St. Gregory's Catholic High School

Child Sexual Exploitation Policy

Monitoring

The implementation of the policy will be monitored by the Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral)

Evaluation

The policy was reviewed by the Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) and SLT on 16th June 2022 prior to the submission of the policy to Governors' Community Committee for scrutiny and recommendation to the Full Governing Board for approval.

Policy Review Dates:

Date last approved by Full Governing Board: 16th July 2020

Date submitted to governor committee: 23rd June 2022

Date submitted to Full Governing Board: 13th July 2022

Review Frequency: Every 2 years

Start date for policy review: March 2024

This policy should be read in conjunction with our school Safeguarding Policy and other related policies including E-Safety, Anti-Bullying, Attendance and Punctuality, Sex and Relationships. Reference must also be made to non-statutory guidance 'Child Sexual Exploitation (Feb 2017 DfE) including annexes, which replaces the 2009 guidance. It should be read alongside 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'. The Pan Cheshire CSE Multi-Agency Strategy 2017-19 will provide additional support for named staff.

Child Sexual Exploitation Policy

Our School Mission Statement clearly states that as a community we seek to "set an example of service, as Jesus did, and in so doing fulfil the high aspirations we have for each of our members and foster the fullest spiritual, academic and personal development of our students."

Sexual exploitation of children and young people has been identified throughout the UK in both rural and urban areas. It affects boys and young men as well as girls and young women. It is a form of Sexual Abuse and can have a serious impact on every aspect of the lives of children involved. Sexual exploitation has become increasingly recognised as practitioners gain more understanding of grooming and other methods of sexual exploitation and begin to take a proactive and coordinated approach to deal with it. Children involved in any form of sexual exploitation should be treated primarily as victims of abuse and their needs carefully assessed. The aim should be to protect them from further harm and they should not be treated as criminals. The primary law enforcement response should be directed at perpetrators who groom children for sexual exploitation.

Child sexual exploitation is a crime with devastating and long lasting consequences for its victims and their families. Childhoods and family life can be ruined and this is compounded when victims, or those at risk of abuse, do not receive appropriate, immediate and on-going support. The first response to children, and support for them to access help, must be the best it can be from all who work with children and their families.

In 'Putting Children' First (July 2016) the Government set out its ambitions to support vulnerable children to lead safe and positive lives, to become successful adults and to have the kind of happy childhood that we want for all our children. We want children and families to have confidence in turning to practitioners for help and protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation. This help and protection should be provided in a timely, enduring and flexible manner, and be the best it can possibly be. This requires children, parents and carers affected by child sexual exploitation to feel part of the solution and confident they will be believed. Practitioners should work together to reduce the immediate risk of harm to children and collaborate to develop long term strategies to improve children's life chances.

This applies as much to child sexual exploitation as to other forms of abuse or neglect. The hidden nature of child sexual exploitation and the complexities involved means professional curiosity, and always being alert to the issue, is vital.

Government guidance requires agencies to:

- Develop local prevention strategies
- Identify those at risk of sexual exploitation
- Take action to safeguard and promote the welfare of particular children and young people who may be sexually exploited, and
- Take action against those intent on abusing and exploiting children and young people in this way

In doing so, the key principles should be followed which all staff at St. Gregory's know, understand and agree with:

- **Child sexual exploitation is never the victim's fault**: all children and young people have a right to be safe and should be protected from harm.
- **Early sharing of information being the key to providing effective help where there are emerging problems.**
- **Safeguarding children being everyone's responsibility.** Everyone should assume that in the course of their work with children they will encounter children at risk of sexual exploitation.
  Any practitioner working with a child who they think may be at risk of child sexual exploitation should follow the guidance set out in Working Together and share this information with local authority children's social care. You should refer any concerns about a child's welfare to local authority children's social care. If you believe a child is in immediate risk of harm, you should contact the police.
- **A child-centred approach**. Action should be focused on the child's needs, including consideration of children with particular needs or sensitivities, and the fact that children do not always acknowledge what may be an exploitative or abusive situation
- **A proactive approach**. This should be focused on prevention, early identification and intervention as well as disrupting activity and prosecuting perpetrators
  - **Developed and informed by the involvement of a child's family and carers wherever safe and appropriate**: a holistic assessment will take account of the wishes and feelings of children and the views of their parents/carers;
  - **Responsive and pro-active:** everyone should be alert to the potential signs and indicators of child sexual exploitation, as well as other forms of abuse, and exercise professional curiosity in their day to day work. It is better to help children and young people as early as possible, before issues escalate and become more damaging;
  - **Relationship-based:** practitioners should establish and maintain trusting relationships with children and young people, and continue to exercise professional curiosity and create safe spaces for disclosure; and

