

Child Exploitation Protocol

Childrens Services & Bradford District Partnerships

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Effective Date: October 2022

Review Date: October 2025

Status: Version 1.1

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1. Foreword – Introduction

The effects of child exploitation can be devastating to children and their families and have a profound impact on children's and their parents or care givers whole lives.

The partners including the police, NHS, schools, voluntary and housing partners have a key role to play in tackling child exploitation head on, together.

This being from;

- raising awareness in our communities
- prevention of exploitation
- protecting children experiencing exploitation
- supporting children to recover from exploitation
- Ensuring their families receive assistance to keep their child safe
- Staff training
- Aligned joint working practices between staff from the partners
- Seeing justice served for those who harm children

It is essential to have the right systems and processes in place to prevent and disrupt risk and harm caused by exploitation, placing children at the centre of everything we do. A strong emphasis should be placed on victim support/recovery, all professionals coming together to support justice being served and partners working together to disrupt those who seek to exploit children.

Children and young people are unlikely to see what is happening to them as 'exploitation'. Therefore, our response needs to consider the holistic needs of the child, their family and helping them to understand such harms and guide them to living safer lives.

This protocol sets out an overarching framework of how we will work together as partners. Helpful tools and guidance attached should be considered alongside the contents of the protocol. This protocol aligns to the Missing Policy given the links to child exploitation and children who go missing are often exploited.

For Frontline Practitioners

Supportive documents including our processes, flowcharts and practice guidance tools are detailed in the appendices below and must be followed under this overarching policy document. Specifically detailing responsibilities of the partners and professionals. Allowing practitioners to work with children, their families and other professionals and giving clear guidance on pathways of support for children and their families.

2. PURPOSE

This protocol sets out the overarching framework of how the partners will work together with families. Its ultimate purpose is

- To provide an agreed inter-agency framework for assessing and classifying the degree of risk when a child is being or suspected of being exploited.
- To provide guidance on what responses each agency will offer in relation to each level of risk.
- To provide an agreed set of measures and safeguarding planning activity that will be put in place when a child is being exploited.

This protocol will serve to outline our commitment to tackling exploitation head on, at a high level and will work in conjunction with statute, government guidance and protocols for specific areas such as when children go missing. All practitioners will have an understanding of this protocol, however might make day to day use of other guidance tools (in the appendices) when supporting children and their families in their roles.

3. STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT

It is vital that strategic leads across the partners have a clear understanding of children at risk of exploitation. Furthermore, a clear understanding of all children likely to be placed at risk of exploitation, through insightful risk quantifying practices alongside measures put in place that can respond to harms associated with all forms of exploitation.

Through joint collation of data and intelligence mapping via the MACE board the partners can be guided on what children in the district need, be it individual safeguarding's responses, right through to our commissioning intentions as partners. Analysis and mapping risk in the district will provide the partners opportunities to undertake targeted prevention and disruption activity and support any criminal investigation.

Every child will have tailored oversight, through Risk Assessment Meetings (RAM) and MACE where necessary. The Multi-agency Child Exploitation Hub will support all professionals in the district and wider through advice and a degree of peer challenge to ensure children's outcomes are met in a timely manner, and any identified risks are managed effectively. In addition, the exploitation plans and disruption plans will form a key part of other care planning such as Children in our Care, Child Protection, Child in Need or Early Help Plans.

For our most vulnerable children, deemed to be at greatest risk; support will be via the MACE panel on a six weekly basis triggering strategic oversight and action planning by the partners. Exploitation Hub advisories will be offered to professionals working directly with children as well as peer challenge to their agency, if required. Disruption and safety planning will become its core purpose, with all agencies accepting responsibility to undertake actions within their powers in helping a child and their family be safe from exploitation.

Disruption planning and victim recovery will form the cornerstone of work undertaken with those children experiencing 'push/pull' factors and any indicators of exploitative harm. Push/ pull factors as set out below where exploitation harms are detailed.

The inter-agency Exploitation Hub Service will have linear lines of reporting to leadership groups across the partners and the Children's Safeguarding Board, including an annual report to be presented to elected members.

4. SCOPE

This protocol provides an overarching framework and will underpin what the partners will do to protect our community from exploitation, together. Further there will be specific policies and practice tools that will sit under this protocol that will provide clear practice guidance on how to manage a variety of safeguarding situations that exploited children experience. For example, the Missing Protocol and supportive operation mapping for front line staff to navigate children and families to safer lives.

5. DEFINITION – EXPLOITATION

“Child exploitation is complex, takes a variety of forms and doesn't neatly fit into categories. In general, child exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of a power imbalance to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into criminal or sexual activity or modern slavery. This can be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, this is most likely to be the result of grooming, where a criminal has identified what a young person may want or need.” (LGA Aug 2021)

Power Imbalance – a core component of exploitative harms.

