



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

**Darlington
Safeguarding
Partnership**
Protecting Children and Adults

Harm Outside the Home Multi-Agency Procedures

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1. INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

[\(Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance\)](#)

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

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

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

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

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

2. WHAT IS HARM OUTSIDE OF THE HOME

OUR DEFINITIONS:

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

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

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

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

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of sexual abuse. In return for gifts, money, drugs, affection, and status, children and young people are coerced, manipulated and deceived into performing sexual activities. It is not just something that affects teenage girls or specific groups and can happen in and out of school. Children and young people can be tricked into believing they are part of a loving and consensual relationship that could be framed as friendship, mentoring or romantic. There is no age on exploited children. Children as young as 8 have been sexually exploited.

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

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

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

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

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

Children Missing from Home:

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

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

[DSP Missing Children – Home Care and Education Procedure and Practice Guidance](#)

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

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

3. RESPONSE TO HARM OUTSIDE THE HOME

Children’s Front Door (Children’s Initial Advice Team):

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

The Children’s Initial Advice Team will make contact enquiries to identify the right support for the child.

Building Stronger Families and Children Services:

Darlington Children’s Services Harm Outside the Home approach will be taken in cases where:

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

AND

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

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

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

Assessment: Children Services:

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

All assessments on young people will include the wider context and assess risk beyond the home, the assessment will balance the risks and strengths both within and outside the family to determine if a young person is at risk of significant harm. The assessment will utilise guidance and tools developed through the contextual safeguarding network found here Contextualsafeguarding.org.uk

Informing Parents of the Need for a Referral

It is good practice to be open and honest at the outset with the parents/carers about concerns, the need for a referral. Where the concerns are related to risk of harm outside the home, we recognise that this extends beyond the parents/families'

capacity to protect, and we aim to work with parents as partners where it is safe to do so.

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

Identification & Screening:

A child exploitation matrix is a tool that the DSP has developed for all partners to use to support them to determine if a child is at risk of exploitation ([Child Exploitation Risk Matrix](#)). The Child Exploitation Matrix is designed to be completed with the child and family and can be used from universal services through to targeted specialist support. The Child Exploitation Matrix should be used in line with [Darlington Safeguarding Partnership Child Protection Procedures](#), if it confirms concerns and/ or identifies risk of significant harm, you **must** make a referral to the Children's Initial Advice Team within the Children's Front door.

The purpose of the Child Exploitation matrix is to:

- Understand the level of risk posed to individual children and young people, what level of threat the risks present to the child's well-being and how well these can be managed so the level of risk is reduced and safely managed.
- The matrix is used to gather a range of information on all aspects of a young person's life to allow for a detailed triage of the young person to be completed which will help assess the level of risk.
- Support the development of robust plans to manage and reduce level of risk
- Support a referral to the Children's Initial Advice Team within the Children's Front Door.
- Link to [DSP Child Exploitation matrix](#)

4. Child Exploitation Matrix

No Risk

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

Low Risk

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

and multiple indicators leading to a suspicion of Child Exploitation but no known offences and there are positive protective factors in the child young person life.

- Access to universal services and early intervention for the child
- Consultation with Exploitation Team Manager as to whether discussion at CEVT is required
- If required, the exploitation team manager will support the Lead Professional with completing a Safety Plan
- A Safety Plan will be completed by the Lead Professional / Social Worker
- Share information / concerns with Police using the [Partnership Information Sharing Form](#)

Moderate Risk

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

- If the child is not already open to children's social care, referral to be made to the Children's Initial Advice Team within the Children's Front Door, including a copy of the Child Exploitation matrix.
- Child Exploitation matrix is to be submitted to cevt@durham.police.uk. CEVT is held every Wednesday. Forms submitted after the end of the working day Thursday will be added to the following weeks agenda.
- CEVT will identify possible areas where disruption can be done or identify gaps in information which need to be filled. It can also consider any further support needed for the family or referrals that can be made. All actions will be sent to the relevant professional if they have an allocated case worker.
- Share information / concerns with Police using the [Partnership Information Sharing Form](#)
- Information and intelligence within a matrix must be submitted on an intel sharing form as well as being documented within the matrix. Intel should be submitted as soon as it is received or as early as possible and not delayed whilst a matrix is being completed.
- A Safety Plan will be completed by the Lead Professional / Social Worker

Significant Risk

Indicators, Assessment, Evidence, Disclosure suggests that the young person is being, or at significant risk of being exploited. Such as, sexually and or physically

e.g. drug trafficking, trafficking for sexual purposes or other, modern-day slavery (including organised begging), on-line, with one or multiple perpetrators (older adults, peers) and where coercion or control is likely to be but not exclusively implicit.

