

**Report to the Scrutiny Panel: Brief Overview of Arrangements to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation in Portsmouth**

**Report Date:** 1<sup>st</sup> June 2016

**Report By:** Sarah Newman, Deputy Director Children's Services, Children's Social Care

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## **1. National Context/ Background**

1.1. Child sexual exploitation (CSE) became an issue of national concern following a number of high profile cases (including Derby, Rochdale, Rotherham, Oxfordshire and Torbay) that highlighted serious shortcomings in the response to this particular type of child sexual abuse. In 2009 the Department of Education (DfE) published guidance defining child sexual exploitation as a distinct form of sexual abuse:

Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. 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/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

## **2. Local Strategy**

2.1. The Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board (PSCB) has overall responsibility for ensuring there is a coordinated, multi-agency response to children at risk of sexual exploitation, going missing or being exploited and/ or trafficked

2.2. A subgroup of the PSCB, the Missing, Exploited and Trafficked (MET) Committee, has been established to provide strategic oversight of missing, exploited and trafficked children. This group has multi-agency representation

and is responsible for the policy and performance of the work to address these issues and improve practice.

2.3. Strategically the aim is to prevent children and young people being sexually exploited by understanding the issues associated with this activity and raising community awareness, so as to equip our neighbourhoods, schools and workforce with the knowledge and tools to tackle the problems. We want to continue to identify those children and young people who are at risk of sexual exploitation so as to intervene robustly to minimise the potential for harm, disrupt the problematic behaviours and use criminal procedures as appropriate.

2.4. The vision in Portsmouth is simple: to safeguard children and young people from harm as a result of going missing; child sexual exploitation; or trafficking (or exploitation arising as a consequence of being the victim of trafficking). To achieve this 5 key practice pillars underpin our local response:

- 1. Scrutiny and Oversight**
- 2. Understanding & Identifying**
- 3. Preventing**
- 4. Intervention & Support**
- 5. Disruption & Justice**

These activities are monitored through a working action plan that is scrutinised and updated on a regular basis to determine progress. A multi-agency, operational group has been established to monitor and develop the front-line practices across Portsmouth in relation to the five key areas above.

### **3. Current Practice and Performance**

3.1. The multi-agency MET Operational Group meets monthly to look at all children identified as being at risk of CSE. A better understanding of the indicators of CSE by frontline practitioners has resulted in a steady increase in the number of children being identified and monitored by the group.

Children are categorised as being at one of three levels of risk:

- High - the child will be open to children's social care;
- Medium - the child will have a lead professional;
- Low - the child will be known to and checked on by professionals.

3.2. When the group meets, it reviews the information they have to ensure that the response is appropriate to the level of risk and will share intelligence on hotspots of activity, parties, activity of perpetrators/subjects etc.

3.3. Updated monthly, the MET Operational Group maintains a list of all children and young people who have been identified as missing, trafficked or at risk of CSE that includes:

- The number of high, medium and low risk flags;
- Gender split;
- Age profile;
- Ethnicity;
- Accommodation (whether the child/young person is with family or in foster/residential care);
- Missing person hotspots;
- Information on victims, perpetrators, locations and intelligence gaps.

3.4. The number of children and young people known to the operational group is increasing, which is to be expected as frontline practitioners are better at recognising the signs of exploitation.

#### **4. Progress and ongoing work**

4.1. Portsmouth's CSE Strategy was deemed to be 'good' when Ofsted inspected the local authority in 2014, although the report noted that 'work must continue to ensure that all practitioners across the city are appropriately trained and made aware of the issues.'

4.2. Since then, Ofsted has developed a thematic inspection to evaluate the effectiveness of local authorities' (and their partners') response to CSE, identifying a number key issues and making a series of recommendations that have informed the ongoing development of our Missing, Exploited and Trafficked Strategy and strengthened our action plan. These include:

- The need to cross-reference information and soft intelligence relating to children who are frequently absent from school with work to identify children and young people at risk of CSE;
- Ensuring that local strategies and plans are informed by the opinions and experiences of those who have been at risk or victims of CSE;
- The importance of evaluating training and awareness-raising with a focus on how it makes a positive difference to keeping children and young people safer;
- The need to improve victims' experience of court where a prosecution is brought;
- The need to audit CSE case files (LA and multi-agency) to identify deficits in practice and develop plans to improve practice;
- The need to start awareness-raising in schools at primary phase;

- The need for targeted work to raise awareness amongst particular communities including BME communities and the lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) community.

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Signed by:

**Appendices:**

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
PSCB Missing, Exploited & Trafficked (MET) Strategy	Appendix 1

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by ..... on .....

.....

Signed by:



**Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board**  
**Missing, Exploited & Trafficked (MET) Strategy**

**Version 10**  
**April 2016 - March 2019**

**Five Pillars for effective safeguarding around missing, exploited and trafficked children:**

- 1. Scrutiny and Oversight**
- 2. Understand and Identify**
- 3. Prevention**
- 4. Intervention and Support**
- 5. Disruption and Justice**

For more information, please contact:  
Lucy Rylatt ([lucy.rylatt@portsmouthcc.gov.uk](mailto:lucy.rylatt@portsmouthcc.gov.uk))

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## **A. Introduction**

Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board is committed to securing a robust multi-agency response to tackling child sexual exploitation, children who go missing and children who are trafficked.

This strategy is an update of our previous strategy on child sexual exploitation which has successfully embedded good safeguarding around children at risk of sexual exploitation. It now includes our strategic response to missing and trafficked children.

## **B. Our Ambition**

In Portsmouth we will aim to prevent children and young people being sexually exploited by understanding the issues associated with this activity and raising community awareness, so as to equip our neighbourhoods, schools and workforce with the knowledge and tools to tackle the problems. We will continue to identify those children and young people who are at risk of sexual exploitation and will intervene robustly to minimise the potential for harm, disrupt the problematic behaviours and use criminal procedures as appropriate.

For those children who go missing from home, from care or from school we will make sure there are follow up conversations with appropriately trained professionals to understand why they are going missing and put in place adequate safeguarding arrangements to effect positive change. We will create robust pathways that ensure we know who these children are, whether this is a pattern of behaviour and how effectively our systems are working to effect change. We understand that there is significant correlation between children who are going missing from home and risks of sexual exploitation therefore we recognise that to prevent the risk of children and young people being exploited we need to understand and address the reasons underpinning any missing episode.

A number of young people arrive in Portsmouth from overseas through the Port. We recognise the importance of thorough and holistic assessment on arrival into the UK so as to ensure safety from trafficking and exploitation. We aim to implement interim safety packages for all children and young people who arrive in Portsmouth from overseas where trafficking may be a concern, whilst further assessment is undertaken.

Our vision is simple: to safeguard children and young people from harm as a result of going missing; child sexual exploitation; or trafficking (or exploitation arising as a consequence of being the victim of trafficking). To achieve this 5 key pillars underpinning our local response have been identified:

1. **Scrutiny and Oversight**
2. **Understanding & Identifying**
3. **Preventing**
4. **Intervention & Support**
5. **Disruption & Justice**

These activities will be monitored through a working action plan that is scrutinised and updated on a regular basis to determine progress.

## **C. Definitions**

### **1. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

The sexual exploitation of children and young people - commonly referred to as child sexual exploitation or CSE - is a distinct form of child sexual abuse. Statutory guidance uses the following definition:

Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. 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/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.<sup>1</sup>

In its report - *Puppet on a String*<sup>2</sup> - Barnardo's identifies three broad categories of child sexual exploitation: inappropriate relationships; 'boyfriend' model of exploitation and peer exploitation; and organised/networked sexual exploitation or trafficking. However, these models of activity identified by Barnardo's are not exhaustive and there is some crossover, particularly between the first two categories.

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<sup>1</sup> This is the definition used in the 2009 statutory guidance *Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation*

([https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/190252/00689-2009BKT-EN.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190252/00689-2009BKT-EN.pdf)), which came from the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.barnardos.org.uk/ctf\\_puppetonastring\\_report\\_final.pdf](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/ctf_puppetonastring_report_final.pdf)

More information and a further breakdown of different patterns of CSE can be found at Appendix 3.

