

Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy 2014 – 2017

- Prevent
- Protect
- Prosecute

Any queries regarding the contents of this strategy should be raised via escb@ealing.gov.uk

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Foreword

“Child sexual exploitation has a devastating effect on the lives of children and young people. The Council and its partners are determined to protect children and young people from child sexual exploitation in all its forms by working together across all council departments and with our partners in the statutory and voluntary sectors. The Council will provide the leadership to build on the high quality safeguarding services that are already in place in Ealing, continue to increase awareness in the community about the risks and dangers to children and young people from child sexual exploitation, and ensure we listen to and engage with children and young people so that we build our services on their needs.”

Councillor Binda Rai - Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Ealing Council

“This strategy sets out the aims and objectives of the Ealing Safeguarding Children Board to tackle child sexual exploitation in Ealing. The Board has a role to ensure that all statutory and voluntary partners work together to identify and protect children and young people who are at risk of and who are the victims of child sexual exploitation and help them in every possible way to overcome the impact of the abuse they experience. The strategy sets out our aims and objectives for the way we intend to work together and sets out a framework for action to tackle and prevent child sexual exploitation. We recognise that tackling child sexual exploitation in all its forms is very challenging and we are committed to continually improve the way we protect children and young people.”

Michael O’Connor - Independent Chair, Ealing Safeguarding Children Board

This guide has been produced by Standing Together Against Domestic Violence, in conjunction with Ruth Lacey, Safeguarding Children Service Manager, on behalf of the Ealing Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB).

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Definition

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

(Sue Jago and Jenny Pearce, University of Bedfordshire, 2008)

1. Introduction

- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a criminal act which significantly harms children and young people and has a growing profile following an increasing number of investigations that have led to many prosecutions.
- The prevalence of CSE nationally led to a two-year enquiry by the Office of the Children’s Commissioner¹ into sexual exploitation in gangs and groups. In 2011 the Government appointed a Children’s Minister to act as the lead for sexual exploitation, and a national action plan was produced.
- In 2011, the Department for Education (DfE) published ‘Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation: action plan’², which included a requirement for all local safeguarding children boards (LSCBs) to develop a local strategy.
- The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham 1997 – 2013³ uncovered large-scale child sexual exploitation in Rotherham with an estimated 1,400 children sexually exploited over the full inquiry period, from 1997 to 2013. In just over a third of cases, children affected by sexual exploitation were previously known to services because of child protection and neglect. This report also highlighted that the abuse is still known to be continuing.
- There has been consistent learning arising from inquiry reports into CSE in different towns and cities. It is significant that despite having good specialist services and the correct structures and procedures established in Rotherham, victims of CSE were still not recognised and responded to. A number of inquiries have highlighted the need to identify victims and perpetrators coming from within all communities.

¹ Office of the Children’s Commissioner’s Inquiry into CSE in gangs and groups
www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content_743

² Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation: – Action Plan (DfE)
www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-child-sexual-exploitation-action-plan

³ Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham (1997 – 2013)
www.rotherham.gov.uk/downloads/file/1407/independent_inquiry_cse_in_rotherham

- Women's groups in Rotherham indicated that had they been engaged they would have been able to raise concerns about victims within their communities. What appears to be significant is that victims need to be believed; the barriers to disclosure need to be understood; and perpetrators' activities need to be disrupted through civil action and brought to justice through the criminal justice system.
- A national police operation in 2013/14 arrested 660 people across England in connection with child sexual abuse images, and 431 children were taken into protective care. Of those arrested only 36 were known offenders. This highlights the need for staff in all agencies to be vigilant when working with children and young people around identifying CSE and for the whole community to own the strategy, including parents, faith groups and members.
- In 2013/14, Ealing Children's Social Care received over 75 referrals from other agencies where CSE was found, following assessment, to be a significant risk. The Ealing Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) forum has considered over 42 individual cases of CSE.
- The internet provides a significant opportunity for CSE. In the 2013 Health Related Behaviour Survey of Ealing school pupils in primary and secondary schools it was clear that a significant number of pupils use chat rooms and have received messages that either scared, upset or hurt them:

Primary schools

- In Years 4 and 6, 6,058 pupils completed the survey;
- 14% of boys and 15% of girls responded that they have received a message or picture that scared them or made them upset.

Secondary schools

- In Years 8 and 10, 4,346 pupils completed the survey;
- 61% responded that they have chatted on the internet and 8% said they received a chat message that scared them or upset them;
- 13% responded that they have received a hurtful, unwanted or nasty message online and 4% said someone has used their identity/password to post false or hurtful things online.