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

Significant Risk can never be held at an early help level and requires Statutory Intervention. A Strategy meeting must be initiated.

- If the child is not already open to children's social care, referral to be made to the Children's Initial Advice Team within the Children's Front Door, including a copy of the Child Exploitation matrix
- Child Exploitation matrix is to be submitted to cevt@durham.police.uk. CEVT is held every Wednesday. Forms submitted after the end of the working day Thursday will be added to the following weeks agenda.
- A referral to Keeping Families Together must be made to consider whether targeted or intensive support is needed for the family
- Consider the need for NRM.
- Share information / concerns with Police using the [Partnership Information Sharing Form](#)
- A Safety Plan will be completed by the Lead Professional / Social Worker

Consideration should be given to completing a Child Exploitation matrix by professionals working with a young person in the following situations (list not exhaustive)

- The young person has been arrested and spent time in custody.
- They have been referred to drug and alcohol support services
- They are at risk of permanent exclusion from school
- They commit Serious Youth Violence
- They have 3 or more missing episodes in a 30-day period or missing for over 72 hours
- They presented to A&E with unexplained injuries indicative of exploitation
- There are concerns about ASB / offending

5. PATHWAYS IN RESPONSE TO HARM OUTSIDE OF THE HOME

Step One:

Where the concerns for a young person's safety lie outside the home, the child exploitation matrix must be completed, by those professionals who identify the concerns. The Matrix will support agencies to understand risks and provide targeted intervention, this may be as a single agency or coordinated by a lead professional.

[Child Exploitation risk matrix](#)

Where a Child Exploitation matrix identifies that a child is medium or high risk of exploitation, it should be forwarded to cevt@durham.police.uk where a child isn't open to Children Services you must also complete a referral via telephone to the Children's Initial Advice Team within the Children's front door.

The Children's Initial Advice Team can be contacted on 01325 406252.

The child exploitation matrix needs to be completed alongside a telephone call to the Children's Initial Advice Team within the Children's front door and sent to childrensfrontdoor@darlington.gov.uk.

Note: For Police this step will be made through completing a SAF. The Children's Initial Advice Team within the Darlington's Children's Front Door will consider next steps.

Step Two:

When a young person is referred to cevt@durham.police.uk either via a Child Exploitation matrix or a police SAF a multi-agency review will be held and each child will be discussed and scored on the child exploitation vulnerability tracker and the risk level for each child will be considered and agreed.

CEVT will:

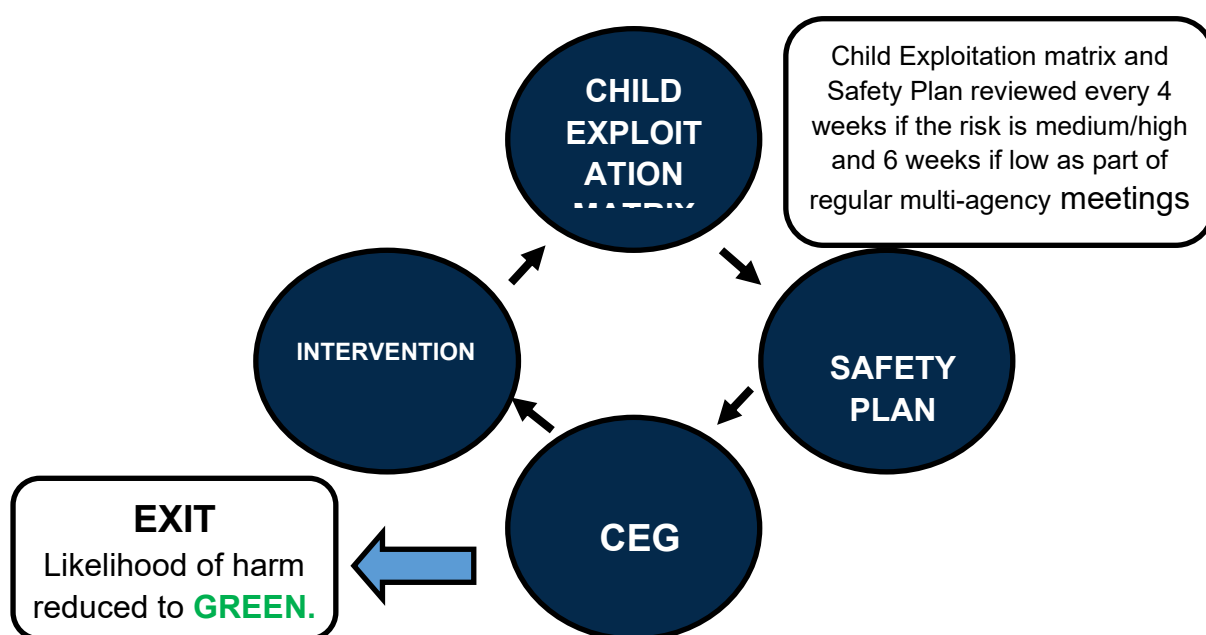
- Refer all children assessed as High Risk on to the multi-agency Child Exploitation Group.
- Provide advice to Lead Professional / Social Worker for those children scored Medium and Low risk, to complete as part of their existing care plan.