## **2. Missing**

A missing child is defined as:

Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established and where circumstances are out of character, or the context suggests the person may be the subject of crime, or they may be a risk to themselves or others.<sup>3</sup>

Children and young people go missing for a number of reasons and a range of 'push' and 'pull' factors may be present:

- 'Push' factors:
  - Conflict with parents/carers
  - Feeling powerless
  - Being bullied/abused
  - Being unhappy/not being listened to
- 'Pull' factors
  - Wanting to be with family/friends
  - Peer pressure
  - For children who have been trafficked into the UK as unaccompanied asylum seeking children, there will be pressure to make contact with their trafficker(s).

There is a strong link between children and young people being sexually exploited and children and young people going missing. Running away places children and young people at greater risk of exposure to sexual exploitation, while going missing for periods of time can be a symptom of the same.

## **3. Trafficking**

The Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (ratified by the UK Government in December 2008 and effective from 1 April 2009) defines trafficking in human beings as:

...the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

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<sup>3</sup> Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton 4LSCB Missing, Exploited and Trafficked Children Protocol

<sup>4</sup> National Referral Mechanism: guidance for child first responders (Home Office)

As guidance on the National Referral Mechanism published by the Home Office<sup>4</sup> makes clear:

Any child who is recruited, transported or transferred for the purposes of exploitation is considered to be a trafficking victim, whether or not they have been forced or deceived. Even when a child appears to have submitted willingly to what they believe to be the will of their parents or accompanying adults, it is not considered possible for a child to give informed consent. For further information please read details on the [Modern Slavery Act](#)

Further, UK legislation 'makes it clear that an intention to traffic and exploit, even if the exploitation has not occurred, is also a criminal offence.'

Finally, a child may have been brought to the UK from abroad or may have been moved around within the UK - either way, the child is a victim of trafficking.

Children are unlikely to disclose that they have been trafficked because most will not know what trafficking is. Many will have been coached by their traffickers and warned that any disclosure to the authorities beyond what they have been coached to say will lead to their deportation. Apparent collusion with their trafficker can add to the confusion when identifying a trafficked child, who may be reluctant to disclose their circumstances for a number of reasons:

- A lack of trust in authority arising from their experiences in their country of origin;
- The identification and referral process may mimic aspects of their experience of being trafficked e.g. being told that everything will be fine and they will be taken care of; being moved to an unknown location with the promise that they will be safe there etc.;
- Their circumstances - even being exploited - may compare favourably to those they experienced at home.

The indicators of trafficking will vary depending on the point at which a child is identified as a potential victim (at the port of entry into or whilst living in the UK), while the indicators of internal trafficking are different again. A complete list of trafficking indicators is at Appendix 5.

Types of Trafficking:

- Sexual Exploitation
  - Domestic Servitude
  - Forced Labour - including restaurant work, car washes etc.
  - Other criminal exploitation
  - Cannabis cultivation
  - Forced marriage
  - Organ donation
-

- Ritual sacrifice
- Benefit fraud
- Begging and pick pocketing
- Credit card fraud
- Unregistered private fostering
- Drug dealing/running/drug mules.

Where a child has been trafficked, the Assessment should be carried out immediately as the opportunity to intervene is very narrow. Many trafficked children go missing from care, often within the first 48 hours. Provision may need to be made for the child to be in a safe place before any Assessment takes place and for the possibility that they may not be able to disclose full information about their circumstances immediately.

During the 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.

The Assessment should take account of any particular psychological or emotional impact of experiences as an unaccompanied or trafficked child, and any consequent need for psychological or mental health support to help the child deal with them.

Statutory guidance for local authorities on the care of unaccompanied asylum seeking and trafficked children (2014) provides that where the age of a person is uncertain and there are reasons to believe that they are a child, they are presumed to be a child in order to receive immediate access to assistance, support and protection in accordance with Article 10(3) of the European Convention on action Against Trafficking in Human Beings. Age assessments should only be carried out where there is significant reason to doubt that the claimant is a child. Age assessments should not be a routine part of a local authority's assessment of unaccompanied or trafficked children. Where age assessments are conducted, they must be Merton Compliant.

With advice from their lawyers, trafficked children may apply to UK Visas and Immigration 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.

Where the outcome of the assessment is that the child becomes looked after, the social worker and carers must consider the child's vulnerability to the continuing influence/control of the traffickers. Planning and actions to support the child must minimise the risk of the traffickers being able to re-involve a child in exploitative activities. A safe plan must be established including the provision of safe accommodation.

Young people suspected or confirmed as being trafficked should be placed in specialist foster placements with carers who have undertaken trafficking awareness training or in a safe house and then placed on an immediate safety plan.

The length of time a young person is on the immediate safety plan and the subsequent reduction safety plan must be individual to the young person according to their needs and risks displayed. Safety work should be completed prior to any reduction in the safety plan being considered and should be discussed in a multi-agency setting with the young person concerned. The 4LSCB Trafficked Children policy outlines the following key issues:

1. The location of the child must not be divulged to any enquirers until they have been interviewed by a social worker and their identity and relationship/connection with the child established, with the help of police and immigration services, if required;
2. Foster carers/residential workers must be vigilant about anything unusual e.g. waiting cars outside the premises and telephone enquiries;
3. The social worker must immediately pass to the police any information on the child (concerning risks to her/his safety or any other aspect of the law pertaining either to child protection or immigration or other matters), which emerges during the placement.

The social worker must try to make contact with the child's parents in the country of origin (immigration services may be able to help), to find out the plans they have made for their child and to seek their views. The social worker must take steps to verify the relationship between the child and those thought to be her/his parent/s.

Anyone approaching the local authority and claiming to be a potential carer, friend, member of the family etc, of the child, should be investigated by the social worker, the police and immigration service. If the supervising manager is satisfied that all agencies have completed satisfactory identification checks and risk assessments, the child may transfer to their care.

The child should be offered an **Independent Visitor** and, if they decline, their reasons should be recorded. Any Independent Visitor appointed should have appropriate training and demonstrate an understanding of the needs faced by unaccompanied or trafficked children.

In addition, unaccompanied children should be informed of the availability of the **Assisted Voluntary Return Scheme**. A risk assessment should always be completed in these circumstances.

Children need to be interviewed separately and over time to build up trust. Best practice should consider specific dialects, gender appropriate interpreters and 2<sup>nd</sup> languages as an option for those victims that have been traumatised by traffickers of their own background.

Attempting to persuade a child victim to testify against a trafficker is complicated. The child usually fears reprisal from the traffickers and/or the adults whom the child was living with in the UK if they co-operate with the police. This includes reprisals against their family in their home country. Children, who might agree to testify, fear

that they will be discredited because they were coerced into lying on their visa applications/immigration papers. Other issues include:

- 1) Victims of trafficking not recognising that they are being coerced or controlled.
- 2) Heightened vulnerability in terms of their immigration status, their fears of being deported, length of time to obtain a decision on their claim and being in limbo during this time
- 3) Isolation and vulnerability – not knowing where they fit in in terms of the UK culture and their new home.

#### **D. Governance**

- The Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board has overall responsibility for ensuring there is a coordinated, multi-agency response to children at risk of sexual exploitation, going missing or being exploited and/ or trafficked
- A subgroup of the PSCB, the MET Committee, has established to provide strategic oversight of missing, exploited and trafficked children. This group has multi-agency representation and is responsible for the policy and performance of the work to address these issues and improve practice. This includes the strategic aims and the working action plan to achieve them. The working action plan is outlined in Section 4.
- The MET committee will provide regular scrutiny and oversight to ensure the working action plan is achieved. Five key pillars have been identified for structuring our improvement plan for MET:
  1. Scrutiny and Oversight
  2. Understand and Identify
  3. Prevention
  4. Intervention and Support
  5. Disruption and Justice
- A multi-agency, operational MET group has also been established to monitor and develop the front-line practices across Portsmouth in relation to the five key areas above. The chair of this group is a member of the strategic group to ensure there is a clear join up of the strategic direction and operational delivery.

#### **E. MET Operational Group**

The multi-agency MET Operational Group meets monthly to look at all children identified as being missing, trafficked or victims/at risk of CSE. A better

understanding of the indicators of trafficking and/or CSE by frontline practitioners has resulted in a steady increase in the number of children being identified and monitored by the group. Children are categorised as being at one of three levels of risk:

- High - the child will be open to children's social care;
- Medium - the child will have a lead professional;
- Low - the child will be known to and checked on by professionals.

When the group meets, it reviews the information they have to ensure that the response is appropriate to the level of risk and will share intelligence on hotspots of activity, parties, activity of perpetrators/subjects etc.

