

Child Sexual Exploitation



A briefing for colleagues working with children and young people in Northamptonshire – October 2015

In the wake of a number of Independent Inquiries and Reports into Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) all of our minds are sharply focused on the lessons being learnt. In Northamptonshire we are undertaking a number of initiatives to ensure our County will not succumb to similar failings found in other areas. Please share this briefing with colleagues working with children & young people.

What is Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)?

CSE is different from 'traditional' forms of child abuse. The current Local Authority mechanisms for statutory child protection were originally designed to protect children from abuse and neglect inflicted by family members in their home environment. The work of child protection services has also been extended to tackle individual perpetrators amidst our communities and perpetrators who have managed to manipulate access to vulnerable children through working for schools, community groups or even children's residential care services.

CSE is a form of abuse in which children are sexually exploited. The nationally agreed definition of CSE is:

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

CSE can be highly organised and committed by lone perpetrators or operate across groups of dangerous adults. Groups or gangs of dangerous adults can be working together as an organised criminal network, with the purpose of grooming children in order to abuse them and make money from their abuse by others. The COFFEY report (Nov 14 post Rochdale) identified 15% CSE cases were perpetrated by groups/gangs, and individual offenders were responsible for 85% of offences.

Violence, coercion and intimidation are commonly linked to CSE. Involvement in exploitative relationships is characterised by the child's or young person's limited availability of choice, as a result of their social, economic or emotional vulnerability. A common feature of CSE can be that the child or young person does not recognise the coercive nature of the relationship with perpetrators and may not see themselves, at least initially, as a victim of exploitation.

The children who are most at risk of being targeted by CSE perpetrators are children who:

- are frequently 'missing' from school, home or residential care;
- are vulnerable due living in neglectful households;
- have been separated or trafficked;
- are unaccompanied and seeking asylum; and
- are living in residential care.

When taking into account the complex and devious nature of serious, organised criminals, it is clear that addressing CSE requires a broader, cross-agency response. Sometimes the perpetrators are organised through criminal networks which have been established for other elements of criminality such as drug dealing, money laundering or intimidation.

To disrupt the activities of serious, organised criminals new mechanisms are needed including a national approach for local authorities, the Police and other partners to co-ordinate all intelligence relating to their prevention, protection and prosecution activities.

What reports have been published?



1. Professor Alexis Jay

In August 2014 Alexis Jay published her Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham which outlines the key issues relating to CSE between 1997 and 2013.



2. Ofsted

On 19th November 2014 Ofsted's Chief Inspector, Sir Michael Wilshaw, published "The sexual exploitation of children: it couldn't happen here, could it?" which outlines how well local authorities and partners are working to prevent child sexual exploitation.



3. Louise Casey

On the 10 September 2014 Louise Casey was asked to carry out an inspection of Rotherham council in relation to the exercise of its functions on governance, children and young people and taxi and private hire licensing. Louise Casey's report was published on 4 February 2015 and found widespread failings across the council's culture and services.

In March 2015 Louise Casey published a report based on reflections on child sexual exploitation. This report sets out her findings for local authorities and police forces.

See Appendix 1 for the recommendations made in these reports

What are we doing in Northamptonshire to protect our children?

The Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing Children Strategy sets out the commitment of the NSCB and the CSE and Missing Children Subgroup to do everything possible to identify, counter and prevent CSE and ensure a co-ordinated multi-agency response to children who run away or go missing from home or care. Below are seven key priorities in line with those in the strategy which outline the action being taken in Northamptonshire.

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.

The NSCB CSE and Missing Subgroup, chaired by Alex Hopkins the DCS for NCC, consists of lead officers from different agencies throughout Northamptonshire who are accountable for the delivery of the CSE and Missing Children action plan.

The group have developed an effective multi-agency CSE and Missing Children Strategy to ensure there is a co-ordinated multi-agency response to CSE and children who go missing.

CSE and violence (including interpersonal violence) have been adopted as county community safety priorities and feature in the County Community Safety Agreement.

The Reducing Incidents of Sexual Exploitation (RISE) unit is the multi-agency team which exists to prevent and protect young people from CSE and prosecute offenders.

RISE includes police officers, CAN engagement workers (3rd Sector partner), Children's Social Care workers and a specialist nurse with support from education colleagues.

The Initial Response Team (IRT) is a dedicated team for missing children who oversee the frequency of incidents and return interviews; using a return interview tool which highlights the risk of CSE. Regular meetings are held to look at the vulnerability of young people missing in relation to the close link with CSE.

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.

A redacted 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, has been developed.

