

Child Sexual Exploitation 2018/19

Policy and Procedures

Key Elements

The purpose of this policy is to create a consistent approach to dealing with CSE at SNA 24/7 Support Services. This document sets out the responsibilities and expectations for all employees at SNA 24/7 Support Services in relation to the safeguarding and support for children/young people at risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE) for all children and young people within the SNA 24/7 Support Services.

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Name of Services	SNA 24/7 Support Services
Name and Contact details of Directors & Operations Manager	Angela Walters - Director angela@sna247supportservices.org Sheila Johnson - Operations Manager Contact Number -07948 897166
Name and Contact details of Designated Safeguarding Leads	Sheila Johnson - 07948 897166

Local Authority safeguarding details	Lewisham 0208 356 5500 (Available 9am – 5pm) Out of hours 0208 356 2710 Croydon 020 8489 4470(Available 9am – 5pm) Out of hours 020 8489 0000 Surrey 020 8379 5555 (Available 9am – 5pm) Out of hours 020 8379 1000 Bromley 020 7527 7400 (Available 9am – 5pm) Out of hours 020 7226 0992 Lambeth 020 7926 5555 24 Hours
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1.Introduction

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) has become a growing and serious concern and is recognised as a form of child sexual abuse. SNA 24/7 Support Services recognises that Child sexual exploitation is a major child protection issue for communities across the UK. Hidden from view and going unnoticed, vulnerable young girls and boys are groomed and then abused, leaving them traumatised and scarred for life.

This Policy is recognition of this concern and our commitment to protecting and supporting our service users whilst working with partner agencies to achieve this. This Policy falls within the established Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and procedure that is at the forefront of our work.

At SNA 24/7 Support Services we strive to support and coach our service users about how to making positive choices and inform decisions within relationships so that they develop awareness and can protect themselves from all potential forms of sexual exploitation and abuse. Our frontline staff and managers encourage and promote healthy friendships and relationships through the 1:1 key work sessions, group sessions and strong community links to external organisations. An awareness of the risk factors, signs and indicators of CSE is key for all staff as is how to access support, guidance and how to morally and legally handle CSE suspicions or real time risks.

This policy applies to all staff employed by SNA 24/7 Support Services and to all other adults supporting the work of the organisation on any of its sites.

The Directors, Managers and all Support working staff at SNA 24/7 Support Services recognise their duty to safeguard and protect children and young people and adults within

our service who have been referred to our service with a history of CSE or suspect of CSE whilst in our care.

All employees supporting the work of our service are expected to do everything they can to protect young people in our care from the risk of engaging in dangerous relationships, to make our housing and support provisions a safe and trusting environment for young people to feel empowered and to effectively engage in support, advice and guidance. All our employees working within our service are in a unique position to identify any welfare concerns and that we **must** take immediate action to address them, where appropriate in partnership with the local authority and other organisations.

All staff within SNA 24/7 Support Services are expected to be open and to have the resilience to the possibility that young people in our care may be a victim of abuse and have the skills and resources to act quickly.

Any adult who has reason to believe that a child, young person or adult is at risk of harm has a legal and moral duty to follow up their concerns through the appropriate channels.

The following legislation has been considered in creating and updating of this policy;

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006
- The Department for Education (2017).
- Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

The following are recommendations relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people has also been considered;

- Guidance on the Sexual Offences Act, 2003
- Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care, 2014
- What to do if you suspect a child is being sexually exploited, 2012
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006

2. Policy Aims and Objectives

Therefore our 2 main areas of safeguarding against CSE which are covered by this policy;

1. Prevention - by raising awareness and preventing CSE from occurring in the first place or by being repeated

2. Protection - by safeguarding children and young people who are or may be at risk

Therefore, the aims of this policy are too;

- Provide staff and young people with information and guidance to minimise risk from harm and safeguard the welfare of young people.
- Demonstrate SNA 24/7 Support Services commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our service users
- To ensure all employees are aware of the warning signs and indicators of possible CSE
- Outline clear roles and responsibilities of paid staff and volunteers.

- To summarise SNA 24/7 Support Services procedures for recognising, raising and handling concerns.
- Summarise the importance of multi-agency co-operation

3. Definitions – what is CSE

The Department for Education (2017) defines Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) as; 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.

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 resulting from their social/economic and or emotional vulnerability.