Updated monthly, the MET Operational Group maintains a list of all children and young people who have been identified as missing, trafficked or at risk of CSE that includes:

- The number of high, medium and low risk flags;
- Gender split;
- Age profile;
- Ethnicity;
- Accommodation (whether the child/young person is with family or in foster/residential care);
- Missing person hotspots;
- Information on victims, perpetrators, locations and intelligence gaps.

The number of children and young people known to the operational group is increasing, which is to be expected in the short- to medium-term as awareness-raising, training and wider use of the CSE toolkit support frontline practitioners to better recognise the signs of trafficking and exploitation and make appropriate referrals.

The group is currently considering how it may need to refine the way in which it operates to ensure that it can continue to provide effective review of a growing number of cases.

## **F. Intelligence sharing**

Intelligence is defined as information that has undergone an evaluation to assess its worth.

To assist in CSE intelligence gathering (and the identification, disrupting and prosecution of perpetrators), Hampshire Constabulary has developed a simple form (FIB1) for agencies to use to pass them information that they think might be CSE intelligence.

Form FIB1s will be sent to all agencies along with guidance on completing them and an explanation of what happens to the information once agencies have shared it with the police's local intelligence team.

Feedback from practitioners on the FIB1 suggests that it would be beneficial - and may increase the number of forms submitted - to include the email address to which completed forms should be returned on the form itself.

Completed FIB1s should be emailed to: [fib.gateway@hampshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:fib.gateway@hampshire.pnn.police.uk).

## **G. Operational Tools**

### **a) CSE Risk Assessment Toolkit**

Based on the Derby Tool and developed for Portsmouth by a small multi-agency working group, Portsmouth's CSE risk assessment toolkit is intended to:

- Enable professionals to assess a child or young person's level of risk of CSE in a concise and consistent manner;
- Provide guidance on effective interventions to safeguard children;
- Improve how the city disrupts exploitation and how agencies work together to secure the prosecution of perpetrators.

The toolkit has been designed to assist assessment and planning for vulnerable children. It does not replace existing single assessment processes or Asset +. The toolkit enhances these assessments and assists practitioners in both the exercise of their professional judgement and decision-making.

### **b) Children Missing From Home or From Care Toolkit, Safe & Well Checks and Return Interviews**

A missing toolkit has been developed to provide

- (a) A simple risk assessment tool so we can have a shared understanding about children going missing from home or care and assist police in grading the incidence as high, medium or low risk.
- (b) Guidance for practitioners in identifying children at risk of going missing
- (c) Guidance and tools for practitioners to support children making different decisions and reducing the incidents of missing, particularly repeat missing episodes.

Safe and well checks are carried out by the police as soon as possible after a missing child has been found and are intended to check for any indications that the child has suffered harm, establish where they have been and with whom and provide the child with an opportunity to disclose any offending by or against them.

Subsequently - and within 72 hours of the child returning to their home or care setting - the child is offered a return interview, which provides an opportunity to uncover information that can help to protect the child from: the risk of going missing again; risks they may have been exposed to while they were missing; and/or risk factors in their home or care setting.

The return interview should be completed by a worker independent of the care arrangements (eg social worker, police officer, independent visitor, but not the foster carer or residential worker)

Following completion of these, the responsible agencies should work together to build up a comprehensive picture of: why the child went missing; what happened to them while they were missing; who they were with and where they were; and what support they will need following their return. The information collated will allow practitioners to grade ongoing risk of missing episodes.

The outcomes of both the check and the interview should be recorded on the child's case file to ensure that the information can be shared with professionals to assist in case planning and wider strategic planning and that the child's views are taken into account.

### **c) National Referral Mechanism (NRM)**

As part of its implementation of the Council of Europe Convention, the UK Government created a National Referral Mechanism (NRM):

The NRM is a victim identification and support process which is designed to make it easier for all the different agencies that could be involved in a trafficking case – e.g. police, Home Office UK Visas and Immigration Directorate, local authorities, Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust in Northern Ireland, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) – to co-operate; to share information about potential victims and facilitate their access to advice, accommodation and support.

For children, a formal referral into the NRM is made by a first responder. In England, these include local authority children's services, the UK Border Force, Home Office Immigration & Visas, the Police, and certain NGOs including Barnardo's.

Completion of the NRM is intended to help children's services put a focused and appropriate response in place for the child by ensuring that all of the available information is gathered and shared quickly between partners. It is also an important tool in the fight against those who commit the crime of trafficking; evidence collected from referrals helps to build a national picture and informs the decisions of policy makers and operational staff.

A referral into the NRM and the subsequent decisions do not replace or supersede established child protection processes, which should continue. Any disclosure of information by the victim of trafficking following submission of the NRM, that are

relevant to the trafficking claim should be submitted to the NRM Hub by the First Responder, so that an informed decision can be made by the Competent Authority.

**d) Links with other work**

The actions aimed at tackling MET framed in this strategy are part of wider safeguarding work that includes delivery of the Children's Trust Plan (incorporating the Early Help Strategy 2014 -17), the Portsmouth Online Safety Strategy and the Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board's business plan.

Additional work is required to ensure effective links with:

- Safer Portsmouth Partnership's priority around Domestic Abuse;
- Local work in relation to forced marriage and honour-based violence;
- Portsmouth's Health & Wellbeing Strategy;
- Licensing strategies;
- Work on personal, health and social education (PSHE) delivered in Portsmouth's schools.

Making these links and ensuring that delivery across all of these areas of work is co-ordinated will help to achieve our aim of mainstreaming MET work as normal safeguarding practice.

**H. The 5 Key Pillars of Work**

**1. Scrutiny and Oversight**

- **We want to** ensure that this strategy and the working action plan is making a positive difference to the safety of children in Portsmouth
- **We will achieve this by:**
  - Having coherent data across the partnership that forms a robust performance framework
  - Scrutinising and challenging the strategy and the working action plan regularly through the MET Committee and through the PSCB every 6 months
  - Holding partners to account for progress
  - Learning lessons through multi-agency reviews and reflective practice meetings
  - Ensuring that robust whistle-blowing and escalation policies are in place

## 2. Understand and Identify

- **We want to** ensure that we have effective and well established information sharing and risk assessment mechanisms in place to understand and identify those at risk of, or experiencing, and issues of MET
- **We will achieve this by:**
  - Ensuring our risk assessment tool for identifying and assessing CSE concerns across the multi-agency workforce is well understood and embedded
  - Ensuring our systems to record missing episodes is robust and reportable
  - Ensuring that information and intelligence relating to victims, perpetrators and locations is shared effectively
  - Ensuring that there are effective arrangements between a child at risk of being MET and adult safeguarding services when they turn 18, or are no longer the responsibility of children's social care.

## 3. Prevention

- **We want to** prevent children experiencing any issues of MET in the first place.
- **We will achieve this by:**
  - Raising the awareness of issues associated with child sexual exploitation, missing from home, education and care; and trafficking
  - Training frontline practitioners to identify the indicators of CSE and trafficking and intervening quickly and effectively
  - Sharing information and intelligence that result in identification of perpetrators, disruption, prosecution and conviction
  - Effective use of independent return interviews is key so that additional interventions are in place to prevent persistent missing episodes.

## 4. Intervene and Support

- **We want to** intervene at the right time and provide appropriate support for children and their families
- **We will achieve this by:**
  - Ensuring that preventative, early help services have a good awareness of MET issues/ plans and are supporting those children who might be identified as at risk of MET

- Ensuring that services are mobilised to reduce the risk of MET and to empower children and young people to improve their safety.
- Ensuring that we complete health and wellbeing checks for all children and young people reported as missing from home or from care.
- Ensuring that return interviews are used to collate information about the push and pull factors locally and that services are provided that address the issues identified.
- Providing accessible services for children who have been sexually exploited.

**5. Disrupt and Bring to Justice**

- **We want to** identify, disrupt and prosecute those who are intent on exploiting children
- **We will do this by:**
  - Developing a problem profile of perpetrators that can be shared with multi-agency partners
  - Ensuring that information and intelligence relating to victims is shared
  - Ensuring that disruption activity is undertaken to break the patterns/ cycle of offending
  - Using Civil Orders to assist investigations, restrict and manage perpetrators, and safeguard victims/ potential victims.

**I. Principles Underpinning the Work**

- We will have the safety and wellbeing of the child at the centre of everything we do
- We will engage children and their families in the development and review of services
- We will focus our work on prevention, early identification and intervention as well as disruption and bringing perpetrators to justice
- We will take account of family circumstances when deciding how best to safeguard and protect the welfare of children
- We will continue to enhance our partnership model for MET arrangements in Portsmouth and keep a working action plan (see section 4)
- We will scrutinise, challenge, monitor and review our work to ensure that it is making a positive difference in the lives of children and families.

