SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE AT RISK OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION POLICY

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Extracts from Barnardo's Report: Puppet on a String

The following are snapshots of stories told by Young People in the Barnardo's Report ''Puppet on a string" report 2011'. You are encouraged to read the fuller versions in the original report.

Tim's story

'It was a destructive cycle, I couldn't get out. I tried to escape but I got attacked, beaten up and taken advantage of. I was too scared to leave.'

Sophie's story

'I was 13 when I met him and it all seemed so exciting...At first he really treated me well and it felt so normal...I wouldn't have listened to anyone.... But then he started to change.... He took me to parties... He made me do things I didn't want to do. I was frightened.'

Emma's story

'I was sleeping rough at 14 and living on friends' sofas...I met an older man who I believed loved me and all I wanted was to be loved by someone....I got taken to flats...and men would be brought to me....My mobile number was given out....Eventually I was taken north somewhere and locked in a flat. They forced me to sleep with loads of men.'

1. Introduction

The policy provides information about sexual exploitation, the roles, responsibilities and procedures staff should follow to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people who are suspected to have been or are at risk of being sexually exploited.

North East Autism Society (NEAS) is committed to working in partnership to achieve outstanding personalised services for people with an Autism Spectrum Condition, their families and representatives of the referring authorities.
We want to ensure that clear direction is provided to staff and others about expected codes of behaviour when dealing with Child Sexual Exploitation issues.

NEAS Children's Services fully recognise its duty, responsibility and contribution it can make to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people placed within their care. It aspires to the highest standards of individually tailored care.

This policy has been written in conjunction with:

- Children and Young Persons Act 1993
- The Child Abduction Act 1984
- The Children Act 2006
- The Adoption and Children Act 2002
- Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 2002
- The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2012
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015
- Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation – Supplementary Guidance
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994
- Data Protection Act 1998
- National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People (NWG 2008)
- The Sexual Offenders Act (2003)

Other related guidance:

- Puppet on a String – Barnardo's 2012
- Rochdale Review of Multi Agency Responses to Child Sexual Exploitation (Sept 2012)
- Tackling CSE (Nov 2011)Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation (DCSF 2009)
- Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) Policies and Procedures

Child sexual exploitation is a crime which respects no borders or boundaries; it can and is happening across the North East including Sunderland and Durham, areas within which the Society operates.

This document sets out the procedures of safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children and young people from sexual exploitation. It sets out how through our partnerships we assess, challenge and provide an enhanced, effective service to reduce the harm and threats posed to children and young people from sexual exploitation.

Part 1 is a quick reference guide for practitioners and managers and Part 2 sets out the underpinning knowledge about sexual exploitation, the indicators and more detail of the way in which practitioners should respond to concerns.

In 2014 a Sunderland Strategic Group was formed to ensure a clear strategy was in place across Northumbria to understand the incidence of Child Sexual Exploitation and address the needs of local children and young people in relation to the risk.

Appendix 3 is the resulting Sunderland Safeguarding Children Board Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy for 2014 – 2017.
Appendix 4 is Durham Safeguarding Children's Board CSE Strategy for 2016 - 2019

Definition of Child Sexual Exploitation,

"*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 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."

This definition arises from joint work between project members of the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People (NWG) 2008. The National Working Group is a support group for individuals and service providers working with children and young people who are at risk of or who experience sexual exploitation. The Group's membership covers voluntary and statutory services including health, education and social services.

a) What is child sexual exploitation?

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of child abuse. It happens when a young person is encouraged, or forced, to take part in sexual activity in exchange for something.

- The reward might be presents, money, alcohol, or simply emotional attention.
- It can happen to any child or young person.
- It might seem like a normal friendship or relationship to begin with.
- It can happen online or offline, and without the young person being aware of it.

b) Who is known to be at risk? Who does it happen to?

- Any young person can be a victim of child sexual exploitation.
- It can happen to boys as well as girls.
- It can happen to young people of all races and backgrounds.
- Young people experiencing problems at home who go missing or are in care can be vulnerable and particularly at risk, but child sexual exploitation can also happen to those from a loving, supportive home.
- No matter who is affected by child sexual exploitation, it is never, ever their fault – even if they agreed to the sexual activity because they felt they 'should'. A child may agree to sexual activity because they felt they had no other choice and or do not fully understand consent.

c) Who does it?

People who commit this crime can be male or female and they normally have an 'edge' over the young people they target. They might be older, wealthier, or physically stronger than them. They may have status that makes them seem 'cool' to others, and might give support and attention that no one else provides. They might listen, offer advice, or give compliments.
They are also becoming increasingly sophisticated, using the internet to protect their identity, and trafficking children around the country to avoid detection.
But there's no standard profile of an exploiter, and child sexual exploitation can also happen between young people – peer to peer and especially within gangs or social groups.
Because there is no standard profile of an offender, child sexual exploitation is hard to spot – even for the young person affected. They may be groomed over time and so not be aware that they are a victim, and even if they are, they may think that it's their fault.

d) How Can Sexual Exploitation Happen?

At first, a young person may like, respect, or even think they are falling in love with the person exploiting them. This is due to the fact they are 'groomed' over time. This process involves making them feel 'special', so they become attached. But later, the behaviour of the abuser starts to change, often slowly. By this point, the young person is likely to feel trapped, isolated and scared, and they may find it difficult to acknowledge that they are no longer comfortable in the relationship.

