



# Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy 2017- 2019

## Reduce the harm from child sexual exploitation

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## Introduction

Reducing the harm from child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a priority for the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). The long-term consequences of any form of child abuse can be devastating and early identification and providing support as soon as problems emerge is critical. Child sexual exploitation damages children and like any form of abuse it can have long-lasting consequences that can impact on every part of a child's life and their future outcomes.

Child sexual exploitation is complex and children are often reluctant to disclose experiences of exploitation due to misplaced feelings of loyalty and shame. Many may not recognise what they are experiencing as abuse or that they require support or intervention, believing they are in control or in a healthy consensual relationship.

It is very clear from the research and local evidence that trust is very important to children and young people and this is something professionals must cultivate so that they can discuss their experiences.

We are committed to listening to and responding to children and young people, recognising when they need help, even when they don't have the words to tell us about what's happening, but their behaviour indicates they need support in respect of CSE.

This strategy sets out the approach multi agencies should take in respect of safeguarding children from CSE. Our approach to tackling CSE is split into three parts and based on the government's objectives outlined in *Tackling child sexual exploitation – progress report (February 2017)*:

- Tackling Offending
- Reducing Vulnerability
- Supporting victims and survivors.

The child sexual exploitation action plan for 2017-2018 is based on these three strategic aims.

## Definition

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

The definition of child sexual exploitation is as follows:

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

Like all forms of child sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex;
- can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual;
- can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity;
- can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (through others copying videos or images they have created and posting on social media, for example);
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Child sexual exploitation is a complex form of abuse and it can be difficult for those working with children to identify and assess. The indicators for child sexual exploitation can sometimes be mistaken for 'normal adolescent behaviours'. It requires knowledge, skills, professional curiosity and an assessment which analyses the risk factors and personal circumstances of individual children to ensure that the signs and symptoms are interpreted correctly and appropriate support is given. Even where a young person is old enough to legally consent to sexual activity, the law states that consent is only valid where they make a choice and have the freedom and capacity to make that choice. If a child feels they have no other meaningful choice, are under the influence of harmful substances or fearful of what might happen if they don't comply (all of which are common features in cases of child sexual exploitation) consent cannot legally be given whatever the age of the child.

**Child sexual exploitation is never the victim's fault, even if there is some form of exchange:** all children and young people under the age of 18 have a right to be safe and should be protected from harm.

One of the key factors found in most cases of child sexual exploitation is the presence of some form of exchange (sexual activity in return for something); for the victim and/or perpetrator or facilitator.

Where it is the victim who is offered, promised or given something they need or want, the exchange can include both tangible (such as money, drugs or alcohol) and intangible rewards (such as status, protection or perceived receipt of love or affection). It is critical to remember the unequal power dynamic within which this exchange occurs and to remember that the receipt of something by a child/young person does not make them any less of a victim. It is also important to note that the prevention of something negative can also fulfil the requirement for exchange, for example a child who engages in sexual activity to stop someone carrying out a threat to harm his/her family.

Whilst there can be gifts or treats involved in other forms of sexual abuse (e.g. a father who sexually abuses but also buys the child toys) it is most likely referred to as child sexual exploitation if the 'exchange', as the core dynamic at play, results in financial gain for or enhanced status of, the perpetrator.

Where the gain is only for the perpetrator/facilitator, there is most likely a financial gain (money,

discharge of a debt or free/discounted goods or services) or increased status as a result of the abuse.

If sexual gratification, or exercise of power and control, is the only gain for the perpetrator (and there is no gain for the child/young person) this would not normally constitute child sexual exploitation, but should be responded to as a different form of child sexual abuse.

## Values and Principles

The core values and principles that underpin our approach are taken from several key sources.

1. *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)* describes what children have said that they need:

- Vigilance: to have adults notice when things are troubling them
- Understanding and action: to understand what is happening; to be heard and understood; and to have that understanding acted upon
- Stability: to be able to develop an on-going stable relationship of trust with those helping them
- Respect: to be treated with the expectation that they are competent rather than not
- Information and engagement: to be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans
- Explanation: to be informed of the outcome of assessments and decisions and reasons when their views have not met with a positive response
- Support: to be provided with support in their own right as well as a member of their family
- Advocacy: to be provided with advocacy to assist them in putting forward their views

2. In February 2017 the Government published *Child sexual exploitation, Definition and guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from child sexual exploitation (February 2017)*.

This outlines that all practitioners working with children and families should respond in ways that are:

- **Child-centred:** recognising children and young people's rights to participate in decisions about them in line with their maturity, and focusing on the needs of the child. Other considerations, such as the fear of damaging relationships with children or adults, get in the way of protecting children from abuse and neglect. Practitioners should view a referral as the beginning of a process of inquiry, not as an accusation. Victims may be resistant to intervention and some may maintain links with their abusers, even after attempts to help protect them;
- **Developed and informed by the involvement of a child's family and carers wherever safe and appropriate:** a holistic assessment will take account of the wishes and feelings of children and the views of their parents/carers;

- **Responsive and pro-active:** everyone should be alert to the potential signs and indicators of child sexual exploitation, as well as other forms of abuse, and exercise professional curiosity in their day to day work. It is better to help children and young people as early as possible, before issues escalate and become more damaging;
- **Relationship-based:** practitioners should establish and maintain trusting relationships with children and young people, and continue to exercise professional curiosity and create safe spaces for disclosure; and
- **Informed by an understanding of the complexities of child sexual exploitation:** it is important to avoid language or actions that may lead a young person to feel they are not deserving of support or are in some way to blame for their abuse.
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The above government guidance highlights that those planning an effective local multi-agency response to child sexual exploitation should follow the process for managing risk of harm to children and putting their needs first, as set out in *Working Together*.

