

# Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham

Annual Report 2013-14



## INTRODUCTION

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is recognised nationally as one of the most important challenges facing agencies today. It has a serious and lasting impact on every aspect of a child or young person's life, including their health, physical and emotional wellbeing, educational attainment, personal safety, relationships, and future life opportunities.

To tackle this vile form of child abuse, effective multi-agency partnership working is essential, where partners work to the principle that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and that each are clear on their respective roles and responsibilities.

In April 2013 the Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) published its three-year single multi-agency strategy and accompanying action plan, outlining how the Council and its partners continue to take real action to tackle the issues relating to CSE,. This action plan is structured under six headings - strategic objectives aligned to Rotherham's three CSE priorities of 'Prevent', 'Protect' and 'Pursue' plus a further objective around Leadership, which supports all three of these priority areas.

The details within the action plan continue to develop over time to ensure they are focused on current issues and will incorporate the findings of any current or future reviews, enquiries and inspections.

This report provides a summary of some of the key achievements in the first year of the CSE Strategy against each of the seven strategic objectives and provides the next steps for 2014-15.

**Steve Ashley**  
**Local Safeguarding Children Board Independent Chair**  
**July 2014**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Strong leadership and clear governance is at the heart of our multi-agency approach, and over the course of this last year we have made significant progress to strengthen how we work together. This is at the very heart of the achievements set out in this report.

Additional resources have been invested in our multi-agency CSE team which now includes staff from health, voluntary and community sector agencies and a Police data analyst.

Information sharing and data management across agencies has been key. Through our working groups we are able to share intelligence about our community, identify risks and opportunities in a way which was previously difficult.

This includes a robust performance monitoring system which takes account of work across organisations – allowing us to understand and demonstrate the impact and outcome of our partnership approach, and identify areas for future improvement.

This strong foundation has laid the foundation for progress against our three priorities: **Prevent**, **Protect** and **Pursue**.

### Prevent

The exploitation of children is a devastating feature of communities up and down the country – but together we are making it more difficult for offenders to be able to abuse young people in this way.

We are building a Borough-wide ‘eyes and ears’ approach – educating our communities, and our staff, to recognise the signs of CSE, and how to report it.

One example outlined in the following pages shows we have doubled the number of people taking part in CSE training and awareness-raising – including almost 3,500 staff, councillors, Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators and members of the public.

Extensive work has also been carried out directly with our young people, to empower them to recognise the signs and risks of CSE.

### Protect

We have streamlined processes across agencies to allow us to better identify and safeguard children who are at risk of CSE. This includes common tools for staff to assess their concerns about a young person and understand what course of action they must take and the implementation of a South Yorkshire-wide risk assessment tool.

Some of the case studies that follow demonstrate the impact that these system improvements are having on frontline child protection in Rotherham and the difference they are making to people’s lives.

## Pursue

We are working together to identify offenders, to disrupt and stop their activity – and ultimately bring them to justice.

Through our working groups, a monthly CSE tactical assessment is shared with all partners to highlight and act upon local intelligence, risks and ongoing operations.

The number of staff dedicated to this work in the CSE team has increased, to allow an improved analysis and tracking of the data which can ultimately lead to the disruption of CSE activity, and prosecution of the perpetrators.

A number of high profile prosecutions over the course of the year is testament to this work, and serves to show the community that this kind of abuse does not and will not remain hidden, or unpunished, in Rotherham.

## Next Steps for 2014/15

Much has been achieved in the first year of this strategy, but we will not be complacent and will continue to work towards a service which operates across agencies and without boundaries to protect our young people against CSE. At the time of writing we are awaiting the outcome of the independent inquiry into historic CSE cases, commissioned by Rotherham Borough Council's Chief Executive. Together with other local, regional and national reviews, this will further inform the development of our multi-agency approach.

Central to these developments is the creation of a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (known as a MASH). Due to be launched in August 2014, the co-located service will bring together key officers to not only tackle CSE, but also domestic abuse, anti-social behaviour and the wider safeguarding children agenda.

