



**Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board
and
Safer Telford & Wrekin Partnership**

**Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy
2017 to 2020**

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1. Foreword

This strategy sets out the commitment of Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board (TWSCB) and the Safer Telford and Wrekin Partnership (STWP), which is the local Community Safety Partnership, to undertake all actions possible to tackle child sexual exploitation (CSE), and to safeguard children and young people experiencing and/or at risk of this form of child abuse. TWSCB and STWP acknowledge that this is a very complex and challenging area of our work and that it is only possible to tackle CSE through a coordinated multi-agency approach, where victims/potential victims are identified and safeguarded and perpetrators are disrupted and prosecuted.

This strategy has been written to support, and be supported by, the West Midlands Multi-agency Safeguarding Children Procedures. When practitioners become aware of children who are affected, by, or at risk of, sexual exploitation they have a duty to comply with the West Midlands Multi-agency Safeguarding Children Procedures, with specific regards for section 3.3 which relates to the referral form and the process to be followed in Telford & Wrekin:

<http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/page/contents#p3>

The strategy outlines the TWSCB and STWP's strategic principles as the basis for its approach in tackling CSE. It also states its key priorities under the four main headings of:

- Prevention;
- Protection;
- Disruption; and
- Prosecution.

An action plan to deliver the key target areas for each of those priorities is included, and the delivery of this will be closely monitored and reported to TWSCB and STWP. All partners own and take responsibility for the effectiveness of its outcomes and will measure the difference it makes in tackling CSE in Telford & Wrekin.

Andrew Mason
Independent Chair
Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding
Children Board

Superintendent Tom Harding
Chair
Safer Telford and Wrekin
Partnership

2. Introduction

Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board (TWSCB) and the Safer Telford and Wrekin Partnership (STWP) seek to create an environment where child sexual exploitation (CSE) is prevented, identified and challenged across the Borough.

Our vision is to ensure that children, young people and families whose lives are affected by CSE will receive a high level of support as well as protection, and the perpetrators are held accountable for their actions, and where possible brought to justice.

In line with national guidance, HM Government Child Sexual Exploitation (February 2017) and HM Government Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015), TWSCB and STWP seeks to develop locally a prevention, protection and investigation strategy to:

- prevent children becoming vulnerable to CSE;
- identify those at risk of being sexually exploited;
- take action to safeguard and promote the welfare of particular children and young people who are being, or may be, sexually exploited; and
- take action against those intent on abusing and exploiting children and young people in this way.

3. Definition of Child Sexual Exploitation

“Child Sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child Sexual Exploitation does not always involve physical contact: it can also occur through the use of technology.”

Source: HM Government Child Sexual Exploitation (February 2017)

4. National Context

“The Government deplores the sexual exploitation of children, and will not tolerate failure at any level to prevent harm.....”

"Tackling child sexual exploitation must be a shared effort. Government can lead the national response. Local authorities, police, children's and health services have a statutory duty to work together to identify and stamp it out in their area."

Source: Dealing with Child Sexual Exploitation (2015)

Working Together March 2015 states that *"LSCBs should conduct regular assessments on the effectiveness of Board partners' responses to child sexual exploitation and include in the [Annual] report information on the outcome of these assessments. This should include an analysis of how the LSCB partners have used their data to promote service improvement for vulnerable children and families, including in respect of sexual abuse. The report should also include appropriate data on children missing from care, and how the LSCB is addressing the issue."*

Source: Working Together 2015 Chapter 3 para 18

Sexual exploitation of children is an area of national concern following a number of high profile prosecutions, serious case reviews, and publication of extensive research into the subject.