People who commit child sexual exploitation can be very manipulative. They might buy presents or give emotional attention that makes a young person feel on top of the world, or as if they are falling in love. They may single out their victims and target them face-to-face, or approach them online.
Sometimes the abuser will strengthen their control over the young person by driving them away from those who would usually look after them, whether that's family, friends or carers. Barnardo's has found that child sexual exploitation tends to be a hidden activity and much more likely to take place in private residences than visibly, on the streets.
Barnardo's has identified three different models of activity; they are not exhaustive, but show a spectrum of exploitation, as follows:

Inappropriate relationships	Usually involving one perpetrator who has inappropriate power or control over a young person (physical, emotional or financial). One indicator may be a significant age gap. The young person may believe they are in a loving relationship.
'Boyfriend' model of exploitation and peer exploitation	The perpetrator befriends and grooms a young person into a 'relationship' and then coerces or forces them to have sex with friends or associates. Barnardo's have reported a rise in peer exploitation where young people are forced or coerced into sexual activity by peers and associates. Sometimes this can be associated with gang activity but not always.
Organised/networked sexual exploitation or trafficking	Young people (often connected) are passed through networks, possibly over geographical distances, between towns and cities where they may be forced / coerced into sexual activity with multiple men. Often this occurs at 'sex parties', and young people who are involved may be used as agents to recruit others into the network. Some of this activity is described as serious organised crime and can involve the organised 'buying and selling' of young people by perpetrators.

'Localised grooming' also known as 'on street grooming' is a form of sexual exploitation where children have been groomed and sexually exploited by an offender, having initially met in a location near their home. This location is usually in public, such as a park, cinema, on the street or at a friend's house. Offenders often act together, establishing a relationship with a child or children before sexually exploiting them. Some victims of 'street grooming' may believe that the offender is in fact an older 'boyfriend'; these victims introduce their peers to the offender group who might then go on to be sexually exploited as well. Abuse may occur at a number of locations within a region and on several occasions.

This type of child abuse often involves rape and is premeditated, planned and carried out systematically with a complete lack of respect or empathy for the victims, often singled out for their vulnerability.

In 2011 the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) undertook a CSE Thematic Assessment and found that almost half of offenders were aged under 25,

where age is known. There was a noticeable level of networking and particular behavioural characteristics among many offenders in that they appear to derive satisfaction from the status and power of exerting control over victims, not only to commit sexual offences, but also as an end in itself. Victims were often from difficult home settings (many from care homes) and going missing was a common feature.

The Interim Report of the Office of the Children's Commissioner's Inquiry into CSE in Gangs and Groups (Nov 2012) identified the risks posed to young people by gangs and groups. This document does not have a key focus on responding to gang activity, but this can be found in the Interim report and other research.

e) Understanding that Children/ Young People are the Victims in CSE

It is often the case that children and young people do not perceive themselves to be victims, as they consider they have acted voluntarily. The reality is that their behaviour is not voluntary or consenting. This is a key area for professionals to consider.

Barnardo's Puppet on a String report highlighted professionals' perception of the abuse: '... there remained a widespread belief that these children were somehow responsible for their own abuse – which they had consented to be abused through prostitution.'

Professionals may also be at risk of seeing CSE as an informed choice by children / young people and not recognising it for what it is, i.e. a form of abuse. This was a key finding of the Rochdale Review of Multi-agency Responses to the Sexual Exploitation of Children enquiry into CSE (Sept 2012).

Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation (Nov2011) sets out the following: 'There is a danger that victims who have been used to engage other young people in exploitation, or who have been involved in other forms of offending, will be seen as offenders and their needs as victims will be overlooked.'

Practitioners working with these children / young people must have a core understanding that exploitative situations arise because perpetrators have identified vulnerabilities in children / young people and used grooming and coercion to draw them into exploitative relationships.

Child sexual grooming refers to actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child, in order to lower the child's inhibitions in preparation for sexual activity with the child, or exploitation.

"I look for a child who seems to be lonely or sad or looking for attention. Then I take my time gaining her trust and becoming her friend. In time she will do anything I ask". Quote from an abuser (NSPCC).

Grooming can be in person (sometimes befriending a child's family in order to get close to the child) and via the Internet. Often the abuser will get the child to engage in illicit activities such as showing them pornography or getting the child to expose parts of their body. These activities make the child feel responsible and unable to tell someone what has happened. Children are often trapped before they know what is happening.

Consent
This extract from The Office of the Commissioner for Children (OCC) Inquiry into CSE in Gangs and Groups (Nov 2012) helps to consider issues around consent.
"The law not only sets down 16 as the age of consent, it also applies to whether a person has given their consent to sexual activity, or was able to give their consent, or whether sexual violence and rape in particular took place. In the context of child sexual exploitation, the term 'consent' refers to whether or not a child understands how one gives consent, withdraws consent and what situations (such as intoxication, duress, violence) can compromise the child or young person's ability to consent freely to sexual activity."
Practitioners must also consider other factors which might influence the ability of the person to give consent, e.g. learning disability / mental ill health.

2. Indicators & Risk Factors for Children/ Young People Being drawn into CSE

Below is a list of personal, behavioural and situational indicators that can be used to identify the potential for sexual exploitation. It is important that all those working with children and young people are familiar with these to be able to spot the potential to be able to explore the risks further. Indicators of CSE might include:

Personal Indicators

- Physical symptoms (bruising suggestive of either physical or sexual assault)
- A sexually transmitted infection
- Pregnancy and/or seeking abortion
- Reports from reliable sources suggesting the likelihood of involvement in sexual exploitation.

