

# Multi-Agency Child Exploitation MACE meeting

**Guidance for professionals with concerns about Contextual Safeguarding: Child Criminal Exploitation, County Lines, and Child Sexual Exploitation**



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## What is Contextual safeguarding

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine carer-child relationships.

Thankfully we know that most young people live positive lives and are not involved, or experience being exploited. However, there are a small number of young people who do become involved and this can have a significant impact on the families, communities, as well as themselves.

Historically different forms of exploitation have had different approaches and responses however this procedure recognises that whilst there are different forms of exploitation, there exists a child who is at risk of and/or subjected to abuse and harm from exploitation. Therefore, we take a holistic view of exploitation whilst recognising that it can occur through different forms and often occurs in amongst other vulnerabilities that children and young people may be exposed to.

## What is Child Exploitation?

Child exploitation is about children who are being used for someone else's advantage, gratification or profit which results in harm of the child. This incorporates both sexual and criminal exploitation. The commonality is that these activities involve manipulation, misuse, abuse, victimization and ill-treatment. All of which are detrimental to the child's physical and mental health and well-being, their education, and their social-emotional development.

Exploitation in the wider definition 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, gifts, money) as a result of them completing a task on behalf of another individual or group of individuals; this is often of a criminal or sexual nature.

Child exploitation often occurs without the child's immediate recognition, with the child believing that they are in control of the situation. 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 or emotional vulnerability.



# Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) Meeting

## Overview

The purpose of the MACE meeting is to provide operational management oversight of the risk management for individual children and groups of children identified as being vulnerable to child exploitation. We are aware that child exploitation takes place in the local community and therefore information known to statutory as well as voluntary sector agencies should be used to highlight the vulnerabilities, threats, to establish, and reduce risk.

The MACE meeting will provide the framework to allow regular information sharing and action planning to tackle child exploitation across Sheffield. The meeting will discuss concerns about children and young people who may be at risk from: CSE, CCE (including county lines), gang related crime and human trafficking that requires a multi-agency response.

The meeting will take place weekly and will be chaired by a senior manager from Sheffield Children and Young Peoples Services. Safeguarding partners who will also attend the meeting will include, but not exhaustively, lead practitioners and managers from: Early Help, Children's Social Work Service, South Yorkshire Police, Youth Justice Service, Health Services, Community and Youth Teams.

The MACE meeting will facilitate effective action to prevent and disrupt exploitation by:

- Supporting the effective sharing of relevant information in accordance with the MACE Information Sharing Agreement. (ISA)
- Enable agencies to identify those at risk of child exploitation as well as victims, perpetrators, and locations of concern; to aid disruption of perpetrators and provide support to victims and their families.
- Ensuring that all agencies are working together effectively to prevent, reduce, track and respond to children missing from home, care, or education, including those children in out of Sheffield placements.
- Providing advice and guidance, including the promoting of robust and proactive multiagency investigations where a risk of exploitation has been identified, especially where children and young people do not perceive themselves as victims.
- Seek assurance from all relevant agencies that the full range of disruption measures are being used to target perpetrators.
- Monitor the effectiveness of return to home interviews in developing an understanding of risk and emerging safeguarding themes.
- Sharing information to understand the nature and extent of child exploitation in Sheffield, as well as enabling the identification of patterns and intelligence gaps.

MACE Meetings are not an alternative to safeguarding and child protection processes and where there is a concern about abuse or neglect within the family, including where parents/carers not acting protectively, the usual S.47 processes should be used and where necessary a Child Protection Plan will be made.

