**Child Criminal Exploitation Risk Assessment Tool - to identify children who may be affected by a range of exploitative situations**

**Definitions:**

***Exploitation*** *of a child refers to the use of the child in work or other activities for the benefit of others and to the detriment of the child’s physical or mental health, development, and education. Exploitation includes, but is not limited to, child labour and abuse through the sex industry. Both terms however indicate that advantage is being taken of the child’s lack of power and status.*

*There is considerable overlap between the terms “abuse” and “exploitation”. Abuse is defined as “the process of making bad or improper use, or violating or injuring, of to take bad advantage of, or maltreat, the person”, while exploitation literally means” using for one’s own profit or for selfish purposes”. (Oxford English Dictionary. Second edition 1989)*

***Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)*** *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 occur through the use of technology (DfE: Feb 17)*

***If you think a child may be a victim of sexual exploitation you should also complete the CSE Screening Tool.***

*The Home Office describes* ***Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)*** *as occurring when 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. 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.*

*Criminal exploitation of children includes for instance children forced to work in domestic servitude or on cannabis farms, children forced to commit theft and children forced to sell drugs or be involved in county lines.*

***Radicalisation*** *is the process by which children come to support terrorism and extremism and, in some cases, to them participate in terrorist groups and activities. Extremism relates to the holding or extreme religious or political views and can be described as fanaticism. Terrorism is not solely related to Islamist extremism, but can be related to far-right political movements in the UK and Europe and can also be non-violent. Children can be groomed into radicalisation through direct contact with an individual group or organisation or online.*

*A common feature of radicalisation is that the child or young person does not recognise the exploitative nature of what is happening and does not see themselves as a victim of grooming or exploitation.*

***Children can be victims of multiple forms of exploitation.*** *The Children Acts 1989 and 2004 define a child as anyone under the age of 18 years.*

The purpose of this tool is to act as a prompt to enable practitioners to identify at the earliest possible opportunity, those children who may be affected by exploitative situations in order that the most appropriate action can be taken to ensure they receive the right help at the right time and avoid problems escalating.

Tools such as this can assist in highlighting what to look for and can support decision making but they are no substitute for professional judgement. In some cases, a single factor may be enough to warrant further intervention although in most situations a combination of indicators are more reliable. The more YES answers, the more likely the child is to be at risk of, or already involved in some form of exploitation, including criminal and or sexual exploitation. The younger the age of the child, the higher the risk/vulnerability factors can be.

Older teenagers are also vulnerable and at risk of harm themselves and can experience victimisation and emotional and physical trauma due to the nature of their behaviours and lifestyle.

**Remember: Exploitation is never the victim’s fault, even if there is some form of exchange. No child is responsible for their own abuse. Consider the language used in this risk assessment to ensure it is not victim blaming. The ‘**[**Appropriate Languag**](https://www.csepoliceandprevention.org.uk/sites/default/files/Guidance%20App%20Language%20Toolkit.pdf)**e’ Guide** **can help if you are unsure**

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| **General details** |
| Name worker completing screening tool |  | Name of manager who has quality assured/ authorised this risk assessment |  |
| Child/Young Person’s name |  | Aliases, gang, or streetnames |  |
| Age |  | D.O.B |  |
| Home address |  | Current address (if different to home) |  |
| Contact number |  | Gender |  |
| Ethnicity |  | Religion |  |
| Date this assessment was Completed? |  | Did the child contribute tothis assessment? |  |
| Does the child have a Provisional or Conclusive NRM Decision? | Yes/ No/ Don’t Know | Has the child been identified as exploited through county lines by Rescue and Response | Yes/ No/ Don’t Know |

**Please give an overview of the concerns that have led to this Risk Assessment**

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| **DETAILS OF CHILD / INCIDENT / INTELLIGENCE****(Please include source of information, names, dates, nicknames, ages, descriptions, vehicle details, addresses, activities, locations, events seen or reported).** |
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**Risk and Vulnerability Indicators**