Specifically, an effective response is one that:

- Is collaborative and multi-agency (including statutory, voluntary and community sectors) with clear roles and responsibilities and clear lines of communication and accountability;
- Has clear and purposeful leadership across local safeguarding partners;
- Is locally informed and based on an up-to-date understanding of the local problem profile, but also informed by national learning;
- Is underpinned by effective information sharing and intelligence sharing. All multi-agency partners should follow the guidance set out in *Working Together*, for example taking part in strategy discussion and child protection conferences;
- Locates child sexual exploitation within a wider context of risk and harm, and moves beyond a case by case response to identify wider patterns of concern;
- Encompasses preventative, protective (immediate safeguarding) and responsive approaches, focusing on both victims and perpetrators (and recognising the potential for overlap between the two);
- Provides help and ongoing support that is responsive to individual need, strengths-based in approach and available over the longer-term (recognising that disclosure, resilience-building and recovery can take time);
- Supports staff to 'work with risk,' where required, in order to support a young person to become an active partner in their recovery and reintegration and achieve longer term meaningful change rather than temporary enforced compliance;
- Provides a response to children and young people with harmful sexual behaviours that recognises their vulnerabilities and needs, is holistic and provides early help and specialist services to these children and young people and their parents/carers; and
- Provides a system for flagging or applying appropriate markers on to systems in order to ensure effective record keeping and retrieval and assist information sharing (this should be based on the policy definition of child sexual exploitation and not just the criminal offences of that name).

The child sexual exploitation context includes:

- **Viewing child sexual exploitation within a wider continuum of exploitation, violence and abuse:** Child sexual exploitation is not a catch all category for all forms of sexual harm in adolescence. It should therefore be viewed within the wider continuum of sexual abuse and other relevant issues such as trafficking, modern slavery, domestic abuse and other gendered violence and going missing. The necessary focus on child sexual exploitation should not overshadow a focus on other manifestations of abuse.
- **Abuse outside of families:** Though child sexual exploitation can occur in the family, in most cases the response to exploitation may require services to consider a broader perspective than intra-familial child abuse. The response may need to address risk of harm posed outside the family home and draw in partners such as local businesses, licensing authorities, and other sectors. This reflects the context in which perpetrators are operating.
- **Agencies should move beyond a reactive approach:** (one that removes the individual from harm) to one that also addresses the existence of harm and/or proactively prevents that harm.
- **Local understanding:** Every area should have its own data and intelligence, of which child sexual exploitation should form a part. The North Lincolnshire CSE Action Plan is based on an inter-agency assessment of the local profile of perpetration. This requires effective local arrangements for sharing and collating intelligence and other information about communities, environments, perpetrators and victims.
- **Engaging with diversity:** The evidence base demonstrates that some cohorts of children and young people – males, children with disabilities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and/or Transgender and Black and Minority Ethnic children, for example – may be less likely to have their abuse identified or responded to. Local areas should ensure responses are accessible, relevant and sensitive to the needs of all children and young people.
- **Cross-area working:** Cases of child sexual exploitation frequently cross local authority, police force and even country boundaries in terms of the movement of both perpetrators and victims. A singular area focus cannot therefore adequately capture patterns of harm and risk.
- **Inter-agency working:** While significant progress has been made here, challenges remain. Important areas for improvement include:
  - the practical implementation of information sharing guidance;
  - common risk assessment processes, as set out in *Working Together*, that follow an evidence-based model which looks at risk factors, vulnerability, protective factors and resilience and which prioritises professional judgement and does not rely on simplistic scoring;
  - clarity about professional roles and thresholds for action across universal, targeted and specialist services;
  - more effective sharing and recording of intelligence;
  - better co-ordination of statutory and voluntary sector services; and
  - more streamlined management of multiple agencies' engagement with victims and their families.
- Enhancing children's and young people's **resilience and strengthening the protective factors** around them are critical strands of prevention. Resilience is about being able to overcome

adversities and avoid negative consequences. It is not a character trait; it involves both internal capabilities and external resources. Resilience is therefore never a substitute for support.

- **Openness to learning and improvement:** There has been considerable learning in recent years around how better to identify and respond to child sexual exploitation. Sources of support and how to access learning in this area can be found in the online annexes found in annex H sources and further guidance.

## Vision

**The vision endorsed by the LSCB is:**

**‘SAFE Children, SUPPORTED Families, TRANSFORMED Lives’**

This strategy supports the strategic outcome set within the Children and Young People’s Plan 2016-2020 which is:

### **Children Feel Safe and Are Safe**

In respect of tackling child sexual exploitation the strategy aims to:

#### **Reduce the harm from sexual exploitation**

The harmful effects of child sexual exploitation are serious and far-reaching for victims, their families and wider communities. The ideal is therefore to prevent the abuse happening in the first place. This section focuses on how we can protect children and young people through awareness-raising and resilience-building work.

The North Lincolnshire Child Sexual Exploitation strategy and action plan aims to:

- Educate all children and young people about the nature and risks of child sexual exploitation and other forms of related harm (both online and offline) and how to access support;
- Recognise that children and young people can be both victims and perpetrators of child sexual exploitation;
- Promote the resilience of children and young people and their families and strengthen the protective factors around them;
- Identify and support those settings, such as schools and colleges, in which children and young people can form healthy and safe relationships;
- Supplement universal initiatives with targeted work with groups of particularly vulnerable children and young people, such as those in care, whilst being careful not to stigmatise specific groups;
- Provide complementary messages to parents and carers about risks to their children (online and offline) and how to access support if they have concerns.
- Consider the levels of knowledge and understanding of the wider workforce, so that everyone working with children and young people can play their role in prevention; and
- Educate the wider community so they can identify and report concerns and seek support.

Although messages and methods of delivery will vary according to the nature and needs of the

audience, all education and awareness raising initiatives should:

- Be grounded in an evidence-based understanding of child sexual exploitation (both online and offline);
- Challenge myths and misconceptions about who is perpetrating and experiencing this form of abuse;
- Send a clear message that all forms of child sexual exploitation are abuse;
- Recognise the potential overlap between victims and perpetrators;
- Challenge any victim-blaming and promote the rights of all victims to protection and support;
- Provide information on where and how to report concerns and access support; and
- Be inclusive and accessible to the intended audience, in terms of language and delivery methods and ensure information is tailored and relevant to diverse groups such as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Black and Minority Ethnic and/or deaf or disabled children and young people.

## **Action Plan 2017-18**

To support the ongoing delivery of the Strategy the following priorities have been identified for 2017/18

- Tackling Offending
- Reducing Vulnerability
- Supporting victims and survivors.

These three priorities are delivered through either existing groups or newly established Task and Finish Groups.

### **Priority Action 1 – Tackling Offending**

The Partnership will maximise all opportunities to disrupt, target and prosecute offenders and those who pose a risk of exploiting children.