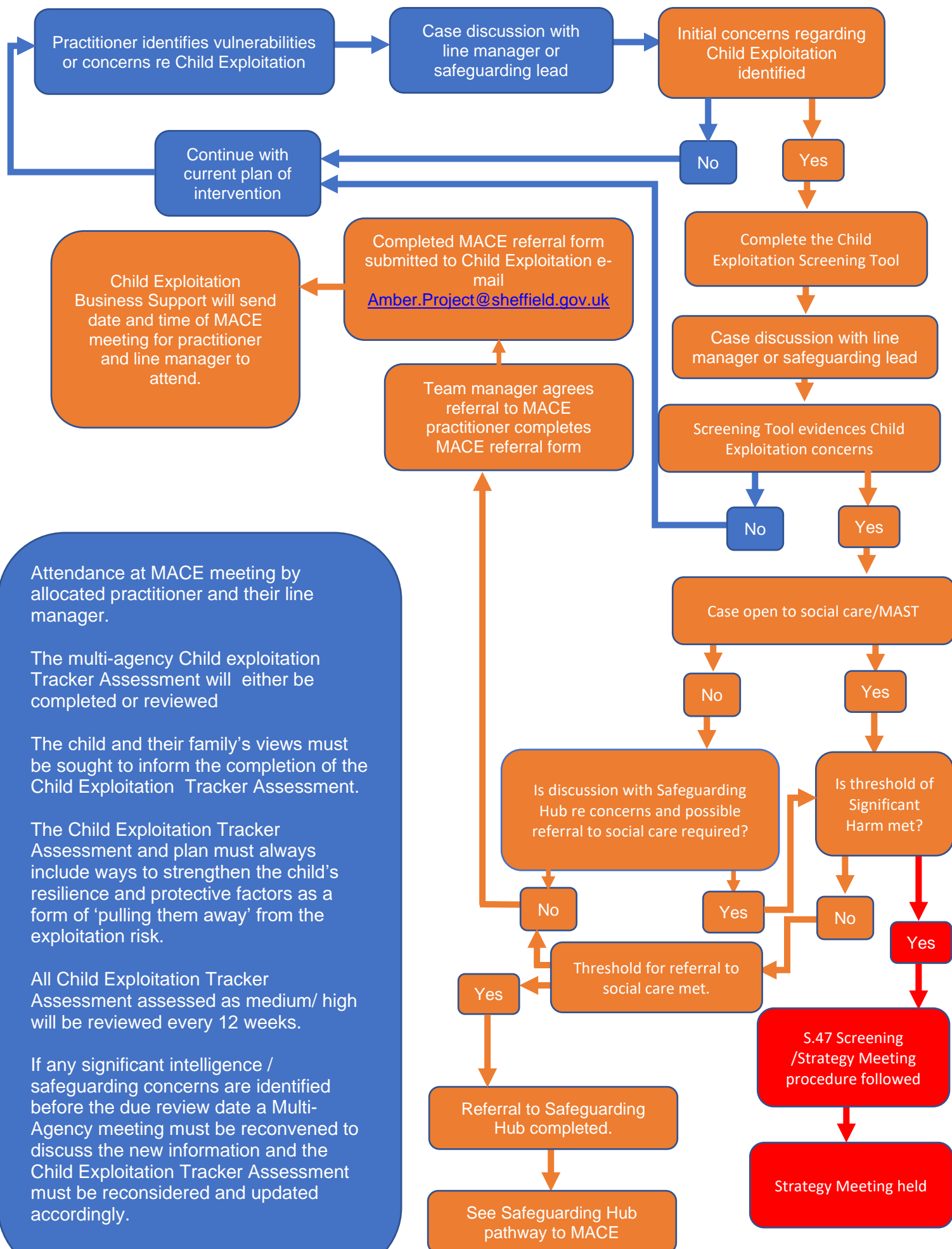
MACE meetings can be held alongside Child Protection Conferences and Core Group Meetings.

## Referrals to MACE

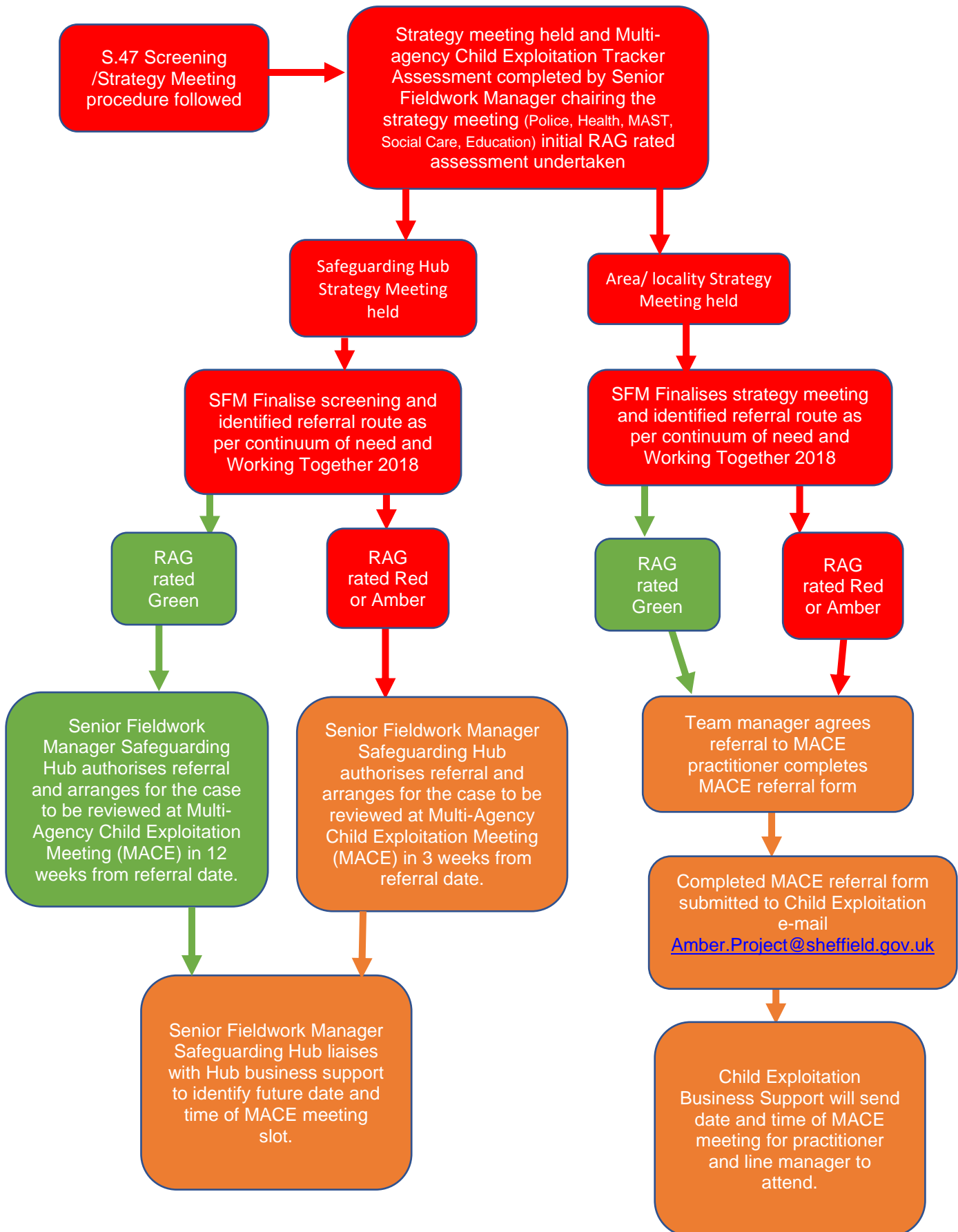
There are 2 main referral pathways into MACE; cases that are already known and open to social care and other services and those that are new cases referred the Sheffield safeguarding hub. Please see Fig1 and Fig 2



