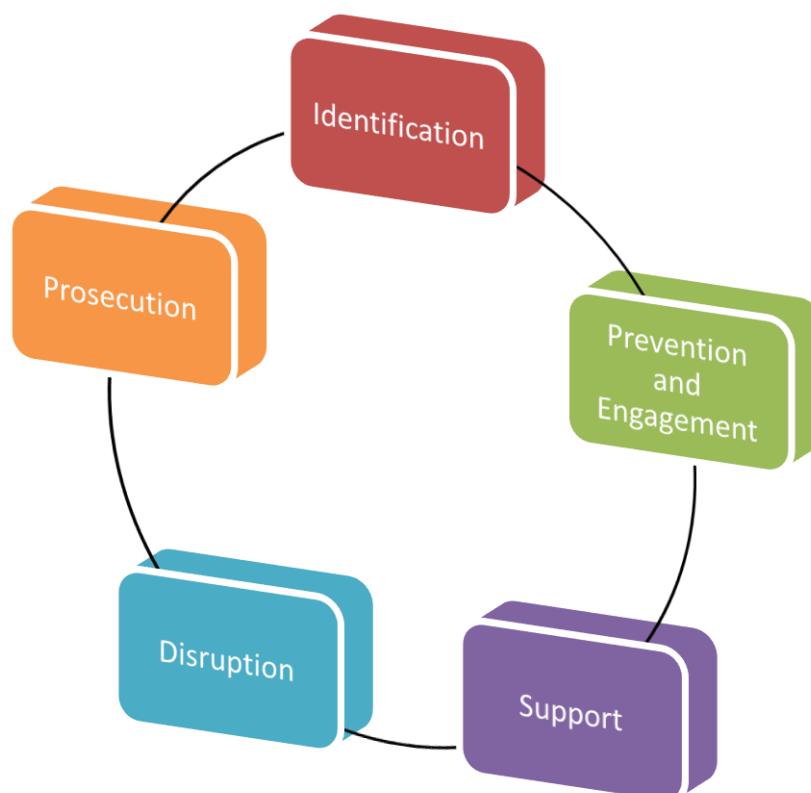


Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Missing Children Strategy 2015 - 16



1. Introduction

- 1.1 This strategy sets out the commitment of the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) and the NSCB Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Missing Children Subgroup to do everything possible to identify, counter and prevent CSE and support victims of this abuse and ensure a co-ordinated multi-agency response to children who run away or go missing from home or care.

We recognise that only a proactive, co-ordinated, multi-agency approach involving parents, carers, families, children and young people, voluntary and community based organisations, which takes into account issues of equality and diversity, will be effective in disrupting CSE and prosecuting perpetrators.

'Experience tells us that it is only by parents, professionals and communities working together and by good front-line practice that such abuse can be most successfully tackled. Prevention and Protection is strengthened by early identification of those children and young people at risk of, or involved in, child sexual exploitation, leading to measures to free them from the control of abusers. Abusers and potential abusers must be disrupted and, ultimately, prosecution employed to rid society of all abusers.' (Quote by Sheila Taylor CEO NWG)

- 1.2 The strategy should be read in conjunction with national guidance including the 2009 Safeguarding of Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation report¹, Statutory Guidance on children who run away or going missing from home or care (DfE January 2014)², current NSCB CSE procedure and CSE screening assessment³, NSCB CSE and Missing Children action plan (Appendix 1) and the Missing from Home or Care Protocol⁴.
- 1.3 All agencies providing services to children and young people have a statutory duty under Section 11 of the Children's Act 2004 to understand the risks and ways in which children can be exploited sexually and the ways in which their agencies can safeguard them against this. Preventing child sexual exploitation and intervening to protect and support victims is not just the responsibility of Specialist Children's Safeguarding Services but is everyone's responsibility. The following services in particular have a part to play in implementing this strategy:
- Specialist children's services including child protection and services for children in care
 - GPs, School Nursing, Sexual Health Services and all Health Partners
 - Youth Services and Youth Offending Services
 - Schools and support services for schools
 - Anti-Social Behaviour Team and community development
 - Housing
 - Community Safety including externally commissioned services such as Independent Sexual Violence Advisors, Independent Domestic Violence Advisors, and Victim Support.
 - Public Health and Health promotion services
 - Police
 - Probation
 - Voluntary Sector
 - District and Borough Councils including Licensing and Environmental Health
 - Secure training centres

¹ [DCSF \(2009\) Supplementary Guidance on Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation](#)

² [Statutory Guidance on children who run away or going missing from home or care \(DfE January 2014\)](#)

³ [CSE Procedure and risk assessment](#)

⁴ http://northamptonshirescb.proceduresonline.com/pdfs/missing_fr_home_or_care_pr.pdf

- Crown Prosecution Service

- 1.4 Partner agencies should refer to the Department for Children, Schools and Families supplementary guidance on Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation which outlines the roles and responsibilities each agency should undertake in protecting children and young people from CSE.⁵
- 1.5 The NSCB acknowledges that its role is strategic rather than operational and partner agencies should develop and embed their own localised operational policies, using this strategy as a framework.