**Aim:** The disruption and prosecution of CSE Offenders is maximised.

### **2 - Priority Action 2 - Reduce Vulnerability**

The Partnership will have a clear focus on preventing the risks and causes of CSE. The Partnership is committed to Education and Prevention, both with individuals and communities and through Early Help is focused on early intervention and behaviour changing through targeted interventions and universal provision.

Our approach will also encompass preventative, protective (immediate safeguarding) and responsive approaches, focusing on both victims and perpetrators (and recognising the potential for overlap between the two);

**Aim:** Address CSE at the earliest point possible preventing escalation and enhance resilience and protective factors for young people.

### **Priority Action 3 Support Victims and Survivors**

The Partnership will provide appropriate services to identify and protect young people at risk of or subject to sexual exploitation and to safeguard and prevent them from further harm.

Where young people are identified as victims of CSE, the Partnership will ensure we have appropriate process in place to support young people and their families through the Criminal Justice System.

**Aim** - All staff across the Partnership are confident in identifying and disrupting CSE, as well as supporting all victims of CSE and their families and carers receive the help and support they require and lessons from the experiences of young people are used to inform future developments.

## **Principles**

### **Tackling Offending**

#### **Educating communities**

**Harnessing the wider community:** Those who do not necessarily 'work with children' also have a contribution to make to tackling child sexual exploitation. Hoteliers, taxi drivers, park wardens, refuse collectors and retail workers (amongst others) may hold vital information about the movement of victims and perpetrators. Emergency services, including the Fire and Ambulance Services, and local community and religious groups can also play a key role. Educating those who work in local services and businesses (including the night-time economy) about what to look for, and how to report concerns, can significantly enhance local disruption and protective capabilities.

This focus should also include members of the wider local community who may observe concerns within their areas – for example, those living near a party house location who may see victims coming and going. Educating people about child sexual exploitation, the things to look out for and where to report concerns, will significantly enhance the protective capabilities of our communities.

### **Reducing Vulnerability**

#### **Educating children and young people**

Although there is not as yet any proven blueprint for the most effective means of communicating messages around child sexual exploitation to children and young people, the evidence base highlights some important principles:

- **The need for early and continuous education:** We are increasingly learning about cases of child sexual exploitation that involve younger children, particularly in the online sphere. If children and young people are not educated about the risk of child sexual exploitation (and other forms of sexual abuse) before perpetrators approach them, they are left unprotected. Schools may want to consider how to build in effective, age-appropriate education, which sensitively supports younger children on these issues and which forms part of a planned programme of study across key stages. This should be accompanied by wider resilience-building work.

- **Use all potential avenues of communication:** Schools, colleges and other educational settings have a critical role to play. Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) lessons are an obvious route for educating children and young people about the risks of child sexual exploitation and other forms of harm, as are pastoral services and school nurse services. Consideration should also be given to how messages can be delivered outside mainstream education, for example, in youth clubs, community settings or the family home.
- **Adopt a holistic approach:** Risk of child sexual exploitation should be addressed as part of a wider programme of work on sexuality and sexual development, choice and consent, healthy relationships, harmful social norms and abusive behaviours and online safety. This should build on existing initiatives (around online safety for example) and ensure messages dovetail across these different programmes of work. Educative work should engage both boys and girls and should address both risk of perpetration and risk of victimisation (and the potential for overlap).
- **Contextual considerations:** Messages around child sexual exploitation should be delivered within a safe non-judgmental environment, by credible individuals who are confident discussing the issues and able to challenge unhelpful perceptions. Where specific vulnerabilities are identified (going missing, gang-association or drug/alcohol misuse, for example) more targeted educative work should be undertaken, while taking care to avoid stigmatisation or labelling. Accessible and appropriate support should be immediately available should any issues of concern be identified during education activity.

### Educating parents and carers

Parents and carers have a critical role to play in helping to protect children and young people from child sexual exploitation. They can educate their children about sex, healthy relationships and abuse, enhance resilience, provide a safe base and ensure open channels of communication. They are also well placed to support early identification by identifying emerging vulnerabilities or potential indicators of abuse and seeking support before risks escalate. In order to support them, practitioners should ensure that parents/carers:

- Understand the risks of both online and offline child sexual exploitation and recognise this as something that could affect their child;
- Know the potential indicators of child sexual exploitation;
- Know where and how to access support;
- Are reassured that services will, as appropriate, work in partnership with them to try to protect their child;
- Have support to manage the emotional impact of child sexual exploitation on their child, themselves and on family relationships; and
- Have support that is tailored to their specific circumstances and needs, for example, support that recognises their culture or faith, and are helped to overcome any barriers such as language.

## Supporting Victims and Survivors

### Educating practitioners

- **Readiness of the professional workforce:** *Working Together* recognises that everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe – that includes all those those who work in social care, adult services, education, health settings, early years, youth work, youth justice, the police, and voluntary and community workers. Local safeguarding

arrangements should provide high-quality training and other learning and developmental activities that are rooted in evidence, tailored to different professional groups and responsive to local learning needs.

- **Staff support and supervision:** Creating the right organisational environment and ensuring good quality professional leadership and practice supervision are essential for developing and sustaining effective practice. Supervision can help to:
  - ensure progress and actions are reviewed so cases do not 'drift';
  - maintain focus on the child or young person;
  - test the evidence base for assessment and intervention;
  - address the emotional impact of the work on the practitioner; and
  - support reflective practice and help practitioners recognise where personal values and attitudes might be leading to risky practice, assumptions or 'blind spots'.

All practitioners working with children and young people, whether in specialist or universal roles, should:

- Ensure they are aware of local multi-agency protocols in relation to child sexual exploitation;
- Recognise learning and development around this as an essential part of their role;
- Discuss learning needs in relation to child sexual exploitation with their supervisor or manager;
- Identify and access training opportunities that reflect their professional role;
- Reflect on learning from training and other activity with their manager, and consider how it will impact on practice;
- Review their learning needs over time, striving to continuously improve their knowledge, skills and understanding; and
- Actively engage in supervision and use it as an opportunity to test out thinking, have practice constructively challenged and discuss support needs.