Behavioural Indicators

- Young person known to be sexually active
- Evidence of drug, alcohol or substance misuse
- Going out from home/care setting in clothing unusual for the individual child (inappropriate for age, borrowing clothing from older young people)
- Significantly older partner (Barnardo's suggests over 5 years difference)
- Accounts of social activities with no plausible explanation of the source of necessary funding.
- Possession of large amounts of money with no plausible explanation
- Acquisition of expensive clothes, mobile phones or other possessions without plausible explanation.
- Having keys to premises other than those known about.
- Low self-image, low self-esteem, self-harming behaviour - cutting, overdosing, eating disorder, promiscuity.
- Truancy/disengagement with education

- Possible inappropriate use of the internet and forming relationships, particularly with adults via the internet.
- Sexually risky behaviour including 'sext-ing' and sending and receiving inappropriate images, contact with unknown individuals via MSM/instant messenger/Facebook.

Situational Indicators:

- Reports that the child has been seen in places known to be used for sexual exploitation
- Adults loitering outside the child's usual place of residence.
- Persistently missing, staying out overnight or returning late with no plausible explanation.
- Returning after having been missing, looking well cared for in spite of having no known home base.
- Missing for long periods, with no known home base.
- Placement breakdown
- Pattern of street homelessness
- Entering or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults
- Going missing and being found in areas where the child or young person has no known links.

Factors that are known to increase the risks of children / young people being drawn into exploitative situations:

- Witnessing/experiencing domestic violence
- Children and young people 'Looked After'
- Patterns of abuse and/or neglect in family
- Homelessness/sofa surfing
- Substance misuse by parents/carers/child
- Learning disabilities, special needs or mental health issues
- Homophobia
- Breaks in adult relationships
- Death, loss or illness of a significant person in the child's life
- Financially unsupported
- Some form of family conflict
- Lack of love and security
- Adult soliciting (prostitution)
- Migrant / refugee / asylum seeker

Vulnerabilities are identified and targeted by the abuser, whether the child / young person is living with their family, looked after, away from home or they have run away.

Those working with children and young people should also be aware of:

- Child trafficking

- Missing children
- Gang Activity

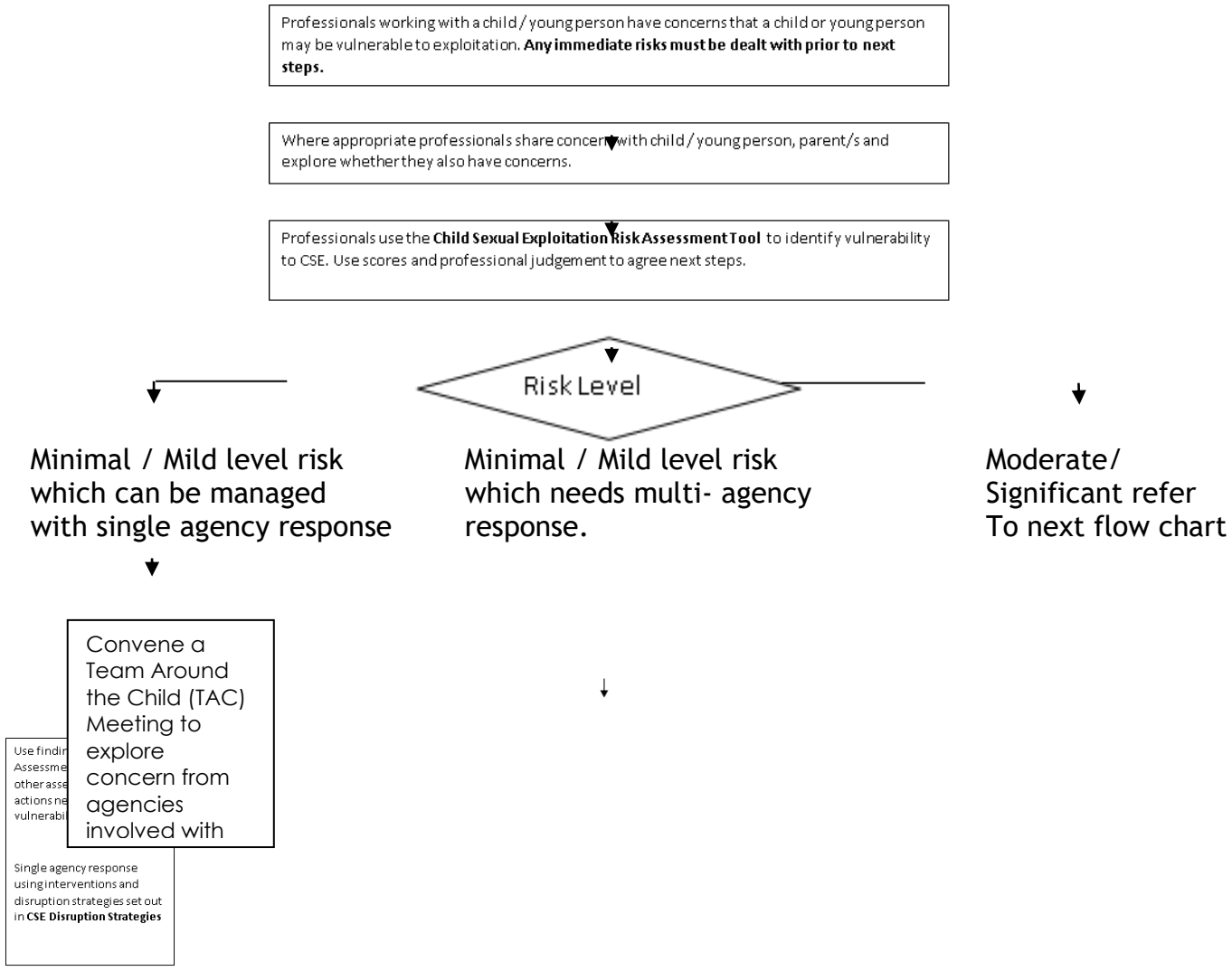
See LSCB policies and procedures “Missing, Sexually Exploited Or Trafficked (MSET) Intelligence Group”

PART ONE – Quick reference guide

3. Multi-Agency Response to concerns about child sexual exploitation

This model of assessment, planning intervention and review shows how specific tools can be used in current processes.