- **Informed by an understanding of the complexities of child sexual exploitation**: it is important to avoid language or actions that may lead a young person to feel they are not deserving of support or are in some way to blame for their abuse.
- **The rights of children and young people**. Children and young people are entitled to be safeguarded from sexual exploitation just as agencies have duties in respect of safeguarding and promoting welfare
- **Responsibility for criminal acts**. Sexual exploitation of children and young people should not be regarded as criminal behaviour on the part of the child or young person, but as child sexual abuse. The responsibility for the sexual exploitation of children lies with the abuser and the focus of police investigations should be on those who coerce, exploit and abuse children and young people
- **An integrated approach**. 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' by DfE sets out a tiered approach to safeguarding: universal, targeted and responsive. Within this, sexual exploitation requires a three-pronged approach tackling prevention, protection and prosecution
- **A shared responsibility**. The need for effective joint working between different agencies and professionals underpinned by a strong commitment from managers, a shared understanding of the problem of sexual exploitation and effective coordination by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Definitions

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 (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. (DfE Guidance, 2017)

The sexual exploitation of children is defined as:

"involving exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example, being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common,

involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability"
(Office of Children's Commissioner's Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups, November, 2012).

Like all forms of child sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation:
- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex;
- can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual;
- can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity;
- can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (through others copying videos or images they have created and posting on social media, for example);
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

It is important for staff at St Gregory's Catholic High School to appreciate:

- Any child or young person may be at risk of sexual exploitation, regardless of their family background or other circumstances.
  - **Any child, in any community:** Child sexual exploitation is occurring across the country but is often hidden so prevalence data is hard to ascertain. However, areas proactively looking for child sexual exploitation are uncovering a problem. All practitioners should be open to the possibility that the children they work with might be affected.
  - **Age:** Children aged 12-15 years of age are most at risk of child sexual exploitation although victims as young as 8 have been identified, particularly in relation to online concerns. Equally, those aged 16 or above can also experience child sexual exploitation, and it is important that such abuse is not overlooked due to assumed capacity to consent. Account should be taken of heightened risks amongst this age group, particularly those without adequate economic or systemic support.

- o **Gender:** Though child sexual exploitation may be most frequently observed amongst young females, boys are also at risk. Practitioners should be alert to the fact that boys may be less likely than females to disclose experiences of child sexual exploitation and less likely to have these identified by others.
  - o **Ethnicity:** Child sexual exploitation affects all ethnic groups.
  - o **Heightened vulnerability factors:** *Working Together* makes clear the requirements for holistic assessment. Sexual exploitation is often linked to other issues in the life of a child or young person, or in the wider community context. Practitioners should be alert to the fact that child sexual exploitation is complex and rarely presents in isolation of other needs and risks of harm (although this may not always be the case, particularly in relation to online abuse). Child sexual exploitation may be linked to other crimes and practitioners should be mindful that a child who may present as being involved in criminal activity is actually being exploited.

- Sexual exploitation results in children and young people suffering harm, and causes significant damage to their physical and mental health. It can also have profound and damaging consequences for the child's family. Parents and carers are often traumatised and under severe stress. Siblings can feel alienated and their self-esteem affected. Family members can themselves suffer serious threats of abuse, intimidation and assault at the hands of perpetrators.