Professional training and local protocols should clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of different practitioners in safeguarding children from harm (see *Working Together*). Training should address the complexities of identifying and responding to child sexual exploitation, emphasising:

- Practitioners' safeguarding responsibilities and local reporting routes;
- Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse;
- Child sexual exploitation can take many different forms (online and offline) and affect any child or young person;
- All under 18s are entitled to protection and support and that safeguarding duties do not depend on a child or young person's desire to be safeguarded;
- The need to understand the impact of trauma on behaviour and presentation;
- The need to look beyond presenting behaviours and exercise 'professional curiosity';
- The need to apply professional judgment, supported by effective supervision and robust tools, in decision-making and practice;
- The power of professional reactions to facilitate or close down access to support and protection;
- The practical implementation of information sharing guidance where there are concerns about child sexual exploitation; and

- The development of practical skills in facilitating conversations with children and young people, and with their parents/carers.

Training alone is not sufficient to ensure a skilled and confident workforce, however. Training should be accompanied by:

- Opportunities to learn from other practitioners – for example, shadowing, co-working and peer observation;
- Ongoing high-quality supervision;
- A focus on reflective practice to help practitioners navigate complexity; and
- A recognition of the emotional impact that such work can have on practitioners, and access to support in order to manage this.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

As part of the LSCB's statutory function to monitor and oversee work to safeguard children and young people the LSCB will keep the implementation of this strategy and action plan under review. The LSCB Child Exploitation Strategic Group will monitor the effectiveness of interagency work in respect of safeguarding children and young people who may be at risk of sexual exploitation or who have suffered harm as a result of this type of abuse.

The North Lincolnshire Strategy delivery is supported by a Governance and Assurance Framework a number of Delivery Groups which are outlined at Appendix One.

All agencies have a responsibility to audit their practice and ensure the effectiveness of their arrangements in respect of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in respect of tackling CSE. The LSCB will monitor compliance through section 11 challenge events, the LSCB Joint Case Evaluation process which includes single agency case audits, joint case evaluation meetings and LSCB Line of Sight meetings, performance management information and most importantly talking to children and young people about their experiences and views to further enhance individual planning, service development and strategic direction.

The progress of this strategy will be reported to the LSCB every 3 months by the chair of the CSE Strategic Group. The strategy will be subject to an annual review.

## Appendix 1

### Accountability Framework for CSE

#### Tackling CSE in North Lincolnshire

North Lincolnshire has a Strategy for tackling CSE which sits under the auspice of the LSCB and is jointly owned by the Safer Neighbourhoods Executive Board. This supplementary guidance describes the accountability framework of the strategy group, referred to as the: **Accountability Framework - Strategy**. The strategy and action plan sets out how we are going to tackle CSE at a population level.

In addition to this strategy children and young people who are at risk of or experiencing CSE **WILL** be managed through the established Early Help, Child in Need and Child in Need of Protection system governed by Working Together 2015, this identification and statutory framework will be enhanced by the **MACE** process – this is referred to as the **Accountability Framework – Case Specific**.

All agencies have a statutory role to: **use the statutory framework as described in Working Together 2015 and within North Lincolnshire LSCB procedures to identify, assess, offer early help and make a referral to social work services if they believe a child is in need and or in need of protection. This is further described within the Helping Children and Families (threshold document 2016-2020) – if a child is at risk of or suffered harm refer to social work services and or the police in an emergency.**

The introduction of the MACE supports and adds value to the above process and provides oversight by gaining a collective understanding in terms of children at risk and perpetrators, it does not detract from the need to follow Working Together 2015 and compliments this process and the Complex Child Abuse arrangements.

Local Profiles, trends, resource and performance data from the MACE - case specific accountability framework will be reported to the Strategy Group to shape and influence strategy development.

#### Groups, core attendance and brief Terms of Reference

##### **STRATEGY & CASE SPECIFIC**

**Chief Officer Group** (GOLD group) – Chief Constable/Local Authority Head of Paid Service, Executive Director People & Transformation/ Director for Children and Community Resilience/LSCB Chair/Identified Partners - Both **Accountable & Case Specific (meets annually or as required to receive an overview and recommendations for commissioning, policy change and or allocation of resources. It can be called to review and prioritise and resource specific activity with regard both case specific and strategy).**

##### **STRATEGY**

**CSE Strategic Group** – Designated Agency Lead Officers on behalf of NL LSCB Partners - **Accountable for the CSE Strategy and delivery of the action plan on behalf of the LSCB (meets quarterly) The Strategic Group also provides oversight and seeks assurance from the Multi- Agency Missing Children Group.**

## **CASE SPECIFIC**

**Senior Officer Group** - Lead Investigation Officer's/Superintendent/Assistant Directors/ Identified Partners - **to ascertain whether there are sufficient resources and policy direction to enable the operational lead investigators to undertake the necessary work to protect children at risk, victims and prosecute offenders. Responsible for recommending action across agencies to maximise the impact of work relating to complex cases. – Accountable to Chief Officer Group (as required). (Complex Cases – are cases that cannot be managed within the scope of current procedures and resources and or involve multiple victims and/or offenders and are such that they require higher level decisions in relation to the case(s).**