In addition, we will build stronger links with local communities, including EU migrants. We will review our procedures to make sure looked after children placed outside our area are protected in line with our local plans.

We will also ensure that our young people are listened to and are developing a participation strategy to ensure their voice helps shape their own support and informs our future improvements.

We will carry out research to better understand the motivations of offenders, and we will continue to raise awareness as part of the South Yorkshire-wide 'Say Something If You See Something' campaign, while developing ways of communicating that specifically benefit our communities here in Rotherham.



## LEADERSHIP

### Supporting Our Work To Prevent, Protect and Pursue

#### Strategic Objective 1: We will improve the clarity of governance and strengthen leadership arrangements to ensure an effective multi-agency response to CSE

##### Achievements

Rotherham has continued its commitment to putting in place strong governance arrangements and the necessary structures to involve and engage key agencies, partners and lay members. The Rotherham LSCB devolved its strategic responsibilities to a specific CSE sub-group (formerly the Gold Group) with further support from a multi-agency operational managers group (known as Silver Group), who can determine how best to put the plans into action.



*This strength and commitment shown by organisations across Rotherham to tackling CSE has been recognised by Rotherham LSCB receiving the NWG award in 2014 for the “Longest Journey Under Challenging Conditions”. NWG is a charitable organisation formed as a UK network of over 2500 practitioners who disseminate information to professionals working on issues of CSE and trafficking in the UK*

Performance and quality management arrangements were put in place with regular operational updates to the CSE sub-group and the full Safeguarding Board, and regular reports to the Council's Cabinet as well as briefings to all elected members. Accurate and meaningful data is critical to determining the impact of services, and the recruitment of a dedicated police data analyst based in the CSE team has been an important development.

This has enabled the delivery of a confidential monthly tactical briefing document which is used and shared at both the CSE sub-group and operational managers group.

Within the document, data is presented alongside narrative on current police operations, details of children deemed the high risk to determine any actions required, and case studies highlighting successful interventions or prosecutions. From this the groups discuss, challenge and jointly address any issues arising either in the service or within individual cases. The narrative around the children, young people and perpetrators also gives the team an opportunity to describe 'impact' and provide a context which the data alone cannot do.

An action plan sets out how partners will deliver the priorities of the local CSE Strategy and improve services for children, young people and their families. It continues to evolve and develop, informed by publication of related national reports (e.g. Office of the Children's Commissioner's Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups) and a number of independent reviews of local CSE services undertaken by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), Barnardo's and the Independent Chair of the Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children's Board.

Each of these reports includes a number of recommendations and highlights areas for improvement. Work has started to address these and feature within the new 2014-15 action plan.

The key themes emerging across the reviews for Rotherham include;

- Clarity and communication of governance arrangements
- Further strengthening performance management arrangements
- Reviewing team resources, structures and location
- Increased use of intelligence and analysis to aid pursuit of offenders
- Improving communication with staff and the community

Central to a number of the improvements is the creation of a central Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (known as a MASH) for children and young people, which is due to launch in August 2014..

This will involve bringing together the existing CSE team, Public Protection Unit police officers, children's health, voluntary and community service colleagues, and the social care contact and referral team (CART) at a single location - Riverside House , the Council's central Rotherham base. The MASH will improve joint working not only around CSE but also around domestic abuse, anti-social behaviour and the wider safeguarding children agenda.

Services provided directly to young people will also move to central Rotherham and be based alongside Integrated Youth Support Services in the Council's Eric Manns Building.

This review and co-location of services will help to break down any barriers to the sharing of information across organisations, and a specific information sharing protocol is being put in place.

### **Next Steps for 2014-15**

The CSE action plan was refreshed in February 2014 in preparation for the new monitoring year. The new plan retains the structure of the 'three P' priorities of Prevent, Protect and Pursue with the seven strategic objectives. It is now focused on strategic improvements and partnership developments rather than operational day-to-day business.

