> </ul>
<p><b>Consider how to make home a more attractive and consistent place to be</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and address push and pull factors</li> <li>• Tackle any relationship problems at home</li> <li>• Support parents / carers with promoting stable routines for sleeping and eating together</li> <li>• Address any domestic violence issues and consider relevant programmes for victims and perpetrators</li> <li>• Tackle drug / alcohol problems of other family members and support referrals</li> <li>• Consider extended stay with a family member or respite, possibly in a different location</li> <li>• Consider if current placement continues to be the most appropriate (level of independence and responsibility; other young people placed; placement location; specialist skills and knowledge; level of support day and night)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Raise awareness of risks of alcohol and substance misuse</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refer to specialist services to provide advice, information and support about alcohol and substance misuse</li> <li>• Consider messages that can be delivered to cohorts of children through 'Personal, Social and Health Education' curriculum</li> </ul>
<p><b>Improve school / college / training attendance</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tackle bullying, truancy and peer pressure</li> <li>• Ensure young people are protected in their educational setting from peers identified as posing a risk</li> <li>• Provide 'Personal, Social and Health Education'</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage engagement with alternative educational provision, informed by the young person's aspirations and interests</li> <li>• Provide funding for after school activities</li> <li>• Provide educational work regardless of attendance and identify an individual who will continue to engage the young person</li> <li>• Education provision to contact parents / carers and social worker whenever the young person is absent</li> <li>• Ensure SEN plans are reviewed are regularly reviewed</li> </ul>
<b>Corroborate information and protect any evidence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure any clothing that is likely to have DNA on it and pass to the Police</li> <li>• Share any witness statements with the Police and Social Care</li> <li>• Establish facts and where possible corroborate information given, remember that evidence thresholds are high.</li> </ul>
<b>Reduce the number of practitioners discussing concerns with family/ young person</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nominate one individual to lead this work</li> </ul>
<b>Provide diversionary activities to improve self-esteem and replace excitement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive activities to be offered, particularly those that heighten adrenaline</li> </ul>
<b>Ensure all relevant people are aware of the level of risk to the young Person</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete a current risk assessment and share with relevant - practitioners</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2

### Child Exploitation Group (Strategic)

#### Terms of Reference

This is a joint group with members of both Durham and Darlington Safeguarding Partnerships.

**Chair:** Andrew Reynolds: Head of Safeguarding, Durham Constabulary  
**Deputy Chair:** Siobhan Arbon, Strategic Manager County Wide Specialist Services, Durham County Council

#### Purpose:

Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP) has duty to monitor the effectiveness of the work of the DSCP to safeguard and promote the welfare of children as set out in ['Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2023'](#).

The Strategic Child Exploitation Group is a subgroup within the DSCP, the structure of the groups is displayed in Appendix A.

The overarching purpose of the Strategic Child Exploitation Group is to:

#### 1. Aim

The primary aim of the Child Exploitation Group is to monitor, improve and evaluate the strategic response of partner agencies in tackling children missing from home, care and education and the reduction of child exploitation across Durham and Darlington.

#### 2. Membership

The Strategic Child Exploitation Group will be chaired by the Head of Safeguarding (Durham Constabulary).

Business support is provided jointly by the DSCP Business Unit and DSP Business Unit.

Membership of the group will include representatives with delegated responsibility to seek and provide information in relation to the purpose of the group, the members of the group are listed in Appendix B.

- County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust (CDDFT)
- County Durham and Darlington Probation Delivery Area, North East Probation Region as part of the HM Prison and Probation Service
- Domestic Abuse Service; Harbour
- Drug and Alcohol Service; Waythrough
- Durham Community Action
- Durham Constabulary
- Durham County Council
- Children's Social Care, including Early Help

- Education
- Housing
- Durham Works
- Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust (HDDFT)
- North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB)
- North East Regional Organised Crime Unit (NEROCU)
- Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV)
- Other strategic partners that have responsibilities to address issues relevant to safeguarding children

Additional members will be co-opted onto the group as and when appropriate. The group welcomes additional attendees, for example, to discuss specific topics.

### 3. Quorum

The Strategic Child Exploitation Group meetings will be quorate with representation from the three statutory partners, Durham County Council, Durham Constabulary, and North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NHS), in attendance.

Wherever possible, members who are unable to attend will delegate a person to deputise who has been briefed on the nature of the meeting to allow for contribution to the meeting.

Members should have knowledge of practice and processes so that they are able to contribute to the work of the Durham/Darlington Safeguarding Children Partnership. There is an expectation that members will attend fully prepared in order to contribute to meetings and will also respond to e-mail consultations. During a period of organisational changes and merges, membership may change but there is a need to ensure expertise and organisational memory is maintained through this group.

### 4. Accountability and Governance

The Strategic Child Exploitation Group will meet formally quarterly to enable discussion relating to data from one quarter within each of these meetings. A schedule of meetings and periods when data and information is requested from members is included in Appendix C.

Agendas and associated documents will be provided to members seven working days prior to the meeting. Associated documents will be stored within the Strategic Child Exploitation Group Teams folder, members are to ensure that they have access to this and to contact [DSCPSecure@durham.gov.uk](mailto:DSCPSecure@durham.gov.uk) if there are any issues with access.

### 5. Authority

The group operates under delegated authority from the Durham and Darlington Safeguarding Partnerships to act within the scope of the agreed terms of reference.

### 6. Scope and Delivery

The responsibilities of the Strategic Child Exploitation Group members include:

- follow an annual work plan agreed by Durham Executive and Darlington Statutory Safeguarding Partners.

- to provide a joined-up approach to raising awareness of online harm, child exploitation, risks to missing children, county lines and modern slavery to enable practitioners to spot the signs to prevent further harm.
- to ensure there are formal strategies and procedures, (including clear thresholds and timeframes) in place for Children Missing from Home, Care and Education and Child Exploitation
- to ensure that where issues of concern are not resolved at a local level, they are escalated to the Child Exploited Group and if required to the Executive/Statutory Safeguarding Partners
- to understand the local picture of missing children, Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation
- to understand the contextualised safeguarding model
- to understand what the gaps and barriers are to work together through audits and quality assurance processes to identify learning and provide appropriate responses, solutions and toolkits.
- to monitor an agreed joint partnership performance scorecard relating to missing children, child exploitation, child exploitation vulnerability tracker (CEVT) and education data to gain an understanding of changing trends, needs and risk factors.
- to use time-limited working groups for any identified project work requested by the group.
- Oversight of the operational groups by exception reporting

These terms of reference will be reviewed every 12 months to ensure they are relevant and fit for purpose in line with changing priorities.

The Chair of the group will provide regular reports to the Durham Executive and Darlington Statutory Safeguarding Partners.

### **Priorities 2023-2026**

- **Child/Children or Young Person(s) focus:** partners are committed to the identification, risk assessment and risk management of those children identified as being at risk of missing and child exploitation. Children are at the centre of what we do.
- **Context focus:** partners are committed to targeting spaces and places and people of concern who pose a risk to exploiting children and young people.
- **Early Identification focused:** Partners are committed equip & educate children to recognise the risks of HOH. Partners will support parents, carers, and practitioners to understand the signs of harm outside the home.

### **7. Review Date**

The Terms of Reference should be reviewed by the group on an annual basis or in line with the DSCP Business Plan, whichever comes first. The next date of review of the Terms of Reference is April 2026.