It is recognised that every so often a child or young person is unaware they are being abused or exploited and at times may be reluctant to report such. This makes it even more important for SNA 24/7 Support Services to work closely with Local Authorities and other external agencies in identifying children and young people who may be at risk as well as those that are committing.

4. Types of CSE

SNA 24/7 Support Services accept the guidance and research set out in The London Child Sexual Exploitation Operational Protocol, 3rd Edition June 2017. Outlined in the document are 8 different models of CSE although these methods may change.

1. Peer-on-Peer Exploitation

Young people can be sexually exploited by people of a similar age as well as adults. Research is increasingly demonstrating that a significant number of sexually exploited young people have been abused by their peers and a London Councils report in 2014 found that peer-on-peer exploitation was the most frequently identified form of CSE in London. Young people can be exploited by their peers in a number of ways. In some cases, young women and young men who have been exploited themselves, by adults or peers, will recruit other young people to be abused. In other instances, sexual bullying in schools and other social settings can result in the sexual exploitation of young people by their peers.

Sexual exploitation also occurs within and between street gangs, where sex is used in exchange for safety, protection, drugs and simply belonging. For 16 and 17-year-olds who are in abusive relationships, what may appear to be a case of domestic abuse may also involve sexual exploitation. In all cases of peer-on-peer exploitation, a power imbalance will still inform the relationship, but this inequality will not necessarily be the result of an age gap between the abuser and the abused.

2. Relationship model

Here the offender befriends and grooms a young person into a 'relationship' and then coerces or forces them to have sex with friends or associates. The abuser may be significantly older than the victim, but not always.

3. Online CSE

Children and young people have grown up in a digital world which has improved people's lives in many ways, such as giving us multiple methods to communicate and share information. It is a constantly changing and dynamic world that is now an essential part of a young person's life. However, these freedoms also create new risks – according to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP), a significant number of CSE offences take place online. These offences include deceiving children into producing indecent images of themselves and engaging in sexual chat online or sexual activity over a webcam. Children and young people at risk of harm online may not have any previous vulnerabilities that are often associated with being victims of sexual abuse and exploitation.

This means that they are less likely to be identified as they might not be previously known to the authorities. Due to the nature of online activity, the currently accepted indicators of possible sexual exploitation, such as going missing or school absence, may not be displayed, and the first time parents are aware that their child has been a victim of sexual exploitation is when the police contacts the family.

Children and young people often do not see the dangers of sharing intimate images of themselves to strangers. The internet creates a false feeling of security and diminishes inhibitions that would exist offline. The anonymous nature of the internet allows perpetrators to adopt false personas and build trust via online conversations. Children and young people can fail to realise that they lose control of uploaded images, falsely believing the properties of social media applications will protect them. This leads to risks of blackmail and coercion against the child. Additionally, the Global Positioning System coordinates where a digital image was created and can be identified using free-to-download software packages, potentially leading a perpetrator to a child. These factors can lead to any and all of the following risks:

- Online grooming and child abuse;
- Access to age-inappropriate content;
- Bullying and cyber bullying;
- Personal information being obtained by perpetrators
- T
- alking to strangers or people who misrepresent themselves

4. Gangs and Groups

Young people associated with gangs are at a high risk of sexual exploitation. Sexual violence among peers is commonplace and it is used as a means of power and control over others, most commonly young women. Young people affected by, or associated with, gangs are at high risk of sexual exploitation and violence, and require safeguarding. The Office of the Children's Commissioner has defined CSE in gangs and groups in its 2013 report. This includes:

- **Gangs** – mainly comprising men and boys aged 13 to 25, who take part in many forms of criminal activity (e.g. knife crime or robbery) who engage in violence

- against other gangs, and who have identifiable markers, e.g. a territory, a name, or (sometimes) clothing.
- **Groups** – involves people who come together in person or online for the purpose of setting up, coordinating and/or taking part in the sexual exploitation of children in either an organised or opportunistic way.

Sexual exploitation is used in gangs to:

- Exert power and control over members;
- Initiate young people into the gang;
- Exchange sexual activity for status or protection;
- Entrap rival gang members by exploiting girls and young women; and
- Inflict sexual assault as a weapon in conflict.

5. County Lines

County lines typically involve an inner-city criminal gang travelling to smaller locations to sell drugs. The group will use a single telephone number for customers ordering drugs, operated from outside the area, which becomes their 'brand'. Unlike other criminal activities where telephone numbers are changed on a regular basis, these telephone numbers have value so are maintained and protected. The gangs tend to use a local property, generally belonging to a vulnerable person, as a base for their activities. This is often taken over by force or coercion, and in some instances victims have left their homes in fear of violence.

