



Child Sexual Exploitation Learning Lessons Briefing

Dudley Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB) has a duty to evaluate multi-agency working through case file audits which involves professionals from across the children's workforce, and in turn, share the learning regarding the quality of practice and lessons for improvements.

A multi-agency case file audit (MACFA) took place on the 13th June 2017 which focused on Dudley approach and response to issues of Child sexual Exploitation (CSE)

This briefing paper is to inform how changes can be made to professional practice across the children's workforce to ensure Dudley's response and support to issues of CSE are

Emerging Themes/Risk Factors identified in relation to CSE

- ✓ Children going missing from school repeatedly and on reduced timetables
- ✓ Drug and alcohol misuse –
- ✓ Domestic abuse and neglect within the family
- ✓ Offending behaviour
- ✓ Displayed risky sexual behaviour

Key messages for inter-agency learning

- ✓ **Promote** the guide to good multi agency working
- ✓ **Embed** a shared use and understanding of the child sexual exploitation screening tool
- ✓ **Share** learning from local and national serious case reviews
- ✓ **Promote** training for practitioners to gain an understanding of child sexual exploitation

effective and robust.

Key points for managers

- ✓ **Supervision:** Ensure that staff are receiving quality supervision and cases are reviewed. Staff must also be supported when working with difficult and intensive children and families
- ✓ **Reflective Practice and Challenge:** Ensure during supervision that staff and managers are reflecting on specific cases and practice around those and children and families. Be confident to challenge practitioner's opinions and decisions to ensure options are explored and good practice is followed
- ✓ **Good Practice:** Ensure that practitioners are using all available tools and resources, especially the CSE screening tool, and are making use of the training available from DSCB and partners

Remember to use the resources available....

- ✓ Seek advice and support from the CSE team/ other agencies – If you have any queries or questions you can contact other agencies for advice and information, or reassurance on concerns.

Learning points

- ✓ **Understanding and awareness** of sexual exploitation and the indicators should be consistent across agencies
- ✓ **Information** from different agencies should always be shared appropriately and taken seriously
- ✓ **Professionals** should look behind the young people's behaviour to find the reasons or causes

Key learning points for practitioners

- ✓ **Be curious** - Ensure you look 'beyond' the young person's behaviour, to find out the reasons behind it and the possible explanations
- ✓ **Understand the signs** – Look for changes in behaviour, episodes and patterns of going missing, the child looking dishevelled and unclean, change in appearance and mature clothing, and having new possessions and gifts.
- ✓ **Understand the referral process** to the relevant support services available in Dudley, If you make a referral for support or intervention for the young person, follow it up and ensure it is taken forward
- ✓ **Listen** to the young person and understand what they are trying to communicate to you. They may not use the language you are expecting or may only give you part of the information, but recognise that they are confiding in you and want to talk.
- ✓ **Persevere** with the child to build up that trusting and supportive relationship, with the use of tools and aids such as looking at the stages of a healthy relationship, confidence building exercises
- ✓ **The safety and wellbeing of the child** should always be the priority, before gaining disclosures and before gaining a criminal conviction
- ✓ **Support** the young person and their parent/s throughout the time that they receive support and intervention, contribute to joint plans and contingency plans, and seek their views
- ✓ **Keep the child in education** – the less time the child is in education and on a school/college premises, the more vulnerable they are
- ✓ **Share key information** across the relevant agencies and professionals working with the young person involved in or at risk of sexual exploitation. Information you may think is irrelevant or not important could form an important part of the bigger picture of that young person
- ✓ **Confidentiality** – Recognise when confidential information needs to be shared with other agencies, when a situation is a safeguarding issue or concern
- ✓ **Seek advice** from designated safeguarding leads and specialist professionals, and share this knowledge with colleagues to support the child/young person

Reminder to practitioners

- ✓ **DSCB child sexual exploitation training** – DSCB offer free face to face training on Child Sexual Exploitation and related themes. These are available via the DSCB website, by clicking on Booking Training: <http://safeguarding.dudley.gov.uk/child/work-with-children-young-people/training/>
- ✓ **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Procedures** – DSCB operate in partnership with the West Midlands LSCB network for its multi-agency procedures, this cover a wide variety of situations you may encounter. You can access them at: <http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/>
- ✓ **Dudley's Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy and Screening Tool** – The CSE Strategy and its associated tools has been designed in line with the West Midlands Regional Framework, to assist practitioners to recognise and respond effectively for possible child sexual exploitation: <http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/local-content/4cjN/child-sexual-exploitation-risk-assessment>
- ✓ **Dudley CSE Team** - The CSE team identifies and ensure system and processes exist to provide support to victims and those at risk of sexual exploitation. You can contact the team on: CSE.team@dudley.gov.uk or CSE.team@dudley.gov.gcsx.gov.uk (secure address); or tele: 01384 817777 if you have any concerns or for advice.