

Local Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) Policy

References:

- [Staffordshire County Council MACE Panels Terms of Reference and Operating Principles](#)
- [Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board – Children Missing from care & home & vulnerable missing families \(joint with Stoke LSCB\)](#)
- [Staffordshire Safeguarding Board Policies](#)
- [Children's Home Regulations 2015 – The protection of children Standard – Regulation 12](#)
- [Children's Home - Statement of Purpose](#)
- [Children's Home– Local Safeguarding Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Children's Home – Local Missing From Care Policy](#)

1. Overview

We are committed to providing a safe and secure environment for children and young people in our care. The provision provides a service that is built upon and promotes respectful, trusting relationships between staff and young people. We recognise that managing complex behaviours of vulnerable young people who access short breaks carries with it enormous responsibility. This policy should be used in conjunction with our Local Missing from Care Policy, and Staffordshire Safeguard Board Policies

The purpose of this Policy and Procedure is to provide a system to identify and safeguard young people who receive a service of short breaks at Brunswick Place who may be at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE).

The protection of children standard (The Children's Home Regulations 2015 Regulation 12) is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe;

We will ensure that staff:

- Assess whether each child is at risk of harm, considering information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child.
- Help the young person to understand how to keep safe.
- Have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm.
- Understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person.
- Take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies.
- That the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep the young person safe and to protect each child effectively from harm.
- That the premises used for the purposes of the home are located so that the young person is effectively safeguarded.
- That the effectiveness of the home's safeguarding policies are monitored regularly.

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This policy aims to ensure that due consideration and importance is given to Regulation 7 of the Children's Home Regulations 2015 – The child's wishes and feelings in particular standard 4.3 to 4.8

The key aims of the service as stated in the statement of purpose will underpin this document:

- To listen to the young person and their family and take their views seriously utilising their strengths, acknowledging that they are the experts in their own family in order to build resilience.
- To enable the young persons and their family to make informed choices about their lives .
- To offer the young person and their family support where they feel safe and cared for.

The definition of CSE is as follows:

'Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse in which a person or persons exploits, coerces and/or manipulates a child or young person into engaging in some form of sexual activity in return for something the child needs or desires and/or for the gain of the person or persons perpetrating or facilitating the abuse'.

The definition of CCE is as follows:

CCE Involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where a child (or a person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g., food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them completing a task on behalf of another individual or group of individuals; this is often of a criminal nature.

Child criminal exploitation often occurs without the child's immediate recognition, with the child believing that they are in control of the situation. 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/economical and/or emotional vulnerability.

Children's involvement in CCE is indicative of coercion or desperation rather than choice. CCE is a complex form of abuse, and it can be difficult for those working with children to identify and assess.

2. Assessment of Risk

All young people will be subject to a comprehensive admission process. All assessments and 'relevant plans will form a basis for a thorough impact risk assessment, and planning process.

All young people will be subject to an impact risk assessment prior to being offered a place in a Staffordshire Children's home, to ensure that any known CSE and or CCE risks are explored, and necessary interventions are in place to reduce the risk to the young person.

The planning process is an opportunity for the service, parents, child, social worker and any other professional to discuss details of the young person and their family and history in order to better understand the child's needs and identify young people who are at risk of CSE and or CCE.

It may also help to understand existing patterns of behaviour, identify warning signs and will inform the risk assessment and strategies to be deployed to prevent and disrupt the activities of perpetrators. The planning process will ensure that the young person and their parents are listened to and enable all involved to identify the best way to support and safeguard a young person who may be at risk.

The induction process is an opportunity to address issues and concerns around CSE and or CCE and will explain the roles and responsibilities of all involved. Staff will do their best to help the young person understand the risks and dangers involved and make them aware of how to recognise risk and how to seek help and keep themselves safe.

Staff will use a variety of tools in order to assess the risk of CSE and or CCE to a young person who is receiving a service from the team. Staff will talk to the young person, their parents and involved professionals including the social worker and will use a restorative approach to build authentic relationships based on trust.

The staff will adhere to and remain focused on the following Key Principles as outlined in Staffordshire County Council Good Practice Guide – practice guidance for assessment, management and engagement of young people exposed to or at risk of CSE/CCE.

Child Centred – Staff will listen to the young person's wishes and feelings and involve them in decision making as far as possible, even if the young person does not recognise or acknowledge the risk

Proactive – Staff will share intelligence as well as information with all agencies in line with current procedures. Information will be shared discreetly and in a timely fashion. This is necessary not only to protect the individual child but also to plan action to disrupt the activities of perpetrators (MACE)

Assess Vulnerabilities – Staff will consider external influences such as school and peer networks and individual family circumstances. Staff recognise that CSE/CCE is often an external threat to the child's household and that parents need to be part of the solution and need to be helped to identify areas of risk and how this risk can be reduced without alienating the young person or supportive networks and positive relationships.

Consent – Children and young people cannot make an informed choice to be sexually exploited or to continue to be exploited: their compliance is often moulded by coercion, enticement, manipulation or desperation.

- **Empowerment** – It is important that young people are not criminalised, and the focus will remain on the disruption and prosecution of offenders
- **Language** – Staff will give due consideration to the language used when discussing the risks around CSE/CCE. The responses staff give to young people and their parents will vary considerably and will be based on understanding, perception, and potential/actual associated risk.