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- We will report to the Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board on a bi-annual basis
- We will continue to liaise with neighbouring authorities to share good practices and that we are strengthening safeguarding arrangements across borders.

## **J. The Action Plan**

The Missing, Exploited and Trafficked Action Plan is structured into the five key pillars:

1. Scrutiny and Oversight
2. Understand and Identify
3. Prevention
4. Intervention and Support
5. Disrupt and bringing to justice

The Action Plan is owned by the Portsmouth MET Committee (a sub-group of the PSCB). It is a working document and therefore RAG rated in accordance with actions being:

- Completed (GREEN)
- On track (AMBER)
- Not Started/ Delayed (RED)

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1 Scrutiny and oversight						
	What are we going to do	How are we going to do it	By Whom	By When	What difference will it make	RAG Rating
1.1	To gain a greater understanding of the MET children through a data set to ensure all strategic partners have appropriate data and can monitor the prevalence and response in their area	<p>Review how agencies have used data to drive their responses and influence service delivery to vulnerable children and their families, who are at risk of MET.</p> <p>Analyse and improve the data to provide a commentary and exception reporting to the PSCB</p>	All members of MET committee	April 2016	<p>Give a complete understanding of the local picture (including prevalence) so that services can be designed and delivered where they are needed.</p> <p>Children effectively safeguarded because gaps in service design and delivery have been acted upon.</p> <p>To ensure identified MET gaps and risks are informing commissioning decisions.</p>	
1.2	Critically evaluate the progress and effectiveness of the local MET strategy and action plan.	The progress of the action plan to be scrutinised on a regular basis by the MET Committee and biannually by the	All members of MET committee	6 monthly	<p>Increase in the number of referrals in relation to MET (short/medium term).</p> <p>Reduction in the number of children at risk of being MET.</p> <p>Successful safeguarding</p>	

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1	Scrutiny and oversight					
	What are we going to do	How are we going to do it	By Whom	By When	What difference will it make	RAG Rating
		<p>Board.</p> <hr/> <p>Partners are held to account for urgency and priority of progress.</p> <hr/> <p>Lessons are learned through multi-agency reflective practice meetings and auditing processes</p>			<p>plans.                      Children at the centre of practice.                      Confident and competent workforce.                      Successful investigations and prosecutions.                      Board members are cited on the issues and can take them back into their own agencies.</p>	
1.3	Ensure that all professionals are working to the same definition of MET/CSE.	This will be applied to all communications, training, policy and procedures.	All members of MET committee	December 2015 and ongoing	All professionals are clear about what we are trying to achieve and their roles and responsibilities.	

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1 Scrutiny and oversight						
	What are we going to do	How are we going to do it	By Whom	By When	What difference will it make	RAG Rating
1.4	Robust whistle-blowing and escalation policies should be in place across all agencies	Agencies to produce policy and be audited through S 11 audits.		June 2016.	Professionals feeling that they can escalate and whistleblow when appropriate.	
		Promotion through training and internal communications.				
1.5	Raise awareness across the workforce ensuring all frontline and strategic staff recognise the warning signs of MET, understanding and acting on them in an appropriate and timely manner.				Increased understanding of MET signs, symptoms and action to be taken.	
1.6	Ensure the strategy and action plan is routinely informed by the feedback, opinions and experiences of professionals.					

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2 Understand and identify						
	What are we going to do	How are we going to do it	By Whom	By When	What difference will it make	RAG Rating
2.1	Ensure we have a robust, well understood and well used risk assessment tool for identifying and assessing MET risks / concerns across the multi-agency workforce.  Training on trafficking awareness also needed including use of the NRM tool	CSE risk assessment tool available on PSCB Website Training across workforce in the use of the tool Audit of cases	PSCB Business Manager & PSCB Trainer  MET Operational Group	November 2015  Annually	Improved learning, timely & focussed intervention	
2.2	Specific Service provided to children/ young people at risk of CSE, Missing or being trafficked	Commission appropriate services	Each agency	October 2015 and ongoing	Dedicated staff with an expertise in MET issues, so that we can provide the best response to children.	
2.3	Information and intelligence relating to victim, offender and locations is shared effectively internally and across district/regional boundaries	Implement information sharing protocol.	MET committee	September 2016	Sharing of information will allow effective management and mitigation of risk to victims.	

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		Ensure effective information sharing and intelligence gathering processes are in place.		September 2016	Facilitate targeting of perpetrators	
		Measure intelligence provided to the police via CPI submissions. Information to be used for CSE patrol		January 2015  June 2015	Raising awareness of hotspot locations of MET	
2.4	LSCB to be satisfied that there are suitable transitional arrangements between a child at risk of MET and adult services when they turn 18, or leave social care responsibility	Each relevant agency to develop a policy and procedure to be delivered through training and internal communications.	PSCB Board Manager & PSAB Board Manager	September 2016	Young adults have access to on-going help and support.	

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3	Prevention					
	What are we going to do	How are we going to do it	By Whom	By When	What difference will it make	RAG Rating
3.1	Ensure that the public, professionals, children and their families are well informed and confident about the identification, prevention and disruption of MET issues.	<p>Create a joined up internal and external media/communication plan with a calendar of events. CSE patrol pilot</p> <p>Children to be educated on how to keep themselves safe and what to do if they do not feel safe.</p> <p>Foster carers/residential workers must be a part of this. Barnardo's also offers a trafficking awareness course specially designed for foster carers</p>	MET Committee	<p>By April 2016</p> <p>June 2015</p>	<p>Increased public and professional recognition of MET. Increased parental awareness of the risks.</p> <p>Reduction in the risks of MET.</p> <p>Improved family relationships.</p> <p>Children better able to keep themselves safe.</p>	

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3	Prevention					
	What are we going to do	How are we going to do it	By Whom	By When	What difference will it make	RAG Rating
3.2	Work with education establishments to embed MET learning within the curriculum to ensure the provision of universal, consistent and high quality PHSW and sex education	<p>Promote and encourage Governors to hold schools to account for this objective.</p> <p>To influence Head Teachers to add to the curriculum.</p> <p>To provide resources to schools and colleges (safe4me).</p> <p>To promote awareness raising materials and productions (Chelsea's Choice/looking out for Lottie)</p>	<p>PARCS in secondary schools</p> <p>Public Health in primary schools</p>	Ongoing	<p>Children better able to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>Children know what to do if they don't feel safe.</p> <p>Schools can recognise signs/concerns and can intervene and support and refer as appropriate.</p> <p>Increased self-esteem.</p>	

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3	Prevention					
	What are we going to do	How are we going to do it	By Whom	By When	What difference will it make	RAG Rating
3.3	Develop a community engagement strategy to include faith groups and diverse communities, including the local business community	<p>Evaluate the current position of potential under-reporting in diverse communities.</p> <p>Training reviewed to ensure the issues within diverse communities is included.</p> <p>Report on outcomes to PSCB of community engagement work.</p>	PSCB Board Manager/ MET Committee	October 2016	Greater awareness	
3.4	Develop targeted work in relation to vulnerable groups including disabled and looked after children together with under-represented groups including BME and LGBT young people, boys and young men.	Strong linkage with statutory and non-statutory partners to develop an approach scheme. Foster relationships with existing partners to shape approach.	PARCS	Ongoing	Opening dialogue and improving service to hard-to-reach communities.	

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3	Prevention					
	What are we going to do	How are we going to do it	By Whom	By When	What difference will it make	RAG Rating
3.5	Learning from SCR's, research and new ways of working to be captured and shared locally in fit for purpose single agency and multi-agency training events	<p>To ensure findings from SCR's and other research/good practices is used to inform content of the multi-agency/single agency training plans.</p> <p>Ensure all training, policies and procedures are based on national guidance and developments.</p> <p>To evaluate the quality and attendance of such training and to identify fill gaps in training.</p> <p>To evaluate the take-up of e-learning package.</p>	MET Committee PSCB & Training Committee	Ongoing	More confident and competent workforce.	