## PREVENT

### Making it more difficult to exploit children

#### Strategic Objective 2: We will deliver an effective co-ordinated training, community and schools awareness programme

##### Achievements

Our aim is to build a boroughwide 'eyes and ears' approach so that as many people as possible - members of staff across the partnership, members of the public and young people - know the risks and signs of CSE, and how to report them.

A CSE competency framework has been developed by the Council and agreed by the Safeguarding Board to enhance the effectiveness of the training and awareness programme that has been delivered to staff and young people over a number of years. In addition a number of existing related training courses and informal learning opportunities for young people also now feature CSE awareness elements.

Over the course of the last year almost 3,500 staff, councillors, young people, Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators and members of the public have attended a CSE training or awareness event. This is an increase on the previous year of almost 1500 people. Work is now underway to ensure that this awareness is available to all staff, with more specialised training available for those working directly with children and young people.

**"Excellent session – logical and easy to follow format in terms of understanding CSE and how it is managed."**

– Health Practitioner (GU Medicine)

Rotherham schools are more actively involved than ever before in protecting children against CSE through more effective training and awareness raising.

In 2012/13 the CSE team worked with 13 of our 16 secondary schools, reaching 911 pupils through awareness workshops. This year that total has increased to 1,955 and all secondary schools in Rotherham are now engaged through their Year 8 curriculum for 2014/2015, with support from Rotherham's Healthy Schools consultant and the education project officer within the CSE team.

In addition to this, preventative work continues with Rotherham's pupil referral units (PRUs), including the Rowan Centre (education provision for young mums) and with special schools and colleges.

This work will ensure that all Year 8 students in Rotherham education settings have a basic awareness of CSE.

Education Welfare links with Social Care have been reviewed and strengthened, particularly around the tracking of missing children and information sharing with the "front door" of social care, the contact and referral team (CART).

*Good practice and resources are being shared with frontline staff to raise awareness of what is available to young people e.g. Zipit App to better respond if they receive inappropriate requests for indecent images.*

Promoting Positive Relationships is another important element of age-appropriate work in schools, delivered through PSHE leads, and focusing on helping young people to understand issues around risk; the imbalance of power in relationships; grooming; sexting, and internet safety – making appropriate use of the resources available from the Child Exploitation and Online Protection service. The ‘This is Abuse’ campaign and the issue of consent has been a particular focus for secondary schools in 2013-14.

Further support is provided through the Integrated Youth Support Service (IYSS), which offers young people the opportunity to access one-to-one support, group work and a wide range of developmental learning opportunities and positive activities. Over the past year they have undertaken informal curriculum sessions on CSE and related issues with 2,326 young people.

To ensure more specialist training reaches all staff who work directly with children and young people, a ‘Train the Trainer’ approach was agreed by the CSE sub-group, which began in *November 2013*. Further support is planned to utilise this group of individuals, and to support their further development.

A specifically-developed training session for school governors and safeguarding leads was delivered during the autumn term.

## **GOOD PRACTICE: RAISING AWARENESS AMONGST YOUNG WOMEN**

Raising awareness of CSE amongst our communities – including vulnerable groups of people who may fall victim to this crime – has been a key strand of our work over the past year. An example of this targeted work includes a residential course which was held at RMBC's Habershon House.

Held over six weeks, more than 30 young women took part in the awareness-raising course. The sessions brought together a number of young women's groups to share experiences of what it is to be a young woman in today's world – including the challenges and potential abuse which they may face, and the many forms that this can take. The group also took part on a self-defence session and talked about personal safety on the street.

Together they were encouraged to discuss the nature of CSE, the forms it could take and to understand the potential devastation this kind of abuse has on people's lives. Feedback from the young women showed they felt that they had benefitted from the programme, and these kinds of sessions will be repeated in the future.