**Fig 2. Flowchart – Referral to Multi-Agency Child Exploitation Meeting (MACE) Open Cases - all agencies**



**Fig 3. Flowchart – Referral to Multi-Agency Child Exploitation Meeting via child protection Strategy Meeting**





# Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) Meeting

MACE meetings identify victims and/or offenders in relation to child exploitation, offering added value solutions to the victim's care plans and clearly identifying disruption opportunities and the criminal justice responses. They are not care planning meetings and will not scrutinise individual care plans, the panels will instead consider activities that can be undertaken in addition to the victim's care plan to further enhance and safeguard them. The MACE panels will scrutinise the tasks and actions for each individual discussed and review the progress and effectiveness of allocated actions, holding to account the individuals and agencies responsible for completing the tasks.

The meeting will also facilitate: -

- Partners understanding their role in the protection of children vulnerable to exploitation, the disruption of location activity and the prosecution and pursuing of perpetrators.
- Partner agencies bringing their own agency knowledge/legislation and guidance to utilise when identifying actions.
- Partner agencies contributing to all meetings, meaning the discussions are not wholly led by the police or social care services.
- All partners contributing to the completion of the child exploitation vulnerability tracker.
- Ensure that robust plans are in place that aim to manage and work to mitigate the level of risk
- Increased consistency for decision making regarding the level of risk and vulnerability of child exploitation across Sheffield and that resources are identified and allocated in the most proportionate way
- Ensure that Health, Police and Children and Young Peoples Service have the right risk status allocated to an individual child and that this is consistent across the partnership.
- Understand the level of risk posed to individual children and young people, what level of threat the risks present to the child's well-being and how well these can be managed so the level of risk is reduced and safely managed

## Examples of MACE actions

- To ensure the completion of referrals to the NRM
- To consider the legislation available by environmental health/licencing for example and how this allows for entry into takeaway establishments.
- To explore the ascertaining of additional orders e.g. sexual risk orders
- To action Child Abduction Notices (CANs) being issued
- To consider children who transition into adulthood and the additional support they require post 18.
- To explore the additional professional presence required within identified hotspot locations
- Identify appropriate and relevant additional support from partner agencies.

It is important that prior to any case being referred to MACE that the Child Exploitation Screening Tool is completed (See appendix 1)

# Child Exploitation Tracker Assessment Tool

## Child Exploitation Tracker Assessment Tool

The Child Exploitation Tracker Assessment Tool scores children and vulnerable adults who are being exploited. It creates a single vulnerable cohort database which the partnership can use to inform safeguarding response, and better understand the strategic picture of child exploitation within Sheffield.

It provides a summary of risk for effective management by using key indicators. The table below shows each indicator. Each indicator has a weighted score which cumulatively create a risk rating for that individual. These weightings have been developed through national and regional practitioner input and feedback. In simple terms the Child Exploitation Tracker Assessment Tool is an information tracker. It is a way of capturing relevant information which is easily accessible and includes key decisions and desired outcomes around cases where child exploitation is the key feature.

Question/Indicators	AGENCY Answering
Age Score	N/A
Known to Social Services	Social Services
Looked After Child (LAC)	Social Services
Currently Wanted / Missing	Police
Self-Harm / Suicidal	Any
Mental Health	Health
Learning Difficulties	Health
Drug / Alcohol Abuse that is problematic	Any
Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Score	Any
ACE Type? (Please specify)	TEXT OPTION
Victim of Sexual Crime	Police
Victim of Serious Violence	Police
Victim of Modern Slavery	Police
Victim of Other Crime	Police
Witness of Sexual / Serious Violent Crime	Police
Experienced Domestic Abuse	Police
Suspect / Accused of Sexual / Serious Violence	Police
Suspect / Accused Other Crime	Police
Suspect / Accused of Possession of a Weapon	Police
Intelligence Firearms / Knife	Police
Suspect / Accused PWITS	Police
County Line Arrest	Police
Stopped in Another Force area	Police
County Line Intelligence	Police
Cuckoo-ing of Home Address	Police
Sexually Inappropriate Behaviour	Any
NEET	Education / MAST
Attendance	Education / MAST
Home Schooled	Education / MAST
Mapped OCG association	Police
<b>Associates with other who are being exploited (sexually or otherwise)</b>	Police / Any
Social Isolation	Any
Level of Parental Engagement	Any



# Child Exploitation Tracker Assessment Tool

## Key goals of the Child Exploitation Tracker Assessment Tool

- To identify and highlight vulnerability and exploitation of young or vulnerable people
- Identify and signpost those who are at risk of Child Exploitation
- Share key information with partners to provide a clear multi agency response
- Mitigate and reduce risk to vulnerable young people through effective and collaborative safeguarding practices.
- Support victims of criminal prosecutions under the Modern Slavery Act.
- Develop single multi-agency informed data set of Child Exploitation vulnerability
- Provide the best wrap around care plan for the child.
- To hold services to account where necessary.