Minimal / Moderate Risk



Moderate/ Significant Risk

Professionals working with a child/ young person have concerns that a child or young person may be vulnerable to exploitation.
Any immediate risks must be dealt with prior to next steps.

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Where appropriate professionals share concern with child/ young person, parent/s and explore whether they have concerns.

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Professionals use the **Child Sexual Exploitation Risk Assessment Tool** to identify vulnerability to CSE. Use scores and professional judgement to agree next steps.

↓

Minimal/ Mild level risk
See previous flow chart

Risk Level

Moderate/ Significant Risk

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Referral to Children's Social care with concern and evidence to support it (if not already open to CSE). Include the **CSE Risk Assessment Tool** in referral.

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On the receipt of a referral that identifies moderate/ significant risk or this level of risk identified in a case which is already open- Children's Social Care convene a multi-agency meeting (usually a strategy meeting between referrer, Police, Education, Health and others involved) to agree whether section 47 enquires to commence or other assessment. Review CSE Risk Assessment Tool.
Plan initial interventions, further assessment/ investigation and disruption strategies set out in CSE Disruption Strategies.
Copy CSE Risk Assessment to CSE Lead in Local Authority.

↓

Assessment undertaken (section 47, Child In Need, Child Assessment Framework). Use the CSE Risk Assessment Tool to inform the Assessment. Use analysis to identify risks to the child/ young person.
TAC Meeting/ CIN Planning Meeting/ Initial Child Protection Conference will use assessment to agree action plan including disruption strategies.
Involve child/ young person and parents as appropriate

↓

Review CSE Risk Assessment Tool every 3 months to inform current assessment until risk is reduced.
Ensure that if case is too close to Children's Social Care that closing communication to universal/ targeted services clearly states the earlier risks of CSE and triggers/ indicators of reoccurrence.
Where risks are escalating the tool may be repeated to understand current situation.

4. Using the CSE Risk Assessment Tool

Appendix 1 contains a Sunderland Safeguarding Children's Board (SSCB) Toolkit for Professionals Working with Children Abused through Sexual Exploitation and Appendix 2 is for Durham Safeguarding Children's Board Toolkit.
It is acknowledged that some agencies will have alternative tools or processes.

The toolkit contains a CSE screening tool that identifies the risk indicators, CSE Risk Assessment Tool and CSE Vulnerability Checklist and Action Plan. These have been designed to assist professionals with the process of identification and assessment of, child sexual exploitation and then to help plan safe interventions and monitor effectiveness at the various levels risk set out.

Young people and their parent/s carers need to be involved in assessment and planning. In planning their involvement practitioners will take into account any risks involved and consider what they know about the young person / parent/s responses to concerns. They will also consider whether parents have any role in sustaining the CSE for the child.

Professionals using the tool should remember that it is based on professional judgement. Using the indicators is a guide only and should not be used to replace an individual's professional judgement.

The risk assessment tool will allow professionals to identify the nature and level of risk behaviours a young person is engaged in and should be completed as an initial screening to assess whether sexual exploitation is a factor in the young person's presentation. The CSE Risk Assessment Tool will help identify whether risks are low, medium or high.

The CSE Risk Factor Matrix will guide professionals about the appropriate level of response / action to be taken depending on the level of risk identified. This may be as a single agency or if the level of risks indicate a multiagency response.

Completion of the CSE Risk Factor Matrix by the professional identifying the concerns should involve liaison with the designated safeguarding lead within each agency, as well as other agencies that may be or who are involved with the child or young person.

PART TWO – Full Policy and procedures

5. Principles

The wellbeing and safety of individual children and young people is vital.

Assessment and interventions will be children and young people centred and focus on their needs and risks.

Professionals need to be aware of:

- Children and young people up to the age of 18. Young people of 16 or 17 years are still at risk of sexual exploitation even though they may give the impression they are giving consent and are in control. They are still covered by the statutory duties – the 1989 and 2004 Children Acts – and their needs should not be ignored or become less of a priority.
- Young people with a disability may have increased vulnerability.
- Young people up to the age of 21 who were looked after for whom the local authority has statutory care leaver responsibility
- Those who are at risk of/are being sexually exploited and for whom there may be child in need and/or child protection issues.

Cultural tradition and religious beliefs alone neither explain nor condone acts of commission or omission which place children and young people at risk of significant harm through sexual exploitation. Individual assessment will identify protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 such as disability, ethnicity, sex, religion or belief, sexual orientation etc. Agencies will ensure that the form of delivery of services does not disadvantage service users. The particular needs and sensitivities of girls and boys, children with a physical disability or learning disabilities, those from ethnic communities, or those for who English is not their first language, should be reflected in the provision of services.
Work will occur in partnership with the parents/carers, children and young people wherever possible and safe to do so.
The priority for the police will be to investigate and prosecute those who involve or coerce children and young people in sexual exploitation.
In the case of children and young people being sexually exploited in a way that involves them in prostitution they will be treated as victims of abuse. However, in exceptional cases the police may use the criminal justice system, where there is a refusal to respond and prostitution continues. This route would normally be taken only when a multi-agency meeting concludes that this is necessary, and should include those who are able to represent the child/young person's views where possible e.g. advocacy worker/project worker.
The response to any children and young people who are being sexually exploited will be on a non-discriminatory basis. Practitioners will need to reflect on their own views about a young person's ability to make informed choices in some of these situations.
Confidentiality will be respected, but information will be shared between agencies in order to ensure the children and young people are protected.
Agencies and services should seek to work together to prevent abuse and provide children and young people with opportunities and strategies to exit from prostitution.