Ealing Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB) has a role to ensure that all agencies carry out their safeguarding responsibilities and work together to safeguard children and young people. The ESCB has prioritised tackling CSE in all its forms and will build on the joint working and information sharing that already takes place between Ealing Council, health services, the police and other agencies and work to ensure that there is a multi-agency approach that involves all council staff and partner agencies in identifying CSE, responding to victims and holding offenders to account.

This **strategy** sets out how we intend to:

1. **Work in partnership** and develop a multi-agency approach to tackle CSE and spread awareness of the problem;
2. **Prevent** CSE happening by strengthening the resilience of children; supporting parents to recognise risk of CSE; increasing awareness of the tactics of perpetrators; and adopting an ethos that all CSE is unacceptable in Ealing;
3. **Intervene** earlier by creating early identification systems within agencies and early help for children;

4. **Provide adequate specialist support services** for those experiencing CSE;
5. **Hold offenders accountable** through the civil and criminal justice systems;
6. **Provide young offenders with support systems** to address their offending behaviour and intervene earlier in their lives;
7. **Develop robust systems of intelligence gathering and data sharing** for analysis to assess prevalence and disrupt abusers.

The ESCB recognises that Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a key aspect of the **Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy** and will be part of the overall response and prevention work related to VAWG, as well as the broader safeguarding responsibilities and legislative frameworks around child protection and children in need. This strategy is included in the VAWG strategy. We recognise that CSE affects boys and young men as well and will work to enable agencies, working within VAWG, to develop clear pathways to specialist male support for those who have been victims of CSE.

2. Aims

The Council and all partner organisations aim to:

- Improve our identification systems and disclosures within Ealing;
- Build on the systems in place through Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE), Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and the Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS) to support organisations, individuals and staff to report concerns and identify victims at risk;
- Provide education within schools for children around CSE and provide support for teachers;
- Coordinate our partnership working to reduce the fear and intimidation of potential victims and disrupt offenders' activities;
- Work in partnership through the ESCB CSE subgroup to address any emerging issues or trends – as well as addressing individual cases, MASE looks to identify patterns of CSE locally and links across the borders of other local authorities;
- Coordinate the work of all agencies to gather intelligence on the scale and prevalence of CSE, to identify hotspots, trends and build a profile of CSE that will support us to intervene and disrupt offending activity;
- Raise the awareness of CSE within communities to tackle organised CSE more effectively;
- Increase community involvement in the issue and develop partnership publicity campaigns that highlight the issues and the help available – by working to increase the awareness of parents, families, communities and faith groups about the risks of internet grooming and the tactics used by perpetrators we can increase their confidence in reporting abuse;
- Work with young people to help them understand what CSE is and the tactics used by peer or adult perpetrators – raising young people's awareness of their rights and the laws around CSE in a way they can understand is important to increase confidence in reporting;
- Work to educate staff in statutory and third sector agencies to identify vulnerable children most at risk of exploitation and abuse – this will support the wider aim of a multi-agency early intervention approach.

The ongoing Child Sexual Exploitation training programme run by ESCB aims to give all staff an understanding of what CSE is and gain a practical understanding of the relevant legislation and safeguarding procedures, including supplementary guidance from the London Child Protection Procedures. This training is also available to all local voluntary sector and community organisations in order to educate all those in contact or working with children and young people. CSE training is now mandatory for all Children's Social Care (CSC) staff and the ESCB seeks to make it mandatory for all nominated or designated safeguarding leads in other organisations. The ESCB and Health Improvement Team collaborate to deliver training on CSE to schools.

These aims also fit into several government and educational recommendations and the report of the parliamentary inquiry into the effectiveness of legislation for tackling child sexual exploitation and trafficking within the UK⁴ (April 2014).

3. Objectives

The objectives of the strategy are to ensure that:

- All workers in all organisations have a good understanding of the prevalence, risk factors and indicators of CSE in our area and a good understanding of the referral pathways to use when they are concerned about a child;
- Children and young people are believed and supported – it is difficult for children and young people to disclose CSE and all agencies must work hard to establish strong partnerships with children, parents, families and communities;
- Perpetrators are identified and brought to justice and successfully prosecuted;
- The links between CSE and online exploitation (grooming), social media and abuse between children and young people are understood by all partner agencies in Ealing;
- Children, young people, parents and carers and members of the wider community have increased awareness of CSE.

4. Delivery

The CSE strategy is being delivered through the CSE action plan. The action plan is a multi-agency plan and implementation is supported by the CSE sub group. The action plan was developed in response to this strategy and using a self-assessment tool provided by the University of Bedfordshire as well as other national guidance documents. Reporting lines for the CSE subgroup are to the Safer Ealing Partnership and Ealing Safeguarding Children Board. Links to the Missing Children subgroup are clear, and in response the two subgroups have been combined. The Vulnerable Adolescents Panel is effective in supporting and unblocking the work in complex cases. Indeed, Ealing's process was cited as good practice in the Office of the Children's Commissioner's final report of their inquiry into CSE in gangs and groups⁵ (November 2013).

