



CHILD

EXPLOITATION

TOOL

BEDFORDSHIRE
AGAINST
VIOLENCE & EXPLOITATION

Bedfordshire

Child criminal exploitation 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 into any criminal activity:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants.
- For the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator.
- Through violence or the threat of violence.

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.

How to use the screening tool



1 Bedfordshire Child Exploitation Tool

Guidance

This indicator tool aims to help practitioners focus on specific exploitation indicators and determine whether further investigations are needed by Children's Social Care (CSC) and Bedfordshire Police. This tool therefore informs both assessment of need, planning and referrals to Children's Social Care. This tool should be attached to your Children's Social Care referral regarding a potential child exploitation (CE) case.

The tool is to be used within a multi-agency way; **all** practitioners working with the child should complete the information they are aware of. The main aim is to ensure there is a safety plan in place for the child or family.

A professionals meeting should be held to gather relevant information to complete the tool. The same process should be followed when reviewing the tool. When considering the views of parents and the child or young person we advise gathering information and **not sharing** the whole document, as there will be sensitive information recorded about others within the tool.

The safety plan can be used within other plans if there is no information that names or identifies any other young people or adults.

Often, children do not recognise themselves as victims, or that they are being groomed, and as a result disclosures of such abuse can be unlikely. Therefore, this indicator tool aids the identification of exploitation. It is paramount that you consider that there may be more than one form of exploitation taking place at any one time, for example a child may be being criminally and sexually exploited.

Practitioners need to exercise their own **professional judgment** when completing the tool because factors such as the child's age, any additional vulnerabilities, and their history etc. This may mean that they are more vulnerable to exploitation. Professional judgment also includes capturing concerns about which they have some evidence, information, **AND** concerns. It is important to consider disruption in all forms of exploitation and for all practitioners to work together to identify and disrupt the perpetrators associated to the exploitation.

Once you have completed this form:

Where child exploitation is suspected the worker should complete a MASH referral form (attaching this form) and Multi-Agency Information Submission Form (If required).

- AccessReferral@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk (Central Bedfordshire Council)
- multi.agency@bedford.gov.uk (Bedford Borough)
- Mash@luton.gov.uk (Luton Borough Council)

CSC are responsible for assessing the level of risk to children. Should the referral not meet CSC's threshold, other support options will be considered including early help and referrals to appropriate support services.

If you suspect anyone is in immediate danger, call the police on 999.

Please note that the document is confidential and should not be shared wider without consent from the professional who completed the document.

Young people's infographic

We are so honoured and grateful to have worked with a group of young people to bring their thoughts around violence and exploitation to life.

Bedfordshire VERU Exploitation lead Lisa Robinson worked with a professional artist on the project, which takes you into the minds of young people and what these massive issues really mean to them.

We love their key message. While the road of freedom may be long, winding and filled with obstacles, by working together we can guide those affected by violence and exploitation towards a brighter future.

With special thanks to:

Daniel Weatheritt

Gemma

Steph

Shelley

Claire

Dovydas

Billie

Holly-Ann

Muaz

and the young people from Bedford Borough Youth Cabinet.



2 Screening Tool

Childs Details

Child's name:	
Address:	
Contact Number:	
Legal Status:	
Date of birth:	
Ethnicity:	
School or College:	
Disability:	<p>Yes No</p> <p>If yes, please provide further details:</p>
Speech, Language and Communication Needs:	<p>Yes No</p> <p>If yes, please provide further details and confirm if diagnosed or undiagnosed:</p>
Education needs or support:	<p>Any known SEN Yes No</p> <p>EHCP Yes No</p> <p>Any known Neuro Diversity</p> <p>ADHD</p> <p>Dyslexia</p> <p>Dyspraxia</p> <p>ASD</p> <p>Social Communication Disorder</p>
Is this child looked after?	Yes No
Do they live in residential care or Foster Care or other?	Yes No
Are they placed out of LA?	Yes No

Professional Details

Your name:	
Job title:	
Contact details:	
Date completed:	
Date for review: (Suggested time 3-6 months, unless there is a significant change)	