As part of a communications campaign, a CSE conference was held in May, when 600 of the County's frontline workers gathered to attend the launch of a new CSE toolkit to help tackle and prevent Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). The toolkit – developed by the NSCB – has equipped workers to recognise the early warning signs to look out for when a young person may be at risk of sexual exploitation and provides a unified assessment tool and a suite of useful resources to enable the worker to feel confident. The toolkit is now available on the NSCB and AskNormen websites.

The NSCB commissioned a training needs analysis which led to a revision of the NSCB Learning and Development Strategy. The revision includes provision for all staff across the partnership to undertake level 1 & 2 e-Learning courses on CSE as well as the provision for Barnardo's to deliver face to face training at targeted groups of staff. This training incorporates the CSE Toolkit and risk assessment.

The RISE team regularly visit all NCC children's homes to ensure staff are aware and understand the issues regarding recognising and responding to CSE and understand the pathways when they have concerns.

In addition presentations to taxi drivers, Borough Council front-facing staff and neighbourhood and environmental wardens are ongoing to promote awareness of CSE.

Awareness-raising presentations to hotels are also ongoing, with pro-active officers from the RISE team in the process of delivering the presentations across the County.

3. Prevention/Communications/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.

On the 18th March 2015, to coincide with the CSE National Awareness Day, the NSCB CSE and Missing subgroup launched a high-profile marketing campaign with the main objective of educating the general public in recognising the signs of CSE - and encouraging reporting of CSE.

The campaign's strap-line was **"Say Something if you See Something"**.

Billboards and bus liners were used to promote the campaign throughout the County. Billboards were situated in key locations, next to the busiest roads and shopping areas such as Tesco, major shopping centres, Waitrose, Morrison's, Asda and Railway Stations and were seen by 3.2 million people.

Bespoke hard hitting and evocative radio adverts were created in liaison with Global Radio and were recorded using the voices of professional actors.

The campaign directly targeted young people via social media and Digital Audio Exchange (DAX), where the audio of the radio adverts was made available. The campaign reached a total of 187,000 via DAX and 3.8 million people via social media.

There were 3,874 unique hits to the new NSCB website during the campaign period, which contains specific CSE related pages.

During and post the communications campaign, the RISE team saw a 50% increase in referrals. Calls into the RISE inbox and phone calls into the office also noticeably increased following the commencement of the campaign.

A schools engagement task and finish group has undertaken a mapping exercise to identify schools most vulnerable or that have not previously engaged in CSE. This exercise has been used to target the Protective Behaviours Programme to vulnerable schools. The Protective Behaviours Programme includes the commissioning of a theatre group to deliver sessions in schools to raise awareness of CSE. The productions engage young people to ensure they know how to protect themselves and also give them the skills to identify if their classmates and friends could be at risk.

4. Support

Ensure that there are clear pathways of support for those who are at risk of or who have experienced CSE.

A CSE and Missing Children Forum is in place which follows a MARAC style model.

Work is underway to ensure victims and families impacted by CSE are provided with end to end support and offered specialist therapeutic services where needed. A tender for victim and witness services for children and young people was published in September 2015.

A mapping exercise of provision based on level of risk has been completed and discussions to look at gaps in provision and opportunities to co-commission with partners is currently underway.

5. Disruption/Dismantle

Ensure that there is a response to emerging individuals and networks where a prosecution for CSE is unrealistic.

Northamptonshire Police have a range of police and partner disruption tactics which have been shared and formalised in the force CSE Investigative Guidance and CSE training.

A RISE monthly report is shared with partners encompassing a range of statistical data to show work of the multi-agency team, together with narrative on investigations of note and other outputs such as the delivery of training.

A new Protecting Vulnerable People proactive team has been recruited comprising of a Detective Sergeant and 6 constables. They are tasked by the established RISE daily and weekly meetings as well as the CSE and Missing Forum to conduct proactive work including disruption and intelligence gathering with a focus on CSE.

6. Prosecution

We will improve approaches to support bringing offenders to justice, and improve prosecutions.

All CSE investigations are investigated or supported by CSE trained staff from the RISE and the CSE Investigative Guidance ensures consistent levels of service.

All investigations, including those that result in no prosecution, in relation to CSE, are reviewed and learning is captured and shared. There is a daily review of current investigations by the multi-agency team which allows for review and capture of learning, opportunities and concerns. The introduction of a quarterly RISE meeting where cases can be raised that are exceptional, challenging or concerning helps to improve understanding, development and learning for RISE and wider CSE work.