6. Aims and Purpose of this Policy and procedures

The aims and purpose of these policy and procedures are to give those working with children and young people the knowledge -

- to identify those at risk of being sexually exploited and to identify signs of sexual exploitation,
- to facilitate and support information sharing about concerns appropriately at the right times with all relevant agencies in line.
- to provide timely and effective assessments and interventions with children, young people and families to safeguard and promote the welfare of those vulnerable to sexual exploitation,
- to apply pro-active problem solving to address the risks associated with victims, perpetrators and ensure the safeguarding and welfare of children and young people who are or may be at risk of sexual exploitation,
- to take action against those intent on abusing and exploiting children and young people in this way.

7. What Actions Must be Taken by the Registered Manager or Care Staff

It is unlikely that concerns about the possible sexual exploitation of the child/young person are as a result of a one off incident. Concerns often build up as a result of deteriorating behaviour. It is crucial that professionals act on early concerns to support the individual child/young person and their family.

Reporting Concerns and Suspicions of Child Sexual Exploitation

All suspicions, disclosures or allegations ***must*** be reported.
NEAS has a Whistle Blowing Policy which provides guidance to staff and volunteers on how they can raise concerns and receive appropriate feedback on action taken.
In any event where sexual exploitation concerns have been made against a staff member then this must be reported to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) immediately.

The following actions should be taken when there is any concern, disclosure, suspicion or allegation about the welfare of a child or young person which is causing or is likely to cause ***Significant Harm***.

This includes 'historical abuse' that may have occurred at some time in the past and may not have been reported or investigated.
It includes harm perpetrated by any person, including:

- Staff Member or Manager
- A visitor or person in the community e.g. friend/boyfriend/girlfriend
- A teacher, social worker or other professional
- A parent or other family member

Staff should firstly make their report to the Manager, unless the Manager is implicated. In which case staff must notify one of the following:

- The Responsible Individual for the Service, Brian Stoker, who is not implicated

- The Initial Response Team (Sunderland or Durham depending on the location of the home)
- Police
- The Regulatory Authority- Ofsted
- The Placing Authority

In an emergency where there is an immediate risk to the child, staff must take necessary action. This may involve asking for Police assistance or seeking emergency medical assistance e.g. taking the child to hospital or contacting the emergency services via 999. If the child is taken to hospital or the Police are called, staff must inform them that there is a suspicion of abuse or harm, more specifically Child Sexual Exploitation. Thereafter staff must notify the Manager (or other agency) as described above.

Once notified, the Manager will be responsible for following the Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedures and making contact with the Local Authority Children's Social Care Services.
The Manager must inform the Responsible Individual, Brian Stoker. The Manager must inform the **Regulatory Authority- Ofsted** of the instigation and outcome of any subsequent **Child Protection Enquiry.** At this stage any action taken must not alert the person(s) who may have caused or be implicated in causing the abuse or harm.

Receiving Concerns and Suspicions of Child Sexual Exploitation

The following is good practice that must be followed:

Staff members seeing, hearing or being told anything that causes them to become concerned that a child or young people may be at risk of, is being or has been the subject of child sexual exploitation must report it immediately to a manager.
Non-action is not an option in the protection of children and all staff have a duty to act.

Children and young people will sometimes disclose abuse to an adult who they have come to feel they can trust. If a child or young person discloses abuse it is important that staff respond appropriately by remaining calm and receptive; listening without interrupting; only asking questions of clarification; **never ask leading questions however**, acknowledging the child's courage in telling.
It is not a staff member's responsibility to investigate or in any way make judgements about what is reported to them. Investigations, if necessary, must be undertaken by properly trained, independent professionals.
If a disclosure or allegation of abuse or harm has been made, staff should discuss with the child or other person who has made the complaint what steps they would like taken to protect them and their wishes should be shared and, if not in conflict with procedures, followed.

Where the allegation is of an historical nature, e.g. relating to abuse or harm that may have been perpetrated in another placement or by family members, allegations must be taken seriously and must be reported in the same way as any other allegation.
Staff must not give absolute guarantees of confidentiality to those who report possible abuse or harm, but they should guarantee that they will take steps to ensure that appropriate action is taken and the child or young people protected.

If an allegation or any suspicion is about the behaviour, past or present of another member of staff, including Managers, which may in any way put children at risk, staff must follow the reporting procedures in accordance with **Reporting Concerns, Suspicions or Allegations.**

Staff must make a written record as soon as possible of their concerns, what they have been told, any questions they asked and the replies given and the actions taken and by whom. They must then give the report to the Manager.
The record should be placed on the child's file except where a colleague is implicated or there is any risk to the child as a result, in which case notes/records should be given to the Manager dealing with the matter.
Staff should not discuss the matter with others, including other staff, parents etc. unless asked to do so by those responsible for dealing any subsequent investigation or enquiry.

Action by the Manager

After receiving a report of a concern, suspicion or allegation of child sexual exploitation, the Manager must firstly take any steps needed to protect any child or young person from risk of immediate harm.
The Manager should ensure the following people are notified:

- The Initial Response Team (Sunderland or Durham)- they will decide further actions to be taken and undertake a risk assessment considering the child/young person's vulnerabilities and risks
- The Responsible Individual, Brian Stoker (Head of Care);
- If the suspicion/allegation relates to a member of staff/professional or Adult, The Registered Manager and Responsible Individual should ensure the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) - in the area where the Home is located - is also notified;
- The Placing Authority/Child's Social Worker;
- The Regulatory Authority- Ofsted

The procedures that will be followed will depend on the decisions made by Children's Social Care and the Placing Authority. It is also likely that the Regulatory Authority will be involved in decision making.