Information Sharing and Disclosure

Is child aware that this tool has been completed?	Yes	No	
Did the Parents or Carers provide information for the completion of this tool?	Yes	No	
Who else has contributed to the completion of this indicator tool? (Child, Parent or Carer, Family Member or other professionals, Education...)			
Concerns identified:	Missing Criminal Exploitation Sexual Exploitation Financial Exploitation Serious Youth Violence Gangs Radicalisation Trafficking		
Has the child or young person or adult made a disclosure regarding any of the concerns identified above?	Yes	No	
	If 'Yes' you must refer to Children's Social Care immediately Previous Yes No If 'Yes' you must refer to Children's Social Care to determine current risk		
Are the people who may be grooming or exploiting the young person known to the child?	Yes	No	Unknown

Information Sharing and Disclosure

Are they a family member?	Yes	No	Unknown
(If you answer 'Yes' to either of the above questions please state who this person is)			
Parent or carer details			
Sibling details			
Names of the child's friends, siblings or others who you think might be affected by exploitation			

Child's, Parents or Carers Voice
<p>Child's Voice or View</p> <p>'The child's voice is a phrase used to describe the real involvement of children and young people. It means more than seeking their views'.</p> <p>Are You Listening? https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cSort9YlupM</p>
<p>Parent, Carers Voice or View</p>

It is important you complete all this section, please consider the risk indicators, vulnerabilities and domains listed on pages 13-17.

Home
Risks outside the home such as negative peer or criminal associations can undermine family relationships, while a poor home environment where there is domestic abuse or neglect, can increase risk and vulnerability.
Is there anything about the child's home situation that could be increasing risk or vulnerability?
Are parents or carers protective?
What safety measures are already in place around the family and home? (Please include protective or mitigating factors such as: support services, trusted adult, contextual support, education)

Peers
A child's peer relationships become increasingly influential during adolescence. While friendships can be positive and supportive, membership of a group where there are concerns about violence, grooming, exploitation, or offending can increase risk and vulnerability.
Do you have any concerns about the child's peer group or associations - how does the group relate to other contexts like school or community?
Are there any financial risks that exist in the peer network?

Names of the child's friends, siblings or others who you think might be also affected by exploitation:

Is anything already being done to reduce risks and needs within the group?
(Please include protective or mitigating factors such as: support services, trusted adult, contextual support, education)

School, College, Education

Schools are important locations where children spend time, socialise, and make friends. While schools can be places where children feel safe, children can also experience harm from peers in educational settings.

Do you have any concerns about the child's school experience - including poor attendance or absence, or a culture of sexual bullying or sexual image sharing - that could be linked to exploitation?

Does the child have EHCP - Identified or unidentified learning needs such as Dyslexia Dyscalculia? Change in academic performance reported by school, education?

Is anything already being done to address these concerns? (Please include protective or mitigating factors such as: support services, trusted adult, contextual support, education)

Locations, Neighbourhoods
When young people experience abuse and violence it is often associated with locations outside the home, such as a park, street, stairwell, business, etc. It is therefore important that locations and neighbourhoods feature within the process of assessment and intervention.
Are there any locations outside the home that may be linked to, or facilitating the exploitation of the child?
Is anything already being done to address this? (Please include protective, mitigating factors such as: support services, trusted adult, contextual support, education)

Perpetrators or Persons of Interest	
Exploitation and abuse occur because there is someone who is willing to take advantage of a child's vulnerability, and or because there are inadequate protective structures (around the child and their family) in place to mediate against this.	
Please provide details of individuals who pose a risk to this child, young person:	
Name	
D.O.B or estimated age	
Any alias and, or nicknames	
Vehicle details (make, model, registration, colour, etc.)	
If there is more than one person, please use the space below to provide further details	
If you know of anything already being done to manage this person, please provide details here (i.e., arrests, bail conditions, Child Abduction Warning Notices (CAWNs), prevention orders, etc.)	