Power imbalance can be through a range of factors, including age, gender, cognitive ability, status, and access to economic or other resources. Other factors being a child lives with a learning need or a mental health issue and this makes them highly susceptible to being targeted. A child's lived experiences such as; bereavement or previous neglect, the impact of domestic abuse, again can heighten their vulnerability to being groomed or exploited.

Children 'consenting' to things, does not remove their part in an unequal relationship. A child may not recognise power imbalance and exploitation does not always follow a

set form. Exploitation does not always involve physical contact and can take place through technology. All professionals will need to recognise that exploitation is never the child's fault, even if some form of exchange or dealings have taken place. All children and young people have a right to be safe and protected from harm.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Any activity that incites a child to commit or undertake acts linked to a crime is Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE). Examples being a child being forced to take part in a theft, take part in cannabis production and selling drugs, threaten other young people or move money involved in any crimes such as drug dealing. A prominent type of CCE is 'county lines' which organised drug dealing networks seek to involve children to travel, move, store or sell drugs in other areas to where they usually live. Criminal gangs use children as a key component of their 'business model' to evade detection and they are 'cheap labour' and less likely to be stopped by the Police. Furthermore, children might be used to cut up drugs, bag them or sell drugs in any area of the UK and oversee cuckooing, the practice of taking over a vulnerable person's home, for illegal drug purposes. The essential part of using children is they can be controlled easier than adults. Where such harm is identified the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) must be triggered see below section on NRM.

Modern Slavery

Modern slavery forms part of the wider picture around child CCE and serious organised crime. This being recruiting, moving and harbouring children or vulnerable adults; using force, coercion, deception and control to exploit them. Where such harm is identified the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) must be triggered.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child sexual exploitation is one of the many forms of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or no penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It can occur when an abuser has never met a child physically, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet (social media platforms, gaming sites etc.)

CSE can affect any child but there are some children who may be at greater risk than others. CSE can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have an appropriate relationship but can still be a victim to exploitation or sexual harm at this age. Again

this is due to the factor of power imbalance and all 16 & 17 year olds must be risk profiled in their own right, of being exploited.

Examples of CSE (not exhaustive)

- Sending of sexual images online
- Being forced to have sex in order to pay for protection or a debt.
- Initiation into a gang
- A child being blackmailed to send more images
- Being asked to make or send videos
- In person or through technology
- Inciting a child to sexually abuse another child

Gangs and Exploitation

Children and young people can be recruited to peer groups who identify themselves as a gang. Those that are recruited to gangs will likely be coerced into many differing forms of criminal activity from nuisance antisocial behaviour, right through to being exploited by organised criminal gangs. They might be at risk of or fear of violence, if they do not undertake gang linked activity. They may be forced to travel away from their home and 'work' for the gang. Young people might not recognise they are victims; at times it might seem they are 'choosing the lifestyle'. Young people once affiliated with a gang may find it increasingly difficult to separate or leave a gang due the hold and control the perpetrators have over them?

They may be pressured into committing offences such as:

- drug dealing
- stealing
- carrying weapons or drugs

Young people can be targeted by their own associates or by other gangs and are at risk of serious violence, robbery, sexual violence and intimidation. Often drawn into 'debt-bondage', where they are robbed for cash or drugs and have to work for free to repay the debt, which can be a substantial sum of money. Their families may also be threatened and their family home targeted.

With an ever-increasing number of young people involved, and a higher earning potential through the 'ranks', there is a desire among gang members to sustain their place or move to the top end of the chain in a gang. Often those that exploit young people in gangs will persuade and encourage gang members to out-perform their peers, leading onto young people taking greater risks and potentially committing more serious crimes.

Gangs often associate themselves with holding a patch or set postcode and increasingly there is an emerging culture to use violence to 'protect their patch'. This correlates with knife crime and the national picture of young people carrying knives and being prepared to harm other gang's members.

Who are the perpetrators of exploitation?

Exploitation can be perpetrated by a wide range of offenders, from individuals through to gangs and organised networks and groups. Some young people can be both victims and alleged 'perpetrators' of exploitation, such as when a young person has been groomed and then 'recruits' their friends. The lines can be blurred as children who 'recruit' friends are led to believe this is 'ok' or acceptable behaviour. The key is to ensure the notion they are a victim in their own right is not lost when working with them. Some young people can become a risk to those who exploit them, leading to them being 'let go'. This can then lead to the young person knowing nothing else and 'setting up' their own network of children to exploit. A primary example being drug dealing. Professionals must not view these young people as 'making their own decision' to become a drug dealer in their own right as a 'career choice'. More often a young person has no other survival skills.

Historical group sexual offender investigations have led to an understanding of children being groomed and trapped into situations where they are sexually abused by networks of offenders. Often a group of people who know one another. In some cases, children being used as a commodity and 'distributed for money'.