The Registered Manager will co-operate with the decisions/actions taken by them. Having received the referral (report/allegation), it is likely that Strategy Discussion/Meeting will be convened, to decide whether to initiate a Child Protection Enquiry and, if so, to agree the following with the manager:

1. Who should inform the child's parent(s);
2. Arrangements for any medical examination of the child;
3. Any immediate arrangements for protection of the child(ren), including whether the child should be moved to another home;
4. Whether it is necessary to inform staff within the home and if so who will do it;
5. Whether any implicated staff should be suspended or moved;
6. Who should inform/update the person making the initial allegation of the steps or actions taken.

In the event of the Society being invited to attend initial Child Protection Conferences or Review Conferences or Core Groups, the Designated Person (Registered Manager and/ or Responsible Individual) will represent the Society and provide information relevant to the meeting in accordance with LSCB's Safeguarding Procedures.
The Manager should ensure that the child is supported during any enquiries/ investigation. This may require an independent advocate or independent person to be involved. The manager should also ensure that all staff co-operate fully.

Initiating Child Protection Enquiries

Once the concern or allegation has been made/raised - assuming it has been made to a Manager - the following actions must be taken.
The Manager must ensure that the Designated Child Protection Manager are notified and co-operate with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the area where the Significant Harm is suspected.

The LADO will advise on the actions/measures that must be taken including notifications to the following:

- The Child(ren)'s Social Worker, and come to a decision about notifying parents and any actions that need to be taken to protect the child(ren) e.g. whether it is necessary to change placements;
- The Regulatory Authority, if a Child Protection Enquiry is initiated;
- Referring the member of staff to the Disclosure and Barring Service

(PLEASE NOTE- the Regulatory Authority must also be notified of any referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service).
In consultation with all the agencies (e.g. the Children's Services/LADO, relevant Social Workers and Regulatory Authority (for Children's Registered Homes this is Ofsted), decisions will need to be taken about the ongoing safety/placement arrangements of the Child(ren) and the alleged perpetrators e.g. it may be necessary to move/suspend or place staff on 'Garden Leave', or move/transfer children to other homes/placements. If such a decision is made, The Disclosure and Barring Service must be notified in consultation with the LADO).
It will also be necessary to co-operate with the procedures initiated by the LADO/Children's Services.
The Designated Child Protection Manager will be consulted as to who should contribute to reports or attend procedures including:

- A Strategy Discussion;
- A Child Protection Enquiry;
- An Initial Child Protection Conference.

Immediate Protection

Where immediate action to safeguard a child/young person is required, it may involve removing the child to a safe place. However those working with children/young people in these circumstances must never underestimate the power of the perpetrator to find where the child/young person is. Such children may require alternative placements with carers who have experience of building up trusting relationships.

Staff working with children/young people who have been involved in sexual exploitation are advised to contact the Police immediately via 999 if at any time the perpetrator is on the Society's premises. Due to the nature of the Society's work other children, young people and staff may be put at risk. Most visitors to the service will have pre-arranged their visit therefore staff are aware of who is coming to the home and when. Staff must request identification from all visitors to the service, if in doubt staff are advised to request this to be shown before the door is opened i.e. through the window, if in doubt do not open the door and where necessary call the Police.

8. Thresholds and appropriate interventions

Low Risk- Child or Young Person presenting with 1 to 4 low level indicators
This child or young person requires intervention by any professional, parent or carer who has a good relationship with them to carry out healthy relationships and rights work. Depending on the indicators they present with, they will also require some basic awareness raising work on CSE, sexual health, risk taking behaviours and consequences. If there is a person/s posing a risk to them, ensure they are disrupted and information about them recorded and passed to the appropriate persons.
Procedure

- Ensure that this child or young person is recorded on file as 'At risk of CSE'.
- Carry out basic intervention work as noted above, over a 4-6 week period.
- Consider Team Around the Child Meeting and CAF.
- The child or young person is to be assessed for changes to risk status regularly (at a frequency informed by professional judgement) using the CSE Risk Matrix until the child or young person is safe or the risk is removed.
- If risk is escalating, report to Child Protection Manager with a lead for CSE and follow procedures below for Medium or High Risk cases.

Medium Risk - Child or young person presenting with more than 5 low indicators or low and some medium indicators
This child or young person requires more intensive assessment and 1-1 support. If they present immediately with Medium Risk indicators the interventions outlined above for Low Risk should be completed, along with more intensive work on CSE, grooming, positive choices, safety and contingency planning. Work is also required on any additional vulnerability factors and with the family, siblings and peers. Involve all professionals linked to the child / young person via TAC and CAF. Refer to Vulnerable Children's Meeting if further services, including Children's Social Care are required on a non urgent basis. Should there be a need for a referral about more serious concerns, refer to Children's Social Care. If the child or young person is already open to Children's Social Care, assessments are to be updated and if required, a S47 enquiry undertaken.
Procedure

- Take whatever steps are required to protect the child or young person.
- Police discussion regarding investigation needs / missing person incidents
- Strategy meetings under Safeguarding Procedures where appropriate.
- Seek guidance/advice and refer to CSE Specialist Voluntary Sector Services.
- Collate and share information on any perpetrators, hotspots and associations involved with the child / young person.