<p>Have you completed a Multi-Agency Information Submission Form?</p>	<p>Yes No</p>
<p>Have you completed an NRM?</p>	<p>Yes No</p> <p>If yes, please confirm date of NRM submitted and outcome:</p>
<p>Have you completed a referral to Barnardo's Independent Child Trafficking Guardianship Service (ICTG)?</p>	<p>Yes No</p> <p>If yes, please confirm date of referral and outcome:</p>

3 Safety Planning

<p>Which agencies, workers are involved with this child, family? Please list agencies, workers below</p>
<p></p>

Ensure you have a safety plan in place for the child. What does this child, young person need to make them safer and meet their needs; also consider the needs of the parent or carer and how they can be involved in the protection of their child. It is important to consider disruption in all forms of Exploitation.

Example:

Risk Identified	Action	Outcome	Individual responsible	Date to be completed
YP is regularly missing but not always reported by parent	Parents to report YP missing. Professionals to action if parent does not report YP missing to police	YP to be located safely as soon as possible	Parents, professional network	Ongoing
Significant risk of harm to YP in the community due to SYV and exploitation risks	Allocated social worker to agree safe phrase, word with young person. This is to be shared with parents and professional network with agreed response.	YP to be safeguarded as soon as possible following communicating safe phrase or word	Parent, professional network	Safe phrase, word to be agreed with YP and shared with professional network and parents by 24.05.22
Significant risk of harm to YP in the community due to SYV and exploitation risks	Location heat mapping to be completed with YP	Professional network and parents to understand where is and is not safe for the young person in the community	Allocated social worker	To be completed by 15.06.22
Significant risk of harm to YP in the community due to SYV and exploitation risks	Ensure that professionals are completing direct work with YP and peers on 'risk and reward'.	YP to gain a better understanding of the risks associated with exploitation and demystify gangs and the glamorisation on social media	YIS, Link to Change, YOS worker	To be completed by 15.07.22
Significant risk of harm to YP in the community due to SYV and exploitation risks	Support parents to gain a better understanding of the risks in the community, identify protective factors, safety planning and provide emotional support	Parents to gain a better understanding of the risks in the community, to feel supported and be engaged in the safety planning for their child	Link to Change, allocated social worker	Referral to be made to Link to Change by 31.05.22
Significant risk of harm to YP in the community due to SYV and exploitation risks	Ringo doorbell to be purchased for the family home	Parent to be able to view who is approaching their home and be able to call police at the earliest opportunity if required	Allocated social worker, parent	To be actioned by 31.05.22

Safety Plan:

Risk Identified	Action	Outcome	Individual responsible	Date to be completed

Based on the information available to you, what, in your professional judgement, is the level of concern?

Vulnerable Child - Emerging risk of exploitation	Moderate risk of exploitation	Significant risk of exploitation
<p>There is currently no evidence to suggest that the child or young person is being exploited at this time or that a criminal offence has occurred.</p> <p>Please consider any further intervention required.</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p>A vulnerable child or young person, where there are concerns, they are being targeted and groomed, and where any of the CE warning signs have been identified.</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p>Evidence a child or young person is being targeted for abuse.</p> <p>There is evidence that the child or young person is a victim of exploitation.</p> <p>Yes</p>

Line Managers Oversight Please consider actions listed on page 19.	
Name of Manager	
Comments	

4 Risk Indicators and Vulnerability Factors

Please **highlight in yellow** if any of the below are known risk indicators or vulnerability factors