6. HOW WILL THE PARTNERS WILL TACKLE EXPLOITATION, TOGETHER?

We cannot tackle child exploitation in isolation and information sharing is necessary to protecting children, disrupting offenders, and bring them to justice. Given there are a whole range of behaviours that often, in isolation will not appear to be exploitation. Put together our combined information forms a bigger picture of harm a child might be suffering. Each agency holds different pieces of information that will identify children or areas where exploitation is taking place. Furthermore, our agencies operate under different legislative powers. Our inter-agency work needs to maximise these powers to tackle not only reducing harms to children, but effectively target perpetrators of exploitative harms towards children. Particularly where a criminal offence is or has been committed and what context.

Risk Profiling Not Risk Assessing

Traditional language around risk assessments can draw professionals focus from the child to the agency's needs. There is a need to move away from risk assessments to risk profiling children (the victim) but broadening risk profiling to;

- profiling persons of interest, suspected to be harming a child or children
- Families of children who are exploited
- The wider community

Risk profiling needs to have meaning and also give consideration to what risks will arise from active disruption activity for the groups detailed as well as the wider community. Risk analysis must focus and recognise retaliation to victims and their family and where applicable threats of extreme violence and risk to life, when interventions are shaped. This will be achieved through inter-agency evaluation of the most appropriate disruption tools or mechanism with safeguarding at the forefront of decisions.

7. PREVENTION MODEL

Targeted work at three levels will be undertaken by the partners.



Advanced – child abduction notice/ legal steps to protect, arresting perpetrators, safety planning for children

Targetted – intelligence led disruption days, proactive work by the partners in the hotspots where trends dictate

Community – work in schools, educating young people and their families about exploitation, and specific issues such as knives.

Inter-agency partner's data sharing/ gathering and analysis – MACE reports distributed to leadership of the agencies and they take action accordingly.

The partners will gather and analyse information together, creating one singular combined MACE report, to maximise and inform how we tackle the; community, targeted and advanced disruption tactics above.

The MACE board being the appropriate forum and attendance from key stakeholders being mandatory. Such information and data will also inform each agencies

commissioning requirements and where there is an identified need to jointly commission to protect children. Working from a collaborative stance the picture will become clearer and outline where we need to be more disruptive and what each partner can do to play their part in disrupting exploitative harms.

VOLT

Partners will make use of the **VOLT** identification model. This will create mapping and forecasting activity not only for specific children but the wider community of children in the local area and wider district. Findings of VOLT mapping will form every child's Risk Profiling in the RAM and MACE meeting discussion.

V – Victim(s)

O – Offender(s)/perpetrators/ persons of concern

L – Location(s)

T – Theme(s)

The VOLT focus will enable the RAM professionals to explore gaps and specific areas of risk. Also giving scope to what disruption planning and tools are to be used to achieve the shared goals to protect children from exploitation. Cross border work with other local authority areas will form a strong part of protecting vulnerable children and managed in the RAM and MACE forums.

Co-Location and Integrated Systems

Inter-agency professionals will be co-located and a wider group of professionals will have access to and have the ability to record on the Liquid Logic Children's Files. The Liquid Logic system will have designated exploitation recording, alongside the wider social care teams recording. The locality team having stronger interface with the Exploitation Hub activity.

8. PROTECTION / SUPPORT & JUSTICE FOR CHILDREN

Tools to protect children and manage offenders who are harming children

A range of tools attached to this protocol will enable all frontline practitioners from all agencies to consider what disruption and support options can be used when exploitative harms are taking place. These will be set out into the categories below as laid out in Home Office 'Child Exploitation Disruption Toolkit' (April 2019).

The toolkit covers a wide range of forms of exploitation and what legal powers and action can be taken and what planning activity agencies must undertake. These tools will form a key part of strategy meetings, safeguarding planning meetings and overseen in both RAM and MACE, to ensure our aligned duties are carried out.

Notably there is a stronger emphasis on victim care and clear focus on bringing offenders to justice. Victims need to feel safe, recover from exploitation and see justice is served wherever possible. Importantly we all have a role to play in preserving

evidence that could be used at a later point in time. This might be physical evidence or disclosures made by victims or their family.



Tools are detailed as appendices at the end of this document

National Referral Mechanism (NRM)

There is a duty to notify under section 52 Modern Slavery Act 2015, any child who is a potential child victim must be referred into the NRM. Child victims do not have to consent to being referred into the NRM. Many of the Interagency partners can refer children; however, a coordinated approach via the Child Exploitation & Missing Hub will be put in place. Referring professionals are known as First Responders, a list of agencies able to make an NRM referral is provided.

Section 45 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 (MSA) provides a statutory defence for victims of modern slavery who have been forced to commit crimes such as selling illegal drugs, but this does not apply to more serious crimes, such as violent or sexual offences. There must be proof of a direct link to exploitation, to achieve a positive NRM outcome. Children referred to the NRM must receive support through children's social care safeguarding pathways to ensure that they are safe while waiting for a decision, where needs present. It is important to note that when a young person achieves their 18th birthday, there are adjustments to the NRM process, particularly a need for their consent once 18 years.