- If the child is not known to services, the lead professional making the referral will be offered advice on support available for the child.
- Ensure oversight of all child exploitation screenings submitted for data /local exploitation profile purposes, to identify any themes or hotspots and in the context of information sharing between the police and children and families social care professional to support the child and consider any urgent disruption activity.

Step Three:

Where there is concern about harm outside the home, the child will be heard at the multi-agency Child Exploitation Group (CEG) which are held monthly. The allocated lead professional will attend CEG to discuss progress on the intervention and improved outcomes for the child/young person. The meeting will review the matrix and interventions to ensure appropriate response to concern and that there is a robust safety plan in place. This will run concurrently with, and feed into, the child's existing multi-agency care planning meetings (i.e. TAF, CIN Reviews, Core Groups and Care Team Meetings). The matrix will be regularly reviewed and updated by the lead professional.

All children and young people presented at CEG and who are on the cusp of experiencing harm outside the home or are experiencing harm outside the home will have a mapping exercise undertaken and will be reviewed at a minimum of every 12 weeks, but more frequently where required in response to concerns. The review date will be booked at the first and subsequent panels.



6. CHILD EXPLOITATION VULNERABILITY TRIAGE

The CEVT meeting is held weekly on a Wednesday and attended by partners from Police, Children Services, Education, Health, Youth Justice, and intervention workers.

CEVT is not a MASH process, however, if the child is not open to social care a referral can be made to children's services, if deemed appropriate.

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

Functions of CEVT:

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

Children may also be discussed where there are high concerns in respect of them missing, the criteria to be considered will be 3 or more missing in 30 days or where they are repeat missing for significant lengths of time (over 72hrs). The focus of discussion in CEG will be to consider whether there are any links to exploitation during missing episodes. Where exploitation is not a concern, no further action will be taken by CEG. However, where exploitation is known or suspected their key worker will be asked to complete a child exploitation matrix and submit to CEVT.

The Keeping Families Together Team Manager will take referrals from CEVT where young people are identified as high risk of exploitation and allocate a Family Support Worker either intensive or targeted depending on need.

For those who are not allocated a Family Worker (low/medium risk) advice is given to the lead professional on the most appropriate intervention for the child's unique circumstances.

7. CHILD EXPLOITATION GROUP (CEG)

The CEG framework provides strategic oversight and does not replace existing Safeguarding review and monitoring arrangements. It is important that concerns in respect of missing, exploitation and harm outside of the home should be incorporated into the young person's assessments and plans that are managed through existing statutory arrangements via Child in Need meetings, Core Groups, Care Teams and relevant Review Meetings. It is expected that the Child Exploitation matrix is updated and the safety plan reviewed at 4-weekly intervals.

The CEG has strategic oversight of all Young People assessed as high risk of missing and/or significant risk of exploitation and their disruption plans. The CEG meetings are held fortnightly.

In addition, a weekly focus on exploitation group is available for Building Stronger Families and Children's Social Care to seek advice and support from the exploitation service.

8. STRATEGIC CHILD EXPLOITATION GROUP (CEG)

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

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

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

The Child Exploitation Group will meet quarterly. Meetings will be quorate if at least three different agencies are represented from each local authority. Any member of the group may propose agenda items. Any proposed agenda items should be proposed 2 weeks prior to the meeting. The Chair will confirm and agree the final agenda.