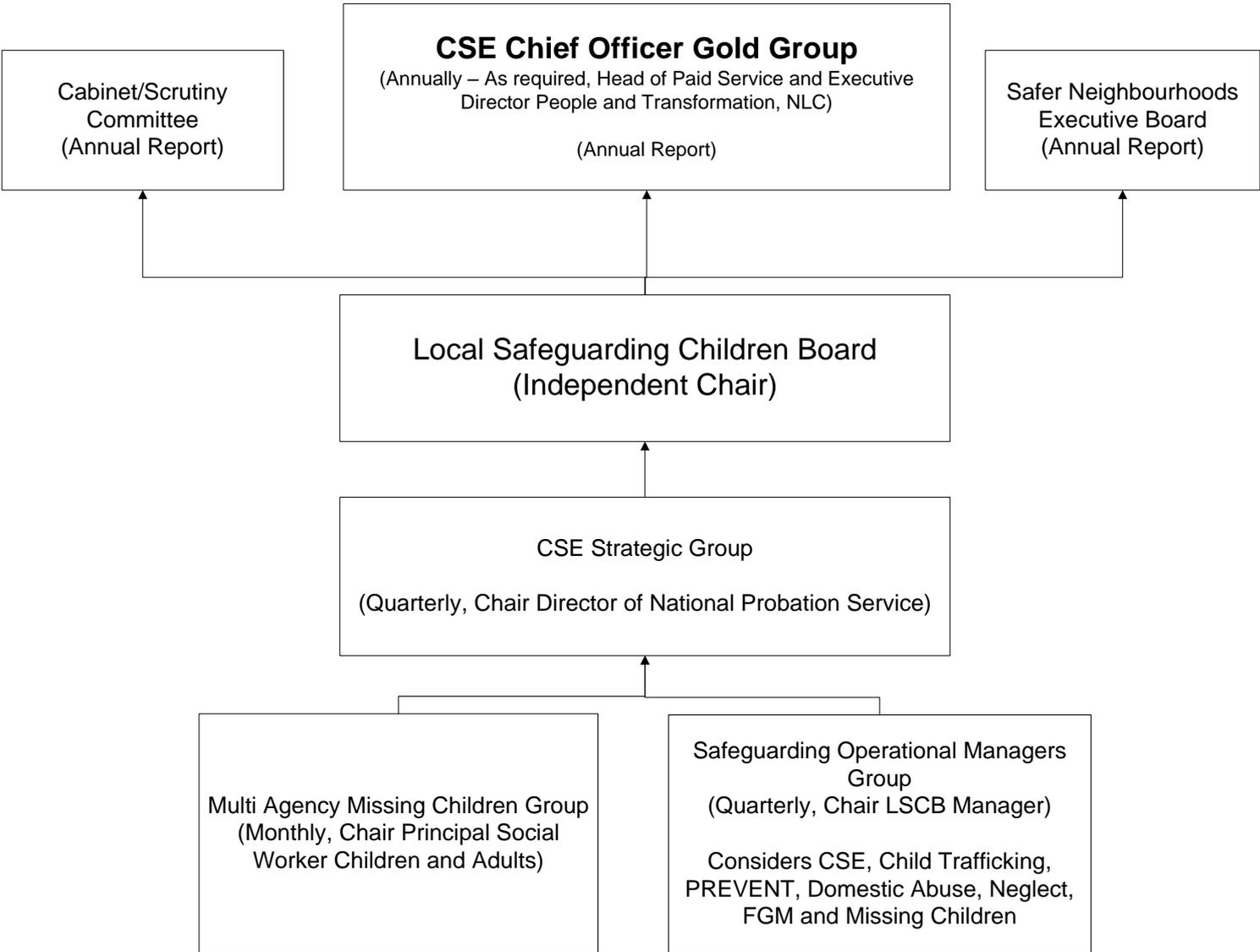
**MACE Risk Management** - Case Managers/Service Managers Children Services/Police CSE and PVP officers/Education Officers/Health Workers-Safeguarding Leads share information and risk analysis on identified cases to identify connectivity, themes and trends to enable the group to identify further action that could be undertaken. This should not replace the role of the case conference or core group process and procedure, it can add value and make recommendation for consideration and if urgent- **Accountable to Senior Officers and will escalate issues to Senior Officers as relevant.**

**Safeguarding Operational Managers Group** - Lead managers across agencies – **Linked to the Senior Officer Group as required (meets quarterly)**

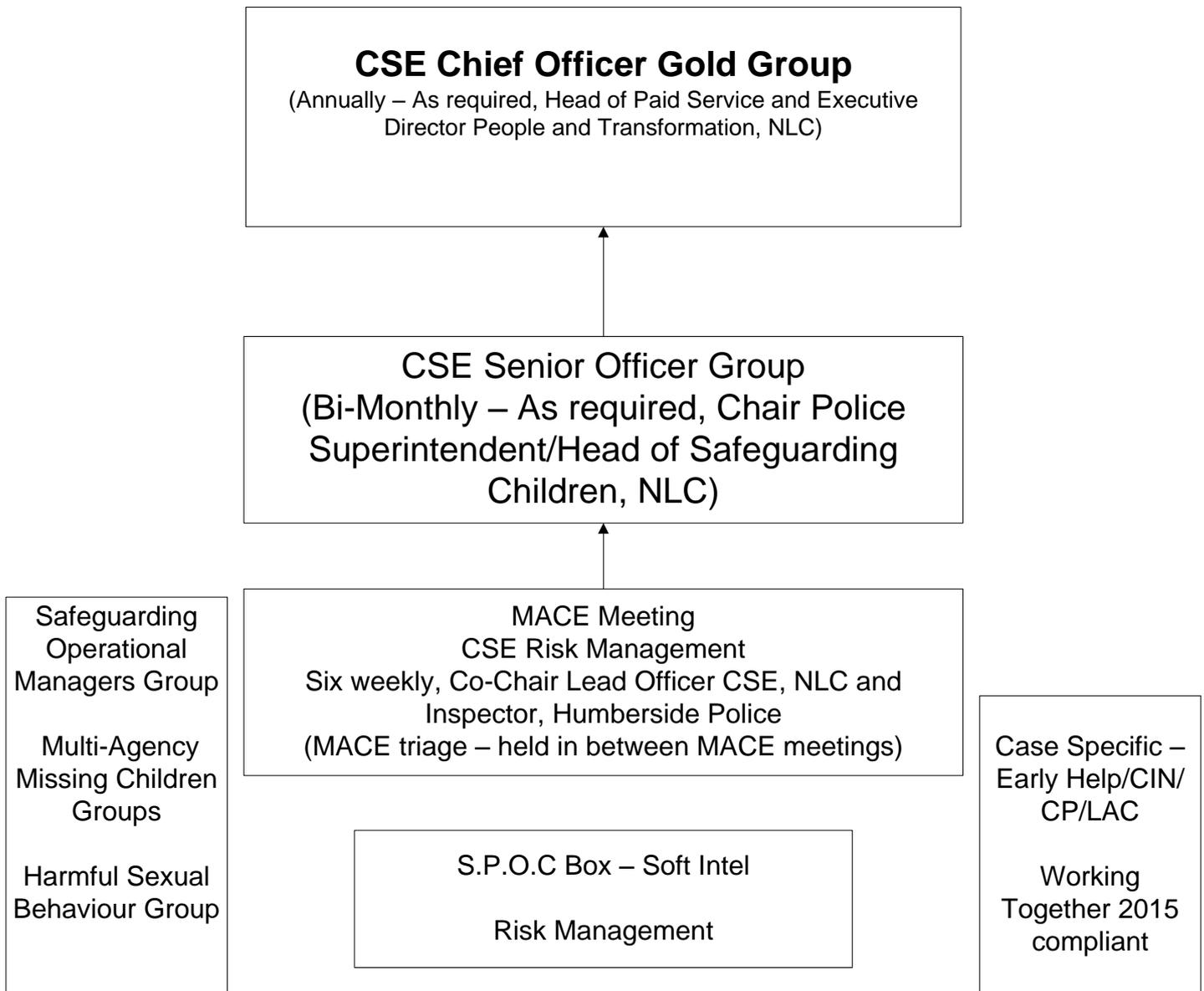
**Multi-Agency Missing Children Group** - case specific named professionals / lead managers – **Linked to the Senior Officer Group as required (meets monthly)**