Police can issue notices to specific adults in relation to children perceived to be at risk from that adult. The notices are issued by the Police, authorised by an Inspector or above, and prohibit the adult from contact (direct or online) with the child. The notices very clearly place responsibility for actively avoiding all contact with the child, even if approached, with the adult. If breached, the Police can arrest the adult for child abduction and whilst most adults have complied with these notices, one local adult was sentenced to custody for breach. A breach can carry up to seven years imprisonment so they are a good deterrent.

7. Monitoring, Scrutiny and Impact

We will ensure that there is continual service development based on monitoring compliance and success factors in addressing CSE.

The young people's NSCB and service user groups are tasked with reviewing future development of the CSE action plan and strategy. A young person friendly version of the action plan has been developed for the group to review and scrutinise.

The College of Policing conducted a peer review of CSE in Northamptonshire. The aim of the review was to assess the capability and capacity of Northamptonshire Police to deal with the threat of CSE.

The review found Northamptonshire Police is committed to the CSE National Action Plan and is actively addressing its recommendations internally and with partners.

The Review Team found passionate, committed and determined staff focused upon delivering an effective service to children and vulnerable young people.

They concluded that improved trust and assurance in the community when reporting cases of CSE together with enhanced confidence in the Police investigation of sexual assaults, high profile cases in the media nationally and a determination by Forces to increase reporting will result in more cases to be investigated.

What next in Northamptonshire?

1. Development of data capturing

All agencies, across the partnership, are to develop methods of recording and capturing data relating to Missing Children and CSE cases to enable the identification of prevalence and monitoring of incidence of children and young people at risk of CSE in Northamptonshire.

The development of a central database of information where all RISE partners can share information relating to CSE is a priority.

Links will be developed with neighbouring authorities and meetings will take place on a formal basis and as required to discuss cross border concerns, monitor trends and gather evidence in relation to CSE.

2. Working with the District and Borough Councils

The RISE team attended the Districts and Boroughs CSE conference on the 22nd September 2015. Group sessions were undertaken to identify further work District and Boroughs should carry out to improve their response to CSE. As a result a 10 point plan has been agreed, outlining priority actions to be implemented.

3. CSE Communications Campaign Phase 2

The next campaign will be more targeted, using the learning from phase 1 and feedback from the recent College of Policing peer review. It will focus on:

- Building on the foundations of phase one;
 - Using more targeted marketing methods – particularly with social media - to reach specific groups and disseminate information about the 14 signs of CSE, with a period of time given to promoting each sign;
 - Improving internal communication across police departments and NCC. The internal communications work for phase two sets out to rectify this and will include a method for more effectively distributing posters and other materials across NCC and the Force, in conjunction with messages of the day, screensavers etc;
 - Parent/carers/older age groups will be targeted to attempt to capture a wider regional audience and encourage widespread engagement and word-of mouth;
 - This campaign will run in tandem with the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) Schools engagement work; and
 - If sufficient intelligence exists, marketing will be focused on hot spot area/ towns
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What can I do to support the fight against CSE?

- If you believe that a child is at immediate risk and in need of protection then you should call the Police on **999** immediately. Alternatively, if you feel the child is a risk of abuse or neglect, but not in immediate need of protection, you should call the Police on **101**.
- The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub can be contacted through www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/MASH
- If you do not feel comfortable speaking to the Police or Social Care you can phone the Free NSPCC Confidential Helpline on **0808 800 5000**.
- You can also report crimes anonymously through Crime Stoppers on **0800 555 111**.

More support and information is available on the NSCB website here:

<http://www.northamptonshirescb.org.uk/tackling-child-sexual-exploitation-cse/>

Thank you for your support.

Appendix 1: Findings from the Alexis Jay report

Below are recommendations from the report by Prof Alexis Jay, Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham (1997 – 2013) published on the 26th August 2014.

A. Risk Assessment

- **Recommendation 1:** Senior managers should ensure that there are up-to-date risk assessments on all children affected by CSE. These should be of consistently high quality and clearly recorded on the child's file.
- **Recommendation 2:** The numeric scoring tool should be kept under review. Professional judgements about risk should be clearly recorded where these are not adequately captured by the numeric tool.

B. Looked After Children

- **Recommendation 3:** Managers should develop a more strategic approach to protecting looked after children who are sexually exploited. This must include the use of out-of-area placements. The Borough should work with other authorities to minimise the risks of sexual exploitation to all children, including those living in placements where they may become exposed to CSE. The strategy should include improved arrangements for supporting children in out-of-area placements when they require leaving care services.

C. Outreach and Accessibility

- **Recommendation 4:** The Council should make every effort to make help reach out to victims of CSE who are not yet in touch with services. In particular, it should make every effort to restore open access and outreach work with children affected by CSE to the level previously provided by Risky Business.