- There are strong links between children involved in sexual exploitation and other behaviours such as running away from home or care, bullying, self-harm, teenage pregnancy, truancy and substance misuse. In addition, some children are particularly vulnerable, for example, children with special needs, those in residential or foster care, those leaving care, and those involved in gangs.

- The majority of sexually exploited children are hidden from public view. They are unlikely to be loitering or soliciting on the streets. Research and practice has helped to move the understanding away from a narrow view of seeing sexual exploitation as 'a young person standing on a street corner selling sex' (DCSF 2009).

- There is also often a presumption that children are sexually exploited by people they do not know. However, evidence shows that this is often not the case and children are often sexually exploited by people with whom they feel they have a relationship, e.g. a boyfriend / girlfriend. Children are often persuaded that the boyfriend / girlfriend is their only true form of support and encouraged to withdraw from their friends and family and to place their trust only within the relationship.

- Due to the nature of the grooming methods used by their abusers, it is very common for children and young people who are sexually exploited not to recognise that they are being abused.

- Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It can take many forms from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for attention, accommodation or gifts, to serious organised crime and trafficking.
- What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power within the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim, increasing the dependence of the victim as the exploitation relationship develops.
- Technology can play a part in sexual exploitation, for example, through its use to record abuse and share it with other like-minded individuals or as a medium to access children and young people in order to groom them. A common factor in all cases is the lack of free economic or moral choice.
- Sexual exploitation has strong links with other forms of crime, for example, domestic violence, online and offline grooming, the distribution of abusive images of children and child trafficking.
- The perpetrators of sexual exploitation are often well organised and use sophisticated tactics. They are known to target areas where children and young people gather without much adult supervision, e.g. parks or shopping centres or sites on the Internet.

Practitioners should not rely on 'checklists' alone but should make a holistic assessment of vulnerability, examining risk and protective factors as set out in the statutory guidance 'Working Together'.

Aims

Pupils at St. Gregory's Catholic High School are given clear messages about healthy relationships and risky behaviours including:

- Respect and responsibilities.
- How to stay safe, including on-line/through social media and associated technologies.
- An understanding of what to do and who to discuss issues with.
- An awareness of unhealthy relationships, sexual exploitation and grooming.
- An understanding of dangerous and exploitative situations.
- An opportunity to explore gender stereotypes and gender roles.
- An increased awareness of risk, assessing risk and consequences of risk taking, including sexual bullying and peer pressure.
- An opportunity to build skills and confidence in developing positive, healthy friendships and relationships.

Objectives

As a school we will:

THINK   SPOT   SPEAK OUT

- Ensure our school online safety procedures/policies are robust and that pupils are taught online safety skills so they can identify online risks and are confident to report any concerns to school staff.
- Have links with outside agencies that will support the school in implementing this policy.
- Identify staff training needs to increase knowledge and develop confidence. Use Safeguarding Notice boards and TV screens (pupil and staff) to update on latest information/contacts and draw attention to these via bulletins/Collective Worship/emails.
- Have a named representative (W. Dolphin) from the Safeguarding Team who works in partnership with the local safeguarding board (LSCB) and other local specialist agencies. Have a named representative (J. Dolphin) from the Pastoral Team who shares monthly Warrington statistics, keeps abreast of current publications, utilises themed days, such as Safer Internet Day to provide information/video clips/organisation advice to Form Tutors, subject staff which is shared with all pupils.
- Be familiar with LSCB procedures and how they will/can support us with child protection concerns which arise as a result of potential child sexual exploitation.
- Provide relevant information in identified lessons, through Collective Worship with outside speakers, themes and resources within our PSHE Programme which

will build in effective, age-appropriate education, which sensitively supports younger children on issues and forms part of a planned programme of study across our key stages, including Transition. This will be accompanied by wider resilience-building work.