- Regular review meetings until child/young person is protected or supported to avoid risk taking behaviours.
- If a risk is escalating, report the changing situation to child protection manager with a lead for CSE and follow procedures below for high risk cases.

High Risk - Child or young person presenting with several indicators from all categories and 1 or more high risk indicator
Core assessment and coordinated intensive support of child/young person and family. Procedure as above and;

- Referral to Children's Social Care.
- Immediate Strategy discussion to agree S47 Joint Investigation Enquiry.
- Police discussion re investigation/resourcing.
- Regular review under Child Protection or Children in Need (CSE) until child is protected from abuse.
- Police to liaise with Crown Prosecution Service for evidential thresholds for prosecution.

NOTE: Ensure that any disclosures are recorded and dated. Once a disclosure has been made it should be clearly and accurately documented and referred to police / Children's Social Care who will make arrangements / decisions about interviewing under Achieving Best Evidence procedures. This is to ensure that any future prosecutions are not hampered or prejudiced by questioning.

The effectiveness of current interventions should be assessed to determine whether they are sufficient to;

- Prevent the child or young person from going missing
- Protect the child or young person from being exposed to any further risk
- Prevent the sexual exploitation
- Change risk taking behaviour.

9. Disruption strategies

Agencies involved with a child or young person experiencing child sexual exploitation will consider disruption strategies which support the child or young person to leave the situation.
Appendix 1 contains a detailed list of Disruption Strategies and interventions to assist those who know the child or young person to choose interventions which will draw them away from the exploitation.
The prosecution and disruption of perpetrators is an essential part of the process in reducing harm. It will be a responsibility of the Detectives within the team to gather evidence, investigate and interview perpetrators and prepare case files for consideration by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) with the intention of obtaining the successful conviction of offenders.

Child Abduction Notices
The child abduction warning notice procedure is for the occasions when police become aware of children spending time with an adult who we believe could be harmful to

them, for example when there is previous intelligence that suggests the adult has a sexual interest in children. Sometimes the children are reported missing by parents and keep being found by police at a particular adult's address. It historically has been difficult to deter the children from spending time with the adult especially when the adult gives the child lots of attention, freedom and presents.
A child abduction Warning Notice can now be issued to the adult. In essence, the Notices identifies the child and confirms that the suspect has no permission to associate with or to contact or communicate with the child and that if the suspect continues to do so, the suspect may be arrested and prosecuted for an offence under s.2 Child Abduction Act 1984 or s.49 Children and Young Persons Act 1989 or for any other criminal offence committed in relation to that child.

10. Intelligence Gathering

As intelligence becomes available throughout the process all partners are able to pass this to the Lead Professional / Police.
Intelligence relating to the threat posed to victims would be responded to by those organisations with responsibilities for the safeguarding and welfare of children and young people. This would be in accordance with their statutory duties and would be appropriate to the urgency of the situation identified through the intelligence.
Sexual exploitation of children and young people takes place in local communities and information known to partners could be used to highlight the threat and establish risk. It is anticipated that an improved intelligence picture will enable effective action in a greater number of cases of sexual exploitation, thereby reducing the harm which would otherwise be caused to the victims and their families.

11. Multi- Agency Responsibilities

Children's Social Care Working Together 2015 requires that following a referral Children's Social Care should ensure that the needs of all children and young people who are being, or who are at risk of being, sexually exploited are assessed and that appropriate multi-agency engagement and appropriate interventions are undertaken.
The duties under the Children Act 1989 apply to all children under the age of 18 years.
Children's Social Care should also be alert to the possibility of sexual exploitation of children who are already in receipt of services.
Children's Social Care should involve the police as soon as possible to ensure that no information that may be critical to a prosecution case is lost (whether or not a child/young person has made a formal complaint). It may also be required so that a disruption plan can be put into place.
Children's Social Care will undertake at least an Initial Assessment to understand the needs, risks and strengths for the child or young person.
Youth Services Youth and Community workers (and volunteers within the service) have close contact with children and young people and will be in a key position to identify signs that someone is at risk of, or is being, sexually exploited. Sexual exploitation is not something that should be kept confidential. Youth Workers should discuss concerns with senior colleagues and should refer to other Children's Social Care /Police when this is identified. Following the referral it may still be part of the plan that the youth worker should continue to support the child.

Leisure Services
Many activities take part in premises managed by local authorities or their agents. Services such as libraries, parks and gardens, sport and leisure centres events and attractions, museums and arts centres will all have children visiting and using their facilities some of whom may be at risk of sexual exploitation. Any concerns regarding sexual exploitation should be discussed with senior colleagues and be referred to the appropriate agencies when identified.
Public areas such as parks and leisure centres are often used by perpetrators to target victims. Therefore managers should comply with requests for assistance from the police and other agencies to help in disrupting the activity.

Housing Services.
Housing staff in Local Authority's, social landlords and environmental health officers are often aware of children and young people with needs and welfare issues. They should be aware of the risk of sexual exploitation and may be able to identify adults about whom they have concerns as possible perpetrators of sexual exploitation. If they have concerns a referral must be made to Children's Social Care or the Police.

The Police
The role for the police is to identify children and young people who may be at risk of child sexual exploitation, work with other agencies to safeguard the child or young person and to investigate those who involve or coerce children and young people in sexual exploitation.
The sexual exploitation of a child or young person will involve the commission of a crime or have the potential for a crime to be committed. Therefore as child sexual exploitation is child abuse it should receive the same level of response as other forms of child abuse. Investigations should be carried out by officers trained in child protection procedures and who are familiar with the risk indicators for child sexual exploitation. This involves a proactive response to explore locally the nature and patterns of sexual exploitation. The information gathered regarding those at risk of child sexual exploitation and potential perpetrators should be shared with partner agencies. Any response should be coordinated with those agencies to ensure that the welfare, safety and best interests of the child are paramount.
Many child sexual exploitation cases cross police force boundaries and therefore there should be cross boundary cooperation and information sharing. This may involve CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre) who can support the police by helping to coordinate cross-boundary or international investigations involving child sex offender networks or in the management of high risk offenders which may involve grooming through chat rooms and social networking sites or involvement with paedophile rings.