Warning Signs of CSE/CCE

Staff will consider warning signs when assessing the potential for risk. A young person who is being sexually and or criminally exploited may show a range of behaviours or warning signs that may indicate they are a victim or at risk of being exploited

Appearance and Behaviour:

- Physical symptoms (bruising suggestive of either physical or sexual assault)
- Evidence of drug, alcohol or substance misuse
- Volatile behaviour / mood swings / use of abusive language
- Truancy/disengagement with education or change in performance at school
- Low self-image, low self-esteem, self-harming behaviour, e.g. cutting, overdosing, eating disorder
- Physical aggression towards others
- Change in appearance / always tired
- Withdrawal from family and friends
- Loss of enjoyment of usual hobbies
- Missing Episodes
- Secretive behaviour with regards to phones and devices

Signs of Sexual Exploitation:

- Sexually transmitted infections / pregnancy / seeking an abortion
- Sexually risky behaviour
- Sexual / unexplained relationships with older people
- History of abuse or neglect
- Domestic violence / parental difficulties
- Clothing – inappropriate for age, borrowing clothing from others
- Reports that the child has been seen in places known to be used for sexual exploitation
- Unexplained gifts such as a mobile phone, clothing, alcohol, drugs
- Missing episodes, staying out late
- Secretive with regards to mobile phone and devices
- Disengagement with school, friends and or family
- Signs of physical assault

Relationships

- Entering or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults
- Hostility in relationship with parents/carers and other family members
- Reports to suggest the likelihood of involvement in sexual exploitation (e.g. from friends or family)
- Associating with other young people who are known to be sexually exploited, involved with gangs or criminal behaviour
- Inappropriate use of Internet – & forming relationships, with adults
- Phone calls, text messages or letters from unknown adults
- Adults or older youths loitering outside the child's usual place of residence

Missing

- Truancy
- Placement breakdown
- Persistently missing, staying out overnight or returning late
- Returning after having been missing, looking well cared for in spite of having no known home base
- Missing for long periods, with no known home base
- Going missing and being found in areas where the child or young person has no known links

Financial

- Petty crime e.g. shoplifting, stealing
- Having keys to other premises
- Expensive clothes, mobile phones or other possessions without explanation

- Accounts of social activities requiring money
- Possession of large amounts of money with no plausible explanation.

3) Roles and Responsibilities.

Staff are committed to a proactive response to CSE and CCE and associated risks. Staff will support the young person and their parents ensuring that the assessment, planning and review processes are appropriate and careful consideration is given to the engagement of young people exposed to or at risk of CSE and CCE during this process.

In all instances where risk is identified staff will review and where necessary update the young person's PSP, Missing Risk Assessment and evaluate what did or did not work in the situation. The Registered manager will use this information to consider whether this identifies any gaps in skills or knowledge for the staff team. This will inform workforce development plans for the Brunswick Place Service.

Staff will consider the risk of CSE and CCE after each missing episode and when there is any information shared with regards to links to a young person being potentially exploited.

In addition to this staff will refer to the Local Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and when necessary, follow the reporting process.

Each Children's home is represented at the MACE panel by a member of the residential team. Attendance at this panel ensures that the service is represented in a multi-agency forum and has strong links with the panel co-ordinator and other professionals throughout the County. During each panel all professionals can share recent developments and practice, discuss available support and receive updates from Staffordshire Police. This is an opportunity for professionals from different departments across the County to share information, intelligence and to discuss potential disruption plans for offenders.

In accordance with *Children's Home Regulations 2015 – regulation 11* the staff will work in partnership with others, maintain effective working relationships, support children in understanding how to build friendships with other children. Staff will help young people understand what makes a healthy nurturing relationship and will have the relevant skill base to recognise the signs and provide support to children in danger of or involved in exploitative or damaging relationships with others and where possible prevent these types of relationship. Direct work will be undertaken with the young person with regards to safe relationships.

4 Guidance and Procedure

Staff will use Staffordshire *Safeguarding Children Board and Stoke on-Trent Safeguarding Children Board* Inter-Agency Procedures for Safeguarding Children and Promoting their Welfare.

The MACE Risk Factor Matrix can be used and will be the basis for assessing and managing risk. This information will be collated from discussions with the young person, observation and analysis of behaviours displayed whilst receiving a short breaks service, their parents and relevant professionals including the social worker and police.

The staff team will not work in isolation and understand the importance of multi - agency working, information sharing, sensitivity, confidentiality and that the safety and protection of the young person is paramount.

Staff Guidance on the use of the Risk Matrix:

- Using the risk matrix is based on your professional judgement. Using the indicators is a guide only and should not be used to replace your professional judgement.
- Completion of the risk by the professional identifying the concerns should involve liaison with the designated lead within your own agency (CSE/CCE Co-coordinator) as well as other agencies that may be or are involved with the child or young person – if in doubt – check it out!
- If a child or young person presents with one indicator action is required. The earlier the intervention the better the chances of success. However, 1 indicator is unlikely to require social care or specialist services intervention unless it is a high-risk category. A record must be kept of the case and what interventions have taken place and kept on the young person's files. Talk it through with your designated lead and decide what the best course of action is for the child or young person.
- In Staffordshire, there will be a MACE operational panel which will be bi-monthly. There will be 6 meetings covering different areas of the County where children/young people at risk of CSE and CCE are discussed, and the risk factor matrix is used to identify the level of risk and appropriate intervention agreed by the panel. Designated Leads can refer a child/young person to the MACE Panel at any stage so risk can be assessed, and interventions agreed in a multi-agency forum.
- It is important to be aware that young people can move very quickly between the risk's categories; therefore, regular assessments should be undertaken using the risk indicators. Any escalation of risk should be dealt with immediately and recorded in the young person's file. Where risk has either stepped up/reduced a new risk assessment form should be completed and attached to their file.

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- If at any stage the young person presents with high-risk indicators or the risk increases and becomes high risk, then their Social Worker will be informed without delay and an immediate referral must be made to the First Response service based at the MASH (Staffordshire) .

**Implemented By : K Hutchinson October 2020
Reviewed By : K Hutchinson May 2020, March 2022**

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