- Adopt a holistic approach and address child sexual exploitation as part of a wider programme of work on choice and consent, healthy relationships, harmful social norms and abusive behaviours and online safety. Educative work will engage both boys and girls and address both risk of perpetration and risk of victimisation (and the potential for overlap).
- Safeguarding/Pastoral Representatives will attend relevant training, advise on completion of referrals, monitor support.
- Agree ground rules with young people, including confidentially in line with our Safeguarding Policy and reinforce the ethos of us being a listening school where pupils feel safe and able to share concerns.
- Use Safeguarding referral sheets to report concerns (Purple) which will be transferred on to CPOMS as an accurate record, by named staff.
- Ensure staff model behaviour - be aware of values and attitudes, preconceptions and feelings and be prepared to challenge any inappropriate language and attitudes including stereotyping.
- Recognise diversity within the teaching group and be aware of gender groupings.
- Build trust to create the correct tone for lessons and help us to reinforce positive relationships.
- Utilise opportunities to reinforce key messages for pupils and staff e.g. CSE Awareness Day, Theme Week, Safer Internet Day, 'The Net', Safeguarding Newsletter.
- Share concerns and work to access appropriate agencies for additional support.
- Place pupils 'at risk' on 'Think Twice' list in order for all staff to be aware and remain vigilant of vulnerabilities.

Potential indicators of child sexual exploitation

This list should be read in conjunction with Appendix C (warning Signs) which is also in our school's full Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in Appendix A as a quick glance reminder.

Children rarely self-report child sexual exploitation so it is important that practitioners are aware of potential indicators of risk, including:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones etc without plausible explanation;
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks;
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work;
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late;

- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls;
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol;
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections;
- Evidence of/suspicions of physical or sexual assault;
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups;
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers);
- Frequenting areas known for sex work;
- Concerning use of internet or other social media;
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours; and
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

How does child sexual exploitation affect children?

The long-term consequences of any form of child abuse can be devastating and early identification and providing support as soon as problems emerge is critical.
Child sexual exploitation damages children and like any form of abuse it can have long-lasting consequences that can impact on every part of a child's life and their future outcomes. Child sexual exploitation has been shown to affect:
- Physical (including sexual) and mental health and well-being;

- Education and training and therefore future employment prospects;

- Family relationships;

- Friends and social relationships, current and as adults; and

- Their relationship with their own children in the future.

Child sexual exploitation is complex and children are often reluctant to disclose experiences of exploitation due to misplaced feelings of loyalty and shame. Many may not recognise what they are experiencing as abuse or that they require support or intervention, believing they are in control or in a healthy consensual relationship.

The first step for staff at St. Gregory's Catholic High School is to be alert to the potential signs of abuse and neglect and to understand the procedures set out by local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. We access training through those multi-agency arrangements to support us in identifying vulnerability, risk and harm. This helps the Safeguarding Team to know what action to take and to develop a shared understanding about what best practice looks like.

Key Personnel Responsibilities

These include:

- **Governing Board:** To review the school's Child Sexual Exploitation Policy and ensure the school is compliant with legislation. To have named a Safeguarding Governor (R. Harrison) who regularly liaises with DSL (C. McKenna).
- **Head teacher:** To ensure that the school is compliant with legislation and to report to the governing board.
- **Deputy Head teacher/DSL:** To ensure that school develops strong links with outside agencies including the LSCB to improve awareness, understanding and recognition of CSE.
- **DSL and Safeguarding Team:** To ensure staff receive information and are trained up on the most recent documentation in CSE and to ensure processes are followed that protect pupils from CSE. To report concerns, know procedures and seek advice from named CSE Police Liaison Officer, relevant agencies, and use CHESHIRE CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING Screening Tool for referrals. (Appendix A). Ensure messages are delivered within a safe non-judgmental environment, by individuals who are confident discussing the issues and able to challenge unhelpful perceptions. Provide supervision for staff involved in CSE cases.
- **To have a named Safeguarding member and a named Pastoral Team Member** who coordinate referrals, monitor and follow-up procedures with LA (See Appendix D and E).
- **All Staff:** To be aware of this policy and use key guidelines and procedures as detailed in Safeguarding Policy. To recognise the signs of possible CSE and pass this information without delay to DSL/Safeguarding Team. (Appendix B)
- **Attendance Officer:** To ensure that parents/carers are informed of pupil absences and work closely with the Attendance Officer and the DSL where there is cause for concern following monitoring of irregular patterns in punctuality/attendance.
- **PSHE Lead:** To ensure delivery of specific programmes to raise awareness of CES within the classroom and to whole year groups using identified speakers/agencies. Maintain regular focus through Collective Worship themes.
- **School Nurse:** To provide information and support for Pastoral/Safeguarding Teams.
- **Head of Computing – I Morgan:** To keep abreast of all social media/technologies which can be used by pupils which may increase their vulnerability in relation to CSE and inform staff of potential dangers. Liaise with pupil online safety officers to discuss issues and maintain regular dissemination of information.