Youth Offending Teams (YOTS)
YOTS are well placed to identify those children and young people known to relevant organisations as being most at risk of being drawn into the criminal justice system. These children /young people may also be vulnerable and therefore may be at risk of or suffering from sexual exploitation. Any child or young person that the YOT are concerned about must be discussed with Children's Social Care following local procedures but there should also be clear links between youth justice and LA Children's Social Care at a strategic level.

Health Services
All health professionals and organisations have a key role in actively promoting the health and wellbeing of children and also have a duty under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
Health services are in a key position to recognise children and young people who are suffering sexual exploitation. However they are also in a position to identify concerns about adults who may be perpetrators of sexual exploitation.

- Sexual health services, genito-urinary medicine services, community contraceptive clinics and community pharmacists for example may be aware of sexually active young people and should be aware of the indicators and signs of sexual exploitation. Any concerns should be referred to Children's social Care following local procedures.
- Mental health services including child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHs), adult mental health services and drug and alcohol services may encounter children at risk of or suffering child sexual exploitation. CAMHs staff should identify whether child abuse or neglect, domestic violence and drug or alcohol misuse are factors in a child's mental health problems and they should also consider sexual exploitation as part of the assessment and care planning. Adult mental health services should be alert to the indicators of child sexual exploitation so can alert children's social care or the police of any adults they suspect of being the perpetrators of child sexual exploitation.
- Looked after Children and Care Leavers health professionals are working with vulnerable children who may be at risk of sexual exploitation. They are in a position to identify concerns and should inform children's social care of these concerns following local procedures remembering that although the young person may be saying that their sexual relationship is consensual they can still be sexually exploited.
- Paediatric and Emergency Department staff see children/young people who have been physically or sexually assaulted. They also see children/young people who attend due to alcohol or drug misuse or deliberate self harm. The staff should refer to other agencies e.g. children's social care, police, CAMHs, and also, as part of any medical examinations (following local protocols) collect forensic and photographic evidence which will assist the police with their investigations.

Schools and further education institutions
Schools (including academies, independent schools and non-maintained special schools) and further education (FE) institutions are required under the Education Act 2002 to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
Staff in education establishments are in a prime position to recognise sexual exploitation and should therefore be able to identify the signs/indicators of sexual exploitation. Any concerns must be discussed with senior safeguarding staff and local procedures followed.
Education establishments can also protect children and young people by helping them gain an understanding of acceptable/unacceptable relationships and sexual behaviour. Children and young people should be informed of risks specifically around sexual exploitation and should be given information on how to seek help and guidance.

Voluntary and community sector organisation

All voluntary and community sector organisations in contact with children, young people and families should be alert to the signs and indicators of sexual exploitation. They may be working with young people who have disengaged from mainstream statutory services and who by definition are more vulnerable to the potential of sexual exploitation. As with statutory agencies if the voluntary sector has any concerns they must refer to children's social care.

Probation Services
Probation Services are a statutory authority and have a duty to refer any children or young people seen as vulnerable to services which can support them. Probation workers will be aware of child sexual exploitation risks and the risks perpetrators pose.

Social Media
The use of media and technology is now a common feature of the social activity of most young people. Smart-phones, laptops and tablets can all be used to exchange information verbally, by text, e mail and most commonly through mechanisms such as Blackberry Messenger, Facebook etc.

The use of electronic media presents considerable opportunities to abusers and provides powerful tools with which to groom and control victims. Grooming is defined as developing the trust of a young person or his or her family in order to engage in illegal sexual conduct.

It may include:

a. Causing a child to watch a sexual act, e.g. sending sexually themed adult content or images and videos featuring child sexual abuse to a young person;

b. Inciting a child to perform a sexual act, e.g. by threatening to show sexual images of a child to their peers or parents (e.g. self-produced material or even a pseudo-image of the child);

c. Suspicious online contact with a child, e.g. asking sexual questions;

d. Asking a child/young person to meet in person; befriending a child/young person and gaining their trust, etc;

e. Other grooming: the range in behaviours that fall into this category are widely variable but reflect the range of strategies often employed by adults to prepare a child for abuse, e.g. using schools or hobby sites such as the Scouts or Girl Guides to gather information about particular children, their location and future events where the child may be present; presenting as a minor online to deceive a child, etc.

It is also known that abusers and exploiters will sometimes pose as teenagers to obtain sexually explicit images via web cams or making arrangements to meet the victim. Often these individuals live some considerable distance from the victim and initially make contact through legitimate sites used by young people.

Facebook and Blackberry Messenger, Snapchat are increasingly the media of communication between victim and abuser, both of which can present significant access difficulties to investigating authorities seeking evidential material.

However, telephone and internet communication can provide excellent evidence against abusers and can assist in identifying perpetrators and unknown victims and in identifying networks. It is vital that those having care of children at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation gather as much information as possible re mobile numbers, text communications and Facebook and Blackberry contacts as these may be able to assist the police in collating this evidence.

Remember that some children / young people show little or no signs, and some may display the indicators for other reasons. Generally, a change of behaviour should make you question what is happening in the child/young person's life.