



# Dorset Extra Familial Risk and Harm Panel Protocol

<b>Authors:</b>	Sarah Whilton, Service Manager Chesil Locality Paula Golding, Head of Locality & Strategy Dorchester & West
<b>Version number:</b>	2
<b>Date agreed:</b>	September 2024
<b>Document owner:</b>	Extra-Familial Harm Lead Dorset Council Children's Services
<b>Review date:</b>	September 2026



## 1. Role of Panel

Dorset Extra Familial Risk and Harm Panel (EFRHP) facilitates partnership safeguarding oversight and recommendations for interventions in cases where a child or young person - or a group of children / young people - meet one or more of the following categories:

- at risk of or are experiencing harm outside their family.
- at risk of or are causing harm to young people outside their family.
- at risk of or are experiencing or causing harm in specific contexts such as their peer group, neighbourhoods/locations and/or school.

Extra Familial Risks include but are not limited to: ***criminal exploitation of children including gangs and 'county lines', child sexual exploitation, harmful sexual behaviours, serious youth violence, young people who are frequently missing from home or care and include:***

- Sexual Exploitation of children and young people by adults.
- Criminal exploitation of children and young people, particularly for the purposes of cultivating, trafficking, distribution and /or selling illegal substances.
- Serious physical violence between young people, including weapon enabled violence, some of which may be connected to organised criminal groups.
- Peer-to-peer sexual abuse and other forms of harmful (problematic or inappropriate) sexual behaviour displayed by young people towards their peers.
- The radicalisation of young people into political or religious ideologies that place them at risk of physical or emotional harm.
- Physical, sexual or emotional abuse, and/or coercive control, young people may experience in their own romantic /intimate relationships.

*(Firmin, C. Lefevre, M. Huegler, N. Peace, D. 2022)*

**The Extra Familial Risk and Harm Panel sits alongside and provides support to any statutory social work processes and early help interventions which are the responsibility of the case holding team within Children's Services.**

While risks around radicalisation and terrorism are often extra-familial in nature these are responded to via Dorset's Prevent and Channel processes ([link](#)). Information related to these cases are shared as needed between Dorset's Prevent Co-ordinator and the EFRHP Chair. Prevent / Channel processes are able to refer to the EFRHP and the EFRHP panel will make recommendation for referral to the prevent / channel process for relevant cases.

Dorset's Extra Familial Risk and Harm Panel and the work undertaken with young people referred to the panel are informed by 'Contextual Safeguarding' principles:



***“Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding and responding to young people’s experiences of harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools, peer groups and online can feature violence and abuse. Therefore, children’s social care practitioners need to engage with individuals and sectors who have influence over/within extra- familial contexts, and recognise that assessment of, and intervention with, these spaces are a critical part of safeguarding practices.”***

(Firmin, C. 2017. *Contextual Safeguarding: An overview of the operational, strategic and conceptual Framework*) <https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/assets/documents/Contextual-Safeguarding-Briefing.pdf>

The EFRHP will:

- Share information from relevant professionals.
- Evaluate risks and agree when the threshold of significant harm is reached.
- Consider the risks from locations.
- Consider the links and complexities of peer groups.
- Make recommendations for specific actions /interventions with the case holding team and relevant agencies to reduce risk of harm to children and young people directly and within the context of their peer groups, schools, neighbourhoods, and other locations.
- Signpost to the most appropriate pathway for ongoing intervention.
- Review cases as appropriate, where deemed necessary, by the chair and panel members and where a complex response is needed across a number of contexts.
- Identify themes, patterns, and strategic issues in safeguarding children from EFRH and raise these to CAROLE, Strategic CE group, and other relevant team and services as required, including, in the case of locations non-traditional safeguarding services.
- Contribute to county wide best practice around EFRH.

## **2. Extra-Familial Risk and Harm Panel Composition**

The EFRHP is chaired by a Service Manager from Dorset Council’s Children’s Services and co-chaired by a Detective Inspector from the Dorset Police County Safeguarding Hub.

The EFRHP consists only of professionals.