D. Joint CSE Team

- **Recommendation 5:** The remit and responsibilities of the joint CSE team should be urgently decided and communicated to all concerned in a way that leaves no room for doubt.
- **Recommendation 6:** Agencies should commit to introducing a single manager for the multi-agency CSE team. This should be implemented as quickly as possible.
- **Recommendation 7:** The Council, together with the Police, should review the social care resources available to the CSE team, and make sure these are consistent with the need and demand for services.

E. Collaboration with CYPS

- **Recommendation 8:** Wider children's social care, the CSE team and integrated youth and support services should work better together to ensure that children affected by CSE are well supported and offered an appropriate range of preventive services.

F. Ongoing work with victims

- **Recommendation 9:** All services should recognise that once a child is affected by CSE, he or she is likely to require support and therapeutic intervention for an extended period of time. Children should not be offered short-term intervention only, and cases should not be closed prematurely.

G. Post abuse support

- **Recommendation 10:** The Safeguarding Board, through the CSE Sub-group, should work with local agencies, including health, to secure the delivery of post-abuse support services.

H. Quality Assurance

- **Recommendation 11:** All agencies should continue to resource, and strengthen, the quality assurance work currently underway under the auspices of the Safeguarding Board.

I. Minority Ethnic Communities

- **Recommendation 12:** There should be more direct and more frequent engagement by the Council and also the Safeguarding Board with women and men from minority ethnic communities on the issue of CSE and other forms of abuse.
- **Recommendation 13:** The Safeguarding Board should address the under-reporting of sexual exploitation and abuse in minority ethnic communities.

J. The issue of race

- **Recommendation 14:** The issue of race should be tackled as an absolute priority if it is a significant factor in the criminal activity of organised child sexual abuse in the Borough.

K. Serious Case Reviews

- **Recommendation 15:** We recommend to the Department for Education that the guiding principle on redactions in Serious Case Reviews must be that the welfare of any children involved is paramount.

Appendix 2: Findings from the Ofsted report

Below are findings and recommendations from the Ofsted report “The sexual exploitation of children: it couldn't happen here, could it?” published on the 19th November 2014.

The report was commissioned by Ofsted's Chief Inspector, Sir Michael Wilshaw, to build a clearer picture of how well local authorities and partners are working to prevent child sexual exploitation in their area, to offer protection to its victims, and to pursue and prosecute its abusers.

Inspectors found that local arrangements to tackle sexual exploitation are often underdeveloped, and leadership frequently lacking. Some areas have only begun to address the issue strategically within the last 12 months, despite statutory guidance being issued more than five years ago.

The report's findings include:

- Inconsistency in the quality of care planning for young people, leaving some exposed to the risk of sexual exploitation
- The way data is collected by many police forces is of limited value because it does not effectively collate crime and prosecutions that are specifically linked to child sexual exploitation
- Training in identifying the warning signs of exploitation was of good quality - but was reaching an insufficient number of professionals
- Many local authorities are still failing to provide good support to children in care who go missing once they have returned, nor are they effectively making the connection between child sexual exploitation and children who are missing from school
 1. It is acknowledged there is an issue with numbers who are home educated/not on roll (see YOT section for action the YOT is taking to address this)
Sources: The Ofsted 2010 Survey 'Children missing from School' and 'Pupils missing out on Education' 2013 – Michael Wilshaw.
- Several local authorities have developed specific campaigns to raise awareness of child sexual exploitation - which are being delivered well, particularly through schools
- All authorities had taken some steps to increase wider community awareness of child sexual exploitation, including engagement with faith and community leaders, but these approaches have tended to be ad hoc and reactive.

The Ofsted report recommends:

- Local authorities and partners should develop and publish a child sexual exploitation action plan that fully reflects the 2009 statutory guidance as a matter of priority
- Authorities and partners must ensure that information and intelligence is shared proactively across the partnership to improve the protection of children and increase the rate of prosecutions
- LSCBs should ensure that the local authority and its partners have a comprehensive action plan in place to tackle child sexual exploitation, and hold partners to account for the urgency and priority they give to their collective and individual contributions
- Local authorities must ensure that managers oversee all individual child sexual exploitation cases, and make sure that plans are progressing appropriately
- Local authorities must make sure that every child returning from a missing episode is given a return interview. Information obtained from the interviews should be used to inform and improve future operational and strategic activity
- Authorities and their partners should make sure that local strategies and plans are informed by the opinions and experiences of those who have been at risk of or have suffered from child sexual exploitation
- The Government should review and update the 2009 supplementary guidance so that it reflects recent research, good practice and findings from child sexual exploitation reviews and criminal investigations.