⁴ Report of the Parliamentary inquiry into the effectiveness of legislation for tackling child sexual exploitation and trafficking within the UK
www.barnardos.org.uk/cse_parliamentary_inquiry_report.pdf

⁵ Office of the Children's Commissioner's Inquiry into CSE in gangs and groups
www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content_743

5. Key guiding principles

This strategy incorporates the local multi-agency protocol arrangements to support the most effective professional liaison in this work with a focus on improving outcomes for affected young people and their families.

It includes the provision of local procedures in line with the guidance in the DfE's 'Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation: Action Plan'⁶ (2011).

The DfE action plan places an equal emphasis on police investigations and activity against those who coerce, abuse and exploit children and young people, as well as efforts to protect children and young people at risk of harm.

To ensure consistent best practice, the ESCB adopts the Metropolitan Police Pan-London Child Sexual Exploitation Operating Protocol⁷ (January 2014) and adheres to the London Safeguarding Children Board principles and recognises that:

- Sexual exploitation incorporates sexual, physical and emotional abuse, as well as, in some cases, neglect;
- Children do not make informed choices to enter or remain in sexual exploitation – rather, they do so from coercion, enticement, manipulation or desperation;
- Children under 16 years old cannot consent to sexual activity; sexual activity with children under the age of 13 is statutory rape under the Sexual Offences Act 2003;
- Sexually exploited children should be treated as victims of abuse, not as offenders – children under 16 will always be dealt with as actual or potential victims;
- For young people aged 16 to 18 years old, who are engaged in the exploitation of others or the recruitment of others for exploitation, careful consideration may be given, in very limited circumstances, where all other options have failed, to the use of criminal justice action – however, it needs to be remembered that 16 to 18 year-olds remain legally minors and may be in need of safeguarding themselves;
- Many sexually exploited children have difficulty distinguishing between their own choices around sex and sexuality and the sexual activities they are forced or coerced into – this potential confusion needs to be handled with care and sensitivity;
- The primary law enforcement effort must be against the coercers and sex abusers, who may be adult, but could also be the child's peers or young people who are older than the child;
- Sexually exploited children are children in need of services and children in need of protection;
- A multi-agency strategy meeting or multi-agency planning (MAP) meeting should take place for all children considered at risk of sexual exploitation;

⁶ Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation: Action Plan (DfE)
www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-child-sexual-exploitation-action-plan

⁷ Metropolitan Police Pan-London CSE operating protocol
content.met.police.uk/Article/Launch-of-The-London-Child-Sexual-Exploitation-Operating-Protocol/1400022286691/1400022286691

- Working Together to Safeguard Children⁸ (2013) and London Child Protection Procedures (LCPP) parts A & B⁹ (2014) should be followed – in addition all agencies should follow the LCPP supplementary guidance on CSE¹⁰ (2009), (currently under review).

Child protection procedures should be followed where:

- The child is at risk of significant harm and has other additional vulnerabilities;
- There is concern that the sexual exploitation is being facilitated by the child's parent or carer;
- There is concern that the sexual exploitation is facilitated by the child's parent or carer failing to protect; or
- There is concern that a related or unrelated adult in a position of trust or responsibility to the child is organising or encouraging the sexual exploitation.

(Safeguarding Children Abused through Sexual Exploitation, London Board, 2006)

Whether they are boys or girls, whatever their culture, whether they have a disability or whether they are rich or poor, no child should be treated unfairly on any basis.

Health Working Group Report on Child Sexual Exploitation¹¹ (January 2014)

Ealing will incorporate into the CSE plan the work focus of the Health Working Group Report on Child Sexual Exploitation, which is:

- Understanding and evidence;
- Identification and assessment;
- A child-centred focus;
- Intervention and interruption;
- Strategic cooperation.

⁸ Working together to safeguard children, 2013
www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children

⁹ London child protection procedures and practice guidance, 2014
www.londoncp.co.uk

¹⁰ Safeguarding children and young people from sexual exploitation: supplementary guidance, 2009
www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-young-people-from-sexual-exploitation-supplementary-guidance

¹¹ Health Working Group Report on Child Sexual Exploitation, January 2014
www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/279189/Child_Sexual_Exploitation_accessible_version.pdf

6. Recognition of Child Sexual Exploitation

Recognising young people as victims should be central to the work of responding to CSE. This needs staff to be aware of the various tactics and methods used by perpetrators to lure young people into their abusive activities. The agencies that are usually the first point of contact for young people will be those where they spend their education or social time. This will include all stages of schooling and youth and community organisations. These agencies have a key role to play in raising awareness amongst young people and safeguarding them. To deal effectively with CSE across all agencies, staff need to be made aware that any information around suspicion of CSE is important. This can assist to build a complete picture of the history of a case and gather intelligence on organised CSE, even if it is not enough information to warrant a full referral. Staff need to be educated about early warning signs, referral routes, how to share information and how to record cases.