2. Definition of Child Sexual Exploitation (a form of child abuse).

- 2.1 The National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People developed the definition of child sexual exploitation which is now used by government and other organisations:

Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities.

Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's or young person's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain.

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

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

- 2.2 A common feature of CSE is that the child or young person does not recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and does not see themselves as a victim of exploitation.
- 2.3 This lack of recognition by a child or young person is achieved through the grooming⁶ process perpetrated by the adult in a range of ways which then lead to inappropriate control over that child. Children do not make informed choices to enter or remain in sexual exploitation, but do so from coercion, enticement, manipulation or desperation.
- 2.4 Sexual Exploitation can be linked to other types of crime including:
- Child trafficking, (into, out of and within the UK)
 - Domestic abuse
 - Sexual violence in intimate relationships
 - Grooming, on and off line
 - Abusive images of children and their distribution
 - Organised sexual abuse of children
 - Drugs related offences (dealing, consuming and cultivating)
 - Gang related activity

⁵ [DCSF \(2009\) Supplementary Guidance on Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation](#)

⁶ NSPCC Definition of grooming - when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of [sexual abuse](#) or [exploitation](#).

- Group related activity as defined in the Office of Children's Commissioner report⁷
- Immigration related offences
- Modern Slavery
- Forced Marriage
- Honour Based Violence.

- 2.5 It is important that professionals are aware of the links between these activities and the possibility of child sexual exploitation when managing referrals and assessing children and young people's needs and providing a service.
- 2.6 There may be no criminal activity present and an open mind while assessing a young person is necessary to ensure any aspect of possible CSE is detected.
- 2.7 The NSCB recognises and will actively focus on the link between children and young people who go missing and are at risk of sexual exploitation.

3. Definition of Missing Children

- 3.1 Governmental guidance describes a young runaway as 'a child who has run away from their home or care placement, or feels they have been forced or lured to leave.' And a missing child as 'a child reported as missing to the police by their family or carers.'⁸

However, it is important to be aware that within Northamptonshire not all children and young people reported to the police as missing will be recognised as such. There are 2 category definitions used by the Police:

ABSENT:

A person is not at a place where they are required or expected to be. The level of risk is assessed as no apparent risk.

MISSING:

Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established and where circumstances are out of character or the context suggests the person may be the subject of crime, or they may be a risk to themselves or others.

- 3.2 When a child or young person runs away or goes missing they are at risk⁹. Whilst the majority of children who go missing will return or be located quickly, there are many others who will either be at risk of, or will suffer from harm. Their physical and emotional health may suffer as well as their general health, education and social relationships.

The link between children and young people who go missing and the risk of sexual exploitation is increasingly recognised, whether young people are missing and sexually exploited, or at risk of sexual exploitation and going missing. The nature of this link is yet unclear, however, sexual exploitation is considered to be both a cause and a consequence of going missing (CEOP, 2011). There are also many different types of missing incident including running away from or being

⁷ [Office of the Children's Commissioner's - Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups It's wrong... but you get used to it](#)

⁸ [Statutory Guidance on children who run away or going missing from home or care \(DfE January 2014\)](#)

⁹ [Statutory Guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care \(DfE January 2014\)](#)

forced to leave home or care, being trafficked into, out of, and within the UK, and being abducted or kidnapped¹⁰.

Research has shown there are many reasons why children run away or go missing from home or care, which is often referred to as the *push-pull* factor. Children who are missing from care are an especially vulnerable group¹¹. Repeated incidents, however long in duration, indicate a high level of vulnerability and risk to each young person who runs away or goes missing. Critical windows of opportunity are presented when a young person returns from a missing incident to understand levels of risk and harm. Every 'missing' episode is potentially serious and should provoke an appropriate response from professionals in order to reduce the incidence of children going missing¹².