**Panel Members of the EFRP include core and locality members.**

- Dorset Council - Children & Families Service - Service Manager & Chair
- Dorset Police – County Safeguarding - Detective Inspector & Co-Chair



- Dorset County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust Safeguarding Children Team and Paediatrics
- Dorset Healthcare University NHS Foundation Trust - MASH health
- NHS Dorset Children's and Adult Safeguarding Team
- Dorset Education – Inclusion lead for locality
- Dorset Education – Virtual School lead for locality
- Dorset Council – Early Help team manager for locality
- Dorset Council CSC team manager for locality
- Dorset Council – QARO
- Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service
- Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) for relevant locality
- Adult safeguarding lead
- Targeted Youth for relevant locality
- Reach representative.
- HARBOUR representative
- Paragon representative

**Panel Members are required to:**

- Check their agency's records in advance of the EFRHP on all cases and if children or young people are open or known previously to their service, provide a concise summary on their agency's involvement in advance of the meeting that can be included in the EFRHP meeting record.
- Attend every EFRHP and stay for discussion on all cases.
- Send a delegate from their agency when not able to attend.
- Agree new actions and follow up existing actions on behalf of their agency.
- Contribute to the analysis of risk, formulation of plans and agreeing to interventions particularly in contexts where their respective agency has duty or responsibility.
- Provide a view and participate in the general decision making around the contexts of concern and appropriate actions.
- Ensure relevant client files on their agency's systems show minutes of EFRHP case discussion and flag that they have been discussed at EFRHP.
- Update the relevant team or chair of completed actions.

**Key Partner Agencies include but are not limited to:** *(representatives could be invited for consideration of specific cases as required)*

- Virtual School
- Educational Psychology Service
- Dorset County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- Dorset Healthcare University NHS Foundation Trust – CiC Health Team



- University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust
- Community Safety
- Adult Social Care
- Housing Needs and Benefits
- Prevent Coordinator
- British Transport Police
- Domestic Abuse Intervention Service
- CMHT
- National Probation Service
- CAMHS
- The Pineapple Project
- Reach
- Paragon

Schools attended by children and young people, allocated social work or early help teams and any other relevant professionals will be treated as members for their cases. Where concerns relate to a school context, individual schools will be asked to attend.

In addition to representing their agency through the EFRHP process, the EFRHP representatives will promote good practice within their agencies around the identification of Extra-Familial Risk, developing interventions to reduce harm and share these with the panel, update colleagues about EFRHP changes, address any issues about the quality of their agency's EFRHP referrals or processes and support colleagues through the EFRHP process.

### **3.Frequency & Administration of Extra-Familial Risk and Harm Panels**

EFRHP meetings are held weekly on a Thursday afternoon from 2.00 pm (depending on volume) to 4.pm.

The referral deadline is 1 week before EFRH panel although significant referral following a strategy discussion will be accepted on the Monday morning (by 10 am) before the panel.

The agenda and referral papers will be shared with panel members no later than Tuesday morning before the panel.

### **4.Extra-Familial Risk and Harm Panel Referral process**

A process diagram for referrers can be found here ([link](#)) and in the appendix.

### **5.The Role of the Referrers**

Referrers should explain to children and young people and their parents/carers why an EFRHP referral is being made e.g. that, given the concerns for their safety, they need to share information



with key partner agencies to better understand and reduce the risk. The R.A must be undertaken in partnership with the child/ young person and their family or carer.

Referrers should explore the young person's peer network including obtaining full names/details of those young people, any professional input they may have and identify any peer relationships that may pose a risk of harm and consider talking to the TYS worker to gain further information on any risks around the group.

Referrers should also seek to ensure they have explored the young person's immediate safety and ensured safety plans are in place with the family / carer and team around the child. Any immediate safeguarding concerns must be flagged immediately to the Team manager in the case holding team. The referrer should indicate which professionals need to be invited to EFRHP. BST will help collate information on all young people mentioned in the referral and ensure relevant professionals are invited, consulting as needed with the EFRHP Chair.

Referrals will be reviewed by the EFRHP Chairs and further information may be requested. Referrals will be prioritised depending on the nature and level of risk. If it is felt that the referral does not appear to require a multi-agency response by the EFRHP, the referrer will be advised of this and support and guidance on possible interventions will be offered.

## 6. During the Extra-Familial Risk and Harm Panel

Meetings will be run on teams to facilitate attendance. It is requested that attendees join by video on teams rather than phone to facilitate the smooth running of the panel.

BST will record key information shared during the discussion, ensuring that risks, strengths and actions are recorded across all contexts factually and succinctly.

The Chair will direct attendees to the **Confidentiality Agreement (Appendix E)**.