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| **Risk/Vulnerability factor** |

 | **Indicator** | **Why is this significant?** | **Points to consider** | **Please give a view on level of risk****& provide evidence for your scoring (including relevant dates)** |
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| **1 School**  |

 | Dips in educational attendance or attainment. Withdrawal from education. Not in employment, education, or training.Persistent lateness, unexplained absences, or internal truanting. | Especially where previously attendance and attainment were not a cause for concern  | Has the child started missing school? Are they achieving less than they are capable of? Is this a different pattern of behaviour than previously?  | **Assessment of Risk:**

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***Evidence*** |
| **2 Children placed in alternative education provision such as the Pupil Referral Unit**  | For some children, alternative education provision is their permanent placement. For others, it is a short-term arrangement. Where this is so, is there evidence of significant and concerning changes in behaviour and attitude? | Criminal activity can thrive in some kinds of alternative education provision, but it also thrives in mainstream education provision where it is unrecognised, unacknowledged or unaddressed  | Is there evidence to suggest that groups may be recruiting members in the school environment? Is the child associating with known or suspected gang members? Are they wearing or displaying any signs of affiliation? Specific colours, clothing, symbols, hand gestures? Is the child scared of going to school?  | **Assessment of Risk:**

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***Evidence*** |
| **3 Increase in fixed term exclusions especially for physical and verbal abuse. Sexually inappropriate or harmful behaviours.**  | Peer-on-peer bullying and abuse. Sexual assault on another child or adult or other type of bullying. Sexting and inappropriate use of social media. | Children with behavioural/conduct disorder in school are especially vulnerable to negative influences  | Are the numbers of fixed term exclusions at school increasing? What is the reason for them? Are other pupils afraid/wary of this individual?  | **Assessment of Risk:**

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***Evidence*** |
| **4 Significant changes in behaviour, attitude, and/ or emotional presentation; Evidence of trauma** | Has the child become aggressive or withdrawn, or are they presenting as tearful or distressed? Is the child harming themselves?Is the child expressing concerning views and attitudes towards other groups or people of a different religion?Is the child starting to neglect themselves, for example by not eating, washing or changing their clothes? Conversely is the child eating lots and gaining weight rapidly?Are they demonstrating an interest in political victim groups or holding political or religious views that vilify other religious, ethnic or gender groups.  | Changes in behaviour can indicate a multitude of underlying issues such as unhappiness, abuse or neglect at home, being caught in exploitative situations, and problems with peer or other relationships.The expression of concerning or extreme views and attitudes toward other groups or religions could indicate that a child is being exploited through radicalisation. | How significant is this change? Is it sudden or gradual? Are you aware of any changes in the child’s circumstances; For example, a move of home, including being received into or returning home from care, parental separation or a change in the family make up at home, a change in peer group or a falling out with an existing peer group, or the arrival of a new, significant friend who may be of a similar age or older than the child. Have you spoken to the parent/ carer and or child about these changes? If so, what are they saying? | **Assessment of Risk:**

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***Evidence*** |
| **5 Older sibling involvement in criminality** |  | Younger siblings are often targeted/groomed by other criminally minded children and can experience bullying and intimidation  | All younger siblings of gang members are at risk of gang involvement or of being harmed or affected by their older sibling’s gang membership  | **Assessment of Risk:**

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***Evidence*** |
| **6 Children with additional needs** | The child is disabled and or has specific additional needs such as poor mental health. The child has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)). The child is a young carer. | Children with additional needs and disabilities are more vulnerable to abuse and neglect, including child sexual and other forms of exploitation.Children with additional needs may be easily influenced by others or isolated and therefore more prone to peer pressure, wanting to make friends with the individual or group that are harming or exploiting them.  | Do the additional needs make the child more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation? Are they socially isolated?Are there additional concerns about their presentation and/ or behaviour? Does the child have safe and appropriate care givers? | **Assessment of Risk:**

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***Evidence*** |
| **7 Living with adults who are not family** | A child under 16 (18 if disabled) is Privately Fostered if they are looked after in the home of someone who is not a first line blood relative such as an aunt, uncle, grandparent, adult sibling or a step-parent through marriage for 28 days or more.Aunts and uncles must be the sibling of a parentThe child may be from the UK or have been brought to the UK from abroad | Children staying with adults who are not close relatives are more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. They may have been trafficked for criminal or sexual exploitation or for domestic servitude. The child may be reliant on the person they are living with to have their most basic needs met and not have access to safe adults who can offer them protection. | Is the child living with an aunt, uncle, grandparent, adult sibling or step-parent?How do you know this? Have you seen supporting documentary evidence? In many cultures, adults are referred to as brothers, sisters, aunts or uncles. Is the local authority aware of the arrangement and have they assessed that it is safe and appropriate for the child to be there? If not, you must refer to the MASH if child is not already open to social care | **Assessment of Risk:**