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3	Prevention					
	What are we going to do	How are we going to do it	By Whom	By When	What difference will it make	RAG Rating
3.6	Consistent with legislation and statutory guidance, organisations bound by Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 that are either providing or commissioning transport services for children must demonstrate the Section 11 compliance of these arrangements.	Engage with Licensing	PSCB Manager	Sept 2016	Increased safety in transport arrangements	
3.7	Ensure the voice of children and their parents/carers informs service design and delivery	<p>Engage with children via focus groups to understand what the issues are for them in their local area.</p> <p>Children's views are gathered on content and distribution of MET messages.</p> <p>Evaluate and explore the MET journey through services where MET is an</p>	MET Committee	Annually	Responsive services to local need	

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3	Prevention					
	What are we going to do	How are we going to do it	By Whom	By When	What difference will it make	RAG Rating
		indicator factor.				
3.8	Partners meet their statutory duties in relation to missing episodes and children returning from missing episodes.	Local policies and procedures are in place and are being followed.	MET Committee	April 2016	Reduction in missing episodes. Reduction in report missing episodes.	
Audit the impact of the 'return' interview process and ensure that patterns and learning is shared across the agencies.						
Ensure that this process is also followed for our CiC placed in other authority areas.						
Ensure that up to date data is available and that patterns/trends						

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3	Prevention					
	What are we going to do	How are we going to do it	By Whom	By When	What difference will it make	RAG Rating
		<p>are quickly picked up.</p> <hr/> <p>Report to the operational group monthly, the MET committee every 3 months and the Board on a 6 monthly basis.</p>				

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4 Intervention and Support						
	What are we going to do	How are we going to do it	By Whom	By When	What difference will it make	RAG Rating
4.1	Preventative/early help services ensure (a) awareness of MET issues/plans and (b) support those children who might be identified as at risk of MET.	Undertake a multi-agency audit of the effectiveness of early help services in identifying, preventing and supporting at risk children.	MET Operational Group	March 2016		
		Children and young people involved in criminality as a result of becoming a victim of MET are appropriately safeguarded.				
4.2	To provide accessible and 'fit for purpose' therapeutic services for children victims of CSE as well as adult victims of CSE.	Review of current provision and make recommendations about gaps in provision.  Multi-agency funding	PARCS	Ongoing  5-10 year old children for this year	Improved protection of children and adults and support for criminal investigations and prosecutions.	

4	Intervention and Support					
	What are we going to do	How are we going to do it	By Whom	By When	What difference will it make	RAG Rating
		<p>opportunities to be regularly sourced so that additional specialist support can be secured.</p>	Barnardo's	Ongoing	<p><b>Health to complete</b></p>	
		<p>The CCGs will develop a response to children who are at risk of MET and in need of CAMHS support and other therapeutic interventions to ensure their needs are assessed and services are provided in a timescale that meets the needs of the children.</p>	CCG			

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4 Intervention and Support						
	What are we going to do	How are we going to do it	By Whom	By When	What difference will it make	RAG Rating
		CAMHS to be represented on the MET Strategic group and ensure that their service is able to provide support.				
		CAMHS to be represented on the MET Strategic group and ensure that their service is able to provide support.				
4.3	Ensure effective use of missing from home school YOT data to inform assessment of local need and response (academies to be included), increase effectiveness of early identification of MET and focussed response on repeat occurrences.	Operational group to monitor data analysis to identify trends for MET Strategic group.	YOT Manager	Ongoing	Protecting vulnerable children	

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5 Disrupt and bring to justice						
	What are we going to do	How are we going to do it	By Whom	By When	What difference will it make	RAG Rating
5.1	Problem profile to be produced for the MET Strategic group and be shared with partners.	Quarterly updated multi-agency child sexual exploitation problem profile to be produced and distributed to partners via the MET Strategic Group share with the chair of and information about risks in certain communities must have a coordinated response via operational MET, escalated to Strategic MET when warranted.	Police	Quarterly		
5.2	To ensure that information and intelligence relating to victims, is shared and tasked effectively.	All statutory and non-statutory partners to work together proactively (particularly the	MET Operational Group		To safeguard children	

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4 Intervention and Support						
	What are we going to do	How are we going to do it	By Whom	By When	What difference will it make	RAG Rating
		police, social care, education and health).Promote and audit the use of the Community Partnership Information form.				
5.3	Develop a mechanism for perpetrator profiling and intervention to attempt to break the cycle of offending	Develop a perpetrator toolkit.	Police	By March 2016	Disrupting perpetrator behaviour  Increased arrest & conversion rate	
		Identify potential offenders for early intervention and support.				
		Promote and audit the use of the perpetrator toolkit.				

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4 Intervention and Support						
	What are we going to do	How are we going to do it	By Whom	By When	What difference will it make	RAG Rating
		Pursue opportunities to interact with offenders in order to develop an understanding of their behaviours and motivations.				
5.4	To utilise ancillary and civil orders to maximum effect to assist investigations, restrict and manage offenders and support and safeguard victims / potential victims.	Identify what powers are available from partners (licensing/housing/courts etc.)	Police & Local Authority	June 2016	Increase protection of vulnerable children	
		Publicise and implement these ranges of powers amongst partners.		June 2016		

## **K. Performance Management**

Performance management of the MET Strategy will be the responsibility of the Portsmouth Missing, Exploited and Trafficked Committee (PMET Committee - previously the CSE Committee).

Primary indicators:

- Proportion of children and young people identified as being at risk of CSE who move from 'high' risk to 'low risk'.
- Proportion of children and young people thought to have been trafficked who are effectively safeguarded.
- Proportion of suspected perpetrators successfully disrupted, prosecuted and convicted.
- Proportion of children and young people who have an independent return interview having gone missing.
- Proportion of frontline staff that have been effectively trained in identifying the signs of CSE and trafficking.
- Impact evaluation of training and awareness-raising activity.

Data requirements:

- Number of children and young people identified as being at risk or the victim of CSE;
- Number of risk assessments completed\*;
- Number of NRM
- Number of children and young people identified as trafficked (or thought to be trafficked);
- Number of children going missing once in 90 days, twice in 90 days, three times in 90 days
- Number of independent return interviews offered and completed;
- Use of disruption techniques e.g. number of Child Abduction Warning Notices issued;
- Number of frontline staff trained\*;
- Number of awareness-raising activities delivered\*;
- Number of FIB1 forms completed and passed to Police Intelligence Team\*.
- Number of prosecutions brought;
- Number of children who are smuggled
- Number of convictions secured.

Data collected for the outputs marked with \* will be triangulated to help identify where focussed work may be required with a particular agency.

## Appendix 1 - National Context

### National context

#### a) Missing

Statutory guidance on a local arrangements for dealing with children who run away or go missing (whether from their family home or their placement) is provided by the Department for Education's 'Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care' published in 2014 (and replacing the previous statutory guidance published in 2009).

This guidance is issued under Section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 and all local authorities must comply with it unless local circumstances indicate exceptional reasons that justify a variation. While the guidance is addresses to chief executives, directors of children's services and lead members with responsibility for children's services, it will be of interest to chairs of Local Safeguarding Children Boards, senior managers within organisations providing services for children and families (including police, health, schools and the voluntary sector), as well as social care professionals, health and education practitioners and those who care for looked after children. For the police, the guidance should be read in conjunction with Authorised Professional Practice guidance on Missing Persons.

#### b) Child sexual exploitation

CSE is an issue of national concern - more so following a number of high profile cases (including Derby, Rochdale, Rotherham, Oxfordshire and Torbay) that highlighted serious shortcomings in the response to this particular type of child sexual abuse.

In 2009, the Department for Education (DfE) published guidance specifically in relation to safeguarding children from CSE. In 2011, the Barnardo's campaign - Puppet on a String - urged the government to take radical action by appointing a minister to take responsibility for CSE and developing a national action plan. In the same year, the government appointed a lead minister for CSE in the DfE and published a national action plan (which places an expectation on Local Safeguarding Children Boards to ensure that a local plan is in place)<sup>5</sup>. Since then, the issue of CSE has only gained in recognition and profile.

In 2014, Ofsted undertook a thematic inspection to evaluate the effectiveness of local authorities' (and their partners') current response to CSE (see 11.0).

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<sup>5</sup> Although it is worth noting that strategic and ministerial responsibility for CSE now rests with the Home Office rather than the DfE.

### **c) Trafficking**

Data for 2015 can be found [here](#).

In 2013, 450 children were referred to the UK's National Referral Mechanism (NRM) as potential victims of trafficking. Of these referrals, 144 claimed trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation and a total of 168 claimed trafficking for the purposes of domestic servitude or labour exploitation. The remaining 138 claimed trafficking for unknown exploitative purposes. For children, the five most common countries of origin were Vietnam (76 children), UK (63 children - of which 53 claimed trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation), Albania (56 children), Nigeria (32 children) and Romania (28 children).