This strategy reflects national guidance and legislation, and recommendations from key reports including:

- HM Government Sexual Offences Act 2003, amended 2013
- Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care – January 2014.
- HM Government Child Sexual Exploitation– February 2017
- HM Government Tackling CSE Action Plan Progress Reports - 2012
- HM Government Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015
- Safeguard Children and Young People who may be been trafficked - 2011
- Care of Unaccompanied and Trafficked Children – July 2014
- Office of the Children Commissioner's Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups. Final Report- November 2013
- Keeping Children Safe in Education Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges – September 2016.
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Children and Social Work Act 2017

5. Local Context

TWSCB and STWP seek to create an environment where CSE is prevented, identified and challenged across the borough. Our vision is to ensure that children, young people and families whose lives are affected by CSE will receive a high level of support as well as protection, and that perpetrators are held accountable for their actions, and where possible brought to justice.

Known CSE Prevalence in Telford and Wrekin

Contacts with the Local Authority

In 2016-17 the Local Authority received **337 contacts** with concerns about CSE. This accounts for 2.7% (337 of 12,173) of the total number of contacts received in that time period. These 337 contacts relate to 224 young people.

Of those contacts 43.3% were made by other local authority services, 27.0% by the Police, 17.2% by education, with the remaining 12.5% coming from members of the public, victim support, housing providers and health providers (including GPs and schools nurses).

The outcomes of those contacts were:

- 56% progressed along child protection procedures (this includes CSE pathway and the Child Protection pathway)
- 22% were referred to other agencies for support
- 22% were provided with information and advice

Local Authority's Specialist CSE Team (CATE)

In 2016-17 the Local Authority's specialist CATE team received 58 referrals to their service.

As at 31st March 2017, the CATE team were working with 68 young people. Of these:

- 62 were female and 6 were male.
- 54 were of a White British heritage, 6 were of a mixed heritage, with the remaining 8 from an Asian, Black or other white heritage.
- 31 of the young people were between the ages of 16-17, 2 were 18 years and over, 28 were between 14 and 15 years and 7 were 13.

Recorded Crime

In 2015/16 there were 308 sexual offences of all types against children recorded. This included offences committed by children against other children and online crime where the offender and victim never come into contact as well as instances of CSE.

Analysis of the data showed that;

For the year 2015/16 of the 128 sexual activity offences involving a child under 16, there were 53 (41%) that involved contact over social media or other electronic communication with the offender and victim never coming face-to-face.

For CSO offences between April 2014 & Sept 2016 where the offender is known:

- 37% of child sexual offences were committed by offenders under the age of 15 on victims under the age of 15
- 52% of child sexual offences were committed by offenders under the age of 18 on victims under the age of 18
- For child sexual offences where the offender is known:
 - 89% are white males
 - 2% are Asian males
- 67% of offences were committed by white males on white females
- A further 11% were committed by white males on white males

Sexual offences against children includes the following offence types: Rape of female child under 13; Rape of a female child under 16; Rape of a male child under 13; Rape of a male child under 16; Sexual activity involving a child under 13; Sexual activity involving a child under 16; Sexual assault on a female child under 13; Sexual assault on a male child under 13; Sexual grooming; and Abuse of children through sexual exploitation.

6. Strategic Principles

This strategy fully supports and accepts as our own principles the four points set out in Louise Casey's report 'Reflections on Child Sexual Exploitation' (March 2015), these being:

- That **CSE is child abuse and is a crime**, and our efforts need to be directed towards perpetrators in order to identify, prevent and disrupt that abuse at the earliest stages as well as the prosecution of individual perpetrators to ensure that they face the full force of the criminal justice system for their crimes. These are not mutually exclusive activities.
- That **the victims are children**, however they present themselves. They cannot consent to their abuse, all the more given that grooming itself removes any real sense of self determination from these children. There should be no scenarios in which victims are viewed as young men or young women or as making choices.
- Thirdly that **CSE is squarely a community safety issue** and local government working with police and others need to make use of community safety tactics and action to keep children safe. The regulatory and enforcement functions of the local authority are vital in preventing and disrupting CSE and in building intelligence which can help with prosecutions. Those in upper tier authorities and district authorities where responsibilities for children's social care and community safety lie in different tiers, have additional partnership challenges, but these cannot be insurmountable.
- Finally, that local government and the police should not fear seeking out and shining a light on sexual exploitation for fear they may be held to account for what they find. **The failure is not in the existence of CSE but in not recognising it and taking appropriate action.**

The TWSCB, STWP and partner agencies, including the voluntary sector, aim to deliver an effective system and infrastructure to address CSE, underpinned by the following key priorities.