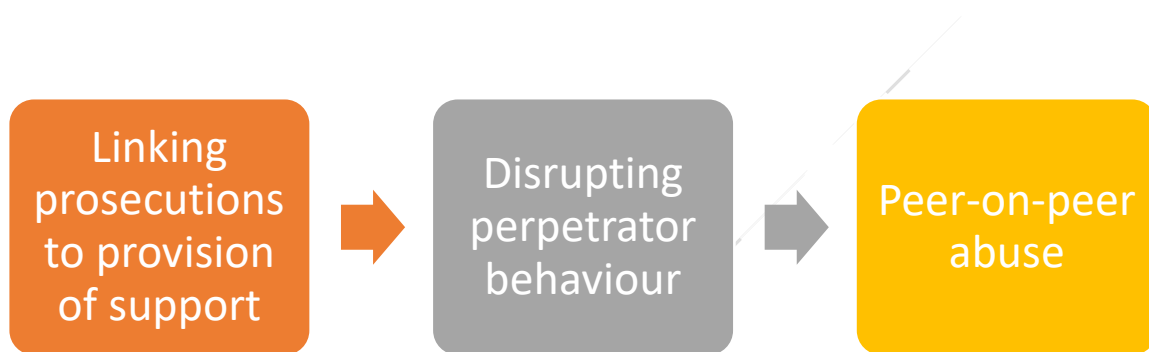
Aligning safeguarding activity to police investigations

Supporting both historical and current police investigations will be a joint enterprise to assist where possible to achieve prosecution outcomes for children. To ensure transferrable risks to children linked to any suspected perpetrator of exploitative harms

and or sexual abuse, are managed. Additionally, families have the right support during police investigation periods and later any potential court activity.

Justice for children and their families

Identifying, disrupting and prosecuting perpetrators must be a key part of work undertaken by the partners to safeguard children. Whilst the police and criminal justice agencies lead on this aspect of work, the support of other partners, for example in recording information and gathering and preserving evidence is also vital. Identifying and prosecuting the perpetrators will be a primary consideration of the partners. However, any work to identify and prosecute perpetrators should not put children and young people at any further risk of harm. Below sets out the three stage approach for seeking justice for children and their families.



Linking prosecutions to the provision of support

The partners will make use of a specialist commissioned services PACE (Parents against child exploitation) to work closely with children and young people and their families during prosecution activity. Their non-statutory status places them in a better position when working with families and it is vital that where a young person wants, and is able to be a part of a prosecution, the agency is able to support them through the process and post-conviction. Further support for parents/ carers can be provided.

Disrupting Perpetrator Behaviour

Disrupting perpetrator behaviours should be viewed as an integral part of our work to tackle exploitation. Whilst there should always be a proactive investigation aiming for successful prosecutions, a disruption plan targeting suspected perpetrators can be extremely beneficial. This leading to using appropriate statutory powers against a perpetrator. This will form part of Risk Profiling, strategy meetings and RAM/MACE meetings and aligned to the VOLT pathway set out above and led by the staff within the Child Exploitation Hub with an ethos of 'think wider community'.

Peer-on-Peer Abuse

When a young person is exploited by their peer(s), the young person who is exploiting another young person, being same age, or close in age to them. When the perpetrator of exploitation is under the age of 18, a strategy discussion will be convened which considers the safeguarding needs of all children linked to peer alleged to be abusing other young people. An assessment will need to be undertaken to consider their needs so that the cycle of abuse can be stopped.

9. RISK PROFILING CHILDREN AT RISK OF BEING EXPLOITED.

Professionals traditionally see risk assessments as a business activity/report, and a shift to risk profiling will keep focus on the child and their assessment and safety planning needs.

Children and young people will be seen as individuals and their specific risks be recorded appropriately, aligning to the safeguarding framework models we already use. Risk Profiling will inform and lead to good assessment decisions, accurate risk grading and subsequent planning will be tailored to their individual needs. The shift to Profiling will make use of the models below in a blended approach and afford a trauma informed response to children's needs.

- Trauma Informed Practice
- Safeguarding procedures/ processes
- Restorative Practice

This will focus on children's individual risk and needs, informing how we approach the interagency planning, to reduce or remove risks for the child and their family. Using a Trauma Informed model will draw down into the specific needs and risks of vulnerable children, capturing a child's specific learning needs and abilities; rather than their biological age for example.

A chronological picture of a child's lived experience and any trauma will build a picture of behaviours acted out and risks the child might have been exposed to and normalised. Also giving measure to their ability to recognise relationships that have power imbalance and are exploitative. Trauma recovery requires Specific post trauma planning and this will be supported by the partners and those supporting children.