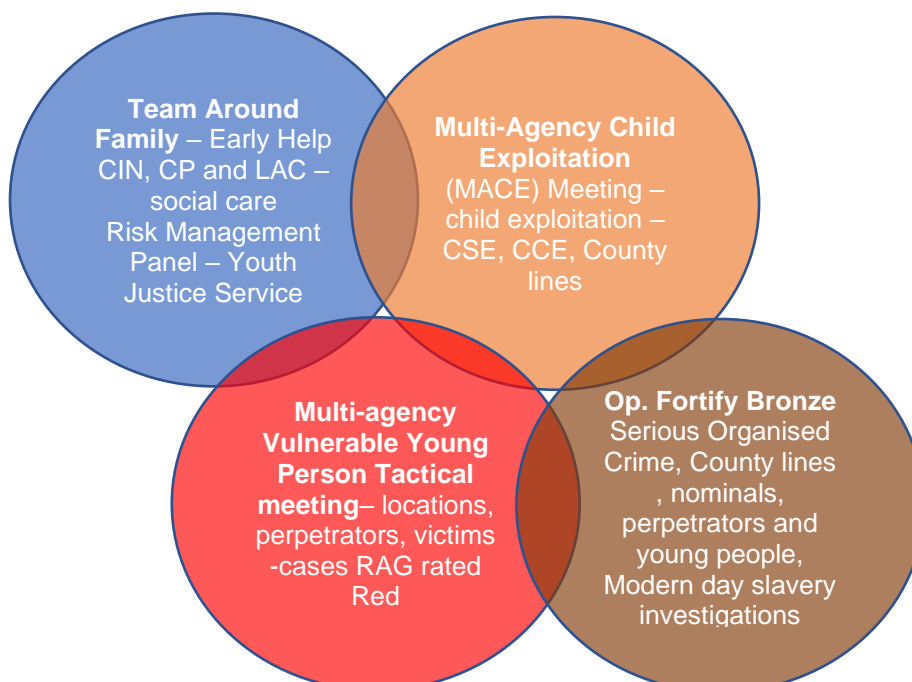
The Child Exploitation Tracker considers; the child's welfare, if they are a victim of crime, criminal behaviour, county lines, child exploitation and other risk factors, enabling professionals to have a clear understanding of links to county lines and gangs/groups or if the risks are from individual adults. It can be used at any stage within the child's journey, from early help through to children in care.

## Benefits of using the Child Exploitation Tracker Assessment Tool

- Shows a current snapshot across the area or Sheffield providing information at a glance for open and closed young people subject to child exploitation. We will know the cohort of young people in Sheffield.
- It evidences preventative work, comparing scoring pre and post intervention. We can evidence impact and change
- Capture data around requests for young people referred to the NRM and know how many have a conclusive grounds decision outcome
- Provides a complete breakdown of the nature of the exploitation within Sheffield.
- Links with trigger plans for missing person reports.

The MACE meeting will be responsible for reviewing the Child Exploitation Tracker Assessment Tool and keeping it up to date. The high-risk RAG rated red cases will be shared with Sheffield partners through the Vulnerable Young Persons Tactical Meeting

## How MACE links into other Safeguarding and multi-agency child exploitation meetings



# Sheffield Child Exploitation Screening Tool

## Sheffield Child Exploitation Screening Tool (appendix 1)

A Child Exploitation Screening tool can be completed at any point prior to or from referral and during the journey of a case. The screening tool supports 'multi-agency practitioners to better exercise professional judgement. This includes a focus on risk indicators and protective factors.

This is a screening tool that you can use to help you decide whether a child or young person may be at risk of child exploitation (CE). It is designed to be used by all professionals working with children and parents or carers. A child is defined as a person who is under 18 years of age.

This tool is intended to assist in your decision making; helping you make an initial judgement regarding the risk of child exploitation; it is neither a specialist assessment or referral form. The tool aims to help practitioners focus on the specific child exploitation evidence, indicators, existing safety and vulnerabilities, and determine whether further investigations are needed by Children's Social Care or suitable for referral to another prevention and early intervention service.

When you are considering making a referral to the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub or sharing your concerns with the child's allocated social worker, this screening tool should form the basis of those discussions and your professional analysis.

Practitioners need to exercise their own professional judgment when completing this tool because factors such as the child's age, any additional vulnerabilities, their history etc. may mean that they are more vulnerable to CE.

Professional judgment also includes capturing concerns about which you have evidence as well as concerns based on 'gut feeling'. It is important that you differentiate between the two and provide explanation and rationale. It is important to include the child's strengths and existing safety so that this can be considered as part of the child's ongoing safety

Your observations of behaviours and any significant changes will be important as children will often deny or be unaware that they are being exploited.