The links between CSE and children missing from care, home and education are well documented. Children vulnerable to CSE or those already exploited often go missing but, in addition, children who are missing may be targeted by opportunistic abusers. Practitioners working with children who go missing should respond in accordance with the London Safeguarding Children Board's missing from care, home and education protocol¹² adopted by Ealing Children's Services as its practice guidance.

The rise in the use of the internet to sexually abuse children and young people and disseminate illegal images is growing rapidly. Users have become more adept at hiding their activities from scrutiny. Apprehending online abusers is challenging and complex. Parents also need support to protect children online.

Routes into sexual exploitation

- Older boyfriend model;
- Gang and group Sexual Exploitation;
- Peer exploitation;
- Parent or family member;
- Opportunistic targeting;
- Online grooming;
- Trusted friends.

Sexual exploitation can include:

- Grooming a child for a sexual purpose – this might involve befriending the child, gaining their trust, giving them drugs, alcohol or gifts, asking them to perform sexual acts as a favour or in exchange for something;
- The movement of children within the UK for the purpose of sexually abusing them (also referred to as internal trafficking);
- The trafficking of children into the UK from other countries for the purpose of sexually abusing them;
- Controlling a child through physical or psychological means or through the use of drugs for a sexual purpose;

¹² Safeguarding children missing from care, home and education, London Safeguarding Children Board. 2014 www.londoncp.co.uk/files/sg_ch_miss_fm_care_home_ed.pdf

- Receiving money or goods in payment for someone to have sex with a child (also referred to as child prostitution);
- Paying or exchanging goods for sex with a child.

Online sexual exploitation can include:

- Grooming children online for the purpose of sexually abusing them – this might involve an adult pretending to be a child, befriending the child through online chat rooms, social networking websites, email, mobile telephone messaging, gaining their trust, stalking their online activities. It can also involve peers seeking to establish relationships or friendships that may be a route to sexual violence;
- Asking children to participate in non-contact sexual activities such as engaging in sexual conversations online or via mobile telephone;
- Asking children to take and share indecent images of themselves online or through a mobile telephone;
- Asking children to display sexualised behaviours or perform sexual acts that are recorded or shared live via webcam;
- The creation, storage and distribution of child abuse images (also referred to as child pornography or indecent images);
- Arranging to meet a child in person for the purpose of sexually abusing them;
- The above activities may take place between peers or gang associated young people as well as perpetrated by adults upon children.

7. Vulnerable children and young people

There are a number of factors which may place children and young people at risk of sexual exploitation. These are sometimes referred to as ‘push and pull’ factors and may occur singularly or in combination. Research and practice shows certain groups of children and young people are at higher risk of being sexually exploited. Those particularly at risk include:

- Missing, runaway or homeless children;
- Looked after children;
- Children with prior experience of sexual, physical or emotional abuse or neglect (including familial child sexual abuse, risk of forced marriage, risk of honour based violence);
- Adolescents or pre-adolescents;
- Girls – boys are also at risk but current research suggests most victims are girls, although boys are considered less likely to disclose, which may explain the gender imbalance and may also make boys more vulnerable;
- Children not in education through exclusion or truancy or children regularly absent from school;
- Social exclusion from services such as health services;
- Children from black and minority ethnic communities;
- Children from migrant communities;
- Refugee children and unaccompanied asylum seeking children;
- Trafficked children;
- Children with mental health conditions;
- Children who use drugs and alcohol;
- Children with learning difficulties and disabilities;

- Children involved with gangs or living in communities where gangs are prevalent;
- Gang association either through relatives, peers or intimate relationships (in cases of gangs associated with CSE only);
- Children from families or communities with offending behaviours;
- Children living in poverty or deprivation;
- Living in a chaotic or dysfunctional household (including parental substance use, domestic violence, parental mental health issues and parental criminality);
- Recent bereavement or loss;
- Attending school with or being friends with young people who are sexually exploited;
- Unsure about their sexual orientation or unable to disclose sexual orientation to their families;
- Lacking friends from the same age group;
- Living in residential care;
- Living in hostel, bed and breakfast accommodation or a foyer;
- Low self-esteem or self-confidence;
- Young carers.