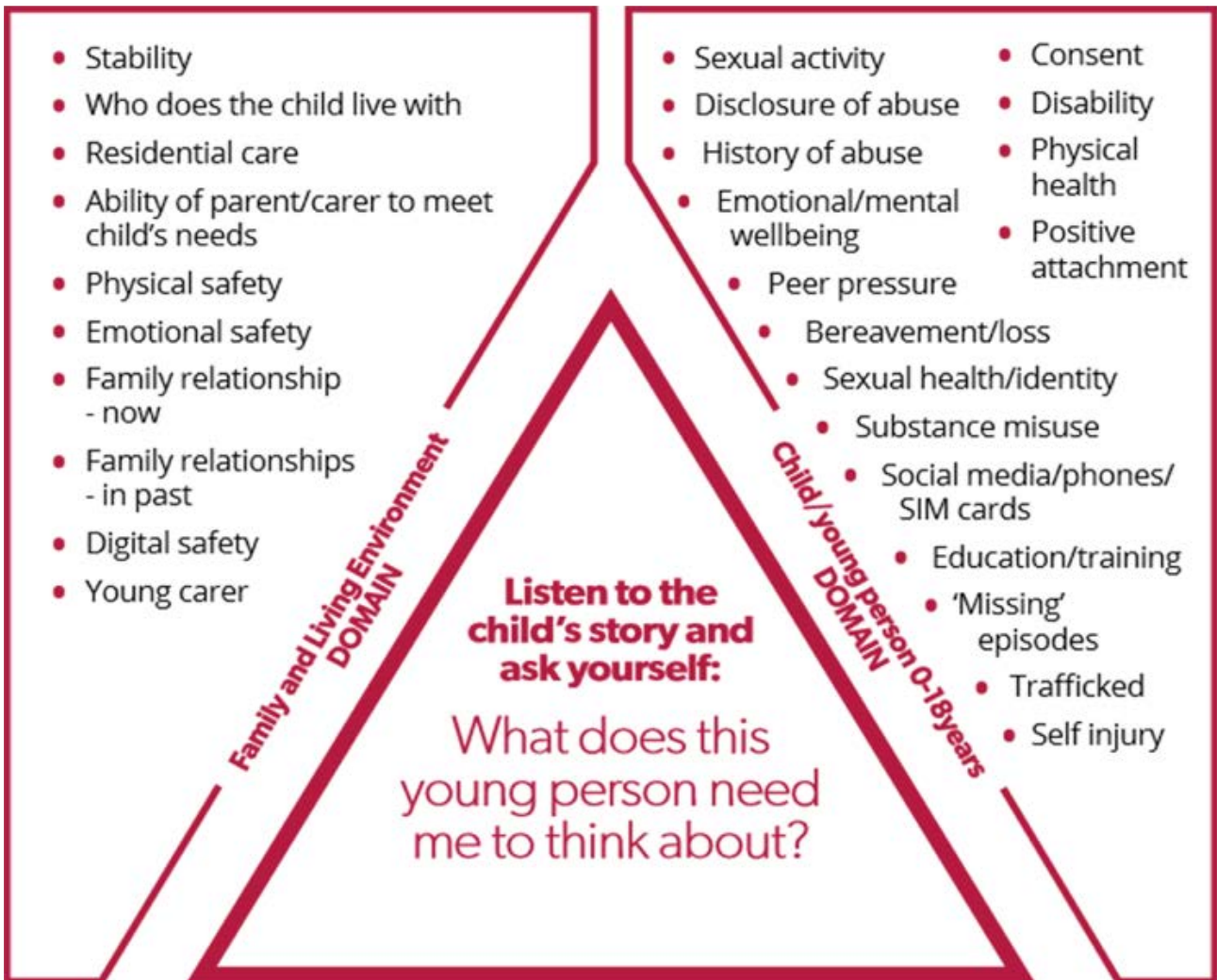
1. Physical Health & Emotional Wellbeing (Health to check)
1.1 Physical injuries such as bruising; suggestive of either physical or sexual assault (include any knife, acid, weapon injuries and forced or coerced to carry drugs internally)
1.2 Sexually transmitted infection (STI), including recurring infections or multiple STIs
1.3 Pregnancy, and or seeking a termination or emergency contraception
1.4 Accessing contraception
1.5 Poor self-image, low self-esteem, low mood, and anxiety
1.6 Self-harming or thoughts or attempted suicide
1.7 Fearful or reluctant of providing details of the operation or hospital to professionals or police
1.8 Eating disorder, and or weight gain or loss
1.9 Evidence of drugs or alcohol use, including associated health problems
1.10 Physical, and/or learning disability or difficulty (or other additional needs)
1.11 Mental Health Concerns (Depression, Anxiety, Personality Disorders)

2. Behaviour
2.1 Regularly in situations that increase the child's vulnerability.
2.2 Missing from education, at risk of exclusion, home educated, on reduced timetable or considerable change in performance at school
2.3 Volatile behaviour exhibiting extreme array of mood swings or abusive or sexual language which is unusual for the child or not consistent with their age
2.4 Aggressive or violent including to animals, parents, siblings, teachers or peers
2.5 Becoming angry, hostile if any suspicions or concerns about their activities are expressed
2.6 Detachment from age-appropriate activities
2.7 Secretive behaviour (including online activities)
2.8 Change in appearance (not including weight changes) including lack of self care
2.9 Using new language
2.10 Serious Youth Violence or Young offender
2.11 Changes in relationships with friends or family members
2.12 Intelligence or suspicion to suggest that they carry weapons

