

SAFEGUARDING UPDATE



St Cuthbert's
ROMAN CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

MARCH 2022

CHILD EXPLOITATION

National Child Exploitation Awareness
Day is 18th March

What is child exploitation?

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

The power imbalance can be through a range of factors, including age, gender, cognitive ability, status, and access to economic or other resources. A young person may also experience poor mental health, have experienced bereavement or are being bullied which may make them more likely to be vulnerable to exploitation.

The victim may have been exploited even if the activity appears consensual, and exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through technology.

Directors of the Trust with a
responsibility for Safeguarding



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New contact

The new co-ordinator for Hull Safer Schools
Partnership & linked PCSOs for every school and
college is:

Dani Noguera, 8802

Community Engagement Coordinator
Community Safety Unit – Humberside Police

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CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION (CCE)

CCE activity can include children 'being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country, forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

One of the most common types of CCE activity is 'county lines'. This involves 'organised drug dealing networks that exploit children and vulnerable adults to move, hold and sell drugs across the UK using dedicated phone lines to take orders'. Exploitation is a key component of the business model and gangs use children because they are 'cheaper, more easily controlled and less likely to get picked up by the police.' More local carrying of drugs, across the same borough or district is also increasingly seen by councils and partners.

Children can be exploited as 'runners' (transporting drugs) but they may also undertake other roles such as cutting and bagging drugs, collecting debts or experience the 'cuckooing' of properties. Cuckooing involves taking over the home of a vulnerable person in a supply area to use it as a base for drug dealing.

Modern slavery comprises part of the wider picture around child criminal exploitation.

Modern slavery is 'the recruitment, movement, harbouring or receiving of children, women or men through the use of force, coercion, abuse of vulnerability, deception or other means for the purpose of exploitation.

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)

There are different types of CSE that range from the sending of sexual images online to being forced to have sex in order to pay for protection or a debt. It can take place in person or online, and can occur without a young person's knowledge, for example through others copying images they have created and posting them on social media.

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

CHILDREN AT RISK OF EXPLOITATION

Exploitation can affect any child but there are some children who may be at greater risk than others:

- Children in the social care system
- Children who have been excluded from school or are in alternative provision
- Children living in poverty
- Children with special educational needs and disabilities
- Children who are not UK citizens or do not have immigration status
- Family connections who are already involved in criminal activity
- Children with poor mental health and wellbeing
- Children in the proximity of the exploiter

SIGNS THAT A CHILD MAY BE BEING EXPLOITED

Children rarely self-report child sexual exploitation so it is important that practitioners are aware of potential indicators of risk, including:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones etc without plausible explanation;
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks;
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work;
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late;
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls;
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol;
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections;
- Evidence of/suspicions of physical or sexual assault;
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups;
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers);
- Frequenting areas known for sex work;
- Concerning use of internet or other social media;
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours;
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION & TRAINING

- National Online Safety course - Certificate in Child Criminal and Sexual Exploitation
- DFE Child Sexual Exploitation - Definition and a guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from child sexual exploitation.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/591903/CSE_Guidance_Core_Document_13.02.2017.pdf
- www.thinkuknow.co.uk – lots of information for professionals and parents and carers created by CEOP.