Perpetrators employ various tactics to evade detection, including rotating gang members between locations so they are not identified by law enforcement or competitors, and using women and children to transport drugs in the belief that they are less likely to be stopped and searched. CSE can also be seen in these types of cases and every effort should be taken to identify those young people that are also being sexually exploited as well as being coerced into other criminal behaviour. This could constitute an offence of trafficking either for sexual exploitation or criminal exploitation, and a crime report and National Referral Mechanism (NRM) referral should be made and investigated. These situations will often become apparent to professionals when young people are located after missing episodes outside the London area, where there is no apparent reason for them being in that location and having no apparent means to have travelled there.

6. Organised/Networked Sexual Exploitation or Trafficking

Young people (often connected) are passed through networks, possibly over geographical distances, between towns and cities, where they may be forced/coerced into sexual activity with multiple men. Often this occurs at 'parties' or brothels, and young people who are involved may recruit others into the network. Some of this activity is described as serious organised crime and can involve the organised 'buying and selling' of young people by offenders.

Organised exploitation varies from spontaneous networking between groups of offenders, to more serious organised crime where young people are effectively 'sold'. Children are known to be trafficked for sexual exploitation, and this can occur across and within local authority (LA) boundaries, regions and across international borders.

7. Familial

Children can be exploited by their parents and/or other family members.

Parents or other family members may also arrange the abuse of the child and/or control and facilitate exploitation. Where one child is being exploited, Siblings or other child relatives are at increased risk of suffering exploitation.

8. Opportunistic

This may occur quickly and without any form of grooming. Typically, older males identify vulnerable young people who may already have been groomed or sexually abused. The perpetrator will offer a young person a 'reward' or payment in exchange for sexual acts. The perpetrator is often linked with a network of abusive adults.

5. Identifying CSE

Sexual exploitation can be very difficult to identify. Warning signs can easily be mistaken for 'normal' teenage behaviour. Many young people who are directly affected by CSE rarely approach professionals so it's crucial that SNA 24/7 Support Services take responsibility in identifying young people who are vulnerable to the risk of, or experiencing CSE. It is an expectation of all employees and volunteers working with SNA 24/7 Support Services users that we are all aware of the indications and vulnerabilities that make our service users more vulnerable.

SNA 24/7 Support Services uses the guidance from '**The London Child Sexual Exploitation Operating Protocol**' issued by the Metropolitan Police, June 2017.

The protocol provides guidance which would be useful for employees in assessing and identifying the warning and indication factors of possible CSE. Metropolitan Police created the mnemonic – SAFEGUARD, which all employees working directly with UKCP would be familiar with. [See Appendix A](#)

	S exual identity, wellbeing and choice Sexually transmitted infections (particularly repeat infections); pregnancy; terminations; changing or out of character sexual behaviour; exploring sexual relationships in an unsafe context or environment; unable to disclose sexual orientation and fearful of societal responses.
	A bsence, truancy and going missing Truancy from school, including during the school day; missing from home or care, and repeat incidents; travelling outside borough/town when missing; unexplained absences.
	F amily and home Sexual, physical, emotional abuse and neglect; risks of forced marriage or so called honour based violence; female genital mutilation; domestic violence; substance misuse; parental mental health concerns; bereavement; parental and sibling criminality; experiences of homelessness or sofa surfing; living in care or temporary accommodation; immigration status.
	E motional and physical health Suicidal thoughts, plans and attempts; self-harm; low self-esteem/confidence/worth; learning difficulties; changing emotional wellbeing and signs of poor mental health; unexplained injuries and changes in physical appearance.
	G angs, Groups, Age Gaps and Crime Involvement in gangs or gang affected family, peers or siblings; concerns of abusive peer groups; involvement with older individuals or groups, lacking friends in the same age groups; older 'boyfriends'; sudden changes in peer groups; bullying, both on and off line; friends of young people experiencing CSE.
	U se of technology and sexual bullying Sexting, both sending and receiving; being listed on social network pages in relation to sexual activity and, or named in videos; secretive use of the internet/phones/social networking sites; sudden behaviour changes when using the phone or internet; control via phone or internet; multiple or secretive social networking profiles.
	A lcohol and substances Reliance on and changing use of substances, both legal and illegal.
	R eceipt of unexplained gifts or money Unexplained money, mobile phones; phone credit, items, clothes, money; new nails; travel in taxis; gifts where payment is required at a later date; worries about having debts
	D istrust of authority figures Resistance to communicating with parents, carers, teachers, social services, health, police and others.