6.1 Prevention

- Undertake a public awareness campaign, including provision of information for parents;
- Enhancing young people's awareness of CSE including on-line abuse, through delivery of CSE awareness programmes within schools, tailored to their age;
- Ensuring those providing training and awareness programmes are supported to deliver effectively;
- Improving staff awareness and support to professionals across all agencies including schools, through awareness training;

- Continue to build a more secure society, by working closely with the Harm Reduction Unit;
- Continuing to develop community safety, continuing to enhance regulatory and taxi licensing functions; and
- Develop professional curiosity amongst staff to ensure they look for and act on signs of potential CSE (Promote corporate and community understanding of, and responsibility for CSE preventing opportunities for perpetrators, using shared intelligence and focusing on identified hot spots).

6.2 Protection

- Identify young people who are at risk of, or are being, exploited as quickly as possible;
- Ensure all young people have their needs assessed, the level of risk established, are protected through a multi-agency plan at an appropriate level and are supported to work with others to reduce or remove risks;
- Develop an appropriate CSE pathway between children and adult services;
- Further develop provision for personal and/or therapeutic support for young people affected by CSE into adulthood and their families;
- Support for families affected by CSE;
- Manage our registered sex offenders/potentially dangerous persons and young offenders to reduce reoffending;
- Promote the crucial importance of effective information sharing; and
- Investigating and following up on criminal activity by perpetrators.

6.3 Disruption

- Identification of perpetrator behaviours and areas of risk, including those that have the potential to become perpetrators;
- Effective evidence gathering;
- Disrupting perpetrator behaviour, including use of ancillary orders, with identified individuals;
- Be clear about how to disrupt within the CSE pathway;
- Embed a culture that uses clear multi agency including the voluntary sector disruption plans in conjunction with evidential recovery strategies to prevent offending and maximise opportunities for prosecution; and
- Agree basic principles in respect of larger CSE investigations.

6.4 Prosecution

- Successful prosecutions; and
- Support to victims and witnesses throughout, and after conclusion of, the criminal justice process.

7. Partnership Approach

To achieve these aims, all agencies including the voluntary sector, will need to work in partnership with:

- Young People to promote full participation and engagement;
- Parents and carers to enable their effective contribution to the protection of young people;
- Communities and organisations to engage in detection; protection; disruption and prevention; and
- Agree basic principles in respect of complex CSE investigations.

Partner agencies, including the voluntary sector, will ensure or provide:

- Identified operational leaders with responsibility for the delivery of the strategy and CSE pathway within their agency;
- Appropriate representation on the operational/strategic group and engage with actions;
- CSE champions or leads as agreed within each agency;
- Appropriately trained staff to support the CSE strategy; and
- Procedures consistent with Multi-Agency safeguarding Procedures.

The STWP and TWSCB will work in partnership regionally and nationally to share learning, and to ensure practice is in line with current research, including taking opportunities to share good practice.

8. Cross Cutting Approach

This strategy reflects the need for agencies, including the voluntary sector, and staff to recognise that young people at risk of CSE may also be affected by other issues.

There are interdependencies and linkages with, for example:

- Going missing
- Mental Health
- Suicide & Self Harm
- Substance Misuse
- Sexual Health
- Homelessness
- Children harming Children
- Online Safety
- Sexual Violence
- Offending
- Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking
- Radicalisation

9. Governance and Accountability

The TWSCB and STWP have a responsibility to monitor the incidence of CSE locally, and oversee agency's responses. Agencies, including the voluntary sector, as requested will need to supply information as required, for analysis and onward submission to the Boards. Single and multi-agency audits relating to CSE will be undertaken and findings reported to the Boards.