**Harmful Sexual Behaviour** - case specific - Agencies are working together to provide a specialist service to children and young people who have engaged in harmful sexual behaviour (HSB). The service consists of a 'virtual team' of multi-agency practitioners who have been trained in the issues surrounding HSB, and in specialist assessment, using the AIMS methodology. **Accountable to the LSCB. (The Panel meets every month at minimum).**

# CSE – North Lincolnshire Accountability Framework - Strategy



# CSE – North Lincolnshire Accountability Framework - Case Specific



## Appendix 2 Risk Analysis Framework

### Risk Analysis Framework

Any assessment and intervention by Children's Services due to ongoing concern or significant harm is underpinned by the North Lincolnshire Risk Analysis Framework (RAF).

The risk analysis process acknowledges that it is never possible to remove all risk from a child's life and that the experience of assessing, understanding and mitigating risk within a consistent framework is essential in balancing the needs of a child or young person within the wider family and environmental factors that impact on a child/young person.

Managing and mitigating risk is essential in engaging with children and young people to understand what factors indicate usual adolescent development; recognising what risks exist in a child's life, what level of threat the risks present to the child's wellbeing, and how well these can be managed so that the level of threat is reduced and safely managed.

Within North Lincolnshire there is a well-embedded RAF which is utilised when working with babies, children and young people and provides a consistent model for the assessment, analysis and management of risk.

The RAF may be used to underpin Early Help Plans where risk and protective factors should be considered. It is integral to individual plans for children and young people where there is statutory involvement due to child concern and child protection. This includes cases that are:

- Child in Need, (including disabled children);
- Child Protection;
- Looked After Children;
- Care Leavers;
- Young Offenders; and
- Older Young People

The analysis of risk also takes place within the three domains of the National Assessment Framework: child's developmental needs, parental capacity to meet those needs, and family and environmental factors that support or hinder. It focuses on two key aspects; what factors are there in the child's life that present a risk to their wellbeing (risk factors), and what factors guard against risk (protective factors).

Having determined what risk and protective factors exist, the process is then to judge the balance of those factors, particularly whether there are sufficient protective factors in place to balance out the risk factors. The next stage is to judge what meaning the level of risk has for and the impact on the child / young person. This will be on a continuum from no significant risk to severe risk.

Finally, the worker must determine what needs to change in order to reduce risk and devise a plan to deliver that change.

The risk analysis is repeated at milestones such as reviews of the child's plan, and at times when significant change occurs in the child's circumstances, e.g. episodes of the child going missing, change in family circumstances, new and emerging evidence etc.

### Risk Analysis Questions

## 1.1 Identified Risk Factors

*Identify those factors relating to the child's development, parenting capacity and family and environmental factors that may increase the risk of future harm.*

### 1.2 Identified Protective Factors

*Identify those factors relating to the child's development, parenting capacity and family and environmental factors that may diminish the risk of future harm*

### 2. Which of these factors are likely to be most significant for the child in terms of increasing or reducing risk and protective factors?

*Assess the relative strength of the risk and protective factors in the child's world*

### 3. What are the likely outcomes of this for the child?

*Assess the likely outcomes of future harm for the child if the current level of risk continues – consider safety, health and development. Assess the acceptability of the estimated risk, given the likely outcomes identified.*

### 4. What needs to change if the level of risk is to be reduced?

*Specify those actions and resources needed to boost the strength and range of identified protective factors, or diminish risk factors. Specify what needs to change if the child is to be kept safe and experience healthy outcomes.*

### How should it be done?

1. The first part of the risk analysis requires the identification of risk and protective factors within the three dimensions of the National Assessment Framework – child's developmental needs, parenting capacity and family and environment. From each of the summaries of the three domains, those factors that can be defined as carrying either a risk or protective potential are identified.
2. Risk factors are defined as those factors in the child's world that are likely to increase the likelihood of harm occurring or recurring.
3. Protective factors are those factors in the child's world that may be seen as containing a protective component for the child – they are likely to counteract the impact of the identified risk factors, and diminish the risk of harm occurring or recurring.
4. The second part of the risk analysis is addressed in the question "*Which of these factors are likely to be most significant for the child in terms of reducing or increasing the probability of future harm?*"
5. Here, we need to appraise the relative strength of the risk and protective factors that have been identified, and assign weight to them. In other words, we assess how powerful each of these factors is likely to be, including their strength relative to each other.
6. It may be that the list of risk factors is longer than the list of protective factors, or *vice versa*. But caution is needed because a longer list of protective factors may be deceptive. When considering the strength of these factors, we may find that a smaller list of risk factors adds up to more in "real terms". We always need to give consideration to the interaction of different factors and their cumulative effects on the child and family.
7. Other important information to weigh will be any clinical diagnoses of physical injury, sexual harm, neglect and failure to thrive and emotional harm, undertaken as part of the enquiry into possible significant harm.
8. The next question in the risk analysis *What are the likely outcomes of this for the child?* invites us to use the overview of risk and protective factors to estimate the level of risk that therefore appears to be present for the child. On the basis of all the information gathered and our assessment of it, we seek to estimate the probability of future harm.

