

The Child's Journey when Exploitation is Suspected or Identified

Integrated Front Door

Concerns around exploited children are referred into the Integrated Front Door (IFD) where the staff in the Exploitation Hub carry out screening of contacts. The exploitation social workers (SW) make enquiries, map harms and make recommendations regarding next steps. These recommendations include early help, a social work assessment, notifying other responsible LA's or no further action. The staff may also contribute to strategy meetings for other LA's if young people from other districts are living in Bradford. We will invite the responsible LA to work with us through our local procedures.

The contact and referrals forms (EHM/LCS) for exploited children are completed by the staff in the Exploitation Hub. Any recommendations are signed off by the Exploitation Team Manager (TM) who will make clear advisories re completing exploitation risk assessments and presenting the case at a scheduled RAM (Risk Assessment Meeting).

Locality Teams/ Case Management

If the case is transferred to the locality teams for an assessment, usual safeguarding processes apply. This includes the completion of single assessments or convening strategy meetings if the child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm. The locality SW/TM will need to be mindful of the advisories in the referral record as it will offer details of the risk exploitation risk assessment to be completed and dates they will be required to attend the RAM.

Before any child or young person is closed, the SW is expected to submit a final risk assessment to enable the exploitation service to ratify that the exploitative harms previously presenting have either been removed or mitigated by way of a viable safety plan. Providing agreement and safety is achieved, the exploitation TM removes the exploitation flags off the LCS child's file.

Exploitation Hub (Exploited and Missing Children)

The exploitation risk assessment is reviewed and risks evaluated and harm grading's are ratified and or adjusted. Any changes in grading might come about from cross referencing with multi-agency partners who work in the inter-agency team. For example, we might have health information which suggests we are more worried. Again TM will be on file do demonstrate rationale.

Invites are then sent to the allocated SW to attend one of the daily RAM meetings. These are virtual and attended by agencies attend who would be able to offer specialist support through co-working arrangements i.e. Breaking the Cycle, Specialist Health Workers, Barnados etc.

RAM (Risk Assessment Meetings)

The Risk Assessment Meetings (RAM) focus on which agency/ commissioned service can offer support to a child or young person and allocate a service to work alongside the SW team. The RAM members look at disruption, Nation Referral Mechanism (NRM) referral needs, and devise an exploitation plan to reduce risks. The SW leaves the meeting with advisories on what to do to support the YP, and a new service is aligned to assist them and work alongside them. The SW is then advised how many days they will need to return an updated risk assessment and re-present to RAM. Multi-agency partners agree on what risk flags need to be entered into LCS ie missing, CCE. TM for exploitation enters these onto LCS.

Children will continue to be reviewed in the RAM until risks are reduced to the lowest level (emerging) at which point their needs can be managed outside of the RAM process.

MACE Panel (Multi Agency Child Exploitation Panel)

MACE is conducted in 2 parts and is held 6 weekly.

The first part of the meeting is where strategic leads across the partnership come together to share crucial data and analysis about exploited children. They will present data that will enable mapping of children's risks, locality 'hotspots' and perpetrators who might be harming children. From this, each agency is to take the knowledge back to their respective service areas and make plans (with the partners) to tackle exploitation. For example, the police might undertake some specific disruption activity in a certain post code, based on data analysis.

The second part of the meeting is where our most vulnerable children are discussed by senior officers who may need to assist front line staff to ensure help and support for these children or young people is put in place quickly. For example, assisting with unblocking resource issues or waiting lists. Similar to RAM meetings, this strategic meeting is a place whereby agencies can be directed to undertake actions and clear advisories will be given to agencies working around the child or YP. We hold each other to account and challenge one another to kick start actions if there is a risk of drift or delay for a child.

The Exploitation Hub Staff Compliment

The Exploitation Hub support the screening of risks identified for children in the front door and the locality teams. There is a specialist exploitation health nurse and a specialist education safeguarding officer.

We also have 4 missing coordinators who undertake return interviews for children who have been reported as missing. For looked after children, these interviews are undertaken by an independent commissioned service in line with our statutory duty.

All team members offer advice and guidance on how to manage and tackle exploitation harms. This support is available to both internal and external staff/partners. They link in with other local authorities and oversee YP who we are hosting in our area and remain the responsibility of another LA. Staff attend strategy meetings and coordinate and lead on complex exploitation strategy meetings when required. For example, when multiple groups are being exploited from what's deemed a gang. The Exploitation service deliver training to professionals across the district including schools, residential staff and locality teams. They will attend team meetings and ICPC's should the need arise.