The partners will need to be aware that a child's or a young person's behaviour, including offending behaviour, should be seen in the context of wider vulnerabilities and unresolved issues such as trauma, post-traumatic stress disorder, mental health issues or substance misuse. Risk Profiling that is trauma informed places the child at the core of the work the partners will undertake and will provide clear guidance to social workers, police officers, education staff, health professionals and our voluntary partners working with vulnerable children.

A restorative approach will be through supporting young people seeking justice as part of their trauma recovery, where this is important to them. This will be achieved through aligned purposeful work with JIT officers (police officers from the child exploitation team) and recognition that children and young people make 'disclosures' or seek help

when they're ready. That agencies recognise the pace of the child in the work they undertake.

Education (NEET/ poor attendance/ SEN/ EHCP)

Children who have been excluded from school, having poor attendance or are in alternative provision may feel disenfranchised which can make them an easy target for perpetrators. The longer the issue goes on the harder it is for children and young people to resume a full and focussed education. Reduced timetables or no schooling can also offer opportunities for exploitation to continue or increase. At times, a young person may also be experiencing grooming which leads to disruptive behaviour and then exclusions.

There will be more emphasis on children who are NEET (not in education or employment training), poor attendance and reduced timetables, with a clear purpose of reinstating full education timetable and or training opportunities, at the earliest point.

For children who have a reduced timetable, particular focus to set out a 'phased return' to full time education, in the shortest period possible. Therefore, periodic reviews of a reduced timetable need to take place. Reduced Timetables for lengthy periods of time is not recognised as a positive outcome for child. The MACE combined report will identify children whose education is at risk. Particular focus where a child has a recorded EHCP due to an identified SEN (special education need).

Risks to exploitation are reduced when children are participating with their education or training. The Exploitation Hub has a dedicated Education Safeguarding Officer to support children and practitioners to return to appropriate education attendance and support schools and colleges to meet the needs of vulnerable learners. This will be particularly supportive to prevent exclusions, managed moves and improve poor attendance. The Education Safeguarding Officer will work directly with families, professionals and schools where education complexities and risks are present.

SEND

The Education Safeguarding officer with the child exploitation hub works diligently with partners in the SEND integrated assessment team providing regular communications and direction around the steps to keep these children safe. The officer will communicate with schools and also attend interim/annual reviews as well as support professionals with EHCP's.

NEET

The Skills House provides an all age guidance service offering information, advice and guidance. Careers advisers work in a school/college setting with year 9 upwards, providing a service to the majority of mainstream and special schools in the Bradford District, including young people in PRUs, home educated and those where no local school has been identified.

Support is continued for students who leave education and either are unemployed or unsure about what to do next. The post 16 team of NEET personal advisers follow up

this group of young people and have a statutory responsibility for the Local Authority to track anyone aged academic age 16-18 and up to 25th birthday with an EHCP. Advisers contribute to CIN, CP and EHCP reviews as well as liaising with the education safeguarding officer within the CE team. Support will be provided through a dedicated keyworker to support service users on their journey to overcome the barriers and enter employment, apprenticeships, traineeships or further training.

Employment

Young people will be supported to achieve positive employment outcomes. Support to young people will need to be tailored to their developmental and emotional needs in support planning. Linking young people to agencies and schemes will be a core focus as part of their transition into adulthood.

RAM (Risk Assessment Meetings)

The multi-agency Exploitation Hub will support all professionals in the district through advice and a degree of scrutiny to ensure children's outcomes are met in a timely manner, and any identified risks are managed effectively. RAM will offer advisories to guide practitioners according to the measured risks and needs. RAM is the operational oversight for all children at risk of exploitation. RAM meetings are held daily (Mon to Friday) with all the partners in attendance including the services we commission to work directly with children and their families. This enables rapid implementation of support required, oversight and practical support for those working directly with families. Services will be allocated to support children in the RAM meeting, for example Breaking the Cycle the youth led service or other commissioned services.

MACE

The Multi Agency Child Exploitation Meeting (MACE) purpose, is to have strategic partnership oversight of high risk exploitation situations for named children, information and intelligence sharing and offer cross boundary work across West Yorkshire. MACE having the ability to remove blockages or obstacles to children being safe and supported as well as considering and directing resourcing in response to trends.

Bradford's partners will commit to being 'braver beyond their remit' in MACE and find bespoke responses for children facing exploitative harms, by going above and beyond for our most vulnerable children.

For our most vulnerable children, deemed to be at greatest risk; support will be via the MACE panel on a six weekly basis for review, support and strategic oversight. Clear advisories are to be offered, peer challenge and disruption planning will become its core purpose. Disruption planning will result in all agencies accepting responsibility to undertake actions within their power it assists in helping a child and their family be

safe from exploitation. Finally, a clear escalation process to alert agency leadership of any children requiring their strategic oversight.