Education Parents and Carers

Parents and carers have a crucial role to play in helping to protect children and young people from child sexual exploitation. They can educate their children about sex, healthy relationships and abuse, enhance resilience, provide a safe base and ensure open channels of communication. They are also well placed to support early identification by identifying emerging vulnerabilities or potential indicators of abuse and seeking support before risks escalate. Engage Evenings will be used to distribute information with emphasis on the dangers of social media, our website will be regularly updated with information, the newsletter will be used to reinforce messages from theme days and there will be an annual Safeguarding Evening for parents/carers/our local community (primary schools) In addition to this, parents are invited to join National Online Safety – a platform with a wealth of information regarding online safety.

Cheshire Contextual Safeguarding Screening Tool

Guidance on completing the tool

The screening tool uses the term 'child' deliberately to remind us that a child at risk through exploitation is a child in need of protection and not a young adult making poor choices. It is designed to be used by anyone who has concerns for a child. A child is defined as person who is under 18 years of age.

The screening tool is designed to help identify possible risks of exploitation and for you to explain what you are worried about. Your observations of behaviours and any significant changes will be important as children will often deny or be unaware that they are being exploited. Significant changes in behaviours, a single high-risk episode or multiple risk factors may indicate that the child is a victim of abuse through exploitation rather than a teenager experimenting with risk taking

This is an initial screening tool, and not a risk assessment. Please complete as fully as possible. The list of questions and observations within this screening tool is not exhaustive.

Details	
Childs Name	Click or tap here to enter text.
Date of Birth	Click or tap here to enter text.
Gender	Click or tap here to enter text.
Home or placement address	Click or tap here to enter text.
Parent or Carer Name	Click or tap here to enter text.
What is your relationship to the child?	Click or tap here to enter text.
School attended by child	Click or tap here to enter text.

Risk - Can highlight more than one risk if required				
Sexual Exploitation	Criminal Exploitation/ County Lines	Missing	Human Trafficking	Modern Slavery

With the above highlighted risk(s) How do you think the child is being exploited? (give as much information as possible)

What are you worried about? (give as much information as possible)

What is working well (strengths) for the child where known?

Which of the following are applicable to this young person? (Use Y for Yes/ N for No / U for Unknown)

	Yes/ No/ Unknown
Repeat missing incidents	No
Drug or alcohol misuse	No
In possession of money/ gifts/ items/ phones/ clothing that cannot be account for	No
Change in physical appearance or behaviour / isolated from peers/ more secretive	No
Pregnancy, termination or repeat testing for sexually transmitted infections	No
Being coerced into taking/sharing indecent images of self or others	No
Arrested/Involved in criminality	No
Found / travelling out of Borough	No
Multiple mobile phones	No
Young person feels indebted to an individual or group	No
Items missing from home	No
Young person carrying / concealing weapons	No
Connections with other people in gangs, criminality or Organised Crime Groups (OCGs)	No -
Absent from school / Non-school attendance	No
Living in a chaotic / dysfunctional household	No
Child has experience of extra or intra familial violence	No
Low self-esteem / self confidence	No
Minimising or retracting statements of harm to professionals	No
Self-harm indicators and/or mental health concerns and/or suicidal thoughts/attempts	No
Injuries – evidence of physical or sexual assault (i.e. domestic abuse)	No
Relationship breakdown with family and or peers	No
Expressions around invincibility or not caring what happens to them	No
Forming relations with unknown adults and young people, including online	No
Increasing disruptive, hostile or physically aggressive, including use of sexual language and language in relating to criminality and/ or violence.	No
Young person's sexuality increases their vulnerability as they feel unaccepted due to sexual orientation	No

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Are the parents/ Carers aware of these concerns? If not why not?