4. Key principles of CSE

The 2009 guidance¹³ sets out some key principles which inform effective practice in working with children and young people who are at risk of, or are suffering, sexual exploitation. These include the following:

- A child centred approach. Action should be focused on the child or young person's needs, including consideration of children and young people with particular needs or sensitivities, and that children and young people do not always acknowledge what may be an exploitative and/or abusive situation.
- Taking a proactive approach focused on prevention, early identification and intervention as well as disrupting activity and prosecuting perpetrators.
- Parenting, family life and services. Taking account of family circumstances in deciding how best to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.
- The rights of children and young people. Children and young people are entitled to be safeguarded from sexual exploitation, just as agencies have duties in respect of safeguarding and promoting their welfare.
- Responsibility for criminal acts. Sexual exploitation of children and young people should not be regarded as criminal behaviour on the part of the child or young person, but as child sexual abuse.
- An integrated approach. Working Together sets out a tiered approach to safeguarding: universal, targeted and responsive. Within this, sexual exploitation requires a three-pronged approach tackling prevention, protection and prosecution.

¹⁰ <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmhaff/68/68vw05.htm> (accessed 19 December 2014)

¹¹ [Report from the Joint Enquiry into Children who go missing from care \(APPG July 2012\)](#)

¹² [NSCB Joint Protocol Children Who Go Missing from Home or Care \(January 2015\)](#)

¹³ [DCSF \(2009\) Supplementary Guidance on Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation](#)

- A shared responsibility. The need for effective joint working between different agencies and professionals underpinned by a strong commitment from managers, a shared understanding of the problem and effective co-ordination by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

5. Strategic Priorities for Northamptonshire

The following key strategic priorities have been identified. Each priority has associated actions within the LSCB CSE and Missing Children action plan.

- 5.1 **Overarching Strategy and Governance** – We will ensure there is a co-ordinated multi-agency response to Child Sexual Exploitation and children and young people missing from home and care throughout Northamptonshire
- 5.2 **Identification** – We will ensure there is far more awareness amongst all professionals in universal and specialist services of their role in identifying and addressing CSE and protecting children and young people who go missing.
- 5.3 **Prevention/Communication/Engagement** – We will ensure children and young people and their parents and carers have the right information and provision to help them keep safe and make healthy choices
- 5.4 **Support** – We will ensure there are clear pathways of support for those who are at risk of or who have experienced CSE or have gone missing to ensure their continued safety.
- 5.5 **Disruption/Dismantle** – We will respond to emerging individuals and networks where a prosecution for CSE is unrealistic.
- 5.6 **Prosecution** – We will improve approaches to support bringing offenders to justice, and improve prosecutions.
- 5.7 **Monitoring, Scrutiny and Impact** – We will ensure continual service development will be based on monitor compliance and success factors in addressing CSE.

AIM: This action plan will drive a coordinated multi-agency response to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), those at risk of CSE and children who go missing in Northamptonshire to keep children and young people safe and bring perpetrators to justice. The CSE and Missing Children Sub Group will be monitored through the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB).

The actions set out in this plan apply to all partner agencies, unless specified otherwise.

Accountable Lead: Chair of the CSE and Missing Children Sub Group

1) Overarching Strategy and Governance –

We will ensure there is a co-ordinated multi-agency response to Child Sexual Exploitation and children missing from home and care throughout Northamptonshire

No.	Action	By When
1.1	Develop an effective local CSE and Missing Children strategy ensuring there is a co-ordinated multi-agency response to child sexual exploitation and children who go missing, based on a robust, thorough needs assessment.	Feb-15
1.2	Ensure that the County Community Safety Agreement focuses on the links between CSE, Missing Children and Inter-Personal Violence	Apr-15
1.3	Ensure there is a lead officer accountable within each organisation for the delivery of the CSE and Missing Children action plan.	Mar-15
1.4	Appoint the role of Missing Young Person's Co-ordinator (MYPC)	Apr-15

2) Identification – We will ensure there is far more awareness amongst all professionals in universal and specialist services of their role in identifying and addressing CSE and protecting children who go missing.

2.1	Develop a CSE and Missing Children problem profile that maps the needs in the area to identify levels of CSE and locations across Northamptonshire or circumstances where children are particularly at risk.	Mar-15
2.2	Ensure the Thresholds and Pathways includes procedures and pathways for referral and pathways clearly outline roles and responsibilities of each agency.	Apr-15
2.3	All agencies to develop methods of recording and capturing data relating to Missing Children and CSE cases to enable identification of prevalence and monitoring of incidence of children and young people at risk of CSE in Northamptonshire.	Apr-15