**The Sheffield Child Exploitation Screening Tool must be undertaken for all children prior to making a referral to MACE**

## Definitions and Related Practice Guidance

The Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership (SCSP) has produced a range of practice guidance and supporting documents that cover the vulnerabilities focussed on through MACE. These can be found on the website <https://www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org/sscb>

**Child Sexual Exploitation** is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual (CSE perpetrator) takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage of increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. Department for Education (DfE) (2017)

# Definitions and Related practice Guidance

The SCSP Practice Guidance for Child Sexual Exploitation can be found at <https://www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org/sscb/safeguarding-information-and-resources/sexual-exploitation>

**Child Criminal Exploitation** (including County Lines) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where children (under 18) receive or are promised ‘something’ tangible e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, gifts or money or ‘something’ intangible e.g. affection, respect, status, or protection in return for committing a criminal act for the benefit of another individual or group of individuals or be threatened, coerced, or intimidated into committing that criminal act (Home Office, 2018)

**County lines** is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons (Home Office, 2018)

The SCSP Practice Guidance for Child Criminal Exploitation can be found at <https://www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org/sscb/safeguarding-information-and-resources/criminal-exploitation>

## Cuckooing

Urban gangs establish a base in the market location, often by taking over the homes of local vulnerable adults by force and/or coercion, in a practice referred to as ‘cuckooing’. Urban gangs then use children and vulnerable people to move drugs and money.

## The Modern Slavery Act 2015

Section 2 Human Trafficking A person commits an offence if the person arranges or facilitates the travel of another person to exploit them. It is irrelevant whether the exploited person, adult or child, consents to the travel. A person may arrange or facilitate another person’s travel by recruiting, transporting, or transferring, harbouring, or receiving them, or 6 transferring or exchanging control over them. ‘Travel’ means arriving in, or entering, any country, departing from any country and travelling within any country. A person who is a UK national commits an offence under Section 2 regardless of where the arranging or facilitating takes place, or where the travel takes place. A person who is not a UK national commits an offence under Section 2 if any part of the arranging or facilitating takes place in the UK, or the travel consists of arrival in or entry into, departure from, or travel within the UK. In determining whether or not a child is a victim of trafficking, their consent to being trafficked is irrelevant and how they are trafficked is also irrelevant. Only the act and the purpose need to be present. It is not necessary to prove coercion or any other inducement.

Exploitation alone does not constitute trafficking – there also needs to be recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a person. Slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour is, or may be, a crime in its own right under Section 1 Modern Slavery Act 2015.

**Modern Slavery Toolkit** can be found at:

<https://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/nyp-modern-slavery-toolkit.pdf>

# Definitions and Related practice Guidance

## 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.

## Children Missing from Home

The South Yorkshire Missing from Home and Care protocol 2020 uses the following definition of missing.

*Anyone, whose whereabouts cannot be established will be considered as missing, until located and their well-being or otherwise is confirmed. All reports of missing people sit within a continuum of risk from 'no apparent risk (absent)', low risk, medium risk and high-risk cases that require immediate, intensive action.*

College of Policing guidance states children can be categorised in one of these four ways, however the Statutory Guidance states that the police will prioritise all incidents of missing children **as medium or high risk**. It is unlikely that a missing child will ever be categorised as 'no apparent risk'.

The protocol relates to all children and young people in South Yorkshire who run away and 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 South Yorkshire.

The protocol does not provide for situations where a child has been abducted or forcibly removed from their place of residence. This is a "crime in action" and should be reported to the Police immediately.

The SCSP Practice Guidance for missing children can be found at

<https://www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org/sscb/safeguarding-information-and-resources/missing-children-1>

## Online Child Exploitation

Children and young people can be exploited online through a wide range of different methods. They can be exploited through cyberbullying, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual or criminal exploitation or emotional abuse are currently developing a practice guidance for professionals around online child exploitation. However further advice, guidance and resources can be accessed through <https://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/children-young-people/childexploitation/>

The SCSP Practice Guidance for online safety can be found at

<https://www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org/sscb/safeguarding-information-and-resources/online-safety>

## Disruption Measures

Child exploitation may be associated with other crimes, or perpetrators may be involved in other criminal activity. In these instances, there are a number of 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 risks; and
- Use of licensing laws and powers to obtain guest information or close down premises associated with child exploitation.

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 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.

The NWG Exploitation Response Unit has developed a Child exploitation disruption tool kit that is available at <https://nwgnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/NWG-Disruption-Toolkit-3.pdf> The toolkit provides information that aims to empower workforces from all professional disciplines to be as creative as possible and to utilise all the opportunities available to them. Disruption is not the focus of a single agency but requires us all to work collectively to create safe spaces for our children and young people.

## Civil Orders and Other Means of Controlling Individual 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 or contact with 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.



# Disruption Measures

**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 limiting their use, 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 takes into account 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).

Where there are concerns that a child 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 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 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. An injunction can be used where there is reasonable cause to believe that the child is likely to suffer significant harm without the court's intervention.

## Confidentiality and Information Sharing within MACE

### Importance of "need-to-know" and "need-to-share" approach to sharing sensitive information

Sharing information about organised crime and child exploitation is a complex process but it is recognised that information sharing is a key enabler for effective multi-agency working.

Fundamentally the development of intelligence relies on the sharing of information between agencies.

This not only helps to achieve a shared understanding of the nature and extent of criminality but can also develop opportunities to implement and mobilise effective preventative and operational interventions. This supports our shared aim to pursue, protect, prevent, and prepare, and ultimately to detect and disrupt crime. It can also help us evaluate our impact.

While there are clear benefits to information sharing, there are also risks.

Maintaining and sharing information securely is a significant task for all agencies. It requires trusting that recipient agencies handle and share their information securely and lawfully. This means that when we are operating within an information sharing network, we are expected to abide by a common set of security standards governing the storage and dissemination of information.