Dealing with difference or issues (Escalation process)

When practitioners and agencies do not agree we shall all offer peer challenge accordingly, to one another. Setting a culture of high challenge, solution finding and learning when an escalation is triggered. The focus of escalations being, that we achieve the outcomes for children, as promptly as required. To ensure escalations do not remove our focus from children, leadership support via arbitration can be triggered and decisions for children can be made without delay.

10. OUR SAFEGUARDING MODEL & SAFETY PLANS

The pathways for children deemed to be in need in our area in accordance to the Children Act will continue to follow the usual safeguarding process via the Integrated Front door and any subsequent children services team activity. Further to any assessments, decisions regarding interventions, formal planning will commence. Partners coming together to play their part in removing or reducing harm. Noting the Exploitation Hub will have already been an integral part of the Front Door screening activity, in the child's journey.

The standard safeguarding model we work to, Trauma informed model and Restorative safeguarding models blended to meet individual needs of children and their families, where exploitation is a presenting risk, will be evident in the planning approach.

Any child identified as being at risk, experiencing exploitative or contextual harms will be afforded support as set out within this protocol and any tools for practitioners and guidance that sit under this protocol.

Measuring Exploitation Risk

Where a child has been identified as being at risk or experiencing exploitation, practitioners will undertake and complete an Exploitation Risk Profiling assessment. This is completed on the LCS system for locality practitioners. For Early Help colleagues and practitioners from outside Children's Services, including other local authorities; paper based documents will be accepted.

Below sets out the 3 grading outcomes from Risk Profiling Assessments and who will need to provide support to children at each level and if RAM support is to be put in place.

Assessed level of need	Who will lead on support planning	Attend RAM	CE Hub support options
Emerging	EH Locality	NO	Advice & Information at any time
Moderate	Locality	Yes	Advice & Information at any time
Significant	Locality	Yes	Advice & Information at any time, and MACE attendance may be requested Joint work CE Hub and Locality SW with CE SW leading on aspects of work with some of our most vulnerable children.

Children supported by Early Help/ Partners

Many of the children and family's we support will be assisted by our Early Help service or voluntary services that families have been navigated to by Children's services. These services play a key role in preventing harm and ensuring families continue to have support after a period of statutory support.

Early Help will support children in their service where it is determined a child's exploitation risk is deemed to be emerging only; be it where exploitation is identified by Early Help or previous moderate or significant risks were assessed, but have now reduced in our locality teams that has enabled a step down for ongoing support.

Children supported by Early Help and where risks have increased at moderate or significant risk to exploitation will be stepped up to our locality teams via the CE Hub who will undertake full screening activity.

Children and their families who are supported independent of Children's Services will follow their own safeguarding protocols and continue to evaluate exploitation risks and whether it is appropriate to refer families to Children's Services. Children's Services will not create flags for children we are not directly working with and partner agencies may make use of their own warning or flag processes.

One Plan for all of the child's risks, exploitation and support needs

Children will have one safeguarding plan that incorporates exploitation issues and any other safeguarding issues presenting. Multi-agency Practitioners will view presenting needs in to a single plan together in the appropriate forum such as a child in need review meeting or RCPC. Where a child is supported through Child Protection Planning or a Child in our Care Plan, the CP Chair and IRO must consolidate the exploitation plan with the child's overarching safeguarding plans, taking note of RAM activity and recording on LCS.

Children in our care / Children leaving our care

As corporate parents, the local authority and the partners are responsible for supporting and advocating for children in our care and those who leave our care, where we retain a duty to them. We must ensure that children and young people are fully supported if they are at risk of exploitation. Ensuring they are in appropriate accommodation/ placements funded by the local authority that meet their needs and any post 18 years wrap around support is in place such as; floating housing support. This requires appropriate exploitation evaluation and planning as part of transition planning activity. This will be facilitated by the CE Hub in RAM meetings. Bradford and the partners have committed to tackling all age exploitation values and supporting those deemed 18 + and still vulnerable. Careful planning support and navigating young people approaching 18 years will be supported by the CE Hub.

National data tells us that children in care are more likely to have missing episodes therefore clear missing prevention planning and support must be integral of our work and precede our work when a child does go missing. Missing prevention planning must form part of placement plans and comprehensively completed Philomena missing trigger plans, at the time of placement. Notwithstanding these are both fluid documents and must be updated every time needs or risks changes; for example, after each missing episode and return home interview is undertaken.

Strategy Discussions

Where exploitative or contextual harms arise, strategy discussions will be held in accordance to the Missing Protocol map set out below and on TriX. Appropriate consideration shall be given to consent from parents/ carers and where required and the test is met, discussions held without such consent. The key factor around consent is around the local authority's duty to coordinate and undertake strategy discussions where there is a presenting risk to a child likely to have suffered significant harm, allowing for consent to be overreached.

