



**CORPORATE PARENTING MEETING**  
**25 JULY 2023**

**ITEM 07**

Report sponsor: Suanne Lim, Director of Early Help & Children's Social Care  
Report author: Mandy MacDonald, CE Lead

**CRE and Children in Care**

**Purpose**

- 1.1 To provide an update to the Corporate Parenting Committee on Children Looked After (CLA) who have been referred for Child Exploitation (CE) meetings. The report and supporting PowerPoint will provide a thematic overview of the types of exploitation identified, level of risk and diversity/identity and gender breakdown of CLA cases referred for child exploitation meetings. The information provided will give context through a brief contrast to wider referrals for child exploitation to the local authority. The data is provided through review of information held on the local authority children's systems.
  
- 1.2 The report also provides Corporate Parenting Committee with an overview of the services partnership, campaign, and awareness work.

**Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 To note the content of the report as part of the process of supporting committee members understanding of the partnership work, undertaken by the services on child exploitation.
  
- 2.2 To consider the offer of updated child exploitation training and determine whether members of the committee should undertake the training on offer, or not.

**Reason(s)**

- 3.1 To ensure children looked after are identified and safeguarded where exploitation risks are highlighted. To show the work of the partnership to reduce the risk of exploitation for looked after children and to highlight the partnership offer to educate, support, and protect them.

**Supporting information**

- 4.1 This report focuses on children looked after, who are referred for independently chaired meetings, due to concerns about child exploitation in line with Children at Risk of Exploitation, DDSCP Procedures. The report and PowerPoint provide a thematic overview of numbers referred and discusses the support provided and partnership initiatives to safeguard. There are no additional costs to the local authority in respect of the partnership work.

#### DATA ANALYSIS

Figures taken on the 31st of March 2023, show that 32 CLA children were under review for child exploitation concerns. At year end, five were assessed being at high risk of exploitation, nine medium and eighteen low risk. Low risk includes closed cases. A thematic breakdown of this data is provided in the PowerPoint attached.

#### SPECIALIST SUPPORT

Contracted services, Catch 22 and Safe and Sound, provide specialist support to children who meet a low – high risk threshold. Children are also supported by keyworkers, parents, and a range of partners in the varied settings they engage with. Welfare, protection, and disruption plans are managed and monitored through network or core groups and independent oversight provided by a team manager (medium risk). High risk cases have independent reviews chaired by a Child Protection Manager. The Serious and Organised Crime and Exploitation Tactical Subgroup (SocEx), have oversight of high risk cases and place based risks. These are also considered in the Serious Youth Violence tactical subgroup and problem management plans created where necessary. Disruption, pursue and prosecution strategies are also created through the SocEx tactical meetings.

#### CRE STRATEGY IMPROVEMENTS

Work to improve disruption plans has been embedded through training and independent advice. This includes the introduction of specific plans that focus on welfare and prevention. Welfare approaches would focus on prevention work, such as awareness raising and protection of children through early help, social care, and partnership support. These strands involve agencies working with and directly supporting the child and family. Disruption and Pursue approaches are often carried out by agencies who are not directly working with the child. They focus on persons, places, community, or online spaces that pose a risk to children (disruption, pursue and prosecution strategies). This includes the police, probation, licensing, community safety, environmental health, fire safety dept, housing etc.

These arrangements can structure, support, and help the partnership to coordinate work to tackle harms within and outside the home (contextual concerns). The 5 P's plans (Prevention, Protection, Pursue, Prosecution and Partnership) is based on the Serious Youth Violence Strategy (2018) and has been adopted regionally as good practice.

