Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) 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. Home Office 2017

**Who does it affect?**

This type of abuse could happen to any young person from any background. It

happens to boys and young men as well as girls and young women. Some children

are particularly vulnerable such as disabled children, children we care for, care experienced young people, migrant children and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

**What do we all need to do?**

We all have an important role to play in protecting children and young people from sexual exploitation. We can do this by the following:

Identification— Children and young people rarely self-report CSE, so it is important that we are aware of vulnerability and risk factors and indicators (see next page).

Acting— Contact the Children and Families Duty and Advice Team (guide) to discuss concerns regarding a child being at risk of or experiencing CSE. If a child is believed to be at risk of immediate harm, ring the Police on 999.

Vulnerability and Risk Management—Where it is recognised that a child is at risk, has been targeted or is being sexually exploited, services should work together to manage the child’s vulnerability and risk. This is usually coordinated by Children’s Social Work Service; and

Disruption – Practitioners, businesses and communities should work in partnership to disrupt perpetrator activity. Effective sharing of information and intelligence is vital to help the police and services working with children and adults to disrupt exploitation and secure prosecutions.

**What to do if you are worried about a child**

Any practitioner working with a child who they think may be at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation should follow the guidance set out in Working Together and share this information with LBTH MASH. An exploitation screening tool is available to support professional judgement and should be completed and sent alongside any referral made to MASH about child sexual exploitation.

Children’s Social Care need to complete an exploitation risk & harm assessment and make a referral through an 87a to Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT).

If you believe a child is in immediate risk of harm, you should contact the police.

**For further information, support or advice please contact:** **exploitation.team@towerhamlets.gov.uk**