As a result, there is a constant trade-off between the need to share information and the need to ensure that, when it is shared, it is held securely. The sharing of information must have due consideration with the law relating to confidentiality, data protection and human rights. Having a legitimate purpose for sharing information is an important part of meeting those legal requirements.

Six key documents provide the main national framework for information sharing:

- Data Protection Act 2018 - This act provides the main legislative framework and information sharing issues and stipulates the conditions under which information may be shared i.e. the legal justifications.
-

# Confidentiality and information Sharing

- Human Rights Act 1998 - This act incorporates article 8 of the European Convention of Human Rights which provides states that everyone has the right to respect for their private and family life.
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998 - The Act is the primary legislative tool, common to all crime reduction protocols. It does not override existing legal safeguards on personal information.
- Caldicott Guidance - Caldicott Standards are applicable to Children's Social Care and Health. These standards have applied to NHS organisations for some time. They have more recently been extended into councils with social care responsibilities, in order to provide a framework for working within the Data Protection Act 2018 and to promote appropriate information sharing. See Implementing the Caldicott Standards into Social Care Department of Health 2002;
- NHS Confidentiality Code of Practice - The code was issued in July 2003 and applies to all NHS organisations. It is a guide to the practice on confidentiality, security and disclosure of personal information.
- Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers; 2018

## Key Points to Remember for Practice

The basic approach is to think about the “need-to-know” and “need-to-share” requirements of any request and to make sure that any sensitive information is made available only to those persons:

- with appropriate level of clearance/vetting
- for the performance of their and your own duties
- is in line with either an information sharing agreement or an operational requirement.

What is Good Information Sharing Practice?

- In a nutshell, it is the right information shared with the right staff member in the right agency/agencies at the right time and in the right way.
- How and to whom you pass on information depends very much on your role and local policy. Make sure that you know how these apply to you.
- There is an Information Sharing Agreement in place, or, the purpose justifies infringing the individual's right to privacy.
- In exceptional circumstances information could be disclosed for operational or emergency situations when a record of the information disclosed MUST be recorded, by the discloser. Make sure that you know how this applies to you.

The method of transmitting the information depends both on urgency and local policy. If you are giving important information verbally, always make a note according to local policy.

Ensuring the security and confidentiality of information is most important; therefore, an audit trail is essential. Information sharing must:

- Have lawful authority. ( permission from the data owner)
- Be necessary.
- Be proportionate and done in ways, which.
- Ensure the safety and security of the information shared.
- Be accountable.

# Appendix 1

## Sheffield Child Exploitation Screening Tool -

Child exploitation is about children who are being used for someone else's advantage, gratification or profit which results in harm of the child. This incorporates both sexual and criminal exploitation. The commonality is that these activities involve manipulation, misuse, abuse, victimization and ill-treatment. All of which are detrimental to the child's physical and mental health and well-being, their education, and their social-emotional development.

Further information - [Child Sexual Exploitation](#) [Child Criminal Exploitation](#)

***This Child Exploitation Screening Tool does not replace existing multi-agency safeguarding arrangements that are in place in Sheffield. If you have safeguarding and child protection concerns about a child's welfare then you should contact the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub to discuss.***

### Purpose of this screening tool

This is a screening tool that you can use to help you decide whether a child or young person may be at risk of child exploitation (CE). It is designed to be used by all professionals working with children and parents or carers. A child is defined as a person who is under 18 years of age.

This tool is intended to assist in your decision making; helping you make an initial judgement regarding the risk of child exploitation; it is **neither** a specialist assessment or referral form. The tool aims to help practitioners focus on the specific child exploitation (CE) evidence, indicators, existing safety and vulnerabilities, and determine whether further investigations are needed by Children's Social Care or suitable for referral to another prevention and early intervention service.

When you are considering making a referral to the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub or sharing your concerns with the child's allocated social worker, this screening tool should form the basis of those discussions and your professional analysis.

Practitioners need to exercise their own professional judgment when completing this tool because factors such as the child's age, any additional vulnerabilities, their history etc. may mean that they are more vulnerable to CE. Professional judgment also includes capturing concerns about which you have evidence as well as concerns based 'gut feeling'. It is important that you differentiate between the two and provide explanation and rationale. It is important to include the child's strengths and existing safety so that this can be considered as part of the child's ongoing safety

Your observations of behaviours and any significant changes will be important as children will often deny or be unaware that they are being exploited.



<b>Child Exploitation Screening Tool</b>				
<b>Strong signs/indicators of Child Exploitation</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Historical</b>	<b>Unknown</b>
1. Entering/leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults				
2. Unexplained physical injuries and/or refusal to seek/receive medical treatment.				
3. Association with taxi firms/takeaway owners (night-time economy) or gang members/criminal activity/organised crime that suggest child exploitation is a possibility.				
4. Found travelling out of City – no legitimate reason identified				
5. Multiple mobiles/changing phones frequently- or having more sim cards, receiving multiple callers or more texts/pings than usual				
6. Possession of hotel keys / cards or keys to unknown premises.				
7. Refuses/scared to enter certain geographical areas				
8. Expressing aggressive or intimidating views towards other groups of young people, some of whom may have been friends in the past				
9. Minimising or retracting statements of harm/assault made to Police/Professionals				
10. Driving vehicles (underage) either alone or with other young people or adults				
11. Found with drugs concealed internally in any body part (plugging)				
12. Child having sex where there is exchange / coercion / reward involved. Involved in 'clipping' (receiving payment in exchange for agreement to perform sexual acts but not performing the sexual act)				
13. Possession with intent to supply Class A drugs				
14. Possession with intent to supply Cannabis or spice?				
15. Refusal to engage with ANY services offered				
16. Multiple STIs or terminations of pregnancies				
17. Possession of significant amount of unexplained cash.				
18. Knowledge of towns or cities child/young person has no previous connection with				
<b>Moderate signs / indicators of Child Exploitation</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Historical</b>	<b>Unknown</b>
1. Sudden change in appearance				
2. Seems withdrawn / emotionally 'switched off' – from family				
3. Unexplained money or possessions				
4. Increase in aggressive behaviour / use of intimidation or threats				
5. Changed friendship groups and no contact with old friends				
6. Stays out unusually late without reason or consistently breaking parental rules				
7. Self-harm indicators and/or mental health concerns and/or suicidal thoughts/attempts				