6. SNA 24/7 Support Services Approach to CSE

SNA approach to safeguarding our service users is founded on the nature of our relationships. We prioritise monitoring, assessing, coaching and managing the needs of our service users and have an active approach to the identification, assessment and response to risk, need and support

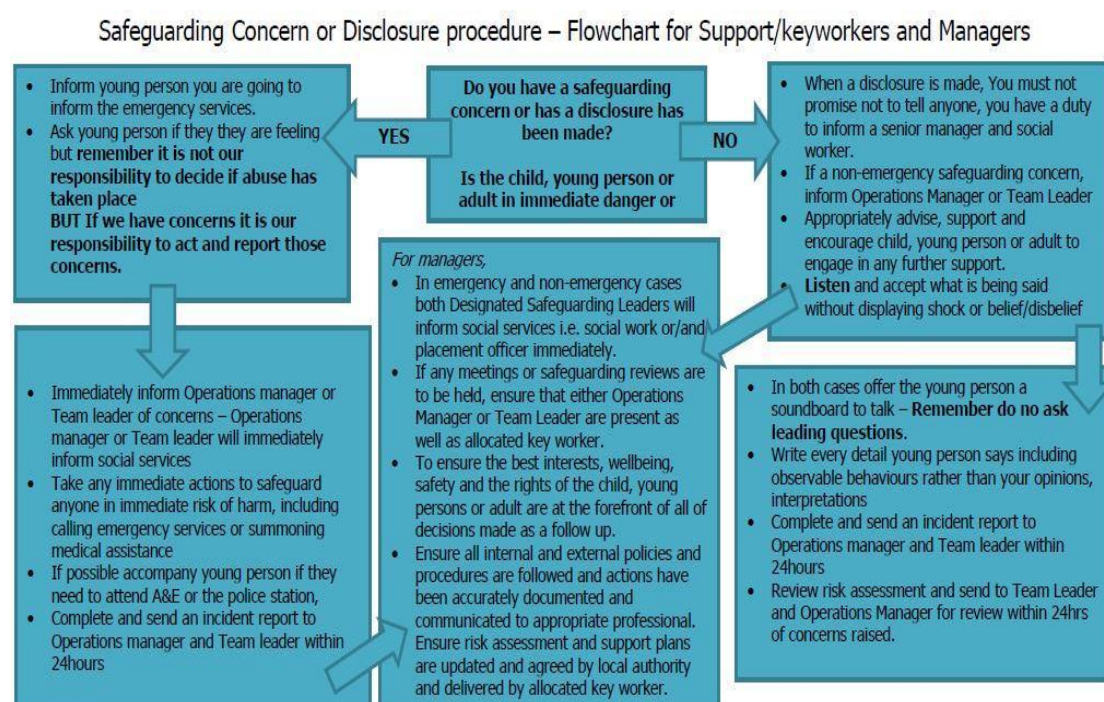
- Our organisational structure and approach places emphasis on collaborative relationships with our service users and our partners in delivery. This means our response to need and risk is timely and effective. We ensure that we work together to learn the lessons from our practice and use them to inform our safeguarding.
- At SNA 24/7 Support Services our understanding of the severity of suspected CSE and evidenced CSE is of the same understanding as it is defined in *The Department for Education (2017)*. For this reason, all SNA 24/7 Support Services staff have the

duty to follow regulatory requirements that should you suspect a child or young person is involved in sexual exploitation, immediate notifications to external agencies should be made i.e. Police and Placing Authority.

- **Our goal is to develop our service users' understanding of the term 'exploitation'.** This means that we focus on supporting them in understanding the reality of what is happening in a professional, non-judgemental and compassionate manner. Whilst empowering and supporting them to accept further support to rebuild their trust in others and self confidence in themselves. At the point where CSE has been suspected and proven, SNA 24/7 Support Services would support our service users to engage in more specialist services.