Strategy Discussions for Children in our Care

Strategy discussions and any return home interviews or Children in our Care reviews must examine if a current placement is meeting a child or young person's needs and

can keep them safe from exploitative harms and further missing episodes. Equally, full consideration given to the range of court orders that could be sought to assist in the protection of a child or young person, including any Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS) actions being sought to protect a child from exploitation and missing episodes. Further any legal orders available to each of the partners are considered and instigated for the benefit of protecting children, for example Child Abduction Warning Notice or Recovery Orders. It is vital an all agency approach is taken when considering the range of orders used to protect children and all agencies recognise the need to formulate a package of court orders where this is needed.

Closures, ending our involvement with exploited children and warning flags on LCS

There are several aspects to consider when bringing our work to an end with children who are exploited and their families. Ending the work with children and their family, LCS and warning flags on LCS.

Good practice for agencies to step away from children and their families must consider the consequences of reduced professional input and support. Restorative practice for example shapes family led support and contingency planning in our safeguarding work. The same practice is to be used for children who have been exploited. When we step away we consider the family’s ability to continue on their path in protecting their child from significant harm and other community resources or services. For example, a child’s school to continue day to day support to the family.

LCS Management

To ensure our ‘data’ remains accurate and up to date for exploited children, we all will need to ensure episodes and warning flags reflect children who we are working with. Our ‘data’ tells us key information about our district.

Open CE Episodes & Warning flags when ending all LA work with family	LCS requires all open CE episodes and tasks to be concluded. Where a child will close to the local authority the warning flag will also need to be ended too by locality team managers, at the point of closure.
Ongoing EH support CE - Warning Flags	<p>Locality end all CE <u>Episodes only</u></p> <p>A child stepping down to EH, warning flags must remain This alerts EH that there is an <u>emerging</u> exploitation risk.</p> <p>EH manager will oversee planning and support for children with emerging risks</p>

	as part of their standard family/ child oversight activity. When EH draw their work to an end or exploitation risks are removed, whichever is sooner; the flag will be closed down by EH manager.
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Unaccompanied Children

Children who are not UK citizens and have not regularised their leave to remain through legal immigration routes and there is no safe adult holding parental responsibility, are deemed to be unaccompanied children. Unaccompanied migrant children and child victims of modern slavery, including trafficking, can be some of the most vulnerable children in our community.

Unaccompanied children are alone, in an unfamiliar country and may be surrounded by people unable to speak their first language. Exploitation can take a number of forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, forced criminality, begging, and domestic servitude. Unaccompanied children are likely to be uncertain or unaware of their rights and whom they should trust. They are at increased risk of going missing, often leaving the care of those who would protect them to return to traffickers who will continue their exploitation. All groups may have experienced emotional trauma in their country of birth, on their journey to the UK or through their treatment by adults in the UK. Local authorities have a duty to protect and support these highly vulnerable children because of the circumstances they have faced. Careful assessment and planning will need to be undertaken to ensure needs are understood and planning remains sensitive to the needs of children who are unaccompanied in the UK. All children will be supported through our safeguarding process.

11. WHEN A CHILD IS MISSING

Children who go missing can be placed at risk of significant harm and there are complex underlying reasons why children go missing. These include problems at school, home life experiences as well as the issue of trafficking and exploitative harms. Children in care are particularly at risk of going missing and three times more likely to run away and be exposed to/ or already in exploitative situations. There is strong evidential link between children in care who go missing and those being groomed or sexually exploited. Every time a child is missing, this is extremely serious. Exploration why a missing episode is triggered as well as risks that occur during periods they are unaccounted for, is an essential process to reduce further missing episodes.

The current joint missing protocol will be used in conjunction with the Philomena protocol to manage children’s missing risks. (please see Tri X) Providing guidance to the role of each agency to protect children. A missing prevention plan must be formulated as preventing missing reduces risk. Both the Missing prevention planning and the Philomena plan are live documents and must be kept up to date by all professionals circled around the child. This allowing for accurate risk measurement and management and should form part of any review and plan meetings held.

12. SUPPORTING PARENTS/ CARERS TO KEEP THEIR CHILD SAFE

Supporting parents and carers whose children have been exploited and/ or at risk of being exploited will receive targeted tailored support to equip them with knowledge and skills to keep their child safe from exploitative harms. Enabling them to help their child recover from exploitative harms, beyond statutory intervention. This would be provided through our specialist commissioned services PACE, Be Positive Pathways - BPP (home breakdown and prevent reception into care/edge of care statutory service) and through our Early Help offer.

13. WHERE AN ADULT IN THE HOME IS BEING INVESTIGATED FOR SEXUAL OFFENCES AGAINST CHILDREN (current or historical)

When situations arise that an adult is suspected or arrested for harming or abusing children, including historical offences; transferrable risks must be considered to any child they have contact with. This may include biological children and children of partners or children in their family and friendship network. Practitioners will be required to make use of the following assessment guidance, '*Assessing the risk of harm in families where a parent/carer is being investigated for sexual offences against children*' (see *Tri X*). This assessment guide will ensure due diligence to presenting and potential risks and prevent over optimism and reliance on another parent/ carer being given lone responsibility to safeguard a child. Whether the CPS (Crown Prosecution Service) test is met or not will not be our overriding consideration that a risk remains. Such assessments will evaluate probability of risk or harm to a child connected to an alleged offender.