<b>Moderate signs / indicators of Child Exploitation cont.</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Historical</b>	<b>Unknown</b>
8. Interest in music which glorifies weapons/gang culture				
9. Using new/unknown slang words				
10. New nickname				
11. Known/suspected involvement in minor criminal activity				
12. Concerned by the presence of unknown youths in their neighbourhoods				
13. Loss of interest in school, decline in attendance or achievement				
14. Possession of knife or other weapon – to protect/threaten				
15. Constantly talking about someone who seems to have a lot of influence over them				
16. Dropped out of positive activities				
17. Increased episodes of going missing and / or absconding .Parents/carers not consistently reporting the child missing				
18. Drug and alcohol use – Concerns for use / dependency & change / increase of use				
19. Starting to adopt codes of group behaviour e.g. ways of talking and hand signs				
20. Unsuitable/inappropriate accommodation i.e. sofa surfing, homelessness				
21. Single sexually transmitted infection				
22. Young person considered to be at risk of sexual harm on more than one occasion				
23. Expressions of invincibility or not caring about what happens to them				
24. Associating with other young people believed/known to be at risk of exploitation				
25. Lack of positive relationships with adult/s				
26. Living in a chaotic / dysfunctional household				
27. Child/young person attending concerning locations				
28. Some engagement but sporadic contact, often misses appointments, limited explanation, secretive and unwilling to engage meaningfully				
29. Concealed/concerning use of the internet including webcam, on-line gaming (via X-box, PlayStation) chat rooms				
30. Being accompanied to appointments by an unknown person that causes concern				

<b>Protective Factors</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Historical</b>	<b>Unknown</b>
<b>Education &amp; Learning Needs</b>	• Enjoys and participates in learning activities				
	• Good links between home and school				
	• Planning for career and adult life				
	• Engaged / re-engaged in education or training, or in work				
	• No behavioural concerns in school or college				
<b>Health Needs</b>	• Health needs being met				
	• Developmental milestones appropriate				
	• Safe and age appropriate sexual activity				
	• No concerns over misuse of drugs or alcohol				
	• No known physical or mental health needs identified				
<b>Emotional Health &amp; Behaviour Needs</b>	• Responds appropriately to boundaries and constructive guidance				
	• Can differentiate between safe and unsafe contacts				
	• Child engaged in positive activities				
	• Child has age appropriate and positive peers				
	• Good engagement with appropriate services				
<b>Family &amp; Parenting Needs</b>	• Parents/carers shows warm regard, praise and encouragement				
	• Good relationships within family, including when parents are separated				
	• Provides for child's physical needs, e.g. food, drink, appropriate clothing, hygiene, medical and dental care				
	• Accommodation has basic amenities and appropriate facilities and can meet family needs				
	• Age appropriate boundaries and routines set by carer and adhered to				
	• Carer is aware of peer group				
	• There is no known criminality or anti-social behaviour amongst members of the household living at the address				
	• Good engagement with appropriate services				
	• There is a network that is willing to engage with a safety plan for the child.				

# Appendix 2

## MACE Referral Form



Young Person's Information					
LCS No			NHS No		
Name			D.o.B	Age	
Address				Post Code	
Parent/Carer Name			Parental responsibility	Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>
Ethnicity		Nationality		Gender	

Practitioner Completing Referral					
Name				Agency	
Job role					
Address				Post Code	
Telephone No			E-mail Address		
Working week contact availability	<input type="checkbox"/> Mon	<input type="checkbox"/> Tue	<input type="checkbox"/> Wed	<input type="checkbox"/> Thu	<input type="checkbox"/> Fri

Nature of Exploitation					
County Lines (out of City) <input type="checkbox"/>	In City drug dealing <input type="checkbox"/>	Storing weapons/drugs for others <input type="checkbox"/>	Committing offences under coercion <input type="checkbox"/>	Other Please specify:	
Online/Phone <input type="checkbox"/>	Boyfriend /Girlfriend <input type="checkbox"/>	Adult/ Lone Offender <input type="checkbox"/>	Group/ Gang <input type="checkbox"/>	On Street <input type="checkbox"/>	Peer <input type="checkbox"/>

Lead Agency Involvement: please tick					
No Lead Agency <input checked="" type="radio"/>	Child in Need <input type="radio"/>	Child Protection Plan <input type="radio"/>	Child Looked After/ leaving Care <input type="radio"/>		
Lead Practitioner Name: _____					
Is the child placed from a different Local Authority?			<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	
If Yes – state which and what date been placed since					
_____					

Education Health Care Plan				Not applicable <input checked="" type="radio"/>
Diagnosed Learning Need <input type="radio"/>	On pathway for assessment <input type="radio"/>	Referral required <input type="radio"/>	Details:	
_____				

Have you completed the Child Exploitation Screening Tool	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
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**Why do you suspect the child is being exploited?**

**What is the agency evidence or intelligence from the Last 6 months relating to vulnerability/exploitation – please see guidance**

## Guidance.

Please consider the following questions and factors when completing the referral form. It is important that you are clear in recording relevant information where there is a level of assurance about its credibility and confidence that it is factually correct and accurate. It is important that where you have concerns regarding the possibility of something happening or you believe it is occurring but have no tangible evidence that you clearly record the information as such. It is also important that you are clear in terms of the timeline of the information and evidence provided. We want to ensure that any risk assessment is based upon information that is current.