8. Indicators that sexual exploitation is taking place

The following list of indicators is not exhaustive or definitive but it does highlight common signs which can assist professionals in identifying children or young people who may be victims of sexual exploitation. Signs include:

- Unexplained gifts;
- Unaffordable new things (clothes, mobile) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs);
- Drug use, alcohol abuse;
- Physical injuries;
- Going missing from care/home, running away, homelessness;
- Disengagement with school, not in school, truancy, exclusion;
- Repeat sexually transmitted infections; in girls repeat pregnancy, terminations, miscarriage;
- Inappropriate sexual behaviour or knowledge that is outside of what's expected developmentally;
- Sexually risk-taking behaviour;
- Association with older men or women, or older boyfriends;
- Hanging out with groups of older people, anti-social groups, other vulnerable peers;
- Unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual);
- Involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations, including peers or gang associates;
- Contact with known perpetrators;
- Self-harming, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders;
- Injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault;
- Getting into/out of different cars;
- Seen at known places of concern;
- Moving around the country, appearing in new towns or cities, not knowing where they are;
- Gang fights, gang membership;
- Engagement in offending, criminal activity;
- Police involvement, police records;

- Evidence of sexual bullying by peers and/or vulnerability through the internet and/or social networking sites;
- Estranged from their family, professional network or support.

It is not the case that a set number of indicators mean definitively that a child or young person is a victim of sexual exploitation. However, the more numerous the indicators, the greater is the risk of sexual exploitation.

9. Difficulties in identifying victims

It can be difficult to identify children and young people who have been or are being sexually exploited.

Children who have been sexually exploited by organised crime networks are often fearful for their safety even after being removed from the exploitative situation. These children may find it very challenging to form trusting relationships with adults in positions of power, for example with child protection professionals.

Young people may not see themselves as victims. They may believe their abuser is their boyfriend and loves them. They may be unwilling to say anything that could get their boyfriend in trouble or cause their boyfriend to become angry or break up with them.

In some situations, such as in gangs or peer groups, there may be the belief that the abuse is normal and a rite of passage.

There may not be any peer support for the victim. The child's friends may all be in the same situation, under the control of an abuser or part of the network which is exploiting them. There may be nowhere for the child to go to escape their abusers, particularly if they are part of the same peer group, attend the same school or live in the same neighbourhood.

They may be dependent on the things they receive such as money, drugs, alcohol or accommodation.

For young people who have a history of offending behaviour or are currently involved with the criminal justice system, there may also be a difficulty in recognising them as a victim and treating their experiences as a child protection issue.

Boys may find it difficult to discuss exploitation by another male for fear of discrimination, homophobia or their sexuality being questioned. They may fear that exploitation by a female may not be taken seriously. Many services are orientated toward addressing the exploitation of girls; boys/young men may find the services do not fit their needs. Services need to consider how to target boys and young men and ensure that staff are equipped to identify and respond.

10. Attitudes of children and young people

What children and young people say

- “I suppose I thought grooming was when an older man pretended to be a girl’s boyfriend so he could rape her. I now know there’s lots of different ways to groom someone”
- “I didn’t think age mattered that much. I always thought if I got a boyfriend who was older than me it wouldn’t be a big deal. I was so wrong”
- “I had to have sex with all of his mates. I got used to it, but I suppose it’s a bad thing that I actually got used to it”
- “I didn’t realise how in danger I was until it was too late. When I think about it now, I suppose I’m lucky to be alive”
- “He was my mate. Well he was meant to be. If you’d have told me when I first met him that one day he’d rape me, I’d have laughed my head off”
- “Everyone tells girls to be careful and stay safe and all that, but boys don’t get owt. It’s kind of like we should know it all already”

(Source: Blast project, March 2014)

Agencies need to understand that young people make choices that are limited to their resources through intellectual, developmental, social, economic, parental and material vulnerabilities. Children will not always be able to recognise the abusive behaviour of adults or peers; they will not have the confidence, maturity or understanding to protect themselves. Many children will be threatened, coerced, and physically and sexually assaulted to ensure compliance.

Gangs

CSE may be a significant part of gang behaviour. A gang is defined as a relatively durable, predominantly street-based, social group of children, young people and, not infrequently, adults who see themselves and are seen by others, as affiliates of a discrete, named group who:

- Engage in a range of criminal activity and violence;
- Identify or lay claim to territory;
- Have some form of identifying structural feature;
- Are in conflict with similar groups.

Gang associate

A gang associate is any individual that has one or more of the following features:

- Offends with or for gang members, either willingly or through coercion or exploitation but does not identify themselves as a gang member and there is no other corroborative information that they are a gang member;
- Is shown to associate with gang members by police, partner agencies, community intelligence or has displayed, through conduct or behaviour, a specific desire or intent to become a member of a gang.