The Chair will introduce the referral and provide a very brief summary of the primary referral reason - eg -

***We are here to discuss 'A' and 'B' in relation to an incident of serious youth violence and concerns that 'A' is at risk of exploitation.***

The Chair will explain the structure of the meeting, which is to discuss each context individually, considering the risks, strengths, current interventions and planned actions in that context before progressing to the next. The chair will invite the referrer to present the information.

If applicable and in the case of 'Moderate' reviews, any outstanding follow-up actions from the previous EFRHP will be highlighted and new deadlines / actions agreed as required.

Whilst there may be some overlap of concerns between contexts such as '**child & young person**' and '**home & family**' and the contexts of '**school**' and '**peers**', the Chair will guide the discussion to ensure practitioners and panel members consider the most appropriate context for the concern raised.

Panel members are expected to contribute to the discussion through both the analysis of risk and suggested plans and interventions. Panel members are expected to consider the contexts where



their agency may hold influence or responsibility and demonstrate leadership and expertise in these areas.

Peer risk assessments and location risk assessments will be expected to be shared prior to the meeting.

The Chair will review the plans and actions with those agencies who have agreed to take them forward to ensure that interventions are focused on reducing risk in the contexts where harm is occurring.

The Chair will ask panel members to establish if a review is required and a summary of the EFRHP decision will be recorded.

Throughout the discussion, the voice of the young people concerned will be shared by the professionals along with the views of the family.

Where risks within the family system have been identified at the panel that have not previously been identified / addressed, the Chair will agree with the case holding team actions regarding these also which will be shared with the team manager within 24 hours.

The panel may identify a need for a context assessment or intervention i.e. peer group, location or school. This will be undertaken by the Targeted youth workers for the locality in partnership with other key agencies.

There will be opportunity in the meeting with standing agenda items for:

Emerging or new locations of concern to be shared by panel members that have not been referred to the panel.

Risky adults of concern

Emerging peer groups of concern

Themes and Patterns

Cross boarder concerns

## **7. After the Extra-Familial Risk and Harm Panel**

The EFRHP minutes are recorded live in the meeting and will be finalised by the Monday following the panel. Panel members and attendees will be advised via email of completed minutes. It is their responsibility to ensure it is uploaded to their relevant case files outside of Childrens Services. Childrens Services actions will be added to casefiles by BST. EFRHP representatives are responsible for following up on any actions they have agreed on behalf of their agency, for integrating these into their existing plans / assessments and for ensuring that their agency records EFRHP outcomes securely on client files.

The lead professional for each child will be responsible for ongoing coordination and communication within the professional system.



## 8.Reviewing at the Extra-Familial Risk and Harm Panel

The Panel, including the referrer, will take a decision about whether to review a case during the initial EFRHP discussion and will be informed by complexity across a number of contexts and plans already in place. For cases that are open to Children’s Services on statutory or early help plans, and do not require multi-agency input across multiple contexts, these plans will act as the review mechanism, incorporating actions agreed at the EFRHP and developed within meetings held in the locality – eg CIN or Significant MACE. Moderate cases will be reviewed at panel at a frequency of no more than 12 weekly.

## 9.Related children

The Panel will consider any children living with or related to those causing or experiencing harm and whether any safeguarding measures are required. The panel will notify the CHAD or allocated social work team of any safeguarding concerns and/or panel recommendations for related children who are identified at EFRHP as at risk.

## 10.Information Sharing

The EFRHP discusses children and young people who are at risk of harm and as such information has to be shared between agencies to help make children and young people safe.

Government guidance puts preserving life and promoting safety as key considerations when seeking to balance confidentiality and disclosure.

Information sharing about children, young people and adults can be based on the legal authority of: Children Act 1989

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

Care Act 2014

Data Protection Act 2018

Human Rights Act 1998

The need to share information in accordance with the above guidance applies to members of the EFRHP but also to all agencies.

## 11.Confidentiality

The EFRHP is not a public forum and attendance shall be limited to those agencies who are able to provide a contribution with regard to listed cases. See **Appendix E** for Confidentiality Agreement.

All cases discussed at the EFRHP are strictly confidential and the minutes should not be passed on to any individual or agency that is not a member of the EFRHP without the agreement of the Chair; with exceptions as set out by Data Protection guidance.

EFRHP members can convey summaries of EFRHP discussions and outcomes as needed with other partner agencies to promote public safety and/or the apprehension of perpetrators.