7. Handling allegations or suspicions of CSE procedure.

At SNA 24/7 Support Services we have a clear procedure in handling all safeguarding concerns and disclosures those including young people who are suspected of or at risk of child sexual exploitation. Regardless of the severity of concerns or disclosures, All SNA 24/7 Support Services employees or volunteers must follow through the below procedures. However, the below flowchart should work as a guidance for the minimum expectations for SNA 24/7 Support Services but the reality of the level of support and input required is not exhausted. [See Appendix B](#)



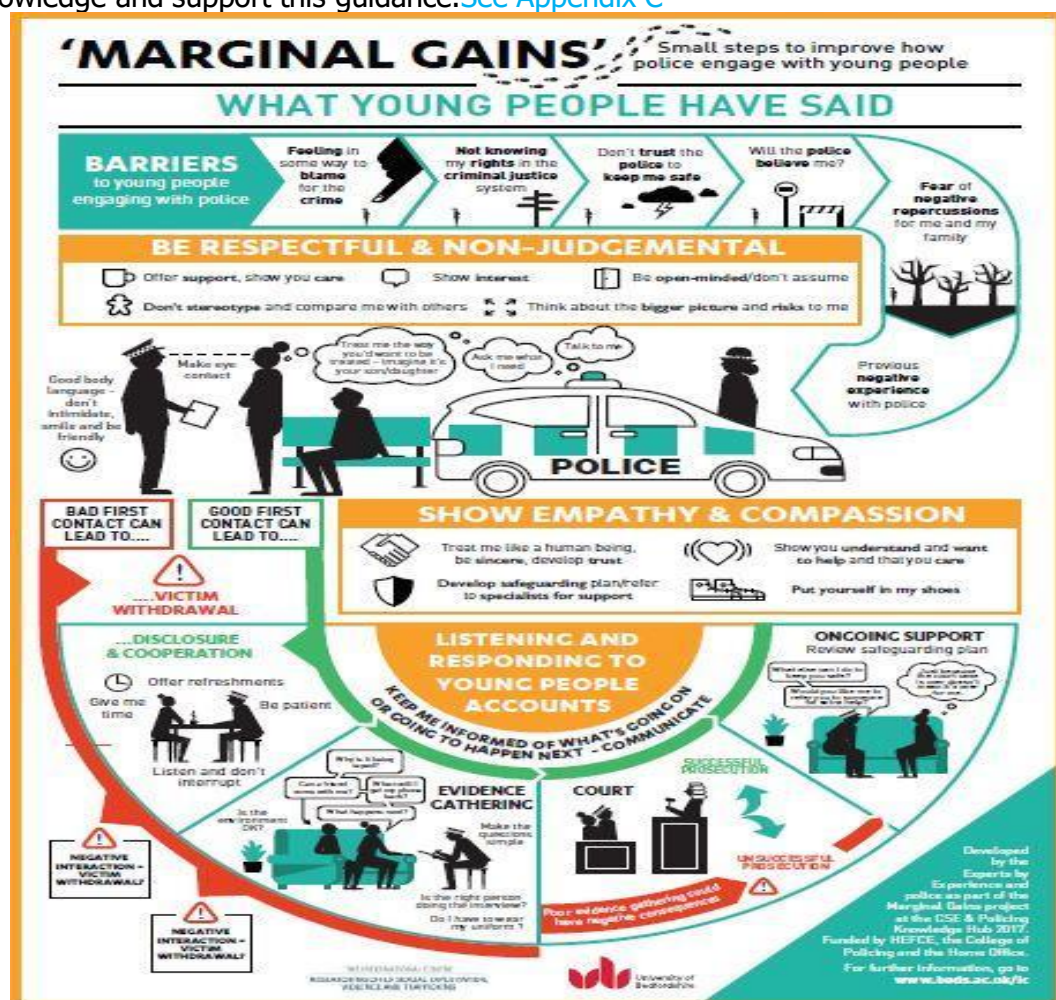
If at any stage you are unsure of the procedure and/or have any queries regarding providing ongoing support for a child, young person or adult. Please seek advice from your Team Leader or Operations Manager.

When suspicions are proven correct but no immediate danger is posed, the allocated key worker or senior management will make an appropriate referral to a specialist external service to provide ongoing specialist support, followed by an updated risk assessment to be completed

by the relevant person and approved by senior management. SNA 24/7 Support Services will provide a comprehensive incident report detailing knowledge or any indications, conversations or disclosures (if any) which have raised concerns. SNA 24/7 Support Service will also support and provide any further information required to support local authorities MASE information form.