The work to address the transition from children to adult services has led to the amalgamation of the TWSCB's Child Exploitation Thematic Sub-group with the Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Adult Board. This amalgamation has resulted in the formation of a Joint Exploitation Sub-group which will report to both Safeguarding Boards.

10. Monitoring & Review

The implementation of this strategy will initially be overseen by the Joint TWSAB & TWSCB Exploitation Thematic Sub-group with regular reporting to TWSAB, TWSCB and STWP.

Key measures of its effectiveness will include evidence of:

- Victims of CSE, and those at risk of CSE report that the service they received from agencies, including the voluntary sector, met their needs and took into account their wishes and feelings. This will be evidenced through case reviews and through services conducting service user evaluations where appropriate.
- The Joint Exploitation Thematic Sub-group will have regular information in relation to perpetrators that will allow agencies to take appropriate disruption tactics – this will be evidenced through a change in the profile of CSE cases that are known to services with less cases of a complex and acute nature.
- Staff are able to appropriately identify CSE and are confident in taking appropriate action – this will be evidenced through 3 and 6 monthly evaluations associated with the CSE training, through case file audits and through results from the annual TWSCB Practitioner Survey.
- To have contracts in place which monitor staff training and competence around CSE. This will be evidenced through regular staff supervisions and contract management procedures.
- Identifying if children at risk of CSE are being flagged within different organisations, e.g. Letter to GP if the child is reviewed at CSE panel. This will be evidenced through multi-agency case file audits.

The strategy will be reviewed annually by TWSCB and STWP, or more frequently if required, to ensure it is making a difference to the children and young people of Telford and Wrekin involved in CSE.

11. Further Information and Contact Details

What to do if you are worried about a child and sexual exploitation:

Contact: Family Connect: 01952 385385

familyconnect@telford.gov.uk

(Out of Hours: 01952 676500)

Other useful contacts/sources of information:

www.familyconnecttelford.co.uk/family/info/27/child_exploitation

www.tell-someone.org

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

www.barnardos.org.uk

www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-sexual-exploitation/preventing-cse

Police: 101

NSPCC: 0800 800 5000

PACE: 0113 240 3040



*Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Children
Board*

www.telfordsafeguardingboard.org.uk

For further information, please contact:

Sarah Constable



Safer Telford & Wrekin Partnership

<http://www.telford.gov.uk/csp>

For further information, please contact

Sarah Constable

Partnership Manager

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Appendix 1

Policy and Legislation

1. HM Government (2003) *Sexual Offences Act 2003*
www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/42/section/3
2. Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care – January 2014
www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-who-run-away-or-go-missing-from-home-or-care
3. HM Government Child Sexual Exploitation– February 2017
www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-sexual-exploitation-definition-and-guide-for-practitioners
4. "Dealing with Child Sexual Exploitation" March 2015 Government Response
www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-child-sexual-exploitation--2
5. HM Government (2009) *Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation 2009*
www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/278849/Safeguarding_Children_and_Young_People_from_Sexual_Exploitation.pdf
6. HM Government Tackling CSE Action Plan Progress Reports - 2012
7. HM Government (2015) *Working Together to Safeguard Children*
www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working_Tog_ether_to_Safeguard_Children.pdf
8. Safeguard Children and Young People who may be been trafficked – 2011
www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-who-may-have-been-trafficked-practice-guidance
9. Care of Unaccompanied and Trafficked Children – July 2014
www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-of-unaccompanied-and-trafficked-children
10. Office of the Children Commissioner’s Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups. Final Report- November 2013
11. Keeping Children Safe in Education Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges – September 2016.
www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2

TWSCB CSE Care and Support Pathway and CSE Referral Form

westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/local-content/4cjN/child-sexual-exploitation-risk-assessment