### **Next Steps for 2014-15**

Lead responsibility for the Prevent element of the work programme now rests with the Safeguarding Board's Learning and Improvement sub-group, and the associated training activity is now being incorporated into the LSCB training and development prospectus and framework.

Plans are in place to utilise the National College e-academy CSE e-learning package across the partnership to ensure quality and consistency across organisations. This follows an early demonstration and consultation exercise at the CSE Sub-Group by NWG representatives at the end of 2013. The rollout is now planned for July 2014.

Training specifically tailored to the health community has been developed with specific focus on health provision for this vulnerable group, supporting victims and raising awareness around the recognition of perpetrators.

### **Strategic Objective 3: We will develop a multi-agency media and communication strategy to ensure consistent and accurate messages are shared with all, in support of public awareness and improved confidence in delivery**

#### **Achievements**

All organisations have pledged their support for a South Yorkshire-wide communications strategy, agreed by the South Yorkshire CSE Forum in October 2013. Its aims are to:

- Raise awareness of the public in South Yorkshire and key stakeholders of CSE and the warning signs in order to increase reporting
- Raise the awareness and active support of the public and key stakeholders in the work being done by the partner agencies to protect children and to combat child sexual exploitation
- Aid accurate, informed and balanced reporting of CSE issues
- Encourage accurate, informed and balanced media coverage for the actions being taken by the partner agencies in combating and preventing CSE
- To raise the awareness and understanding of the staff of all partner agencies of the definition of CSE and the work being undertaken to combat and prevent such crime

An important element of this is a sub-regional awareness-raising campaign, with associated billboard advertising, leaflets and flyers, launched at Rotherham's New York Stadium in February 2014, under the banner 'Say Something If You See Something'. The campaign received the high profile endorsement of the Police and Crime Commissioner; the Chief Constable of South Yorkshire; the Leader of Rotherham Borough Council; the Chief Crown Prosecutor for Yorkshire and Humberside; the national NWG Network, and Crimestoppers Chair, who all delivered key messages at the event, which received extensive print and broadcast media coverage.

In spring/early summer 2014, Rotherham agencies participated in a six-week, single issue social media "blast" using Twitter and Facebook as primary channels to reinforce a number of key generic messages during that period. Images from the campaign material were also used, along with the hashtag #ssiyss.

The intended audience was the wider South Yorkshire-based social media community but particularly those in a position to identify CSE indicators with improved awareness. The call to action was for individuals to contact Crimestoppers if they are aware of potential/suspected CSE activity.

Rotherham agencies were instrumental in the development of a range of information leaflets for parents and carers, and also for children and young people. They have been distributed widely, adopted by other areas and remain available for downloading on the RMBC and Safeguarding Board websites.

Targeted awareness raising has been extended into local communities, with presentations to parish councils, Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators and a workshop for school governors. Significant work has also been undertaken to build relationships with social



landlords and other businesses, including owners, managers and staff of local guesthouses and hotels, who were invited to a workshop in October 2013 as part of Operation Makesafe. The positive impact of this work is already being seen, as demonstrated by the following case study.

### **GOOD PRACTICE:**

#### **EDUCATING BUSINESSES AS A KEY COMMUNITY PARTNER**

Businesses and employees form a key part of our 'eyes and ears' network – the example below shows how local people are being trained to see the signs of CSE, and feel empowered to take effective action.

A general manager of a Rotherham hotel attended a CSE awareness-raising session, and shared his learning with all of his staff. One afternoon, an adult male arrived at the venue, booking a room in his name. Paying in cash and without any photo ID, he only gave his bank card details and car registration number. Two young teenage girls then joined the man and accompanied him back to his room – an unusual situation which staff quickly responded to.

Acting on suspicions, the receptionist alerted the duty manager. He went up to the room and made excuses to enter the man's room, concerned for the young people. The girls were present – they said they were OK and that there was nothing wrong. However, within minutes of the manager making this approach, the group left the hotel.