What is the child's view of these concerns?

What support have you put in place to address these concerns? / What else do you think child/ family needs?

Name of Referrer	
Role and Agency	
Contact Details	
Date completed	

Please send this form to:

Cheshire East - ChECS Team – checs@cheshireeast.gov.uk.cjsm.net
Cheshire West - iART - i-ART@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk
Warrington - Assessment and Intervention– childreferral@warrington.gov.uk
Halton - CART - contactandreferralteam@halton.gov.uk

<u>**Identifying Cases: The Warning Signs**</u>

This checklist is not intended to be comprehensive.

The evidence available points to several factors that can increase a child's vulnerability to being sexually exploited. The following are typical **vulnerabilities in children prior to abuse**:

- Living in a chaotic or dysfunctional household (including parental substance use, domestic violence, parental mental health issues, parental criminality)
- History of abuse (including familial child sexual abuse, risk of forced marriage, risk of 'honour'-based violence, physical and emotional abuse and neglect)
- Recent bereavement or loss
- Gang association either through relatives, peers or intimate relationships (in cases of gang-associated CSE only)
- Attending school with young people who are sexually exploited
- Learning disabilities
- Unsure about their sexual orientation or unable to disclose sexual orientation to their families
- Friends with young people who are sexually exploited
- Homeless
- Lacking friends from the same age group
- Living in a gang neighbourhood
- Living in residential care
- Living in hostel, bed and breakfast accommodation
- Low self-esteem or self-confidence
- Young carer

The following signs and behaviour generally seen in children who are **already being sexually exploited:**

- Missing from home or care
- Physical injuries
- Drug or alcohol misuse
- Involvement in offending
- Repeated sexually-transmitted infections, pregnancy and terminations
- Absent from school
- Evidence of sexual bullying and/or vulnerability through the internet and/or social networking sites
- Estranged from their family

- Receipt of gifts from unknown sources
- Recruiting others into exploitative situations
- Poor mental health
- Self-harm
- Thoughts of or attempts at suicide
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour

Appendix C

Appendices

APPENDIX A - CSE Warning Signs

CSE Warning Signs

Often children and young people who are victims of sexual exploitation do not recognise that they are being abused. There are a number of warning signs that can indicate a child may be being groomed for sexual exploitation and behaviours that can indicate that a child is being sexually exploited. To assist you in remembering and assessing these signs and behaviours we have created the mnemonic 'SAFEGUARD'.

S exual health and behaviour
Evidence of sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy and termination; inappropriate sexualised behaviour

A bsent from school or repeatedly running away
Evidence of truancy or periods of being missing from home or care

F amilial abuse and/or problems at home
Familial sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, as well as risk of forced marriage or honour-based violence; domestic violence; substance misuse; parental mental health concerns; parental criminality; experience of homelessness; living in a care home or temporary accommodation

E motional and physical condition
Thoughts of, or attempted, suicide or self-harming; low self-esteem or self-confidence; problems relating to sexual orientation; learning difficulties or poor mental health; unexplained injuries or changes in physical appearance identify

G angs, older age groups and involvement in crime
Involvement in crime; direct involvement with gang members or living in a gang-afflicted community; involvement with older individuals or lacking friends from the same age group; contact with other individuals who are sexually exploited

U se of technology and sexual bullying
Evidence of 'sexting', sexualised communication on-line or problematic use of the internet and social networking sites

A lcohol and drug misuse
Problematic substance use

R eceipt of unexplained gifts or money
Unexplained finances, including phone credit, clothes and money

D istrust of authority figures
Resistance to communicating with parents, carers, teachers, social services, health, police and others