The Child Exploitation Group is accountable to the Durham Executive and Darlington Management and Lead Safeguarding Partners Strategic Groups.

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

9. SERVICES

Exploitation Team Manager:

Darlington has a specialist Team Manager whose sole focus is supporting children, their families and professional network where exploitation is a concern. The Team Manager has close links with the Children's Initial Advice Team within the Children's front door, BSF, Police, missing from home worker, Keeping Families Together (KFT), youth justice and social care to ensure a coordinated response and advice service.

The Team Manager is the operational lead for all aspects of exploitation including early intervention, education and development of the service in line with the community's changing needs. The Team Manager or Service Manager will hold the exploitation CEG meetings. The Children's Initial Advice Team within the Children's Front Door is responsible for chairing the missing CEG meetings. The exploitation Team Manager will attend the missing CEG meetings.

Building Stronger Families (BSF):

A child/young person or family would benefit from coordinated support from more than one organisation or agency through the provision of Early Help services. The Early Help Assessment is the single assessment used by multi-agency partnerships which includes Schools, Colleges, Health, Childcare settings, voluntary sector and across all Children's Social Care teams. The Early Help Assessment provides a standard and coordinated approach for practitioners across agencies and services and is designed to ensure that children, young people and their families receive the right support at an early stage to reduce the chance of escalation to a specialist services. Early help assessments should be evidence based, be clear about the action to be taken and services should be provided with a focus on improving outcomes. This is an early intervention service, and the child/young person can be allocated a keyworker who will hold regular meetings to review the child's plan and identify any support needs. This will include signposting to other agencies.

Children's Social Care:

Where a child is deemed a child in need (s.17) or a child in need of protection (s.47) they will be allocated a social worker from the Assessment and Safeguarding team. The Assessment & Safeguarding (A&S) Social Worker will work alongside multi-agency partners to assess the children's circumstances and take a whole family approach, working alongside parents as partners. A Child & Family assessment will be completed to provide a clear analysis of risk.

Keeping Families Together (KFT):

Keeping Families Together are a team of family workers who can support families intensively (between 12-16 weeks) if young people are deemed to be on the edge of becoming looked after or can provide targeted support to young people. They carry small workloads in order to work intensively and build relationships with young people with an aim of disrupting and removing exploitation from the child's life.

INTERVENTIONS

Safety planning (missing and exploitation)

The type of plan a child is made subject of will be determined by assessment, this could be an Early Help plan, Child in Need, Child Protection or Child in Care. Where there are concerns with regard to harm outside the home, the plan will outline both engagement and disruption activities with the young person their parents / carers

and partners. Where the safeguarding concern is outside the home, we actively promote parents as partners.

Mapping Meetings

At Darlington we hold regular partnership mapping meetings, this allows professionals to see both risks and safety within peer networks and social circles, as well as in spaces and places outside of their home. Through carrying out peer mapping exercises, practitioners can identify and understand the nature and extent of the harm outside of the young person's home, which can then be addressed from a multi-agency perspective, supporting individual safety and care plans. The intention is to reduce the risk of young people being exploited by increasing their safety outside of the home.

There are 3 levels of mapping meetings:

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

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

10. PEOPLE OF CONCERN

This requires the professionals to identify and share intelligence with the police regarding people of concern, so intelligence can be developed to assist with police enquires, so those people of concern can be dealt with through criminal proceedings and / or appropriate sanctions applied to restrict / disrupt their actions that exploit children and young people. [new-partnership-information-sharing-form-june-2023.pdf](#)

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

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

The purpose of the People of Concern Meeting is to:

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

11. SPACES AND PLACES

This requires professionals to identify places and spaces of concern, this will be predominantly through Community Safety and Housing partners.

Community Safety Meeting – this meeting is held fortnightly with Multi agency partners including the Police, Civic Enforcement, Early Help Coordinator, Building Stronger Families (BSF) and Education. The meeting is dynamic and responsive to whatever issues arise through discussions, the session is an opportunity to share any information that informs on what is happening in the community, it takes a preventative approach to tackling the issue of exploitation in whatever form. It provides an opportunity to share information about specific children and young people where there are particular concerns, including the locations (hotspots) they may be frequenting, it also allows for identification and an understanding of who else the children and young people might be associating with. When specific children or 'hotspots' are identified then invites for professionals involved with that child, or who work in the community where they live or frequent are sent out and they attend the next meeting. Actions are agreed in order to take a preventative approach and reduce any potential for harm to occur where deemed necessary. If serious concerns are identified, then Children's Social Care and Police take the lead on this without delay. This meeting is very much viewed as a starting point in terms of tackling this issue from a preventative approach.

