



## CHILDREN'S SERVICES

### Complex Safeguarding Team - Structure and Operating Model:

Throughout 2019-20 there was a review of services, delivery and models for intervention in regards to children and young people likely to suffer harm through Exploitation .These children are often reported as missing from home/care, not accessing education or training, often looked after and experience instability of relationships with their carers/parents and home environment . These children are our most vulnerable and high risk of harm.

We have designed and are implementing a new, bespoke Complex Safeguarding Team ( CST) in response to challenges identified through audit, review and through discussions with our practitioners . The CST aims to improve practice with children and young people who are at risk of harm and exploitation external to the family home (e.g. child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, gangs, modern slavery and county lines).

This area of practice is known in BCP Children's Services as complex safeguarding. A relational model and Exploitation Team around the Child (ETAC) approach will offer individual support and evidence-based interventions for children and their families and ensure staff have the most effective tools and training to safeguard and support our most vulnerable children

### **Complex Safeguarding Team - Our goal**

Our Passions for young people and children are:

- **Safer** – reduced risks from exploitation.
- **Happy** – Living in stable, supportive, safe homes negating the need for high cost, secure accommodation. Positive relationships with family, carers and professionals.
- **Healthy** – Children and young people enjoy good physical and emotional mental health with the ability to make healthy choices for themselves.
- **Successful** – All children and young people can thrive and succeed in their education, emotional and personal lives.
- **Hope and aspirations-** ensure all our children have their aspirations identified and receive the right support, at the right time, to achieve these.

## **How will we do this?**

A Complex Safeguarding Team will consist of both qualified, experienced social workers, family support practitioners, Missing From Home/Return Home Interview (MFH/RHI) intervention support workers. The team will deliver a relational and youth engagement approach to working with children with complex needs and multiple vulnerabilities e.g. missing from Home, exploited through gang association, criminality and those suffering harm through sexual exploitation.

Research and reviews identify several factors which can support resilience and recovery from trauma in adolescence and early adulthood. These include establishing or maintaining a strong, supportive relationship with a parent or carer and with a committed, reliable worker outside the family. Further, maintaining positive supports of extended family and friends, by keeping young people local, and re-engaging young people in education

By designing One Team, One Approach, One Referral Pathway we aim to provide an evidence and strength-based approach to intervention. The team will adopt a co-working arrangement with allocated social workers, statutory and voluntary partners using the ETAC framework for planning, intervention and disruption

### **Operating Model:**

The model and approach for intervention, support and protection of children and their families affected by, and suffering harm through, exploitation will an evidenced strength model built on the following principles:

- Knowledge is critical – chronologies before intervention using research and best practice for gathering and sharing intelligence
- Effective services require resilient, experienced practitioners. Training and development is central to what we do
- The young person must be at the centre of what we do and will directly influence planning and intervention
- No agency can address exploitation in isolation; collaboration is essential and will be a focus of the ETAC
- Communities and families are valuable assets and may also need support in contributing to individual plans for children
- Practice will be within the context of understanding impact of trauma and grooming, poverty/deprivation and adolescent development
- Creative use of education and training is key to building resilience

### **In practice this means:**

- Providing practitioners with time and resources to allow for a relationship and rapport to develop between the social worker and child /young people
- Smaller caseloads = improved relationships and flexibility of approach, one size does not fit all.

- Co-working arrangement with social workers, adding value through shared resources, knowledge and skills base.
- Strengths-based centred approach (Child in Need/Child Protection/Children Looked After)
- Flexible working hours and patterns to respond to the needs of children
- Bespoke training for practitioners and partners
- Co-design and review as a 'team ethos' and not an event
- Exploitation Team Around the child approach.

