

FACTSHEET: Trafficking

Children and young people are usually recruited by coercive or subversive means, taken on dangerous journeys with false papers and ID and, at their destination, they are kept in a controlled environment by means of threats or violence. Some children may be escorted by a person stating that they are a relative. Most children are trafficked for financial gain such as domestic servitude, sexual exploitation, benefit fraud, sweat shop work in catering or agriculture, illegal adoption & many more.

Possible Indicators

The child at the point of entry:

- Entered illegally without passport or ID papers
- Has false papers, goods and money not accounted for
- Has no adult with them or to meet them
- Is with an adult who refuses to leave them alone
- Has no money but a working mobile phone
- Is reluctant to give personal details
- Once in the UK the child:
- Receives unexplained calls
- Has money from an unknown source
- Shows signs of sexual or physical abuse
- Has not been enrolled in a school or with a GP
- Seems to do work in various locations

The child's sponsor:

- Has previously made multiple visa applications for other children or acted as guarantor or
- Is known to have acted as guarantor for others who have not returned to their countries of origin at the expiry of the visas

Issues for consideration

Children need to be interviewed separately and over time to build up trust and trained CRB checked interpreters should be used. Independent legal advice should be arranged and discreet family tracing and contact, if it is safe, should be followed up.

Medical and counselling services should be arranged. A risk assessment should be made if the child is to be repatriated.

For further details see **chapter 3.4.2** in Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership Procedures.

Immediate Protection

If there is a risk to the life of the child or a likelihood of serious immediate Significant Harm, South Yorkshire Police or Children's Social Care should act quickly to secure the immediate safety of a child who may have been trafficked. In some cases it may be necessary to ensure either that the child remains in a safe place or is removed to a safe place. This could be on a voluntary basis, or following the making of an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

Referral and Assessment

Following a referral an Initial Assessment will be carried out by the Lead Social Worker and a Strategy Discussion will take place. It may decide that a Section 47 Enquiry should be carried out which could result in an Initial Child Protection Conference.

If the decision is that the risks do not require a Child Protection Plan then the child should be responded to as a Child in Need.

During the Initial Assessment the Lead Social Worker should establish the child's background history including a new or recent photograph, passport and visa details, Home Office papers and proof and details of the Guardian or carer.

With advice from their lawyers, trafficked children may apply to The United Kingdom Border Agency (UKBA), for asylum or humanitarian protection. This is because they often face a high level of risk of harm if they are forced to return to their country of origin.