3. Grooming
3.1 Entering or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults, or regular use of taxis, with no known means of paying for them (trafficking)
3.2 Excessive use of mobile phones (including receiving calls late at night)
3.3 Possession of a second mobile phone or SIM card
3.4 Exposing or recruiting other children into exploitative situations
3.5 Peer on peer (child on child) abuse
3.6 Seen in adult places (i.e., pubs, clubs, and hotels) or venues known to be used for exploitation or criminal activity
3.7 Unexplained relationships with older adults
3.8 Associating with other children who are known to be exploited, including in school
3.9 Child Sexual, Criminal, Financial Exploitation (known to be current or previous)
3.10 Disclosure of sexual or physical assault followed by withdrawal of allegation
3.11 Phone call, texts, What's app's, DM's, likes on social media sites from unknown adults and several unknown followers on social media sites
3.12 Mobile phone being answered by unknown adult or person
3.13 Inappropriate use of the Internet and forming relationships, particularly with adults (they may appear to be peers), via the Internet.
3.14 Social activities with no plausible explanation of the source of necessary funding
3.15 Having keys to premises other than those they should have, including hotel key cards
3.16 Possession of money, clothes, accommodation, or other expensive items with no plausible explanation
3.17 Adults loitering outside the child's usual place of residence or school
3.18 Persistently missing from home or local authority care or foster care for different periods, including overnight or returning late
3.19 Returning after having been missing and being secretive about where they have been and who they were with
3.20 Returning after having been missing looking dirty, dishevelled, tired, hungry, thirsty
3.21 Abduction or false imprisonment
3.22 Coerced into sexual activity (Sexual Abuse)
3.23 New contacts with people outside of town or area
3.24 The child being in 'Debt'
3.25 Being paid or forced to carry or deliver drugs
3.26 Being paid or forced to harm others
3.27 Holding money, others depositing money in child's bank account
3.28 Not being paid for work, working long hours or working in an inappropriate environment.

4. Family and Social
4.1 A family member or known associate working in the adult sex trade (Adult Sexual Exploitation) or involved in criminal or drug activity
4.2 History of physical, sexual, and or emotional abuse; neglect
4.3 Witness to domestic abuse or abuse at home
4.4 Parental difficulties: drug and alcohol use, mental health problems, physical or learning difficulty. Child is a young carer.
4.5 Pattern of street homelessness or sofa surfing
4.6 Living in hostel, B & B or Foyer accommodation
4.7 Conflict at home around boundaries, including staying out late
4.8 Living in a gang affected neighbourhood
4.9 Recent bereavement, loss, family separation, and or family breakdown
4.10 Are parents or carers protective?
4.11 Gang association either through relatives, peers or intimate relationships
4.12 Lacking friends their own age
4.13 There are cultural factors that impact on their vulnerability
4.14 Going missing with other children
4.15 Insecure immigration status
4.16 Conflict or confusion around identity
5. Online Safety
5.1 Evidence of vulnerability through internet or social networking sites
5.2 Concern that inappropriate images (child abuse images) of a child are being circulated via the internet or phones
5.3 Concern that the child is being coerced, bribed, threatened to provide explicit images or engage in inappropriate online activity
5.4 Concern that a child has an Only Fans profile
5.5 Concern that the child is being paid for sexual acts online, including live streaming (online Sexual Abuse)
5.6 Accessing on-line dating or 'hook-up' sites
5.7 Unexplained increased use of social networking, shared gaming sites, and or receiving rewards or credits.
5.8 Going online during the night
5.9 Being secretive using mobile phone for accessing websites etc., including unwillingness to share or show online or phone contacts
5.10 Concern that a child is being exploited online
5.11 Concerns that a child's online exploitation has developed into an offline exploitation.