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

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

Each level facilitates and supports the other. Level 1 work gradually identifies contexts in need of attention through Level 2 work, and work undertaken at Level 2 wraps around the work at level 1 informing its effectiveness.

The DSP are aware that all professionals can independently take steps to enact change at level one, whereas level two requires strategic sign-up and commitment for effective delivery.

12. CHILDREN IN CARE LIVING IN ANOTHER AREA

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

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

There are a number of Out of Area (OOA) cared for children who are placed into Darlington by other Local Authorities. Darlington has a number of specialist providers that have established Private Residential Settings and placements can involve children who are identified as high risk of exploitation or missing.

A list of all notified OOA cared for children placed in Darlington by other Local Authorities is maintained within DBC's children's liquid logic system.

All OOA cared for children placed in Darlington remain the responsibility of the placing Local Authority. Anyone with information relating to a safeguarding concern or risk to any specific non-Darlington cared for children or children should notify the relevant responsible authority for that child without delay. The information should

also be shared with Darlington's Children's in order that local risk determination can take place.

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

13. TRANSITIONAL SAFEGUARDING

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

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

Where a young person is reaching 18 and it is identified that there may be ongoing needs post-18 a referral to Adult Social Care should be made.

You should contact the Adult contact Team on telephone: 01325 406111

14. NATIONAL REFERRAL MECHANISM

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

It encompasses:

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

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

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

Public Health England defines modern slavery as:

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

[Report Modern Slavery](#)

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

15. DISRUPTION MEASURES

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

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

- Obtaining orders on an identified individual.
- Investigation of other crime types such as drugs or theft.
- Increased Police attention on an individual (checking car tax, road worthiness of car etc.).
- Increased Police presence in suspected hotspots (online or offline).
- Working with internet providers to address online harm; and

- Use of licensing laws and powers to obtain guest information or close down premises associated with child exploitation.

Where applicable, an effective disruption strategy may use a range of these methods

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

[Child exploitation disruption toolkit - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-exploitation-disruption-toolkit)

16. CIVIL ORDERS AND OTHER MEANS OF CONTROLLING BEHAVIOUR

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

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

Sexual Harm Prevention Orders (SHPOs) can be applied for by the Police or the National Crime Agency. They can be used to impose restrictions on an individual who has been convicted or cautioned of a sexual or violent offence, where there is reasonable cause to believe that the imposition of such an order is necessary to protect an individual or the wider public from harm. Restrictions can include things like limiting their use, preventing them from approaching or being alone with a

named child and prohibiting foreign travel. Breach of the order, without reasonable excuse, is an offence punishable by a fine and/or imprisonment.

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

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

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

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

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

application of the order is necessary to protect an individual or the wider public from harm.

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

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

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

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

17. INFORMATION SHARING

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

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

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

Harm outside the home can be defined as: Harm that can occur in a range of contexts, including school and other educational settings, peer groups, or within community/public spaces, and/or online. Children may experience this type of harm from other children and/or from adults. Forms of harm outside the home include exploitation by criminal and organised crime groups and individuals (such as county lines and financial exploitation), serious violence, modern slavery and trafficking, online harm, sexual exploitation, teenage relationship abuse, the influences of extremism which could lead to radicalisation and children missing and/or excluded from education. Children of all ages can experience harm outside the home.

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

The Tier 2 HOTH Information Sharing Agreement is currently in development and will be linked to this guidance when approved through the governance of the DSP.

DSP Tier 1 Information Sharing Protocol (Tier 1) [DSP Information Sharing Protocol](#)

Appendix 1

Child Exploitation & Missing Safety Plan Practice Guidance

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

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

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

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

Please Note: Elements of this plan should be used in the child's existing CIN/CP/LAC plan where necessary.

This plan is NOT intended as a separate document.