9. There are some helpful questions to consider when seeking to assess the probability of future harm, adapted from Moore (1996) for the purposes of risk analysis in child protection:
10. Working on the basis that the best predictor of future behaviour is past behaviour, we should ask:
  - How often has this harm occurred to the child before?
  - Over what time period has it occurred?
  - In how wide a range of circumstances has it occurred?
  - Consider its unusualness and the specificity of internal and external factors which seem necessary for the harm to occur (by internal factors is meant thoughts, emotions, arousals. By external factors is meant situations and the actions of others)
  - If the harm has occurred before, can we identify what the situations had in common? What factors were present?
  - To what extent have these factors needed to be present for the harm to occur?
  - What reinforces the harmful behaviour? – which factors seem to increase the probability of harm occurring?
  - Is it likely that these factors will occur again in the child's and family's environment?
11. Using these questions we can attempt to formulate a model of the process that appears to have led to the harmful behaviour. We can use our responses to these questions to clarify what appear to be the predisposing influences, dis-inhibitors, drives and triggers – *Why this act? Why in this way? Why now?*
12. Having done so we should be better placed to make some judgement about the level of risk to the child and the probability of future harm.
13. We then need to assess the likely outcomes of this for this child. What are the likely consequences for them in terms of their safety, health and development, if the current level of risk continues?
14. Knowledge that the professionals involved with the family have of this particular child, more general knowledge of child development, child health and the possible impact of child abuse and neglect, and the use of research should be used to assess the likely outcomes for the child. This information is used to assess what future harm may mean for this particular child. Medical assessments of injuries or damage sustained by the child will be very important to this part of the analysis. We would need to take into account psychological or psychiatric assessments that may have been carried out, and the impact of any disability will have to be weighed. Issues of ethnicity and the impact of wider cultural and community factors will need to be considered.
15. The importance of reaching conclusions on the basis of a multidisciplinary assessment is to be emphasised, because it will be necessary to draw on a range of sources to corroborate our judgements. At each stage of the risk analysis we need to ask what evidence we have to support them.
16. The last question brings us to the last part of the Risk Analysis. All of the information gathered and the analysis undertaken will enable us to describe *What needs to change if this level of risk is to be reduced?*
17. We return to the three domains of the Assessment Framework to highlight areas where change is needed. What needs to change in the parenting capacity and family environmental factors if the child is to be kept safe and experience healthy outcomes – i.e. their developmental needs are to be adequately met? The time-scales within which these changes need to occur and those responsible for the actions/next steps need to be identified including the parents, wider family and the child (if appropriate).

## Appendix 3: MACE (Multi Agency Child Exploitation) Meeting Procedure

### Introduction

There are existing LSCB procedures for responding to children in need or at risk of significant harm and these provide an effective framework for assessment, risk analysis and managing risk to children in a multi-agency arena.

A distinct process to complement and add value to the existing procedures should be followed in cases of child sexual exploitation.



Upon receipt of a referral where there are factors that may indicate CSE, the CSE - Vulnerabilities and Risk Indicators Guide should be used to consider if there are vulnerability/ risk factors in relation to CSE that require further consideration. There should be a summary and analysis of the Guide within the body of the referral rather than a specific standalone document being included on a child's case file.

The concerns should be discussed with the Practice Supervisor within 24 hours of the referral being received. The Practice Supervisor signing off the contact/referral must clearly have considered risk and protective factors, and summarised the reasons why a particular disposal has been decided upon. The rationale for any decision should be clearly set out.



When a Children's Services Assessment is agreed as a referral decision, a holistic assessment of the child's needs is completed.

A risk analysis is completed within the CSA (utilising the risk analysis framework). The CSE - Vulnerabilities and Risk Indicators Guide is used to enhance the outcome focused risk analysis framework.

If during or as an outcome of the assessment there is indication that the child is at risk of or experiencing CSE (use the definition of CSE) the MACE risk tool should be completed to enable a specific risk focus on CSE.

If there is an indication on an open child's case that they are at risk or have experienced CSE, the MACE risk tool is completed.



If the MACE risk tool indicates that the child is likely to be at risk of CSE the Practice Supervisor responsible for the case liaises with Lead Officer for CSE who reviews the case in order to consider the need for the case to be discussed at MACE Triage which will decide whether the case is subsequently discussed at the MACE meeting. NB – if there is clear evidence that the child is at risk of or experiencing CSE the MACE risk tool can be used at the point of referral.



Upon the case being agreed to be discussed at the MACE meeting, the allocated social worker takes the lead for completing the MACE risk tool. *Professional judgement and liaising with other agencies are key when completing this.*

A Service Manager and/or Lead Officer for CSE presents the case to the MACE meeting, following them being provided with the MACE risk tool and being fully briefed by the social worker.

The case is discussed within the multi-agency arena. A decision will be made whether to review the case or remove from the agenda.

The MACE meeting WILL NOT review or amend any statutory plans in place but may make recommendations. The purpose of the MACE is to add value & to use the knowledge from agencies to form links between children at risk / victims, offenders and locations (soft intelligence). Information about perpetrator connections can be identified at the MACE meetings.

During each meeting, the highest risk children will be identified alongside themes (may include hotspot locations / emerging concerns regarding a group of children from a particular school)

MACE meetings will identify actions for other services for example environmental health and immigration.

**If a child not known to social work services is referenced to have connections with a child assessed to be at risk of CSE, a referral should be made in relation to the child not known.**

Statutory plans will continue as normal, plans are to be enhanced with information obtained throughout the MACE meetings.

## Appendix 4: North Lincolnshire Risk Analysis in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation

The following offers guidance on the use of the risk analysis tools, none of these should detract from working within the statutory framework specified in Working Together 2015 and the LSCB procedures. The tools include:

- CSE Vulnerabilities and Risk Indicators Guide
- Risk Analysis Framework
- MACE Risk Assessment

The tools should be used to enhance and complement the Working Together 2015 and LSCB procedures and should be used by practitioners and managers employing evidenced based interventions, practice wisdom and not as a tick box.

Risk in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in North Lincolnshire is identified, assessed/analysed and managed at varying levels dependent upon the individual context of each case:

- Identification & Emerging needs - vulnerability factors in relation to CSE (CSE Vulnerabilities and Risk Indicators Guide)
- Assessment and use of Risk Analysis Framework (RAF), including consideration of the vulnerabilities and risk indicators from the CSE Vulnerabilities and Risk Indicators Guide which are considered in the RAF. This can be within an Early Help Assessment or a Children Services Assessment.
- Multi agency management oversight of CSE through the MACE Triage and MACE risk assessment and management meetings.

### Identifying Emerging Needs and Vulnerabilities:

The CSE Vulnerabilities and Risk Indicators Guide should be used as a reminder of points to consider as guidance by all agencies staff to recognise and identify children who are vulnerable to, at risk of, or who are already being sexually exploited.

