

## **Child Sexual Exploitation Policy**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of sexual abuse. This occurs when a child is exploited by being given gifts, drugs, money, or affection for sexual activities.

Children often believe the nature of this is loving and consensual- but this is known as grooming.

CSE can lead to being trafficked into or within the UK. They will be moved around and forced to take part in sexual activities, usually with more than one person. Once the abuser knows the child has been tricked, they will sometimes use methods of violence, financial abuse, and intimidation to scare or force the child or young person and make them feel like they have no other option.

Perpetrators of CSE have no certain age, gender, or race- this can be anyone. Children who have been abused may also be used to coerce others to join groups, or to become involved with the abuser.

CSE can happen in person or online. The abuser will gain the child's trust or threaten them with violence or blackmail before moving onto sexually abusing them. This can be a quick process.

### **The child may be forced to:**

- Send or post sexually explicit images of themselves.
- Film sexual activities.
- Have sexual conversations with their abuser or other parties.

Once an abuser has images, videos, or copies of conversations, they may use threats or blackmail to force a child to take part in other sexual activities. The abuser will also often share the images and videos with others or circulate them online.

Children or young people may be invited to parties or gatherings with others their own age or adults and given drugs and alcohol. They may be assaulted and sexually abused by one person or multiple people.

### **Spotting the signs of CSE**

Sexual exploitation can be difficult to spot at times, and sometimes mistaken for normal behaviour. Knowing the signs can help protect children and help them when they feel like they have no one to turn to. Children of all ages can be exploited, and it is important to keep an eye out for these indicators of CSE in both primary and secondary school age children.

- Unhealthy or inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Being frightened of some people, places, or situations
- Being secretive
- Sharp change in mood or character
- Having money or things they can't or will not explain.

- Physical signs of abuse. For example, bruises or bleeding in their genital or anal area
- Alcohol or drug misuse
- Sexual transmitted infections
- Pregnancy

**Remember:**

- Always be vigilant and consider the signs of abuse when a child is displaying unusual behaviours.
- If a child is aware they are being exploited, they might be worried or confused and less likely to speak to an adult they trust/have a close relationship with.

If a child talks to a member of our team about CSE, it is important for them to:

- Listen carefully to what they are saying.
- Let them know they've done the right thing by telling you.
- Tell them it is not their fault.
- Make sure they know you will take them seriously.
- Don't confront the alleged abuser.
- Explain what you'll do next.
- Report what the child has told you as soon as possible.

If a member of our team has concerns about CSE, they will immediately report their concern to our Safeguarding Lead.