Girls who are connected to gangs through family, friendship networks or locality are highly likely to be at risk of sexual exploitation by gang members (Children's Commissioner's Report¹³, 2012).

Groups

Child sexual exploitation by a group involves people who come together in person or online for the purpose of setting up, coordinating and/or taking part in the sexual exploitation of children in either an organized or opportunistic way.

11. Referral and safeguarding consultation procedure

11.1. Agency referral routes into ECIRS

Professionals in Ealing should be alert to the possibility that a child or young person they are working with may be sexually exploited. This can be often linked to concerns about a child who is missing from care, home or education or a child who self-harms. Ealing will expect all agencies and its staff to adhere to the London Child Protection Procedures supplementary guidance when assessing children and young people at risk.

If you are concerned about any child who may be at risk of CSE, discuss this with your designated or nominated safeguarding lead or line manager. If after discussion your concerns remain, refer the situation by contacting Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS) on 020 8825 8000 and make a referral for risk category 2 and 3 (see Section 11.2).

Child protection advice can be sought for CSE risk category 1 via the Child Protection Advisers on 020 8825 8930.

Following referral into ECIRS, a Child and Family Assessment (CFA) will be carried out by a locality social work or specialist team. Where there is a concern about the risk of significant harm this will include a child protection enquiry under section 47 of the Children Act 1989. Any concerns about significant harm or where a crime may have been committed must be referred to the police. All CSE cases should be discussed at a strategy or Multi-Agency Planning meeting, and all children being sexually exploited should also be referred to the Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) meeting which is part of the Metropolitan Police Pan-London protocol for investigating CSE.

Note: Where a child/young person is considered to be at risk or likely to be at risk of significant harm or if the agency's designated safeguarding lead is not available, a referral must be made immediately to ECIRS.

¹³ Office of the Children's Commissioner's Accelerated report of the inquiry into CSE in gangs and groups, 2012
www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content_580

Ealing will ensure that the referral routes into ECIRS and referral pathways for the different levels of risk are understood by all partner agencies. This is set out in Ealing Safeguarding Children Board Assessment Protocol and Threshold of Need Guide 2014¹⁴.

11.2 London Child Protection Procedures Supplementary Guidance; safeguarding children at risk of CSE¹⁵ (2009) (under review).

The risk assessment framework within the supplementary guidance has been developed to help professionals in all agencies assess whether a child for whom they have a concern is at risk, at medium risk or high risk of harm through sexual exploitation. Indicators of risk of harm are grouped in the categories:

Category 1 (At Risk): a vulnerable child who is at risk of being targeted and groomed for sexual exploitation;

Category 2 (Medium Risk): a child who is targeted for opportunistic abuse through the exchange of sex for drugs, accommodation (overnight stays) and goods, etc. The likelihood of coercion and control is significant;

Category 3 (High Risk): a child whose sexual exploitation is habitual, often self-defined and where coercion / control is implicit.

The risk assessment tool needs to be used flexibly to take account of each child's individuality, the uniqueness of his/her circumstances and the changes that may occur for him/her over time. Child sexual exploitation is dynamic; the young person's circumstances can change and on occasions deteriorate very rapidly. All professionals should be aware that assessments need to be continual and display vigilance.

11.3 Young people under 13 years of age

All cases involving under-13 year-olds should always be referred to ECIRS. There should always be a presumption that the case will be reported to Children's Social Care who will refer to the police if this has not already happened. This recognises the particular vulnerability of children of this age engaging in sexual behaviours and that they are deemed too young to give consent to any sexual activity.

¹⁴ Ealing's Assessment Protocol and Thresholds of Need Guide 2014
www.ealing.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/8308/ealings_assessment_protocol_and_thresholds_of_need_guide_2014

¹⁵ Safeguarding children and young people from sexual exploitation: supplementary guidance
www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-young-people-from-sexual-exploitation-supplementary-guidance

11.4 Young people over 13 years of age

Agencies need to be particularly vigilant around working with young people who are between 13 and 18 years old, some of whom may be already sexually active, and not necessarily consider their behaviour as normal. It is common for young people or children to not recognise they are being abused due to the grooming methods perpetrators often use. It may take a long time for agencies to build the trust of the young person enough to help them recognise they are being exploited.

Young people aged 13-16 years

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 introduced a new law to protect children under 16 from sexual abuse. Sexual activity between young people who are over 13 and under 16 remains illegal. However, the law is not intended to prosecute mutually agreed teenage sexual activity between two young people of a similar age, unless it involves abuse or exploitation.