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***Evidence*** |
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| **8 County Lines**  |

 | Possession and or use of drugs and alcohol. Arrested for possession with intent to supply class A or B drugs.Arrested out of area.Found in a cuckoo houseFound with drugs in the anus or vaginaMissing, especially if missing for extended period of time or regular missing episodes | Possession of substances could be an indicator of possible gang involvement and can be the “hook” used by gangs to influence a child to join a gang (the so-called “pull”) Children and younger teenagers or more vulnerable older teens are used (as a “mule”) to carry drugs around and/or to sell them because they are less likely to attract police attention. They may be asked to do this in return for “free” substances. Don’t assume that if police haven’t charged a child with supplying drugs that this means they weren’t dealing. The standard of proof for prosecution is high and is not a reliable indicator of a child’s actual behaviour or motivation.  | How much substance is involved? Is it a small amount that could be just for personal use? On its own, this may not be significant in terms of concern but children buying or using substances brings them into contact with people who may try and recruit them. If they are vulnerable in other ways, they may be at risk. Larger amounts in separately wrapped packages, perhaps with weighing scales, might suggest the child is selling or carrying drugs? Is the child also using alcohol? | **Assessment of Risk:**

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***Evidence*** |
| **9 Offending to order** | Stealing carsHigh value or high-volume theft/ shopliftingRobberyFraud | This type of offence can sometimes be used as a test of loyalty or initiation.Children can often be used to commit offences for financial gain for others with a promise of some financial incentive – this can also be onlineChildren can be utilized to set up bank accounts to launder money  | The child may not be the main perpetrator, they could be there to watch and learn. Any association with this type of offence can be an indication of association and/or concern Children receive lower penalties in Court and adults may use them because of this. | **Assessment of Risk:**

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***Evidence*** |
| **10 Possession of a Noxious substance, knife or other weapon.**  | Children identified as carrying weapons or found in situations where weapons are apparent (i.e. vehicle/ accommodation) | Children carry knives or other weapons to protect themselves and to threaten and intimidate others, children in these situations may find themselves under police investigation and not have any restriction or conditions to abide by until they appear in court.  | This type of offence and or explanation would raise concerns about peers and possible links with gang related territory or post code issues | **Assessment of Risk:**

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***Evidence*** |
| **11 Family Circumstances** *Children can be “pushed” towards gangs and other unsafe contexts if they are unhappy at home*  | Missing or staying away from home or care for more than 24 hours Living in a family where there are parental/ carer issues with domestic abuse, substance misuse or poor mental health.Evidence of political, religious or cultural extremism in the home.Supervision and boundaries are inconsistent/parent (carer) is absent/ disinterested/or unable to exert control or influence over the child**.** | Belonging to a group or gang requires a significant time commitment and often involves overnight activity or periods of absence A child may have little or no choice about where they sleep, how they spend their time, who they are with, where they go and when they are allowed to return home. Children with difficult home lives may feel that the risks associated with being out of home are preferable to the risks faced at home.Gangs can have boundaries, rules, offer protection, and help children to feel “cared-for”, and give them a sense of belonging | Does the parent/carer know where the child is and whom they are associating with? They may know who they are with but not be happy about it, or not know the address. Alternatively, they may have no idea where they are but have indirect contact through a friend or via social media. How often do they go missing? How long are the absences? How do they present when they return? Are they stressed, or do they look as though they have had fun? Longer periods of absence are of more concern.  | **Assessment of Risk:**

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***Evidence*** |
| **12 Peers**  | Associating with known gang members/predominantly pro-criminal peers,  | The influence of peer groups is well evidenced. Some children are more able to resist peer influence than others. The more vulnerable an individual, because of other factors, the harder it will be for them to resist.  | Are the majority of his/her friends involved in criminal activity? Does s/he spend most of her/his time with pro-offending peers?  | **Assessment of Risk:**