14. TRANSITIONING INTO ADULTHOOD AND KEEPING SAFE

Exploitation vulnerabilities don't cease upon a child reaching the biological age of 18 years. It is important the partners recognise individual risks posed for children through the risk profiling activity with a view to transitional planning to adult social care and other appropriate agencies, should this be required. This giving rise to an all age exploitation ethos the partners have committed to. Particularly children who might live with a learning disability and have been supported by an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) during their education years, the learning need remain pertinent to risks beyond their 18th birthday.

Practitioners supporting young people approaching 18 years will need to consider and map post 18 vulnerabilities and offer a seamless handover to ongoing services and agencies upon the assessments and mapping undertaken. For example, practitioners ensure the receiving post 18 years' service has all of the assessment information/ risk mapping to inform their safeguarding work. Transitioning work must include clear plans of what must be put in place leading to a child's 18th birthday and beyond. Connecting young people to services for those 18 years + and the CE Hub will continue to work with young people for any given period to ensure the right services are in place.

15. MEDIA & RAISING AWARENESS

Targeted media presence will be used to actively prevent, educate and raise awareness to Bradford citizens and professionals. Paying particular attention to marginalised groups and ensuring anyone experiencing or worried about exploitation can report such concerns. This will be coordinated by the MACE and the Bradford Children's Safeguarding Board.

16. LEARNING, DEVELOPMENT AND AUDITS

The partners will work together to ensure that all professionals in the safeguarding arena have a minimal standard of exploitation harm training. This delivered through jointly commissioned trainings activity, embedding training in staff induction activity and targeted support to our commissioned services. Specific exploitation Hub learning audits will be undertaken for a minimum of 2 children each calendar month. Further MACE will undertake 2 audits each quarter to explore its effectiveness and practice.

17. USEFUL LINKS

NWG Network - The NWG strives to ensure all organisations working in the field of exploitation have access to support to build appropriate services to tackle the issues faced by adolescents in today's society.

<https://nwgnetwork.org/>

- **The Children's Society** – Child Exploitation language guide. <https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/information/professionals/resources/child-exploitation-language-guide>. Wider support and resources around Child Exploitation and related topics <https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work/children-missing-home>.
- **Social Workers Tool Box** – Free social work tools and resources for direct work with children and adults. <http://www.socialworkerstoolbox.com/>
- **Child Exploitation Disruption Toolkit** - Disruption tactics for those working to safeguard children and young people under the age of 18 from sexual and criminal exploitation. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-exploitation-disruption-toolkit>
- **Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP)** - CEOP is a law enforcement agency and command of the National Crime Agency established to help keep children and young people safe from sexual abuse and grooming online. <https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>
- **Internet Watch Foundation (IWF)** – IWF works to stop the repeated victimisation of people abused in childhood and make the internet a safer

place, by identifying & removing global online child sexual abuse imagery. <https://www.iwf.org.uk/>

- **Parents Against Child Exploitation (PACE)** – PACE UK works to support parents and carers whose children are being exploited by offenders outside of the family. <https://paceuk.info/>
- **National Referral Mechanism (NRM)** – The NRM is a framework for identifying victims of human trafficking and ensuring they receive the appropriate protection and support. A referral into the NRM does not replace or supersede established child protection processes, which should continue in tandem. <https://www.modernslavery.gov.uk/start>
- **CrimeStoppers** – CrimeStoppers is not the police, they are an independent charity working to help communities. This service is 100% anonymous. Your IP address and location are not tracked by Crimestoppers. **Call 999 if you or someone else is in immediate danger, or if the crime is in progress.** Call 101 to contact the police if the crime is not an emergency.
- **Integrated Front Door (IFD)** - is the single point of contact to report safeguarding concerns. The IFD operates in partnership with West Yorkshire Metropolitan Police. If an adult or child is in immediate danger you should ring the emergency services or contact the police on 999. If the situation does not require emergency assistance you should report your concerns using the link provided. <https://www.saferbradford.co.uk/report-a-concern>
- **Child Exploitation Hub contact details:** consultation line:01274 435080, Email Child.Exploitation@bradford.gov.uk

18. APPENDICES

- a. Identifying exploitation
- b. Toolkit – trafficked or abducted children
- c. Toolkit – sexual exploitation
- d. Toolkit – behaviour of perpetrators
- e. Toolkit – location
- f. Toolkit – other options taxis & CCTV
- g. National Referral Mechanism (NRM)
- h. Children at risk of Extremism
- i. Glossary of Terms & Exploitation appropriate Language