Therefore, when making an assessment about risk for this age the professional should take into account:

- The age of the child/young person;
- Level of understanding/maturity;
- Any key risk factors;
- Behaviour of young person;
- Any evidence of grooming;
- Age of boyfriend/girlfriend or sexual partner;
- Any coercion or abuse of power and control.

Young people aged 16/17 years

It is important to consider that just because a young person is 16 or 17 years old and has reached the legal age of being able to consent to sex that does not mean that they are no longer at risk of sexual exploitation. They are still defined as children under the Children Act 1989 and 2004, and can still suffer significant harm as a result of sexual exploitation. They have the right to appropriate support and protection from harm.

12. Ealing Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation Meetings (MASE)

The MASE meetings are part of the Metropolitan Police Pan-London CSE protocol for investigating CSE.

Purpose

- Review progress of cases and ensure action is being taken by whichever agency is involved in individual cases;
- Identify any trends or problem locations and ensure they are addressed to reduce the risk to children and young people;
- Look at cross-border issues and ensure there is a coordinated approach with other boroughs;
- Ensure looked after children placed away from the borough and at risk of CSE are being protected by the agencies where they are located;
- To address links between CSE, children exploited through gang association, missing children and trafficked children.

Aims/objectives

- To reduce the risk of children being sexually exploited;
- To identify perpetrators of CSE;
- To build a problem profile of CSE in Ealing;
- To plan disruption activity.

Membership

Criteria for membership

- Having strategic or operational responsibility within the agency for CSE.

Core members

- As set out on Metropolitan Police Pan-London CSE protocol;
- In addition it is agreed that Ealing MASE will include being the single point of contact for gangs/serious youth violence as recommended by the Office of the Children's Commissioner.

All follow up reviews are scheduled into these meetings. The meetings are chaired by the police and the vice chair is the Local Authority Strategic Lead for CSE. A record of the meeting is completed and securely sent to all participants.

The MASE considers individual cases of children who may be placed in Ealing by other local authorities as well as children who live locally but who may be exploited across borough boundaries. Cases can be referred into other MASE meetings and links made with established safeguarding leads for neighbouring boroughs. Looking at patterns of abuse or location of victims is an essential part of problem profiling.

Also see Appendix 3: Ealing MASE panel referral form.

Appendix 1: Key documents

Ealing Safeguarding Children Guidance

www.ealing.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/3835/yellow_book_2014

Ealing's Assessment Protocol & Thresholds of Need Guide 2014

www.ealing.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/8308/ealings_assessment_protocol_and_thresholds_of_need_guide_2014

London Safeguarding Children Board - Safeguarding Children Abused through Sexual Exploitation

www.londonscb.gov.uk/files/conference07/sexual_exploitation_procedure.pdf

What to do if you suspect a child is being sexually exploited

www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-you-suspect-a-child-is-being-sexually-exploited

Pan-London Child Sexual exploitation

content.met.police.uk/Article/Launch-of-The-London-Child-Sexual-Exploitation-Operating-Protocol/1400022286691/1400022286691

Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham (1997 – 2013)

www.rotherham.gov.uk/downloads/file/1407/independent_inquiry_cse_in_rotherham

Children's Commissioner's Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups

www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content_743

Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation – Action Plan, DfE

www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-child-sexual-exploitation-action-plan

Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation, 2009

www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-young-people-from-sexual-exploitation-supplementary-guidance

The Framework for assessment of children in need and their families

A draft revised framework was published for consultation in June 2012. The final version will be published on the Department for Education website following the consultation.

Safeguarding children and young people who may be affected by gang activity, 2010

www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-young-people-who-may-be-affected-by-gang-activity

Sexual Offences Act 2003, Sections 47-51 (Appendix 5)

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/42/contents

The sexual exploitation of children: it couldn't happen here, could it?

Ofsted, November 2014

www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-exploitation-of-children-ofsted-thematic-report

Appendix 2: Legislation

- Rape of a child under-13 years - Section 5, Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Assault of a child under-13 years by penetration - Section 6, Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Sexual assault of a child under-13 years - Section 7, Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Causing or inciting a child under-13 years to engage in sexual activity - Section 8, Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Sexual activity with a child - Section 9, Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Causing or inciting a child to engage in sexual activity - Section 10, Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Engaging in sexual activity in the presence of a child - Section 11, Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Causing a child to watch a sexual act - Section 12, Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Arranging or facilitating a child sex offence (child under-16) - Section 14, Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Meeting a child following sexual grooming (child under-16) - Section 15, Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Paying for sexual services of a child - Section 47, Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Causing or inciting child prostitution or pornography - Section 48, Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Controlling a child prostitute or a child involved in pornography - Section 49, Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Arranging or facilitating child prostitution or pornography - Section 50, Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Trafficking into, within or out of the UK for sexual exploitation - Sections 57, 58, 59, Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Section 2 of the Child Abduction Act 1984 to be used as standard with all under-16s identified as missing with a named perpetrator where an address is known
- Section 58 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 must be used for all identified and trafficked under-18-year-old children within the UK, and a referral made to the National Referral Mechanism which is a framework for identifying victims of human trafficking and ensuring they receive the appropriate protection and support