Increasingly worried by the situation, the duty manager alerted police via the 101 line. Officers attended the hotel and secured the room for potential evidence. Further investigation followed, leading to one of the young girls disclosing that she was in a sexual relationship with the man. Police traced the man later that day. He was arrested and bailed, pending further investigation.

Staff have shared their experiences of this case with others in the industry, and highlighted the benefit the awareness-raising training they received in helping them respond to an unusual situation. The venue has also changed its processes as a result of the case – it no longer accepts cash payments for rooms from someone without photo ID.

#### **Next Steps for 2014-15**

Subsequent SY-wide elements of the campaign include a CSE drama competition for secondary schools; a good practice seminar for representatives of the taxi, licensed and hospitality trades, and the development of a wider social media campaign targeting young people.

The Rotherham Voluntary Sector Children, Young People and Families Consortium (CYP&F Consortium) has been commissioned by the Safer Rotherham Partnership to design and run a community awareness raising programme which targets parents, carers and community members. The CYP&F Consortium comprises around 30 of the main voluntary sector providers in Rotherham who have come together to achieve the best possible outcomes for children, young people and families.

In addition greater links with the EU Migrant and Roma strategy group are also being formed and this will continue to strengthen over the next 12 months to build on targeted work which has taken place previously with families and girls from these communities.

Data Summary - PREVENT			
MEASURE	2012/13	2013/14	Direction of Travel since last yr
Numbers attending training and/or awareness raising Events			
Police Supervising Officers trained in CSE	110	-	monitoring has changed to demonstrate agencies attending therefore comparison not possible at this level
Ward Members trained in CSE	45	15	
Senior Managers trained in CSE	19	2	
Staff undertaken multi-agency training on CSE	171	48	
Multi-agency staff trained on the lessons learned from the Child 'S' Serious Case Review	175	37	
Ward Members attended 'one off' Local Government Yorkshire and the Humber conference	36	N/A	
Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators trained	-	24	
Parish Councillors trained	-	11	
RMBC - CYPS Staff	-	48	
RDASH	-	1	
NHS Rotherham / TRFT (Hospital)	-	40	
Schools Staff and Governors	-	71	
Voluntary or independent organisations	-	29	
Health Other	-	4	
RMBC Other	-	2	
Local Business representatives	-	58	
Early Years (children's centres, childminders etc)	-	6	
TOTAL	556	394	↓ 162
Number attending 'Train the Trainer' courses	0	8	↑ 8
CSE Team - Training and awareness of Children and Young People			
Number of under 18 college or 6th Form students engaged in CSE awareness raising	-	1127	↑ 1127
Number of secondary schools engaged in CSE awareness raising with pupils	13	16	↑ 3
Number of other learning settings engaged in CSE awareness raising with pupils	-	17	↑ 17
Number of pupils involved in CSE awareness raising (through the above schools)	911	1955	↑ 1044
IYSS Awareness Raising via Informal Curriculum sessions			
Number of sessions with young people on 'Relationships'	-	1510	new measure for 13/14
Number of sessions with young people on 'Sexual Health'	-	598	
Number of sessions with young people on 'CSE'	-	218	
Youth Start attendances by young people for;			
Sexual Health	-	1181	new measure for 13/14
Sex and Relationship Education	-	1239	

*The contents of the data and performances will continue to be developed and therefore measures may change/expand in the future.*

## **PROTECT**

### **Identifying and safeguarding children who are at risk**

**Strategic Objective 4: We will ensure single and multi-agency processes and procedures are effective, efficient and fit for purpose to support the protection of children and young people from the risks and impact of CSE**

#### **Achievements**

In 2013-14 the Multi Agency CSE Team expanded to include representatives of the voluntary and community sectors and also health services. GROW – a Rotherham agency supporting women to make informed choices – are commissioned to deliver a project called “INVOLVE”, a support package to families and young women up to the age of 25 who are victims of CSE. A Public Health-funded nurse specialist supports young people to identify any health needs whilst developing appropriate pathways within the health community. The team also includes a worker funded by Barnardo’s to provide a specific focus on encouraging access to support for those who are reluctant to engage with statutory services and/or those who do not perceive themselves to be at risk.