If a professional has information that indicates a child is possibly vulnerable or at risk of CSE then the CSE Vulnerabilities and Risk Indicators Guide should be considered to inform what needs to happen next. The document is to assist professionals in having regard to these signs and behaviours. The CSE Vulnerabilities and Risk Indicators Guide will not necessarily be completed in isolation. It will be used as guidance to consider and recognise/identify children who are vulnerable to, at risk of, or who are already being sexually exploited as part of the risk analysis and information considered and gathered for an assessment. The CSE Vulnerabilities and Risk Indicators Guide covers the following areas:

The following vulnerabilities are examples of the types of things children can experience that might make them more susceptible to child sexual exploitation:

- Having a prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse;
- Lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic violence or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example);
- Recent bereavement or loss;

- Social isolation or social difficulties;
- Absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality;
- Economic vulnerability;
- Homelessness or insecure accommodation status;
- Connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited;
- Family members or other connections involved in adult sex work;
- Having a physical or learning disability;
- Being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories); and
- Sexual identity.

Not all children and young people with these vulnerabilities will experience child sexual exploitation. **Child sexual exploitation can also occur without any of these vulnerabilities being present.**

Children rarely self-report child sexual exploitation so it is important that practitioners are aware of potential indicators of risk, including:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones etc without plausible explanation;
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks;
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work;
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late;
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls;
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol;
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections;
- Evidence of/suspicions of physical or sexual assault;
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups;
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers);
- Frequenting areas known for sex work;
- Concerning use of internet or other social media;
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours; and
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

Practitioners should also remain open to the fact that child sexual exploitation can occur without any of these risk indicators being obviously present. Practitioners should also be alert to the fact that some risk assessments have been constructed around indicators of face-to-face perpetration by adults and may not adequately capture online or peer-perpetrated forms of harm. It is also important to remember that risk assessments only capture risk at the point of assessment and that levels of risk vary over time, and that the presence of these indicators may be explained by other forms of vulnerability rather than child sexual exploitation.

The first step for practitioners is to be alert to the potential signs of abuse and neglect and to understand the procedures set out by North Lincolnshire's LSCB. Those working with children and families should access training through those multi-agency arrangements to support them in identifying vulnerability, risk and harm. This will help practitioners to know what action to take and to develop a shared understanding about what best practice looks like.

**If the child is at risk of or experiencing CSE a referral should be made to Children's Social Work Services or the Police if the child is in immediate danger.**

Having considered the vulnerabilities and risk indicators if the child is not believed to be at risk of CSE there may still be other needs that could be responded to by completing an Early Help Assessment.

## **Children in Need**

If the child is determined to be in need but not at risk of CSE a Children Services Assessment should commence.

## **Children at risk of or experiencing significant harm**

If there are indications that the child is at risk of or experiencing CSE a referral should be made and a multi-agency strategy meeting held in accordance with the LSCB procedures and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 to determine the next course of action.

## **Risk Analysis Framework:**

Any assessment and intervention by Children's Services due to ongoing concern or significant harm is underpinned by the North Lincolnshire Risk Analysis Framework (RAF).

The risk analysis process acknowledges that it is never possible to remove all risk from a child's life and that the experience of assessing, understanding and mitigating risk within a consistent framework is essential in balancing the needs of a child or young person within the wider family and environmental factors that impact on a child / young person.

Managing and mitigating risk is essential in engaging with children and young people to understand what factors indicate usual adolescent development; recognising what risks exist in a child's life, what level of threat the risks present to the child's wellbeing, and how well these can be managed so that the level of threat is reduced and safely managed.

Within North Lincolnshire there is a well-embedded RAF which is utilised when working with babies, children and young people and provides a consistent model for the assessment, analysis and management of risk.

The RAF may be used to underpin Early Help Plans where risk and protective factors should be considered. It is integral to individual plans for children and young people where there is statutory involvement due to child concern and child protection. This includes cases that are:

- Child in Need, (including disabled children);
- Child Protection;
- Looked After Children;
- Care Leavers;
- Young Offenders; and
- Older Young People

The analysis of risk also takes place within the three domains of the National Assessment Framework: child's developmental needs, parental capacity to meet those needs, and family and environmental factors that support or hinder. It focuses on two key aspects; what factors are there in the child's life that present a risk to their wellbeing (risk factors), and what factors guard against risk (protective factors).

Having determined what risk and protective factors exist, the process is then to judge the balance of those factors, particularly whether there are sufficient protective factors in place to balance out the risk factors. The next stage is to judge what meaning the level of risk has for and the impact on the child / young person. This will be on a continuum from no significant risk to severe risk.

Finally, the worker must determine what needs to change in order to reduce risk and devise a plan to

deliver that change.

The risk analysis is repeated at milestones such as reviews of the child's plan, and at times when significant change occurs in the child's circumstances, e.g. episodes of the child going missing, change in family circumstances, new and emerging evidence etc.

### Multi agency management oversight through the MACE meeting:

#### MACE risk assessment

Where a child is deemed to be at risk of or experiencing CSE the MACE risk assessment tool will be used to complement the Risk Analysis Framework and be presented for discussion at the Multi Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) Triage which will subsequently decide whether the child's case is discussed at the MACE meeting meeting. This enables a specific focus on the risk factors in relation to CSE at a management level allowing for added value for example intelligence on connections between children and young people, perpetrators, locations and premises.

The MACE risk assessment tool can be utilised at the point in which a child is deemed at risk of CSE. The MACE risk assessment tool should run parallel to any statutory plan, therefore all children and young people on the MACE agenda should have already been referred through to Children's Services and be subject to a Child in Need, Child Protection plan or be Looked After. Given the role of the MACE in making connections and associations between young people and perpetrators there may be some young people whom may not be subject to a statutory plan, however, through the process of discussion at the MACE may be at risk of CSE. In these circumstances an immediate referral to Children's Services should be made.

The risk assessment tool aims to identify all areas of vulnerability and risk related to CSE and outlines specific tasks to manage and reduce risk in relation to CSE. The tool enables a focus on CSE and connectivity between children and perpetrators. It also enables groups of children's risk assessments to be viewed collectively thus enabling a focus on cross referencing groups of children/perpetrators, utilising intelligence and identifying emerging themes and hot spots. All of the tools should be based upon professional practice and a qualitative analysis of the factors evident in the case.

### The connectivity of risk assessment tools when assessing the risk of Child Sexual Exploitation

