

# 10 things you should know about child exploitation



1

All children are vulnerable to exploitation and **child exploitation** is the broader term used to describe children and young people who are experiencing or at risk of sexual or criminal exploitation. The key forms of abuse are sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and county lines.

2

**Child sexual exploitation:** This 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.

3

**Criminal exploitation:** Child criminal exploitation is common in county lines and 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. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can occur through the use of technology. The criminal exploitation of children is broader than just county lines. It includes, for example, children forced to work on cannabis farms or to commit theft.

4

**County lines:** This 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.

5	The delivery of high quality PSHE in schools is recognised as a protective factor. Teaching young people to keep safe is an essential element of the curriculum. Relationships Education (for all primary pupils), Relationships and Sex Education (for all secondary pupils) and Health Education became compulsory from September 2020.
6	Your school Child Protection and Safeguarding policy should make reference to different forms of exploitation, recognising that your school acknowledges that child exploitation is a safeguarding issue.
7	Non - attendance is one of the key indicators for pupils who might be victims of exploitation. Schools must ensure they comply with local and national guidance in relation to children missing education. Information in relation to Children Missing Education can be found on the <a href="#">Virtual School webpage</a> .
8	All concerns involving any form of exploitation should be reported to your Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who will make the appropriate referral to <b>One Call 01670 536400</b> . Where risk is identified the case may be referred to the Missing, Slavery, Exploitation and Trafficking Group, or <b>MSET</b> , which replaced the Risk Management Group in 2019. If a school makes a referral to One Call they may be asked to complete the initial screening tool with children's services staff.
9	Resources and guidance in relation to all forms of child exploitation are located on the NSSP webpage here: <a href="#">Safeguarding children information for professionals</a>
10	All staff in school should have a basic knowledge of all aspects of child exploitation and this information should be updated annually. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should access face to face training, as published in the NSSP Multi Agency Training Programme catalogue and located on <a href="#">Learning Together</a> .
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