## 12.Issue Resolution & Escalation

The EFRP Chair will seek to discuss informally any issues with agency representatives where this is





proportionate. The Chair will raise with an appropriate senior manager of the referring / attending agency or EFRHP member if actions agreed at EFRHP are not being followed up, if agency representatives are not providing the required level of engagement with the EFRHP process or if there are concerns about their or their agency's practice.

### **13.Extra-Familial Risk and Harm Panel Governance**

The EFRHP reports to EFRH Tactical Group.

### **14.Extra-Familial Risk and Harm Panel Quality Assurance**

EFRHP functioning will be reviewed at EFRH Tactical group meetings and the EFRH strategic board to enable panel members along with the Chair to reflect on what is working well, what needs to improve and actions for agencies to take to achieve positive change.

EFRHP cases are selected for each audit exercise and audits are conducted by members prior to the meeting. The audits identify any issues arising and learning emerging from the exercise is incorporated into updates to EFRH Tactical group.

### **15.Extra-Familial Risk Panel Protocol Responsibility**

The EFRHP Protocol sits with Dorset Children and Families Service. Any questions about the Protocol should be directed to Paula Golding, Head of Locality, Dorset Children's Services and Strategic lead for EFRH or Sarah Whilton, Service Manager, Dorset Children's services and Operational lead for EFRH.



## Appendix A – Extra-Familial Risk of Harm Panel Flowchart

### Extra-Familial Risk of Harm Flowchart

## Appendix B - Extra-Familial Risk and Harm Definitions

**1. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE):** 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.

**Department for Education’s (2017)** Child sexual exploitation: definition and guide for practitioners [Department for Education \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

See also – [Dorset Multi-Agency Child Sexual Abuse Toolkit - Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership \(pdscp.co.uk\)](https://pdscp.co.uk)

**2. Child Criminal Exploitation CCE:** Child criminal exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity:

- in exchange for something the victim needs or wants.
- for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator.
- through violence or the threat of violence.

The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact, it can also occur through the use of technology. The criminal exploitation of children is not confined to county lines but can also include other forms of criminal activity such as theft, acquisitive crime, knife crimes and other forms of criminality.

**Department for Education’s Definition and a guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from child sexual exploitation (2017)** - [Department for Education \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

### **2 (a) County Lines:**

County lines is a form of child criminal exploitation. The UK Government defines county lines as: a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated



mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

## **2 (b) Child trafficking:**

It's defined as recruiting, moving, receiving and harbouring children for the purpose of exploitation. This exploitation can be criminal or sexual. Child trafficking is a form of modern slavery. Children can be trafficked into the UK from overseas and on their journeys are very often subject to sexual abuse. International child trafficking can be incorrectly labelled as child smuggling. Professionals are encouraged to be professionally curious in order to identify the trafficking risk indicators and implement a collaborative safeguarding response to the child. Responding to the vulnerability is a key factor. Exploiters may act as interpreters therefore, it's important the child is spoken to independently. Utilising accredited independent translators from the outset is key to capturing the best evidence. Investigations should be subject to a Section 47 joint investigation. A full risk assessment must be undertaken by all professionals before ensuring the child is placed with a suitable adult. Children can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another as evidenced in county lines. Child Trafficking varies from spontaneous networking between groups of offenders, to more serious organised crime where young people are effectively 'sold'. Children can be trafficked for criminal exploitation, and this can occur across and within Local Authority (LA) boundaries, regions and across international borders. This can occur at parties and gatherings where children who are involved may recruit others into the network. Some of this activity is described as serious organised crime and can involve the organised 'buying and selling' of children by offenders.

**2 (c) Online exploitation:** According to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP), a significant number of child exploitation offences take place online. These offences include deceiving children into producing indecent images of themselves and engaging in sexual chat online or sexual activity over a webcam. Since 2020 there has also been a significant increase of online grooming for child criminal exploitation including county lines.

**3. Missing:** When a child goes missing or runs away, they are at risk. Safeguarding children therefore includes protecting them from this risk. Local authorities are responsible for protecting children whether they go missing from their family home or from local authority care.