#### **GOOD PRACTICE:**

##### **SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO STAY SAFE ONLINE**

Seemingly innocent acts can leave young people vulnerable to abuse. Working with partners we aim to educate young people about the risks of social media, and work together to provide support – and take action – when they are subjected to abuse.

In one example, the Barnardo’s worker within the CSE team worked with a young person who shared inappropriate images of herself to an older male online. He went on to distribute these pictures on social media. The young person reported the images to the police and managed to get them removed. However, the incident had such an impact, she took an overdose and was admitted to hospital. The young person was later referred to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) for support with her mental health concerns.

Initially the girl was reluctant to engage with the Barnardo’s service, reporting that she felt ashamed and embarrassed by the incident. However, the worker persisted in trying to help the young person open up, and slowly developed a relationship, enabling her to share how she was feeling. Using various interactive resources – including DVDs showing CSE scenarios – the worker was able to increase the young person’s awareness and understanding of online risks and safety, explore her knowledge of healthy and unhealthy relationships and complete work around positive sexual health. The resources helped the worker and young person focus on ‘third party’ examples rather than her own experiences to help reduce anxiety and embarrassment about what happened to her directly.

This example shows the value of the multi-agency approach. The Barnardo’s worker regularly liaised with a CAMHS colleague to share any concerns about the young person’s mental health and to ensure that the work being undertaken was considered appropriate given her vulnerability in terms of her mental health following the incident. The work was successfully completed – the young person engaged well, and showed a clear understanding of how to protect herself on and offline; ultimately reducing the risk of further exploitation.

The key tools the CSE Team use to assess and support children and young people have been reviewed over the year and improvements made. These include:-

- Creation of specific multi-agency threshold descriptors for CSE providing a simple and easy to understand reference document which allows external partner agencies to assess their concerns for a child and identify the appropriate course of action based on the Continuum of Need.
- The implementation of a regional CSE risk assessment tool across South Yorkshire which enables a consistent appraisal of children and young people's risk levels and helps professionals identify the right support at the right level for them.
- A new local single assessment framework has been introduced across Rotherham's children's social care teams. This enables workers to have greater flexibility in timescales to ensure the individual needs of the child are properly considered. The new format also promotes the capture of the child or young person's voice and influence within the assessment
- A revised care plan template which is SMARTer and based on the nationally recognised 'Signs of Safety' model
- Regular fortnightly multi-agency 'GAP' (group assessment and progress) meetings to discuss tactics for high risk cases and any cases where there are concerns that the level of risk is increasing. Alongside the CSE Team attendees also include the CISVA (children's independent sexual violence advisor) and a SAFE@LAST worker
- Following the revised national guidelines and policies the local procedure for children missing from home, care and education was refreshed.
- Where thresholds for CSE team interventions are not met but some concerns are still present the young person will be referred to the Integrated Youth Support Service (IYSS) for early intervention and support. IYSS, where appropriate, also provide a step-down and exit strategy support to the CSE Team.

### **GOOD PRACTICE: WORKING TOGETHER TO SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE TO REPORT ABUSE – AND SECURE CONVICTIONS**

Following an allegation of sexual abuse by a family member, a young person came into contact with services through the Sexual Assault Referral Centre, after making a disclosure of rape and sexual assault. The young person had been supported by the Rotherham CSE team before making the disclosure. Support was offered to the family via the Children's Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (CISVA) and a multi-agency care plan was put together in partnership with the CISVA, CSE team and other relevant services.

By working together in this way across agencies a support plan was put in place, which focussed on the needs of the child primarily. The CISVA brokered appropriate specialist support where needed in order to reduce the likelihood of the child and family disengaging with the criminal justice process, as well as increasing their chances of recovery following such trauma.