Although the number of referrals in 2013 were around 21% higher than the previous year (suggesting that identification of potential trafficking victims is improving), the National Crime Agency points out that the number of referrals is not a measure of trafficking in the UK. Agencies working with trafficked young people share this view, emphasising that the number of NRM referrals is not an accurate reflection of the extent of child trafficking as many victims are hidden and remain undetected.

In April 2014 the Home Secretary commissioned a review of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) to establish whether it provides an effective and efficient means of supporting and identifying potential victims of human trafficking.

The final report of the NRM review<sup>6</sup> was published on 12 November 2014 and makes recommendations specifically aimed at protecting child victims of trafficking, in particular:

#### **d) Awareness raising**

The review found that 'only a small proportion of the real number of trafficked children are being identified' due to low awareness of the indicators of child trafficking and the NRM within local authorities and the police. To address this, the report recommends that:

Chairs of Local Safeguarding Children Boards should ensure that trafficking is regularly considered at their meetings, and direct Board members towards any packages which they could make available to persons who work with children affected by trafficking and/or slavery.

To improve the recognition of all human trafficking, the report also recommends that the Home Office develops a comprehensive awareness strategy to include targeted awareness-raising campaigns and a checklist of trafficking indicators (see Appendix C for a complete list of child trafficking indicators produced by Barnardo's).

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<sup>6</sup> Review of the National Referral Mechanism for victims of human trafficking (Home Office), November 2014

There has been an increase in the numbers of suspected victims of trafficking locally that are involved in criminal exploitation that are predominantly more difficult to spot than other types of trafficking. It is important for practitioners to be aware of this when looking to identify a potential victim.

**e) Appropriate support and safeguarding**

The review also found that a failure to recognise the indicators of child trafficking can result in a child being taken into care without the appropriate safeguarding measures being put in place - in particular, to prevent the child going missing from care (the risk of which is high, particularly in the first 48 hours). The report therefore recommends that local authorities 'be aware of the appropriate support and safeguarding measures necessary for trafficked children as a result of their additional vulnerabilities' (a view shared by local providers of support for trafficked children operating in and around the Portsmouth area, Barnardo's and Love 146).

The report identifies Hillingdon Social Services as a local authority with particular expertise in identifying trafficked children (due to the location of Heathrow Airport within the local authority boundary).

## **Appendix 2 - Inspection**

Portsmouth's CSE Strategy was deemed to be 'good' when Ofsted inspected the local authority in 2014 (see 6.0), although the report noted that (as acknowledged by partners), 'work must continue to ensure that all practitioners across the city are appropriately trained and made aware of the issues.'

Since then, Ofsted has undertaken a thematic inspection to evaluate the effectiveness of local authorities' (and their partners') response to CSE, identifying a number key issues and making a series of recommendations that have informed the development of the MET Strategy and strengthened the action plan. These include:

- The need to make links with other key strategies including those relating to licensing and personal, health and social education (PSHE);
- The need to cross-reference information and soft intelligence relating to children who are frequently absent from school with work to identify children and young people at risk of CSE;
- Ensuring that local strategies and plans are informed by the opinions and experiences of those who have been at risk or victims of CSE;
- The importance of evaluating training and awareness-raising with a focus on how it makes a positive difference to keeping children and young people safer;
- The need to improve victims' experience of court where a prosecution is brought;
- The need to audit CSE case files (LA and multi-agency) to identify deficits in practice and develop plans to improve practice;
- The need to start awareness-raising in schools at primary phase;
- The need for targeted work to raise awareness amongst particular communities including BME communities and the lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) community.

### **Appendix 3 - Emerging best practice and learning from serious case reviews/studies of current practice**

#### **Emerging best practice: See Me, Hear Me Framework**

The seven principles underpinning the See Me, Hear Me framework are:

1. **The child's best interests must be the top priority** - The best interests of children and young people and their rights to protection must drive all decision making. The paramountcy principle (Children Act 1989) must be adhered to where applicable and children's rights under UNCRC Article 3 fully honoured.
2. **Participation of children and young people** - Services need to involve children and young people when decisions are being made about their care, protection and on-going support and be kept informed on any issues that affect them throughout. Professionals must be mindful of children and young people's needs and equalities. Their UNCRC Article 12 rights must be honoured.
3. **Enduring relationships and support** - Support must be tailored to meet the needs of the child, according to their age, identity, ethnicity, belief, sexual orientation, disability, language, and stage of development. Children and young people have told us that a consistent person who sticks with them throughout the whole period of their protection and on-going care is crucial to their recovery.
4. **Comprehensive problem-profiling** - It is critical that agencies regularly problem-profile their local area to analyse and understand all the patterns of exploitation to which children and young people are subjected to. A comprehensive problem-profile needs to be compiled with the oversight of the LSCB and should be shared across all key partners to inform the development of a multi-agency strategy and action plans, the commissioning of services and the delivery of training and awareness-raising activity to support local professionals.
5. **Effective information-sharing within and between agencies** - Every area should have a cross sector information-sharing protocol which is predicated on the best interests and safeguarding of children and young people. All relevant agencies and services should be signatories and it should clearly state what information should be shared, by whom and the process for doing this.
6. **Supervision, support and training of staff** - Services should invest in the development and support of staff including providing regular supervision and the opportunities for them to reflect on practice. Those professionals who offer direct support to sexually exploited children and young people might require further intensive training and must have regular opportunities to reflect on their practice with a skilled consultant or supervisor.
7. **Evaluation and review** - Evaluations and regular reviews of the effectiveness of the CSE strategy is necessary to ensure services and interventions are achieving their intended outcomes and meeting the child and young person's needs. Children and young people must be directly involved in this process in compliance with Article 12 of the UNCRC. This will ensure that performance is driven continuously by a cycle that leads to improvement.

The See Me, Hear Me Framework also includes three sets of questions under the headings 'Voice of the Child', 'Voice of the Professional' and 'Protecting the Child'. These have been developed to guide planning and decision making regarding the rights, welfare and protection of children and young people who have been victims of CSE.

Finally, the Framework outlines the functions and processes required for a holistic response to CSE at a local level, framed within a suggested structure for implementation of the Framework ranging from accountability and strategic coordination to an end-to-end approach to intervention and service delivery at the frontline.

### **Learning from serious case reviews/studies of current practice**

In reviewing this body of literature we have attempted to identify specific issues that may be relevant to tackling CSE in Portsmouth over and above those issues that have already shaped the best practice that underpins the strategy and action plan. These issues fall into the following broad categories:

- Sexual activity amongst young people
- Out of area placements
- Early identification of young people at risk of perpetrating
- Identity
- Provision of support as victims of CSE reach adulthood
- Support for victims during the prosecution process
- Role of health services

### **Sexual activity amongst young people**

The perception that sexual activity by young people aged 13 - 16 is by mutual consent needs to be reconsidered in light of peer-to-peer CSE. The identification of sexual activity by a young person may provide a point of intervention to either reduce the risk of CSE or identify that the young person is a victim of CSE.

### **Out of area placements**

Oxfordshire advocated minimising out of area placement on the principle of "keeping our riskiest and most vulnerable children closest" and identified (along with Torbay) the need for joint working between local authorities when one LA places a child within another LA particularly in relation to the risk management plan. In a November 2013 Cabinet report prepared by the Oxfordshire Director of Children's Services, it was noted that the greatest challenge remains external police and multi-agency reporting, tracking and monitoring of missing young people placed by the council outside the county. Oxfordshire is now taking a real-time approach to share information with providers and continue to seek improvements.

### **Early identification of young people at risk of perpetrating**

Torbay recognised that early intervention with the young men who went on to perpetrate CSE may have reduced the offenders' progression to becoming abusers and recommended that agencies supervising young people within the criminal justice system need to work with assessment frameworks that enable them to assess fully the potential vulnerability of the individual as well as their risk of re-offending.

### **Identity**

The serious case review in Derby asked the question: was practice sensitive to the racial, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of the young person and their family? How did issues of identity impact on the abuse of the young person?