### Missing episodes form Home/School/Care

- Number of missing episodes
- Stays out late but not missing
- Occasionally goes missing
- Frequent missing for short periods of time
- Frequent missing form prolonged periods of time
- Not missing overnight but whereabouts during day not known

Also consider – times that they go missing, where do we think/know they are going, are they always being reported as missing, are parents/cares aware that they are going missing, are parents or carers aware of where they are and who they are with?

### School/College

- Engaged in education, training, or in work or actively seeking employment
- Is participating in education or employment but attendance is a concern. Parent /carer engaging with services to improve attendance.
- Is on a reduced timetable, or is persistently absent from school, or sudden noticeable change in attendance, performance or behaviour at school.
- Not attending school or is NEET
- Shows no interest in accessing educational or training opportunities. No engagement from carer.

Also consider – any current or previous prosecution for school attendance. What services currently involved with improving school attendance, any recent changes in attendance, any change in attitude towards attending education, any recent significant incidents within education setting.

### Home and Relationships

- Positive relationships and good communication with parents/carers living in home
- Does the child live in good quality accommodation that meets young person's needs
- Are age appropriate boundaries & routines set by parent/ carer & are they adhered to
- Have there been frequent placement/accommodation changes,
- Has Parent /carer starting to show signs of not having capacity to input & maintain boundaries /consequences and challenge and behaviour
- Has the child become homeless and or been sofa surfing?
- Is there evidence of current / suspected abuse / neglect in the family.
- Poor communication, limited warmth, attachment, or trust. Carer does not have the capacity to respond

Also consider – any evidence of financial difficulties, living in home where DA is a feature, any recent trauma, family deaths etc

### Peer and Adult Association

- Young person started to disengage from positive activities.
- Does the child surround themselves with age appropriate peer group and is parent/carer aware of peer group?
- Are they starting to associate with a problematic peer group? Spending more time with peers in the community. Secrecy around peers and have their peers been found out of borough?
- Are they coming to the attention of services?
- Is there evidence that they are starting to engage in ASB.
- Is the young person associating with peers / adults who are known by criminal justice agencies or to have been sexually exploited?
- Are any peers or adult associates suspected of carrying weapons? Is there any affiliation to Organised Crime Groups? Is there evidence that the young person is or is suspected to be involved in a gang/group?

Also consider – what services is the young person known to, who are the peers/suspected peers, what is their age range, what are we worried about these peers? What information/intelligence do we have from Police or partner agencies

### Misuse of Drugs or Alcohol

- Are concerns about drugs or alcohol use deemed to be age appropriate?
- Is the young person starting to associate with negative peer influence where substance use is suspected?
- Is substance use known & part of daily life of young person?
- Do we know how substances are being financed?
- Is the young person dependent on alcohol / drugs?
- Do we know where the drugs/alcohol is being obtained? Is it from older peers / family members?
- Has the young person been found in the possession of class A drugs more than once?
- Do we believe they are involved in the movement or selling of drugs? If so, what is our evidence?

Also consider – Where do they use substances? Who with? What Type of substance? How much are they using what are the concerns around peer influences? Is it one person or many?

### Mental and Physical Health

- Do we have any concerns regarding young person's physical health?
- Do we have any concerns regarding young person's mental health?
- Is there any increased need to access mental health support? If so do we know and understand the reason why?
- Is there any formally diagnosed mental health illness or disorder?
- Has there been a decline in young person's physical or mental health in last 6 months? If so -what is this?
- Is the young person accessing regular health appointments?

Also consider – Has there been any episodes of self-harm? Has the young person talked about self-harm in the last 6 months? Has the young person ever attempted to kill themselves? Does the young person have any current suicide ideation?

## Further evidence of exploitation

- Young person having extra money or new items that cannot be legitimately be accounted for
- Having multiple phones and sim cards
- People demanding money for drug debts
- Family or young person has had to move or leave their home
- Items have gone missing from the home
- Previous CE concerns
- Sudden change in behaviour/appearance
- Multiple callers (unknown adults/older young people)
- Possession of hotel keys / cards or keys to unknown premises
- Frequenting known locations that have concerns of CE
- Knowledge of towns/cities they have no previous connection with
- Offences committed
- Evidence of inappropriate sexualised behaviour and language
- Affiliation with a group or gang
- Evidence that s/he is coerced to recruit other children
- Additional Police Intelligence
- Injuries – Physical or Sexual
- Associating / relationship with adults who encourage emotional dependence, loyalty and isolation from safe relationships
- Reports of being taken to hotels, nightclubs or out of the area by unknown adults
- Entering / leaving vehicles with unknown adults. Association with taxi firms/takeaway owners