For the duration of this Safety Plan all agencies should:	
Gather information to assist prosecution and disruption of adults suspected of being involved in violence, gang activity, drugs and / or sexual exploitation.	
Complete and submit a police intelligence form with new information or intelligence about young people, people posing a risk or locations of concern: Partnership Information Sharing Form in addition to safeguarding procedures.	
Obtain and share as much information as possible to identify associates and those who pose a risk to young people (good information includes full names, nick names, telephone numbers, addresses, car registrations, employment type and location, details of licensed bodies / properties).	
Record accurate, factual information on children's case records, including the date and time relating to the information, all those involved in concerns, and the professional response.	
Consider the following actions for each young person's Safety Plan	
Desired Outcome	Action: Recommendations
Disrupt contact with any person who poses a risk and/or is suspected of being involved in violence, drugs or sexual (CRIMINAL) exploitation	- Identify who the young person is spending time with and recognise negative and positive relationships - Implement disruption tactics (Community Protection Notices; verbal / written warnings; disruption letters for parents / carers; Child Abduction Warning Notices; Cuckooing Notices) - Consider disruption tactics employable by other agencies such as Licensing, Fire Service / Housing - Prevent home visits and screen telephone calls from other young people who may deliberately or unwittingly be

	recruiting the young person or adults suspected of abusing, grooming, or recruiting the young person • Provide additional patrols and disruption / detached outreach in named hotspots • Secure mobile phones and Sim cards, particularly if supplied by abusers and / or evidence of coercion and pass to the Police. If we provide phones, take down the IMEI (handset) and number of the sim (printed on the sim) as well as phone number, phone network • Consider removing mobile phones at night • Monitor call and text use and internet – laptop / tablet, phone and Xbox • Use MAPPA and MARAC and risk management processes where appropriate • Share information with Police, Social Care and relevant professionals via information report forms • Police and Social Care checks to be undertaken on any person who is deemed a risk • Critical Registration on addresses shared • If coercion is evidenced complete subscriber checks on the telephone numbers provided for alleged perpetrators • Provide additional patrols and disruption/detached outreach in named hotspots • Monitor cars turning up at the home and share information via report forms • Monitor internet use on laptop, phone and xbox – and external use • Engage the parents to ensure they act appropriately to safeguard YP. Consider parenting contract if necessary • Identify who provides housing or postcode input on selective licencing website – speak to Housing (Lynn Hall? Housing safeguarding lead to identify who are tenants) contribute • Incl. link to list of providers • Darlington BC - Housing • Darlington BC - Other housing providers
Raise awareness of exploitation, including relating to the young person's specific circumstances	• work on internet safety, sexting, consent, capacity and coercion, risk taking behaviours and consequences • Complete healthy relationships and rights work (group or individual) – reframe understanding of relationships • Provide peer articles and booklets for self-directed learning • Share online resources targeted at young people • Facilitate peer mentoring by young people who have been through similar experiences and learnt how to cope and protect themselves from exploitation • Work with school / college to raise awareness of risk • Identify a long-term key worker from any agency, ideally identified by the young person, to be their primary point of contact • work on internet safety, sexting, consent, capacity and coercion, risk taking behaviours and consequences • Complete healthy relationships and rights work (Group or Individual)

	• Support worker to complete the same work with the Parents • Provide peer articles and booklets for self-directed learning • Evaluate the work above and prepare a report showing the impact of it
Empower parents and carers	• Raise awareness with parents / carers of relevant resources about exploitation, their responsibilities and options, procedures and legal powers • Consider family support services e.g. support to implement and sustain age-appropriate behaviour management strategies, family contract – involving the young person in discussions too • Maintain active support of parents, carers and foster carers and help parents / carers to identify the signs of all forms of exploitation • Engage parents / carers to ensure they act appropriately to safeguard: actively engaged in searching for the young person, share information such as observed car registration numbers, named individuals, contact details shared by the young person • Consider Family Group Conference or Family Meeting • Parents to be aware of hotspots and implement a strict age appropriate curfew and follow the 15 minute rule (if the child is not home or where they should be, ring or text them after 15 minutes - if they do not respond or phone switched off wait a further 15 minutes – try again, if still no answer ring the Police to report missing)
Reduce the risk of missing episodes	• Identify a trusted adult the young person can contact out of hours • Primary contact to text the young person even if they don't respond to let them know they are in mind and people are worried about them • Provide 1-1 advice on risks associated with missing episodes • Consider a tracker on the young person's phone, with their consent • Place an Alert on Police MISPER system – highlight known addresses and who to contact in an emergency • Place an alert on walk-in health systems and emergency departments • Ensure parents / carers know how to contact EDT and Police to report missing • Ensure the Missing People Helpline and Childline numbers are in the young person's mobile phone address book or text the numbers to them • Consider informing appropriate outreach workers, Safer Neighbourhood Team Bulletins, border alerts (UKBA/UKHTC), public transport bodies, and agencies in other cities such as social care, Police and specialist services • Consider publicity in liaison with police and Council media teams • Conduct return home interviews in a way that facilitates positive change