Issues of culture, ethnicity and identity were a feature both in relation to the victims and the alleged perpetrators. YP1 and YP2 were confused about their identity and sense of belonging. They both had a poor self-image and had difficulty making friends and fitting in. In one assessment of YP2 there was a recommendation that she should be offered help to address this, but there is no evidence that this was done. None of the assessments of YP1 and YP2 paid any detailed attention to this aspect of their lives. However it was a critical factor in making them easy targets for abusers. Questions have been raised for this review as to whether the ethnic background and culture of the perpetrators had any bearing on their decision to take part in this activity, and also whether the ethnic origin of the victims was significant in making them targets for abuse. It has not been possible to draw any firm conclusions from this one review, but it is worthy of wider consideration, possibly on a national basis.

The following learning points were identified:

- Issues of identity and how they might affect young people are poorly understood by staff in all agencies. All staff would benefit from training and development opportunities to better understand how to work with identity formation and positive self-image development;
- Poor self-image is a significant vulnerability factor in young people at risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE).

### **Provision of support as victims of CSE reach adulthood**

A learning review of Operation Kern undertaken in Derby noted that despite the successful prosecution of all but one of the perpetrators in the case, there remains concern about the complex needs of the individual young people, some of whom are now adults. The successful action taken by agencies needs to be balanced with the recognition that in terms of outcomes for the young people, the impact of what they have gone through has been so significant that some of them continue to be vulnerable and the longer term outcomes for them remain unclear. For that reason individual young people need a very strong transition plan and information about what support can be offered in adulthood.

### **Support for victims during the prosecution process**

The learning review of Operation Kern also noted that the prosecution of the perpetrators was at some considerable cost to the victims and witnesses. Current Court processes were in effect abusive of the young people who reported feeling distressed, degraded, exposed, unsafe at Court and in the community, prevented from leading a normal life. The impact on agencies has also been significant, in an effort to fully support the young people. Improvements in the treatment of and arrangements for young witnesses in Court are much needed.

This issue links with recommendation arising from Univ. of Bedfordshire review of current practice in London Boroughs:

Dedicated CSE leads across agencies are also identified as good practice in terms of ensuring proactive response to CSE both within, and across, agencies (Jago et al 2011)...Whilst there is still some way to go in increasing the engagement of agency leads across all of the disciplines, the one obvious omission at this point is the Crown Prosecution Service, with only one borough [of thirty] reporting that they had a dedicated CSE lead in this agency.

### **Role of health services**

The recent "*Shine a light*" report, a survey of Health Professionals prepared on behalf of the National Working Group commented that lack of recognition of CSE was felt to be a common problem nationally rather than something unique to a particular group of staff, "*One Named Nurse for a Hospital Trust felt that A&E is the riskiest place in the hospital but there was a lack of awareness around CSE in that department. An experienced A&E Charge Nurse had said "when it comes to sexual exploitation, we do not know what we are doing". A&E staff feel that they are just too busy to look fully into cases and "opportunities are missed when teenagers want to talk."*

In commenting on the role of sexual health services in the case under review, Torbay noted that sexual health services were focussed on providing a confidential service with a view to preventing pregnancy or various sexual health problems and did not provide an effective assessment of vulnerability to CSE. The review concluded that the lesson in this is that there is a need to identify whether Fraser Guidelines are being implemented correctly along with the Gillick competences. The Torbay review believes that this is a national issue, since sexual health provision is driven by targets related to pregnancy and sexual health with the result that protection has been lost in the process.

### **Further learning**

The SCR commissioned by Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board is not expected to be completed before the end of 2014, at which time it will be reviewed and relevant learning feed into Portsmouth's response to CSE.

#### Appendix 4 - Defining Child Sexual Exploitation

In its report - *Puppet on a String*<sup>7</sup> - Barnardo's identifies three broad categories of child sexual exploitation

1	Inappropriate relationships	Usually involving one perpetrator who has inappropriate power or control over a young person (physical, emotional or financial). One indicator may be a significant age gap. The young person may believe they are in a loving relationship.
2	'Boyfriend' model of exploitation and peer exploitation	The perpetrator befriends and grooms a young person into a 'relationship' and then coerces or forces them to have sex with friends or associates.  Barnardo's services have reported a rise in peer exploitation where young people are forced or coerced into sexual activity by peers and associates. Sometimes this can be associated with gang activity but not always.
3	Organised/networked sexual exploitation or trafficking	Young people (often connected) are passed through networks, possibly over geographical distances, between towns and cities where they may be forced/coerced into sexual activity with multiple men. Often this occurs at 'sex parties', and young people who are involved may be used as agents to recruit others into the network. Some of this activity is described as serious organised crime and can involve the organised 'buying and selling' of young people by perpetrators.

A useful summary of the patterns of abuse in relation to CSE (based on the findings of Phase 1 of the Office of the Children's Commissioner's Inquiry into CSE, 'If only someone had listened') is available here:

<http://www.reconstruct.co.uk/docs/dl/215CSEchildrenbygangspart1Feb2014.pdf>

#### Who is at risk?

Any child or young person, whatever their gender, social background or ethnicity, can be exploited. However, there are a number of factors that can increase a young person's vulnerability to sexual exploitation, including:

- Disrupted family life and domestic violence;
- History of physical or sexual abuse;
- Disadvantage;
- Poor mental health;
- Problematic parenting;

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.barnardos.org.uk/ctf\\_puppetonastring\\_report\\_final.pdf](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/ctf_puppetonastring_report_final.pdf)

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- Parental drug or alcohol misuse;
- Parental mental health problems.

There are also certain groups of young people who are more vulnerable to being targeted by perpetrators of sexual exploitation, including children who:

- Are living in care (particularly residential care);
- Have been excluded from mainstream school;
- Misuse drugs and/or alcohol.

Local intelligence indicates that children and young people with learning disabilities are also more vulnerable to exploitation, but won't necessarily exhibit the common indicators of being at high risk or victims of CSE (such as going missing or disengaging from education). Work to look at how we can effectively identify young people with learning disabilities at risk of CSE is included in the action plan.

**Myths and misconceptions**

There are a number of myths and misconceptions about child sexual exploitation that need to be dispelled, in particular:

<b>Myth</b>	<b>Fact</b>
Child sexual exploitation is something that is done to girls and young women.	There are male victims too. Although research indicates that they are fewer in number, it also suggests that the sexual exploitation of boys is not fully reported or recognised.
Child sexual exploitation only happens to children who are in care, who come from a 'bad' family, or are a particular race or religion.	Any child, from anywhere, can potentially be a victim. However, it is true that certain factors can make a young person more vulnerable to exploitation (see above).
Child sexual exploitation is very rare and only happens in a few places.	It is much more prevalent than most people imagine, but it may often be hidden and can only be uncovered by people knowing what to look for, being vigilant and reporting their concerns.
A lot of these children are over 16 and have consented to sex. Social workers need to concentrate on real child abuse.	The sexual exploitation of young people is just as much child abuse as is sexual abuse experienced by younger children in the home. Young people may initially agree to sex, but they cannot consent to exploitation.

## **Appendix 5 - Trafficking indicators & Barnardo's referral form**

### **At port of entry**

The child:

- Has entered the country illegally
- Has no passport or other means of identification
- Has false documentation
- Possesses money and goods not accounted for
- Is unable to confirm the name and address of the person meeting them on arrival
- Has had their journey or visa arranged by someone other than themselves or their family
- Is accompanied by an adult who insists on remaining with the child at all times
- Is withdrawn and refuses to talk or appears afraid to talk to a person in authority
- Exhibits self-assurance, maturity and self-confidence not expected to be seen in a child of such age
- Does not appear to have money but does have a mobile phone
- Is unable or reluctant to give details of accommodation or other personal details

The sponsor could:

- Be a community member, family member, or any other intermediary
- Have previously made multiple visa applications for other children and/or has acted as the guarantor for other children's visa applications
- Be known to have acted as the guarantor on the visa applications for other visitors who have not returned to their countries of origin on the expiry of those visas

### **Whilst resident in the UK (in addition to those listed above)**

The child:

- Receives unexplained/unidentified phone calls whilst in placement / temporary accommodation
- Shows signs of physical or sexual abuse, and/or has contracted a sexually transmitted infection or has an unwanted pregnancy
- Has a history with missing links and unexplained moves
- Is required to earn a minimum amount of money every day
- Works in various locations
- Has limited freedom of movement
- Appears to be missing for periods

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- Is known to beg for money
- Performs excessive housework chores and rarely leaves the residence
- Is being cared for by adult/s who are not their parents and the quality of the relationship between the child and their adult carers is not good
- Is one among a number of unrelated children found at one address
- Has not been registered with or attended a GP practice
- Has not been enrolled in school
- Is excessively afraid of being deported

**Children internally trafficked within the UK**

Indicators include:

- Physical symptoms (bruising indicating either physical or sexual assault)
- Prevalence of a sexually transmitted infection or unwanted pregnancy
- Reports from reliable sources suggesting the likelihood of involvement in sexual exploitation / the child has been seen in places known to be used for sexual exploitation
- Evidence of drug, alcohol or substance misuse
- Leaving home / care setting in clothing unusual for the individual child (inappropriate for age, borrowing clothing from older people)
- Phone calls or letters from adults outside the usual range of social contacts
- Adults loitering outside the child's usual place of residence
- Significantly older boyfriend
- Accounts of social activities, expensive clothes, mobile phones or other possessions with no plausible explanation of the source of necessary funding
- Persistently missing, staying out overnight or returning late with no plausible explanation
- Returning after having been missing, looking well cared for despite having no known base
- Having keys to premises other than those known about
- Low self-image, low self-esteem, self-harming behaviour including cutting, overdosing, eating disorder, promiscuity
- Truancy/disengagement with education
- Entering or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults
- Going missing and being found in areas where the child or young person has no known links
- Possible inappropriate use of the internet and forming on-line relationships, particularly with adults.