Appendix 3



Ealing Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) panel - referral form

MASE meeting date:

Name	Gender	DOB/age	Address	Sexual orientation	Ethnicity	Religion	GP details (name, address, tel)	Legal status	Category of risk (refer to London CP procedures supplementary guidance)	Child protection plan?
	Male Female			Heterosexual Bisexual Lesbian Gay Transgender Transsexual				CO ICO LAC Section 20	1 2 3	Yes No

Referrer name/role	Agency	Address	Telephone number	Email address

<i>Sibling information</i> Name	Gender	DOB/age	Address, if different to above

Is this child placed out of borough? If so, please state home LA and Social Worker details:

Name of Local Authority	Social Worker name	Address	Telephone number	Email address

Details of referral (Please include any periods missing from home, care or school. Any links to other children or gang associations? Have they been referred to the police? Include details of strategy meetings or MAP meetings.)	Known to the following services? Please tick all that apply	Attending school/college? Please provide details (name, address, tel)
	ECIRS / MASH <input type="checkbox"/> Localities <input type="checkbox"/> SAFE 0-18 <input type="checkbox"/> ESCAN <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Justice Service <input type="checkbox"/> Youth & Connexions <input type="checkbox"/> EOTAS <input type="checkbox"/> Barnardos <input type="checkbox"/> Woman & Girls Network <input type="checkbox"/> Police <input type="checkbox"/> Ealing CCG <input type="checkbox"/> Ealing Hospital Acute (A&E, Midwives) <input type="checkbox"/> London North West Healthcare Trust – Ealing Community Services (School Nurses, Midwives) <input type="checkbox"/> Urgent Care Centre (UCC)) <input type="checkbox"/> WLMHT <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: <input type="checkbox"/>	Attending? Yes / No

Further information informing risk and response:

Vulnerability Factors (tick all that apply)	Yes/No	Risk Indicators (tick all that apply)	Yes/No
Living in a chaotic or dysfunctional household (including parental substance use, domestic violence, parental mental health issues, parental criminality)	Yes/No	Missing from home or care	Yes/No
History of abuse (including familial child sexual abuse, risk of forced marriage, risk of 'honour' based violence, physical and emotional abuse and neglect)	Yes/No	Physical injuries	Yes/No
Recent bereavement or loss	Yes/No	Drug or alcohol misuse	Yes/No
Gang association either through relatives, peers or intimate relationships (in cases of gang associated CSE only)	Yes/No	Involvement in offending	Yes/No
Attending school with young people who are sexually exploited	Yes/No	Repeat sexually-transmitted infections, pregnancy and terminations	Yes/No
Learning disabilities	Yes/No	Absent from school	Yes/No
Unsure about their sexual orientation or unable to disclose sexual orientation to their families	Yes/No	Change in physical appearance	Yes/No
Friends with young people who are sexually exploited	Yes/No	Evidence of sexual bullying and/or vulnerability through the internet and/or social networking sites	Yes/No
Homeless	Yes/No	Receipt of gifts from unknown sources	Yes/No
Living in a gang neighbourhood	Yes/No	Recruiting others into exploitative situations	Yes/No
Living in residential care	Yes/No	Poor mental health	Yes/No
Living in hostel, bed and breakfast accommodation or a foyer	Yes/No	Self-harm	Yes/No
Low self-esteem or self-confidence	Yes/No	Thoughts of or attempts at suicide	Yes/No
Young carer	Yes/No		
Others? Please specify		Others? Please specify	

Details of alleged perpetrator(s):

Name	Gender	DOB/ age	Address	Ethnicity	Please advise if known to any services? Please give details	Any gang association? If so, please give details
	Male Female					
	Male Female					
	Male Female					

Actions arising from MASE:

Action	Responsible agency/ name of person	Date/by when	Outcome sought

Please complete referral form online and email to either: EGRESS secure email to: [laceyr@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:lacey@ealing.gov.uk) and ryanb@ealing.gov.uk / CJSM email - ealing.mase@ealing.cjsm.net

Please note you or a member of your team may be required to attend the MASE meeting to present the case.

'Safeguarding is everybody's business'

If at any time you become concerned that a child/young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm or abuse - call the Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS) on **020 8825 8000 (24 hours)**.

In an emergency dial **999** for the Police.

You can also contact the NSPCC helpline on **0808 800 5000**.