- 4.2 Research and good practice updates are sent monthly to all managers, containing resources to educate staff, parents, children, and the wider partnership about any emerging trends nationally

- 4.3 A cross border, multi-agency audit of criminal exploitation has been completed hosted by the Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (DDSCP). This highlighted good practice in the multi-agency use of CE tools and assessments. This audit highlighted a need for better understanding of the numbers of children with SEND and Disabilities referred who are at risk of exploitation. This is now being considered through Exploited and Vulnerable Young People (EVYP) Subgroup of the DDSCP.
- 4.4 Operation Keep safe was conducted with Derbyshire Police and CE Leads. This focussed on test purchases in hotels, using police cadets. It is an extension of the 'Say Something If You See Something' Campaign. Concerns were highlighted about hotel safeguarding practice and as a result, partners have offered training and awareness to the hotel sector. The campaign will broaden to other licensed persons or premises later in the year. The Children's Society campaign #lookcloser was supported and our police and community safety teams and CRE lead provided information and posters to local businesses throughout April. This campaign was adopted regionally through the CE Regional Leads meeting.
- 4.5 Online abuse training has been delivered virtually in short 1 hour sessions across Derby and Derbyshire and has been accessed by children's home staff. The modern slavery training has been updated and embedded into the generic CE course.

## **Public/stakeholder engagement**

- 5.1 Children in care benefit from wide ranging support, from their allocated social workers, specialist workers from local authority contracted CE support services and independent reviewing officers. Each home has a safer neighbourhood officer attached to it. Information about risk to children is shared via Operation Liberty forms and the homes share these intelligence forms regularly. This supports officers to build an intelligence picture and to direct resources to mitigate risks. Operationally, the risk of exploitation is managed via regular reviews, which are independently chaired by child protection or team managers depending on the level of risk to the child.

- 5.2 Children continue to be encouraged to attend their meetings to share their wishes and feelings and to shape the plans which the network group put in place to protect them. The more a child is involved from the outset, the better the outcome and they then feel they have some control, understanding and say over actions to safeguard them. They do not always agree or relate to the safeguarding plan but feel included and listened to. There has been significant change to the structure of strategic boards which oversee CE service delivery and other DDSCP priorities. As such, work is underway to agree governance and focus for priorities moving forward, which reduces duplication of work. There are no additional costs related to this work. The review will aim to improve communication and planning between the range of subgroups and boards across the partnership. A development day is set in July to consider the new priorities for the Exploitation and Vulnerable Young Peoples (EVYP) subgroup. The aim will be to ensure effective safeguarding, communication, shared priorities and positive impact for children and families.

CRE training has been updated with partners and there are now podcasts and self-directed learning packs online for delegates to access. These provide a basic understanding of exploitation, a grounding for new workers prior to the course. The podcasts cover a range of exploitation models including online safety, modern slavery, and the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation and contextual safeguarding/placed based risk. The changes reflect research and learning within the independent inquiry into child's sexual abuse (IICSA <https://www.iicsa.org.uk/>) and the children exploitation practice principles <https://tce.researchinpractice.org.uk/>

Thus far, the course has been evaluated positively by all participants for content, delivery, and usefulness. Further training and workshops are planned between September 2023 and April 2024.

Free training events have been launched to ensure practitioners use the cyber choices toolkit when working with children. The sessions are offered from August 2023 to October 2023, to support practitioners identify and respond, when interest in IT becomes a concern and puts children at risk of committing cybercrime. Recent figures show that 61% of hackers start hacking before the age of 16 and 1 in 4 teenagers have engaged in cyber-crime (IWF 2022), in many cases without even knowing it. Please contact me if you wish to book a place [mandy.macdonald@derby.gov.uk](mailto:mandy.macdonald@derby.gov.uk)

## **Other options**

- 6.1 None

## **Financial and value for money issues**

- 7.1 None

## Legal implications

8.1 None

## Climate implications

9.1 None

## Socio-Economic implications

10.1 The CRE offer is there for all children regardless of circumstances. The more vulnerable children affected by disadvantage or childhood adversity are offered tailored support dependent on their needs.

## Other significant implications

11.1 None

This report has been approved by the following people:

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date of sign-off</b>
<b>Legal</b>	Olu Idowu, Head of Legal & Insurance Services	14.07.2023
<b>Finance</b>	Janice Hadfield, Head of Finance	07.07.2023
<b>Service Director(s)</b>	Andy Smith, Director of Peoples Services	17.07.2023
<b>Report sponsor</b>	Catherine O'Melia	07.07.2023
<b>Other(s)</b>		

**Background papers:**

**List of appendices:**