When a young person is identified as having high indications to CSE and immediate concerns have been raised, the local Police should be informed as well as the relevant local authority. SNA 24/7 Support Services will provide a comprehensive incident report detailing knowledge or any indications, conversations or disclosures (if any) which have raised concerns. SNA 24/7 Support Services will also support and provide any further information required to support local authorities MASE information form

University of Bedfordshire completed a research study between 2015 and 2017 regarding the engagement barriers between the police and young people. SNA 24/7 Support Services found this study to be very similar to how young people may perceive a new professional i.e. allocated support worker when a young person is referred to. SNA 24/7 Support Services. Small steps to improve engagement with young people. We at SNA 24/7 Support Services acknowledge and support this guidance. [See Appendix C](#)



8. Prevention

To prevent children and young people at risk from experiencing or continuing to experience sexual exploitation we are going to achieve this by;

- Delivering 1:1 key work sessions addressing positive relationships, safety planning, peer-on-peer violence, and harmful sexual behaviour and general CSE awareness.
- Encouraging all support and key workers to promote an environment where all sexual harassment, sexual bullying, sexing and other sexually inappropriate behaviour within our provisions are challenged, reported and responded to effectively.
- Reviewing the use of the LSCB threshold guidance in relation to CSE, and The London Child Sexual Exploitation Operating Protocol
- Attending CSE Skills and Practice training for support workers delivering support to groups of children and young people who are potentially at high risk of being sexually exploited (e.g. care leavers and LGBT young people) to improve direct delivery to these groups.

8a. Protection

To work together to safeguard current victims of sexual exploitation to minimise harm, reduce opportunities for perpetrators to target victims and to provide appropriate support, intervention, information and recovery services to children and young people at risk.

We are going to achieve this by:

- Manage the risk posed by convicted perpetrators in the community and any further local knowledge through clients, local authorities and The Police.
- Involve Local Policing Area teams in safety and response plans.
- Gather local knowledge of new locations or hotspots which may pose a risk for at risk SNA 24/7 Support Services users through Community Safety partnership plans, and Community Police access to youth services and safe youth spaces.
- Share information about perpetrators, potential perpetrators and identified hotspots.
- Review the online activity of those at risk to help prevent and disrupt online exploitation.
- Providing support to young people that promotes their options, provides opportunities for achievement and empowers them to succeed in achieving future aspirations.
- Ensuring that Care Leavers and those young people transitioning into adulthood have access to appropriate support services.
- Ensuring that information about potential perpetrators and victims obtained from Social Media and other online sources is collated, shared and investigated in a timely manner.

Appendix A



Sexual identity, wellbeing and choice

Sexually transmitted infections (particularly repeat infections); pregnancy; terminations; changing or out of character sexual behaviour; exploring sexual relationships in an unsafe context or environment; unable to disclose sexual orientation and fearful of societal responses.



Absence, truancy and going missing

Truancy from school, including during the school day; missing from home or care, and repeat incidents; travelling outside borough/town when missing; unexplained absences.



Family and home

Sexual, physical, emotional abuse and neglect; risks of forced marriage or so called honour based violence; female genital mutilation; domestic violence; substance misuse; parental mental health concerns; bereavement; parental and sibling criminality; experiences of homelessness or sofa surfing; living in care or temporary accommodation; immigration status.



Emotional and physical health

Suicidal thoughts, plans and attempts; self-harm; low self-esteem/confidence/worth; learning difficulties; changing emotional wellbeing and signs of poor mental health; unexplained injuries and changes in physical appearance.



Gangs, Groups, Age Gaps and Crime

Involvement in gangs or gang affected family, peers or siblings; concerns of abusive peer groups; involvement with older individuals or groups, lacking friends in the same age groups; older 'boyfriends'; sudden changes in peer groups; bullying, both on and off line; friends of young people experiencing CSE.



Use of technology and sexual bullying

Sexting, both sending and receiving; being listed on social network pages in relation to sexual activity and, or named in videos; secretive use of the internet/phones/social networking sites; sudden behaviour changes when using the phone or internet; control via phone or internet; multiple or secretive social networking profiles.



Alcohol and substances

Reliance on and changing use of substances, both legal and illegal.



Receipt of unexplained gifts or money

Unexplained money, mobile phones; phone credit, items, clothes, money; new nails; travel in taxis; gifts where payment is required at a later date; worries about having debts



Distrust of authority figures

Resistance to communicating with parents, carers, teachers, social services, health, police and others.