



## Safeguarding Children from Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Policy

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## Safeguarding Children from Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Policy

**Policy Statement:** The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015

*'The protection of children standard 12.–(1) The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.'*

### Introduction

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse in which children are sexually exploited for money, power or status.

Children or young people may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol. They may also be groomed online.

Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people in gangs.

### Definition of CSE

*'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.'* - This definition of child sexual exploitation was created by the UK National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People (NWG) and is used in statutory guidance for England. (DCSF, 2009). This guidance is referenced in Appendix C of the 2013 Working together to safeguard children (HM Government, 2013) guidance.

## Scope of the Policy

This policy sets out how Our Place Schools will work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people from sexual exploitation.

This sets out some key principles which inform effective practice in working with children and young people who are at risk of, or are suffering, sexual exploitation. These include the following:

- A child centred approach. Action should be focused on the child's needs, including consideration of children with particular needs or sensitivities, and that children and young people do not always acknowledge what may be an exploitative and/or abusive situation.
- Taking a proactive approach focused on prevention, early identification and intervention as well as disrupting activity and prosecuting perpetrators.
- Parenting, family life and services. Taking account of family circumstances in deciding how best to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.
- The rights of children and young people. Children and young people are entitled to be safeguarded from sexual exploitation, just as agencies have duties in respect of safeguarding and promoting their welfare.
- Responsibility for criminal acts. Sexual exploitation of children and young people should not be regarded as criminal behaviour on the part of the child or young person, but as child sexual abuse.
- An integrated approach. Working Together sets out a tiered approach to safeguarding: universal, targeted and responsive. Within this, sexual exploitation requires a three-pronged approach tackling prevention, protection and prosecution.
- A shared responsibility. The need for effective joint working between different agencies and professionals underpinned by a strong commitment from managers, a shared understanding of the problem and effective co-ordination by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

As part of the Children and Young people's education at Our Place Schools- Physical Social and Health Education (PSHE) is incorporated into their Individual Education Plans and waking curriculum. This is to enable young people to be educated in areas of Relationships, Puberty and Growing.

The effects of sexual exploitation are harmful and far reaching for children and young people and the ultimate aim for Our Place Schools is to prevent them from being exploited in the first place. The following measures aim to reduce the risk that young people become victims of sexual exploitation through:

- reducing their vulnerability;
- improving their resilience;
- disrupting and preventing the activities of perpetrators;
- reducing tolerance of exploitative behaviour.

## What are the signs and symptoms of child sexual exploitation?

Grooming and sexual exploitation can be very difficult to identify. Warning signs can easily be mistaken for 'normal' teenage behaviour and/or development. However, parents, carers, school teachers and practitioners are advised to be alert to the following signs and symptoms:

- inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour
  - repeat sexually transmitted infections; in girls repeat pregnancy, abortions, miscarriage
  - having unaffordable new things (clothes, mobile) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs)
  - going to hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends
  - getting in/out of different cars driven by unknown adults
  - going missing from home or care
  - having older boyfriends or girlfriends
  - associating with other young people involved in sexual exploitation
  - truancy, exclusion, disengagement with school, opting out of education altogether
  - unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual)
  - drug or alcohol misuse
  - getting involved in crime
  - injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault
- (List taken from Barnardos, 2011; CEOP, 2011; Berelowitz et al, 2012)

## Procedure

As set out in the Our Place Schools safeguarding Policy the same procedures would apply for reporting any suspicions of sexual exploitation.

Ensure you document everything, only share information with relevant people, report your concerns to your line manager or if they are not available then directly to a member of the Senior Management Team, if you wish to report concerns outside of "office hours" then you must contact the On- Call manager.

For further information on reporting and recording a disclosure refer to the Our Place Schools Safeguarding and Protection of Children Policy.

## References:

- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Department For Education (DfE) 2011
- Our Place Schools Safeguarding Children including Child Protection Policy
- Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance
- Department for Children Schools and Families (2009)
- The Children Act 1989, 2004
- The Child Abduction Action 1984
- The Children Leaving Care Act 2000
- The Adoption and Children Act 2002
- Homelessness Act 2002
- The Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants, etc) Act 2004
- The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004