	• Follow up return home interviews with active support to ensure the young person sees the return interview as a positive experience • Provide 1-1 advice on risks associated with missing episodes • Consider a tracker on the young person's phone • Place and Alert on Police MISPER system – highlight known addresses and vulnerability of child and who to contact in emergency etc. • Improve attendance at school/college • Do not hang around in hotspots discussed today or go to other City's with peers or adults without parental permission
Promote physical safety	• Identify triggers and patterns of escalating behaviour and agree how this can be de-escalated and appropriate intervention when de-escalation has not been effective • Working with housing services to look at alternative accommodation. • Consider whether legal advice is required in order to secure the young person's safety • Consider use of police powers • Consider National Referral Mechanism criteria
Promote sexual health and reduce the risk of STI's, pregnancy and blood borne viruses	• Recommend a full sexual health screening with sexual health services • Provide advice and options on contraception • Place an Alert on walk-in sexual health clinics, emergency departments and school nurse files – social worker and school nurse to be notified should child present for sexual health services or with injuries • Seek consent and conduct medical investigations as appropriate • Recommend a full sexual health screening at the GUM Clinic for the young person • Provide advice and options on contraception • Place an alert on GP/GUM/Walk-in clinics – Social Worker and Nurse to be notified should YP present for sexual health services or with injuries.
Support emotional needs and build self-esteem, including through diversionary activities	• Consider referrals for support to specialist services regarding sexual exploitation; rape and sexual assault; domestic abuse; mental health; counselling; youth services • Take time to explain the issues and keep the young person informed • Involve the young person in looking at alternatives and decision making • Identify and encourage positive activities and encourage the young person to make positive contributions at home, school, leisure or work Role model assertive behaviour • Raise aspirations with positive reinforcement • Arrange work experience opportunities and / or vocational training • Consider what can each agency offer (YOS, police, social care, education providers, voluntary sector) • Support the emotional needs of the child/YP and family

	• Referrals for support to CAMHS/Counselling etc. • Offer bereavement counselling to family and child • Support those that are self-harming
Consider how to make home a more attractive and consistent place to be	• Identify and address push and pull factors • Tackle any relationship problems at home • Support parents / carers with promoting stable routines for sleeping and eating together • Address any domestic violence issues and consider relevant programmes for victims and perpetrators • Tackle drug/ alcohol problems of other family members and support referrals • Consider extended stay with a family member or respite, possibly in a different location • Consider if current placement continues to be the most appropriate (level of independence and responsibility; other young people placed; placement location; specialist skills and knowledge; level of support day and night)
Raise awareness of risks of alcohol and substance misuse	• Refer to specialist services to provide advice, information and support about alcohol and substance misuse • Consider messages that can be delivered to cohorts of children through 'Personal, Social and Health Education' curriculum
Improve school / college / training attendance	• Tackle bullying, truancy and peer pressure • Ensure young people are protected in their educational setting from peers identified as posing a risk • Provide 'Personal, Social and Health Education' • Encourage engagement with alternative educational provision, informed by the young person's aspirations and interests • Provide funding for after school activities • Provide educational work regardless of attendance and identify an individual who will continue to engage the young person • Education provision to contact parents / carers and social worker whenever the young person is absent • Ensure SEN plans are reviewed are regularly reviewed
Corroborate information and protect any evidence	• Secure any clothing that is likely to have DNA on it and pass to the Police • Share any witness statements with the Police and Social Care • Establish facts and where possible corroborate information given, remember that evidence thresholds are high.
Reduce the number of professionals discussing CSE concerns with family/young person	• Nominate one individual to lead this work

Provide diversionary activities to improve self-esteem and replace excitement	• Positive activities to be offered, particularly those that heighten adrenaline
Ensure all relevant people are aware of the level of risk to the young Person	• Complete a current risk assessment and share with relevant professionals