### **Shifting focus away from process to outcomes:**

- Rethinking what effective intervention looks like
- Professional judgement is valued over linear tools and assessments
- Developing assessment tools and plans that are genuinely systemic and not systematic
- Exploitation is complex; therefore, the response must not be linear or simple

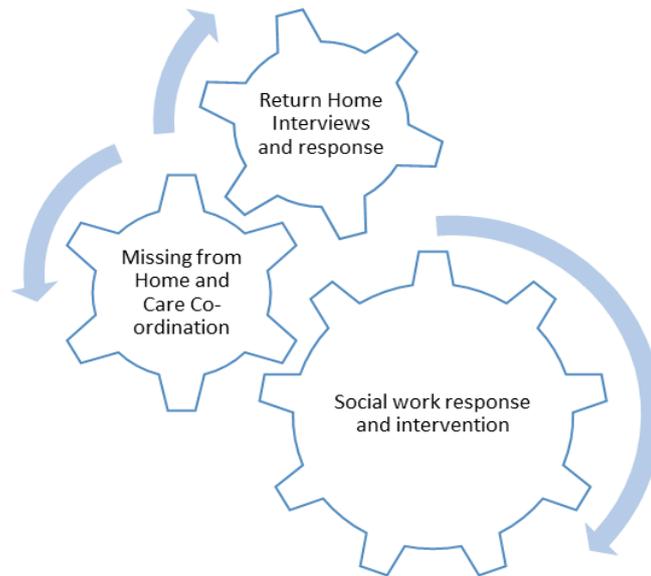
### **Relationship-based practice**

Some fundamental principles Social work is essentially about relationships: first and foremost, with children and their families; but also, with social workers and colleagues from other professional backgrounds – health, education, police, to name a few; with the organisational context and wider policy context of practice.

These relationships do not exist in isolation from each other and are interrelated and exert influences on each other. Relationship-based practice is not a new phenomenon:

*Relationships are central to social work practice but are shaped by the nature and purpose of the intervention, whether the relationship is the primary means of intervention, i.e. 'the end in itself' or, as it is more commonly utilised, as a 'means to an end' (Network for Psycho-Social Policy and Practice, 2002), and the timescales involved (Ruch, 2005). Definitions of relationship-based practice are hard to come by, but it is closely related to and builds on psychosocial approaches to practice and the psychodynamically informed case-work tradition (Hollis, 1964).*

The CST places emphasis on the relationship as the means through which interventions are channelled. What these characteristics also imply is that trusted relationship-based practice involves practitioners developing and sustaining supportive professional relationships in unique, complex and challenging situations. (via use of the ETAC and clinical/peer supervision)




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### **Social Care staff**

1. Service Manager x 1
2. Team Manager - X 2
3. Missing from Home Co-ordinator x 1
4. Social Workers – 5
5. Family support workers-parent and family focus x 1
6. Return Home Interview Support workers x 10 – Bank staff
7. Business support x 3

### **Referral Pathway.**

The key threshold for a referral into the service will be those children likely to suffer or suffering harm through Exploitation. This is determined through use of the screening tool and single assessment. In exceptional cases, where a child has been identified as part of a complex and or organised investigation the referral will come directly from Children’s First Respond Hub/MASH once all checks etc have been completed and in discussion with the Service Manager of the CST.

Referrals can only be made to the team by an allocated social worker on open cases.

### **Exploitation Team around the Child Meeting (ETAC)**

Once a Social Worker is allocated a child/family where it is suspected a child is suffering harm through Exploitation, an Exploitation Team Around the Child Meeting **(ETAC) must be** held within **72 hours**. If the concerns are immediate and urgent then a strategy meeting must be held within 24 hours of the receipt of the referral.

### **The purpose of the ETAC is to:**

- Ensure that all available information is shared and considered.
- Needs and vulnerability are identified and planned for.
- A trigger and disruption plan are completed.
- Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.
- Timescales are agreed.

### **Screening tool**

There is a revised screening tool which can be used by any professional where there are Exploitation concerns regarding a child or young person. This helps identify areas of concerns and features of exploitation. Agencies and voluntary groups can use the completed tool to support a referral to Children's First Response Hub if they believe that a statutory response and service is required.

### **Service contact information**

For cases that are open to Children's Social Care: please contact the named Social Worker

For new referrals: please use the normal Children's Services First Response Hub Inter-agency Referral Form

[https://search3.openobjects.com/mediamanager/poole/fis/files/bcp-inter-agency-referral-v2\\_0-14\\_05\\_20.docx](https://search3.openobjects.com/mediamanager/poole/fis/files/bcp-inter-agency-referral-v2_0-14_05_20.docx)

For further information about the Complex Safeguarding Service: please contact the Service Manager – [tim.nelson@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:tim.nelson@bcpcouncil.gov.uk) or 07714 440028