See [Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) for further information. Also see the Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership policy on [Children Missing from Care, Home and Education \(proceduresonline.com\)](#)



the Practice guidance for missing children and young people [practice-guidance-for-missing-children.pdf \(proceduresonline.com\)](https://www.proceduresonline.com/practice-guidance-for-missing-children.pdf)

**4. Serious Youth Violence:** Youth Violence can occur in the absence of a young person being exploited where the young person either engages in behaviour that poses harm to others or appears to be a victim of violent behaviour outside the home. Such behaviour will often, particularly when it relates to groups of young people, require a multi-agency response to reduce risk.

**5. Youth Produced Sexual Imagery:** Children may take nude and sexual images of themselves and share them with other children and, whilst the taking and receiving of such images is a criminal offence and a criminal justice response may be necessary in some cases, the focus should be on providing a collaborative response which educates, supports and safeguards all children involved.

The following offences could be committed by sexting:

- Take or permit to take an indecent photo or video of themselves or another person under 18.
- Share an indecent image or video of another person under 18, even if it's shared between young people of a similar age.
- Possess, download or store an indecent image or video of a child/young person under 18, even if that young person gave their permission for it to be created.

**5. Harmful Sexual Behaviours:** Sexual behaviours expressed by children and young people under the age of 18 years old that are developmentally inappropriate, may be harmful towards self or others, or be abusive towards another child, young person or adult (Hackett, S., 2014. *Children and young people with harmful sexual behaviours*. Dartington: Research in Practice)

**Risk categories for young people at risk of demonstrating sexually harmful behaviours:**

**6. Context of Concern - Peer Group:**

***Incident based peer group*** - group of young people who are linked through a specific incident of harm ie peer sexual assault or peer robbery.

***Relational peer group*** - group of young people who are linked either through a known friendship or relationship as defined by the young people themselves and within this group there are concerns that harm is occurring to one or more young people. i.e. friendships where young people are going missing together, friendships where one young person may have suffered or be at risk of suffering EF harm, young people who identify as being a part of a gang and where there are concerns about harm linked to that association.



### **7. Context of Concern - School:**

Any education provision that has been identified as a context where harm is occurring to repetitively to one young person or the environment is considered to pose a risk of harm to multiple young people. i.e. sexual assaults or youth violence occurring on school premises

### **8. Context of Concern - Neighbourhood / Location:**

Any location that has been identified as a context where harm is occurring repetitively to one young person, or the environment is considered to pose a risk of harm to multiple young people i.e. serious youth violence or gang related violence in particularly neighbourhoods, frequency of sexual assaults in a park or block of flats etc

## **Appendix C - direct practice tools**

[Extra-Familial Harm - Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership \(pdscp.co.uk\)](http://pdscp.co.uk)

## **Appendix D - EFRH Referral pathways**

[Supporting Children and Young People Vulnerable to Violent Extremism \(proceduresonline.com\)](http://proceduresonline.com)

[Abuse by Children and Young People \(proceduresonline.com\)](http://proceduresonline.com)

[Harmful Sexual Behaviour \(proceduresonline.com\)](http://proceduresonline.com)

## **Appendix E - Extra-Familial Risk and Harm (EFRH) Panel Confidentiality Agreement**

# **Dorset Extra-Familial Risk and Harm Panel Confidentiality Agreement**

1. Information discussed by the agency representatives within this meeting, is strictly confidential and must not be disclosed to third parties who have not signed up to the EFRH



panel protocol and without the agreement of the partners of the meeting. It should focus on children and young people at risk of experiencing or causing extra-familial harm and a clear distinction should be made between fact and professional opinion.

2. All agencies should ensure that all minutes and related documentation are retained in a confidential and appropriately restricted manner. These minutes will aim to reflect that all individuals who are discussed at these meetings should be treated fairly, with respect and without improper discrimination. All work undertaken at the meetings will be informed by a commitment to equal opportunities and effective practice issues in relation to age, sex, disability, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity.

3. The panel will:

- Share information to increase the safety, health and well-being of children and the public.
- Construct and implement jointly risk management plans that provide professional support to all those at risk and which reduce the risk of harm.
- Ensure that interventions to reduce harm are directed towards the context in which harm takes place.
- Share information that may enable perpetrators to be held account and ensure they face sanctions.
- Ensure agency accountability.
- Provide support/guidance for staff involved in extra-familial harm cases.

The responsibility to take appropriate actions rests with individual agencies; it is not transferred to the EFRH panel.

The role of the EFRH panel is to facilitate, monitor and evaluate effective information sharing to enable appropriate actions to be taken to increase public safety.

By signing, I agree to abide by these principles.

Name and role:

Date: