

Child criminal exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity: In exchange for something the victim needs or wants. For the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator. Through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact, it can also occur through the use of technology.

Child Exploitation Tool

May 2020

Bedfordshire

This document can be used when discussing the Exploitation of children and young people. Think about appropriate terminology. 'it's not what you say it's how you say it' quote from a Bedfordshire young person.



This Tool is designed to be used in a multi-agency way; complete the information you have and share with relevant agencies to include what they know, work together.



If the referral does not meet the CSC threshold, consider additional referrals to other agencies that can provide support.



Do you have information to share? Think about using the Multi Agency Information Submission Form

Understand Criminal Exploitation and the stages of recruitment and what this means for a child; 'a child cannot consent to abuse'



Tackling child exploitation is a complex task. There are similarities between different forms of exploitation and the criminal and sexual exploitation of children may overlap. Think about disruption techniques for those who pose a risk to the child/young person you are working with.



Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. Think contextual safeguarding as you work through the tool.



Ensure the child's voice is within the tool; The child's voice is a phrase used to describe the real involvement of children and young people. It means more than seeking their views'.



How to use the Screening Tool



1 BEDFORDSHIRE CHILD EXPLOITATION TOOL

Guidance

This Indicator Tool aims to support practitioners focus on specific exploitation indicators and determine whether further investigations are needed by Children's Social Care (CSC) and Bedfordshire Police. This tool therefore informs both assessment of need and referrals to Children's Social Care. This tool should be attached to your Children's Social Care referral regarding a potential Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) or Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) case.

The tool is to be used within a multi-agency way; **all** practitioners working with the child should complete the information they are aware of and include all agencies that are working with the child or family; the aim is to ensure there is a safety plan in place for the child/family.

Often, children do not recognise themselves as victims, or that they are being groomed, and as a result disclosure of such abuse can be unlikely. Therefore, this indicator tool aids the identification of exploitation. This tool can be used alongside the Child Exploitation Practitioners Guidance.

Practitioners need to exercise their own **professional judgment** when completing the tool because factors such as the child's age, any additional vulnerabilities, and their history etc. This may mean that they are more vulnerable to exploitation. Professional judgment also includes capturing concerns about which they have some evidence, information **AND** concerns. Practitioners should differentiate between the two and explain this in the 'comments/evidence/description' sections.

It is important to consider disruption in all forms of Exploitation and for all practitioners to work together to identify and disrupt the perpetrators associated to the Exploitation.

Once you have completed this form: Where child exploitation is suspected the worker should complete a MASH referral form (attaching this form) and Multi-Agency Information Submission Form (If required).

- **AccessReferral@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk** (Central Bedfordshire Council)
- **multi.agency@bedford.gov.uk** (Bedford Borough)
- **Mash@luton.gov.uk** (Luton Borough Council)

CSC are responsible for assessing the level of risk to children. Should the referral not meet CSC's threshold, other support options will be considered including Early Help and referrals to appropriate services.

If you suspect anyone is in immediate danger, **call the Police on 999.**

2 SCREENING TOOL

Childs Details

Child's name:	
Address:	
Contact Number:	
Legal Status:	
Date of birth:	
Ethnicity:	
School / College:	
Is this child looked after?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Do they live in residential care/Foster Care/other?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Are they placed out of LA?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

Professional Details

Your name:	
Job title:	
Contact details:	
Date completed:	

Information Sharing and Disclosure

Is child aware that this tool has been completed?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Did the Parents/Carers provide information for the completion of this tool?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
If No, why?		
Who else has contributed to the completion of this indicator tool? (Child/ Family Member/other professionals, Education...)		
Has the child made a disclosure of exploitation (abuse)? Current <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If 'Yes' you must refer to Children's Social Care immediately Non-Recent <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If 'Yes' you must refer to Children's Social Care to determine current risk		
Are the people who may be grooming or exploiting the young person: Known to the child? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> A family member? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/>		
(if you answer 'Yes' to either of the above questions please state who this person is)		
Names of the child's friends/siblings/others who you think might be also affected by exploitation:		

1. Physical Health & Emotional Wellbeing (Health to check)	Yes (Y) No (N) Unknown (U)	Current (C) Previous (P) in the last 12 months
1.1 Physical injuries such as bruising; suggestive of either physical or sexual assault (include any knife, acid, weapon injuries and Plugging)		
1.2 Sexually transmitted infection (STI), including recurring infections or multiple STIs		
1.3 Pregnancy and/or seeking a termination/emergency contraception		

1.4	Accessing contraception		
1.5	Poor self-image, low self-esteem, Low Mood, and Anxiety		
1.6	Self-harming or thoughts or attempted suicide		
1.7	Fearful or reluctant of providing details of the operation or hospital to professionals/police		
1.8	Eating disorder and /or weight gain/loss		
1.9	Evidence of drugs/alcohol use, including associated health problems		
1.10	Physical and/or learning disability or difficulty (or other additional needs)		
1.11	Mental Health Concerns (Depression, Anxiety, Personality Disorders)		
1.12	Are they managing existing Health Conditions?		
Health/Comments/Evidence/Description of 'YES' indicators			
2. Behaviour		Yes (Y) No (N) Unknown (U)	Current (C) Previous (P) in the last 12 months
2.1	Regularly in situations/places/locations that increase the child's vulnerability.		
2.2	Truancy/at risk of exclusion/missing education		
2.3	Reduced timetable or considerable change in performance at school		
2.4	Volatile behavior exhibiting extreme array of mood swings or abusive/sexual language which is unusual for the child		
2.5	Aggressive or violent including to animals, parents, siblings, teachers or peers		
2.6	Becoming angry, hostile if any suspicions or concerns about their activities are expressed		
2.7	Detachment from peer/age-appropriate activities		

2.8 Secretive behavior (including online activities)		
2.9 Change in appearance (not including weight changes)		
2.10 Serious Youth Violence/ Young offender (current or previous)		
2.11 Changes in relationships with friends or family members		
2.12 Intelligence/suspicion to suggest that they carry weapons		
2.13 Maintaining peer relationships		
2.14 Maintaining positive family relationships		
Behaviour/Comments/Evidence/Description of 'YES' indicators		
3. Grooming	Yes (Y) No (N) Unknown (U)	Current (C) Previous (P) in the last 12 months
3.1 Entering or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults, or regular use of taxis, with no known means of paying for them		
3.2 Excessive/increase in use of mobile phones (including receiving calls late at night)		
3.3 Possession of a second mobile phone or SIM card		
3.4 Exposing or recruiting other children into exploitative situations		
3.5 Seen in adult places (i.e. pubs, clubs and Hotels) or venues known to be used for exploitation or criminal activity		
3.6 Unexplained relationships with older adults		
3.7 Associating with other children who are known to be exploited, including in school		
3.8 Child Sexual Exploitation/Child Exploitation (Known to be Current/previous)		

3.9 Disclosure of sexual /physical assault followed by withdrawal of allegation		
3.10 Phone call, texts or letters from unknown adults		
3.11 Mobile phone being answered by unknown adult/person		
3.12 Inappropriate use of the Internet and forming relationships, particularly with adults (they may appear to be peers), via the Internet.		
3.13 Social activities with no plausible explanation of the source of necessary funding		
3.14 Having keys to premises other than those they should have, including hotel key cards		
3.15 Possession of money, clothes, accommodation or other expensive items with no plausible explanation		
3.16 Adults loitering outside the child's usual place of residence or school		
3.17 Persistently missing from home or local authority care/foster care for different periods, including overnight or returning late		
3.18 Returning after having been missing and being secretive about where they have been and who they were with		
3.19 Returning after having been missing looking dirty, disheveled, tired, hungry, thirsty		
3.20 Abduction or false imprisonment		
3.21 Coerced into sexual activity (Sexual Abuse)		
3.22 New contacts with people outside of town/area		
3.23 The child being in 'Debt'		
3.24 Being paid/forced to carry or deliver drugs		
3.25 Being paid/forced to harm others		
3.26 Holding money/others depositing money in child's bank account		
3.27 Not being paid for work, working long hours or working in an inappropriate environment.		

Grooming Comments/Evidence/Description of 'YES' indicators

4. Family and Social	Yes (Y) No (N) Unknown (U)	Current (C) Previous (P) in the last 12 months
4.1 A family member or known associate working in the adult sex trade (Adult Sexual Exploitation) or involved in criminal/drug activity		
4.2 History of Family physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse; neglect		
4.3 Witness to domestic abuse/abuse at home		
4.4 Parental concern with; drug and alcohol use, mental health problems, physical or learning difficulty. Child is a young carer.		
4.5 Pattern of street homelessness or sofa surfing		
4.6 Living in hostel, B & B or Foyer accommodation		
4.7 Conflict at home around boundaries, including staying out late		
4.8 Living in a gang affected neighborhood		
4.9 Recent bereavement, loss, family separation and/or family breakdown (in the last 2 years)		
4.10 Are parents/carers protective?		
4.11 Gang association either through relatives, peers or intimate relationships		
4.12 Lacking friends their own age/school year		
4.13 Are there any cultural factors that impact on their vulnerability		
4.14 Going missing with other children		
4.15 No recourse to public funds (a condition imposed on someone due to their immigration status)		
Family and Social Domain Comments/Evidence/Description of 'YES' indicators		

5. Online Safety	Yes (Y) No (N) Unknown (U)	Current (C) Previous (P) in the last 12 months
5.1 Evidence/information/intelligence of vulnerability through internet or social networking sites		
5.2 Concern that inappropriate images (child abuse images) of a child are being circulated via the internet/phones		
5.3 Concern that the child is being coerced/bribed/threatened to provide explicit images/engage in inappropriate online activity		
5.4 Concern that the child is being paid for sexual acts online; including live streaming (on line Sexual Abuse)		
5.5 Accessing on-line dating/ 'hook-up' sites		
5.6 Unexplained increased use of social networking, shared gaming sites and / or receiving rewards/credits.		
5.7 Going online during the night		
5.8 Being secretive using mobile phone for accessing websites etc... including unwillingness to share/show online or phone contacts		
5.9 Concern that a child is being exploited On Line		
5.10 Concerns that a child's online exploitation has developed into an offline exploitation.		
Online - Safety Comments/Evidence/Description of 'YES' indicators		

6. Positive/Mitigating factors

Childs Voice/View

'The child's voice is a phrase used to describe the real involvement of children and young people. It means more than seeking their views'.

What are the protective/mitigating factors? (support services, trusted adult, contextual support, education)

Summary

It is important you complete all of this section:

Total number of concerns identified:		Please tick which exploitation type you feel is relevant to the child: (see definition on back page) <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Exploitation <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal Exploitation
Previous	Current	

Have you completed a Multi-Agency Information Submission Form?

Have you completed an NRM?

<https://www.ecpat.org.uk/the-national-referral-mechanism>

Your analysis and overview (a few sentences to indicate your thinking; think about Contextual Safeguarding):

<https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/about/what-is-contextual-safeguarding>

Assessment:

Based on the assessment above, please provide your professional opinion by selecting **ONE** of the boxes below

- No concerns of exploitation - concerns relate to behaviors associated with age-appropriate child/young person behaviors
- Evidence of vulnerability to exploitation
- Evidence of being groomed or targeted for the purposes of exploitation
- Evidence that child is being exploited

Specific planned or completed actions as a result of tool completion; Short Term/Long Term/Transition

Which agencies/workers are involved with this child/family?

3 SAFETY PLANNING

Ensure you have a safety plan in place for the Child/ details to be given below/ What does this child/young person need to make them safer and meet their needs; also consider the needs of the parent/carer and how they can be involved in the protection of their child. It is important to consider disruption in all forms of Exploitation.

How will you know the child is safer and their needs are being met?



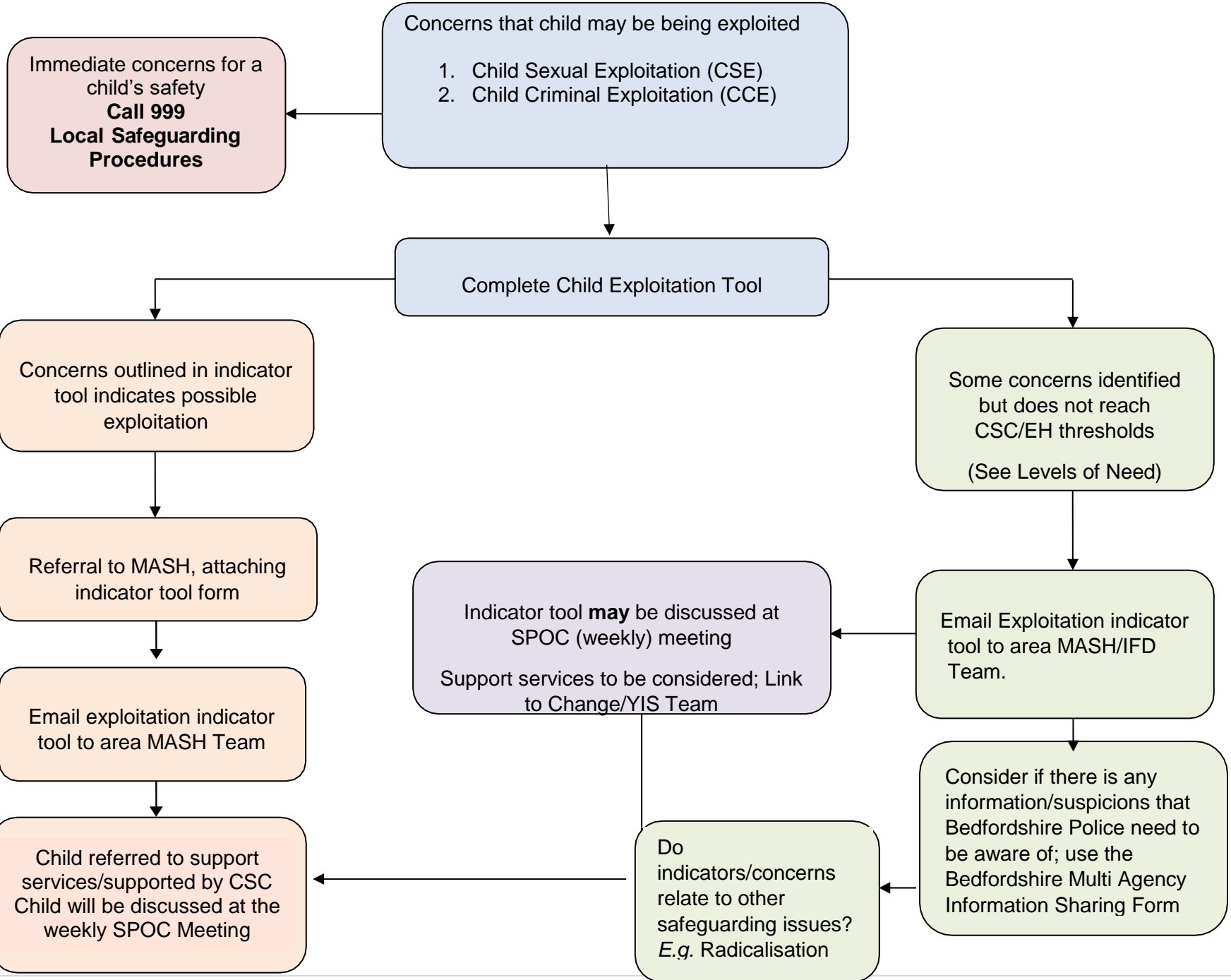
DOMAIN
Locality and wider community



Consider which of the following actions should be taken following completion of assessment if applicable: (not an exhaustive list)

by: **Date to be completed**

- Dial 999 to secure an immediate police response
- Discuss with Line Manager/Safeguarding Lead
- Contact local CSE Coordinator/SPOC/CCE Coordinator
- Coordinate multi-agency early help support
- Refer to MASH/Children's Social Care
- Share information with Police (Multi Agency Information Sharing Form)
- Request/arrange a multi-agency meeting e.g. strategy meeting, Child in Need Meeting or other meeting as required by local CSE/CCE pathway
- Arrange a sexual health assessment/review (Consider SARC services)
- Work alongside parents/carers to identify and respond to their needs
- Address any issues in relation to the child's education
- Refer to specialist CE/CSE services e.g. voluntary sector project, Link to Change, Youth Intervention Specialist Team (VERU)
- Refer to National Referral Mechanism (NRM)
- Consider disruption options (Home Office Child Exploitation Disruption Toolkit)
- Address transition issues including referral to adult services/ adult safeguarding/Adult support services
- Refer to CEOP (Child Exploitation On Line Protection)
<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>
- Agree date for review of assessment (Suggested time 3-6 months; unless there is significant change)



4 DEFINITIONS & GUIDANCE

Child Criminal Exploitation

CCE is not defined in law but is a term that has come to be associated with 'county lines'. The government definition of county lines is set out below together with the Home Office definition of child criminal exploitation, which is increasingly used to describe this type of exploitation where children are involved.

Child criminal exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity:

In exchange for something the victim needs or wants.

For the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator.

Through violence or the threat of violence.

The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact, it can also occur through the use of technology.

The criminal exploitation of children is not confined to county lines but can also include other forms of criminal activity such as theft, acquisitive crime, knife crimes and other forms of criminality.

Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: County Lines guidance

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/741194/HOCountyLinesGuidanceSept2018.pdf

Children and Young People Trafficked for the purpose of Criminal Exploitation

<https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/exploitation-toolkit.pdf>

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 in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or 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.

Definition taken from Department for Education's Definition and a guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from child sexual exploitation (2017)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-sexual-exploitation-definition-and-guide-for-practitioners>

Child Exploitation Disruption Toolkit

Perpetrators of child sexual exploitation (CSE) and child criminal exploitation (CCE) can share patterns of behaviour in respect of coercion, violence, intimidation and the power imbalance inherent in them and many other offences.

This toolkit is primarily aimed at frontline staff working to safeguard children and young people under the age of 18 from sexual and criminal exploitation. This includes law enforcement, social care, housing, education, the voluntary sector and related partner organisations.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/794554/6.5120_Child_exploitation_disruption_toolkit.pdf



Bedford Borough
Safeguarding Children Board



Central Bedfordshire
Safeguarding Children Board



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