When considering exploitation the following domains are helpful to review



Consider which of the following actions should be taken

Following completion of assessment if applicable (not an exhaustive list)

By: _____ date to be completed

- Dial 999 to secure an immediate police response
- Discuss with Line Manager or Safeguarding Lead
- Contact local CSE Coordinator, SPOC, CCE Coordinator or Prevent Lead
- Co-ordinate multi-agency early help support
- Refer to MASH or Children's Social Care
- Share information with Police (Multi Agency Information Sharing Form)
- Request or arrange a multi-agency meeting e.g. strategy meeting, Child in Need Meeting or other meeting as required by local CSE or CCE pathway
- Arrange a sexual health assessment or review (Consider SARC services)
- Work alongside parents or carers to identify and respond to their needs
- Address any issues in relation to the child's education
- Refer to specialist CE or CSE services e.g. voluntary sector project, VERU YIS, Link to Change
- Refer to National Referral Mechanism (NRM)
- Consider disruption options (Home Office Child Exploitation Disruption Toolkit)
- Address transition issues including referral to adult services, adult safeguarding, adult support services
- Refer to CEOP (Child Exploitation On Line Protection)
<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>
- Agree date for review of assessment
(Suggested time 3-6 months; unless there is significant change)

5 Definitions & Guidance

Child Criminal Exploitation

CCE is not defined in law but is a term that has come to be associated with 'county lines'. The government definition of county lines is set out below together with the Home Office definition of child criminal exploitation, which is increasingly used to describe this type of exploitation where children are involved.

Child criminal exploitation 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 into any criminal activity:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants.
- For the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator.
- Through violence or the threat of violence.

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 using technology. The criminal exploitation of children is not confined to county lines but can also include other forms of criminal activity such as theft, acquisitive crime, knife crimes and other forms of criminality.

Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: County Lines guidance

County lines 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.

[Government guidance](#)

Child Sexual Exploitation

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 in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and, or 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.

[Government guidance](#)

Child Financial Exploitation

Criminals befriend young people through social media and online games. They offer them gifts, promise easy money, gaming credits, skins or cryptocurrency. Once they have gained a young person's trust, they force them to carry out fraudulent activities, like opening a bank account for them. This is financial exploitation.

[Children's Society Guidance](#)

Child Exploitation Disruption Toolkit

Perpetrators of child sexual exploitation (CSE) and child criminal exploitation (CCE) can share patterns of behaviour in respect of coercion, violence, intimidation, and the power imbalance inherent in them and many other offences.

This toolkit is primarily aimed at frontline staff working to safeguard children and young people under the age of 18 from sexual and criminal exploitation. This includes law enforcement, social care, housing, education, the voluntary sector, and related partner organisations.

National Referral Mechanism

Where there is information to suggest that a child or young person has been a victim of modern-day slavery (including slavery or human trafficking) a referral should be made to the National Referral Mechanism. The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern-day slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support.

Trafficking includes being moved from one part of the country or county to another, from one part of a town to another and being moved within the same building. The guidance explains how to complete the referral form before it is considered by the relevant Single Competent Authority (SCA) within the Home Office.

Barnardo's Independent Child Trafficking Guardianship Service (ICTGS)

Barnardo's deliver a specialist Independent Child Trafficking Guardianship Service (ICTGS) services in Bedfordshire:

- build trusting relationships with trafficked children to help them build a positive future
- help children navigate the criminal justice, immigration, and social care systems
- give practical support, such as help with housing, medical needs, and education
- give emotional and psychological support
- train professionals working with children so they can spot the signs of trafficking and know how to support trafficked children

A referral to ICTG should be made at the same time as the NRM referral.

Child Exploitation Tool developed by

Lisa Robinson Strategic Lead Exploitation & Missing Bedfordshire

Child Exploitation Tool Reviewed in July 2022 by

Lisa Robinson Strategic Lead Exploitation & Missing Bedfordshire, Slavica Tobdzic Consultant Bedfordshire VERU, Rebecca Knight Senior Practitioner Young People Support Team CBC, Maureen Sheerin Highly Specialist Speech and Language Therapist, Bedfordshire Community Services, Seconded to Youth Partnership Services (Luton), Mia Tomlinson Exploitation and Missing Co-ordinator CBC, National Working Group (NWG).