2.4	Organised Crime Group mapping to identify groups and gangs committing CSE	May-15
2.5	The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and IPV needs assessment will include CSE within its scope	Sep-15
2.6	Develop a CSE toolkit pack to support practitioners in identifying and responding to children and young people at risk of CSE.	May-15
2.7	Review all basic safeguarding training – level one and two to contain signs of CSE. To include single agency training e.g. District and Borough Councils.	May-15
2.8	Development of a bespoke, tiered approach training offer in line with Rotherham recommendation for key staff groups	Apr-15
2.9	Organise an annual CSE and/or Missing Children conference/seminar to increase understanding of child sexual exploitation in the professional and wider community so that they are part of preventing and responding to the problem.	May-15
2.10	Map provision across the County that has a remit of CSE and identify gaps. Ensure all provision is built into the Children and Families Service Finder	Jun-15
2.11	Ensure residential and foster care providers have clear guidance on CSE, Missing Children (including the missing children protocol) and services in their area, both for in and out of county placements. To be reported on quarterly	Apr-15
2.12	Establish an effective independent service to respond to missing notifications for those children who do not have a social worker or other statutory worker.	Apr-15
2.13	Monitor compliance with Return Home Interview (RHI) requirements and timeliness for young people and ensure intelligence from these interviews is shared with key stakeholders	Apr-15
2.14	Map the levels of missing and related data within the Police & NCC. The Police will share monthly data. Quarterly joint reports from Police and NCC to council members, senior members and NSCB on the analysis of all young runaways missing from home and care, mapping out any patterns of concern for risk of CSE, Trafficking, Gangs and Criminality	Apr-15
2.16	Health to develop an information sharing process to ensure Children and Young People known to be at risk of CSE are shared with all health partners	May-15
3) Prevention/Communication/Engagement – Ensure children and young people and their parents and carers have the right information and provision to help them keep safe and make healthy choices		
3.1	Develop a comprehensive internal and external CSE and Missing Children communications strategy and action plan which will aim to raise awareness amongst Children and young people, parents/carers, professionals and communities.	Mar-15

3.2	Develop a clear preventative strategy for CSE and Missing Children for engaging with schools and young people, to be reported on quarterly.	tbc
3.3	Ensure the development of an E-safety programme includes working with children and young people to reduce CSE	May-15
3.4	To identify effective CSE resources and approaches that secondary schools could tailor to their needs e.g. to address issues in their localities, cohorts, profile of CSE cases for children at their schools.	Feb-15
3.5	Promote the inclusion of CSE and the impact of Children going missing in Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum and resources available to primary and secondary schools.	Feb-15
4) Support – Ensure that there are clear pathways of support for those who are at risk of or who have experienced CSE.		
4.1	Review the effectiveness of the CSE and Missing Children Fora	Oct-15
4.2	Commission a therapeutic response for children at risk and victims of CSE	Jun-15
4.3	Develop a central database of information where all Reducing Incidents in Sexual Exploitation (RISE) partners can share information relating to CSE.	Mar-15
4.4	Ensure 'Voice' support victims and families impacted by CSE including those where no prosecution takes place	May-15
4.5	To ensure that children placed out of county (OoC) receive the same co-ordinated response to episodes of going missing	Apr-15
4.6	To facilitate children and young people placed in Northamptonshire by other local authorities (OLA) access to a return interview by their placing authorities	Apr-15
5) Disruption/Dismantle – Ensure that there is a response to emerging individuals and networks where a prosecution for CSE is unrealistic.		
5.1	Develop a multi-agency suite of disruption tactics	Apr-15
5.2	Report six monthly on the disruption activity undertaken by relevant agencies	Oct-15
5.3	Police on line teams to report on operations and outcomes for on-line activity six monthly	Oct-15
5.4	Develop a forum to discuss perpetrators of CSE	Apr-15

6) Prosecution – We will improve approaches to support bringing offenders to justice, and improve prosecutions.

6.1	Ensure all CSE investigations are investigated by or supported by CSE trained staff from RISE	Apr -15
6.2	Develop the regional prosecutions performance framework to track CSE performance	Jun -15
6.3	Ensure all investigations, including those that result in no prosecution, in relation to CSE are reviewed and learning is captured and shared	Mar-15

7. Monitoring, Scrutiny and Impact – We will ensure that there is continual service development based on monitoring compliance and success factors in addressing CSE.

7.1	Develop a full NSCB and Executive Support Group (ESG) performance pack to include cross agency CSE and Missing Children performance data	Apr-15
7.2	The young people's LSCB and service user groups to be tasked with reviewing future development of the CSE action plan and strategy – consider use of Viewpoint	Dec-15
7.3	Undertake an academic evaluation of national CSE and Missing Children practice and policy to inform the 2016/17 strategy and action plan	Dec-15
7.4	NWG to undertake a peer review of the cross agency and CSE subgroup response to CSE	Jun-15
7.5	Develop links with neighbouring authorities and meet with them on a formal basis and as required to discuss cross border concerns, monitor trends and gather evidence in relation to CSE.	Apr-15
7.6	Develop mechanisms to engage and listen to victims and use this information to develop our learning.	May-15