**Appendix 5**

**Services for Trafficked Children**

**Initial Enquiry / Referral Form**

Please send to [kate.norman@barnardos.org.uk](mailto:kate.norman@barnardos.org.uk)

<b>Referrer Details</b>	
Name:	Date:
Local authority:	Other agencies involved:
Contact no:	
<b>Young person's details</b>	
Name:	
Age and D.O.B (if disputed please put down age that has been assessed at):	
Country of origin:	
Address of placement:	
Type of placement (foster placement, supported lodgings etc):	
Contact number of carers/key workers (please stipulate which):	
Contact number of young person:	
Allocated social worker:	Contact No.
Preferred language of young person:	Interpreter required? Y/N
Has the NRM (trafficking referral to the Home Office been completed? Yes/No?	

**Please describe presenting issues / concerns/ background. Please also include trafficking indicators present:**

**Action** *(tick as many as apply)*

No further action  Why?

Proceed to risk assessment / further info gathering

Make s.47 referral

Allocate worker  Who?

Consult CSM  Details

Signpost / refer on to other agencies  Details

Attend planning meeting  Date:          Details

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**Risk Assessment**

**YOUNG PERSON NAME**

**DATE**

If you answer YES for any of these risks, we do REQUIRE you to complete the Risk Assessment details below in order for us to accept the referral.

	<b>RISK</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	
1	Has the referrer identified any known risks?			
2	Is there any known unpredictable behaviour?			
3	Are you aware of any known proven offences, convictions, cautions?			
4	Are you aware of any known violence/abuse?			
5	Are you aware of any known substance misuse?			
6	Are you aware of any animals in the property/ foster placement that could be a risk?			
7	Has there ever been an incident at the property while a professional has been visiting the young person?			
8	Are there any other known risks to staff attending the placement?			
9	Is there anything about this young person that makes you uncertain about visiting?			
Number	Details of risk	Level of risk	Actions to be taken	Date to be reviewed

### **Appendix 6 - Earlier work in relation to CSE**

In January 2012, the Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board (PSCB) submitted its 2010/11 annual report to the Children's Trust Board and laid down five challenges to Children's Trust partners, including:

To implement local arrangements to prevent, identify and intervene in child sexual exploitation that are robust, fully compliant with statutory guidance and best practice.

In its annual report for 2011/12, the PSCB noted that "further work is required in relation to identifying the extent of child sexual exploitation in Portsmouth and communicating and raising awareness amongst all practitioners and more broadly, the community" and reiterated the need for the Children's Trust and Health & Wellbeing Boards to take action.

In spring 2012, the 4LSCB Procedures Group set up the Missing, Exploited and Trafficked (MET) Group led by Hampshire Constabulary and chaired by one of its senior officers to co-ordinate development work across the Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Southampton and Portsmouth areas. The MET Group developed an action plan with six objectives:

- a. To create a system to identify and monitor the number of young people at risk of child sexual exploitation;
- b. Ensure professionals are equipped to be able to identify the signs of Child Sexual Exploitation;
- c. Create a strategy to educate young people about the dangers of going missing and Child Sexual Exploitation;
- d. Ensure young people are able to access appropriate support;
- e. Provide a lead person with responsibility for co-ordinating a multi-agency response;
- f. Create a holistic protocol that will set out service delivery standards in relation to vulnerable missing people, trafficked people and children who are at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation.

Established in 2012, the Portsmouth CSE Committee includes representatives from the PSCB, police, children's social care, Barnardo's, Solent NHS Trust and Portsmouth's Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

The Committee developed an action plan informed by and aligned to:

- The 4LSCB-wide MET Action Plan;
- The structure recommended by the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People (NWG);

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- Priorities D<sup>8</sup> and E<sup>9</sup> of the Portsmouth Children's Trust Plan (including Targeted Youth Services, the local safeguarding training and the Joint Action Team).

In September 2012, the PSCB agreed to establish a standing committee for child sexual exploitation chaired by Hampshire Constabulary and vice-chaired by the local authority's Commissioning Manager for Looked after Children and Fostering.

In terms of delivery, the Committee:

- Set up an operational group that meets fortnightly;
- Delivered CSE training;
- Distributed the "Spot the Signs" leaflet across the workforce;
- Designed and piloted a risk assessment tool (see below);
- With Southampton, jointly re-tendered a specialist CSE service;
- Collated a full list of children and young people considered to be at any level of risk to ensure the appropriate safeguarding response is in place;
- Hosted a CSE Conference in October 2013;
- Arranged performances of 'Chelsea's Choice' in local secondary schools.

### **Emerging best practice**

Publishing its final report in November 2013, the Office of the Children's Commissioner's (OCC) Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation, "If only someone had listened" concluded that:

Despite increased awareness and a heightened state of alert regarding child sexual exploitation children are still slipping through the net and falling prey to sexual predators. Serious gaps remain in the knowledge, practice and services required to tackle this problem. There are pockets of good practice, but much still needs to be done to prevent thousands more children falling victim.

While the focus of the OCC's inquiry was on CSE in gangs and groups (i.e. CSE perpetrated on children and young people by other young people - a particular type of CSE about which more intelligence is needed locally), a review of the report makes it apparent that the inquiry's findings are equally applicable to CSE more generally.

Based on the evidence gathered (to which all LSCBs - including Portsmouth's - contributed), the inquiry identified nine significant failings in the current response to CSE:

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<sup>8</sup> Priority D: Targeted support for children and young people who demonstrate behaviours that may put them at risk.

<sup>9</sup> Priority E: Excellent safeguarding and early intervention practice, processes and procedures.

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- Many agencies are **forgetting the child** or young person, who is often ignored or discounted;
- Services are **failing to engage with children** and young people;
- There is a **lack of leadership** amongst some of the most senior decision makers at local level;
- Some LSCBs have limited or **no strategic planning** in relation to CSE;
- Too many people who should be protecting children are **in denial** about the realities of CSE and therefore do not believe what children may tell them;
- Professionals are **failing to recognise victims** due to pervasive and damaging myths about both victims and perpetrators;
- Too many areas are still **working in isolation** to tackle CSE with a lack of co-ordination between responsible agencies;
- A **delayed response** to CSE continues to hamper the development and improvement of practice to tackle CSE;
- **Results are not being monitored** to ensure effectiveness.

### **See Me, Hear Me Framework**

In response to the findings of its inquiry, the OCC has developed the See Me, Hear Me Framework that focusses on:

- Preventing the sexual exploitation of children;
- Identifying, protecting and supporting the victims;
- Disrupting and stopping perpetrators, securing justice for victims and obtaining convictions.

Drawing extensively on the evidence gathered in the course of the inquiry, the Framework has been developed with the assistance of a group of young people who have been victims of CSE to ensure a child-centred approach to protecting children.

The Framework sets out the agencies, networks and stage-by-stage coordination necessary for effective practice and joined-up working from the top strategic level down to frontline handling of cases with victims and perpetrators. The Framework is underpinned by seven firm principles of effective practice:

1. The child's best interests must be the top priority;
2. Participation of children and young people;
3. Enduring relationships and support;
4. Comprehensive problem-profiling;
5. Effective information-sharing within and between agencies;
6. Supervision, support and training of staff;
7. Evaluation and review.

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