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***Evidence*** |
| **13 Frequenting a location characterized by high level criminal activity or exploitative behaviours** | Found by police or known to be congregating in larger groups where there is concern about the group’s behaviour | There are some postcodes in the borough which carry a higher risk of criminal involvement than others and locations where other children may be fearful of going.  | Considerations need to be given to known crime hot spots and areas within the borough where known drug dealing, other criminal activity or exploitation is taking place.  | **Assessment of Risk:**

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***Evidence*** |
| **14 Arrests/NFA’s**  | Children involved with significant others or arrested with significant others/known gang members resulting in no further action. Children may have been arrested a number of times and NFA’d but this may indicate that they are on the peripheries of criminal/gang involvement | There are some children who are not known to services for gang involvement or serious youth violence but are arrested with known gang members or people of concern, which indicates some connections with higher level criminality.  | Exploitation from older males, there may be an unwillingness to publicly distance themselves from peers. A child being used to be at the forefront of situations that seem unusual to services.  | **Assessment of Risk:**

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***Evidence*** |
| **15 Victims of crime** | Children who have been the victim of an incident involving a knife or noxious substance are more likely to be involved in group/gang activity. | Children who have been the victim of an incident, particularly a stabbing are more likely to be involved in gang activity and are at much greater risk of becoming a perpetrator of serious violence.  | The child becoming the perpetrator of further incidents due to reprisals | **Assessment of Risk:**

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***Evidence*** |
| **16 Significant changes in lifestyle, access to large amounts of money or expensive items**  | Unaccounted for goods or money.Sudden changes in clothing and lifestyleFor young females, this may present as expensive hairstyles, nails and make up.Having more than one mobile phone. | Possible use of accounts to facilitate online fraud. Possible involvement in criminal or sexual exploitation.  | How unusual is this change of lifestyle? Is this in and around a birthday?Has the child been missing or absent for any lengths of time?Have older peers been of influence historically for this child? Has there been any contact with Parents or carers regarding the concerns. Is the child able to give a reasonable answer regarding this change?Do you think that the child may be being sexually or criminally exploited? If so why do you think this?  | **Assessment of Risk:**

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***Evidence*** |

**Analysis of risk**

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| **Agreed risk rating (in consultation with line manager/ DSL )**  |
| **How does the child view their behaviours? Do they express any worries or fears?** |
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| **Is risk increasing or decreasing? Please provide details** |
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| **Is there evidence of Peer on Peer or complex abuse? Please provide as much detail as possible** |
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| **Is there evidence of contextual safeguarding concerns, i.e., risks that arise outside of the home? Yes/ No** **Contextual risks are those that are extra-familial and relate to*** **Peer Groups – the young people that the child is spending time with**
* **Neighbourhood Locations – the places that the child spends time in or goes to in the community**
* **School- risks that are evident in the school environment**
* **Online – the social media platforms and Apps that the child is using.**
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| **Details of contextual concerns (Please provide as much detail as possible)** |

**Do you have a Plan in place to support the child’s welfare and safety?**

**If so please either attach or outline below:**

**Exploitation Risk Management/ Safety Plan**

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| **Objectives and outcomes?** | **Who is doing what to realise this objective?** | **When will this be completed?** |
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| **Date of Plan** |  |
| **Lead Professional** |  |
| **Date of Plan Review** |  |

**What to do next**

**Children NOT Open to Children’s Social Care:**

Multi-agency partners working with children and young people who do not have an allocated social worker should complete this risk assessment to identify and give context to Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) concerns. Standard risk cases may not meet the threshold for social care intervention but should have a single agency (CAF) assessment to identify whether the threshold is met for individual or multi-agency intervention. However, if there are a few standard risk indicators practitioners may wish to contact the Barking and Dagenham Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for advice. MASH Tel: 020 8227 3811.

**If you are referring CCE concerns to children’s social care, this Risk Assessment Tool should be submitted with your MARF**

**Children OPEN to Children’s Social Care:**

Where a partner has completed this risk assessment on a child who has an allocated social worker CCE Risk Assessments should be shared with the social worker and next steps agreed.