The Children's Independent Sexual Violence Advisor supported the whole family throughout the course of the daunting legal process, which culminated in a guilty verdict and conviction.

The importance of building relationships within the CSE team has been recognised, and in response to recommendations from recent reviews by Barnardo's and the independent chair of the Safeguarding Board, a two-day team building was held, using Myers Briggs and other established tools to gain a greater understanding of team members and their contributions to the team as a multi-agency partnership.

The way we have recorded CSE contacts and referrals in the last 12 months has changed. Due to improved recording procedures within social care which removed the requirement to record the primary contact reason for the family against **all** siblings rather than just the subject child. This means professionals keep focused on the child who is at risk of CSE and not siblings who may not.

Improvements in practice and recording have also contributed to an increase in social care assessments of individual child's needs from 17 in 2012/13 to 145 in 2013/14.

### Next Steps for 2014-15

Following the recent publication of the multi-agency threshold descriptors referenced earlier, work has begun to clarify pathways and transfer procedures between agencies. These are already in place but need to be formalised and documented in a format which is clear and understood by staff outside the specialist CSE team. This needs to also include key partner agencies such as CAMHS, Know the Score and other health services.

Listening to young people and their families to ensure their voices help shape the support they receive and inform future service improvements remains a priority, and the Young Persons' Participation Strategy for CSE is therefore a key piece of work, which is supported by the Integrated Youth Support Service.

## GOOD PRACTICE: EARLY INTERVENTION TO IDENTIFY POTENTIAL CSE VICTIMS

Youth clinics are delivered in partnership by a range of professionals, including contraception and sexual health nurses and youth support workers. The assessment of potential CSE issues is part of the protocol of responding to each young person attending youth clinics, illustrated in this brief case study.

During discussion with youth workers, a 14 year old - attending youth clinic for the first time - spoke of her new 17 year old boyfriend. She was reluctant to share much information, but the detail she did give alerted workers to the possibility that she was vulnerable to CSE.

This information was shared with the CaSH (Conception and Sexual Health Service) nurse who confirmed similar potential concerns. Although the young woman would share no further relevant information on this visit, the team had gained sufficient trust for the young woman to feel able to return to the youth clinic.

Subsequently she spoke a little more easily and talked of telling mum that she was going shopping with friends, when she was actually meeting her boyfriend. Discussions gave clues to the fact that her boyfriend had a house - she had visited and that several other men had also been present during her visit.

Following a conversation with the young woman around CSE, a referral was made to RMBC's Contact and Referral Team, and the young woman was put in touch with relevant officers qualified to discuss CSE and give advice. The young woman explained that she now intended to end the relationship.

At a later clinic she expressed how helpful the discussion had been when thinking about her relationship, and how her understanding of CSE had increased. She also confirmed that the relationship had ended. The youth clinic team have been able to maintain a relationship with the young woman and consequently continue discreet monitoring of the situation.

Multi-systemic therapy is being piloted using Troubled Families grant funding, and dependent on the outcomes of the pilot, may be commissioned as a responsive intervention in some CSE cases.

The CSE data analyst has a critical role to play in using risk assessments to demonstrate the impact of services on the individual young person, but also to help evaluate the service overall.

Barnardo's is appointing a team manager for their satellite service (four workers based within South Yorkshire CSE teams), with dedicated time to work with partners to develop the service and enhance their existing contribution. Priority will be given to improving access to support for those children and families who are willing to self-refer where they may be reluctant to do so to statutory agencies. Barnardo's will work with partners and young people to agree how to promote accessibility and develop referral pathways for those who do access Barnardo's directly; ensuring effective multi-agency communication about vulnerable children coming forward.

## **Strategic Objective 5: We will ensure that there is effective protection, support and guidance for victims and potential victims of Child Sexual Exploitation**

### **Achievements**

During the year the social care 'front door' process, and support specifically for CSE, has been clarified and strengthened. Any child who is referred to, or already involved with, children's social care services and is at potential risk of CSE undergoes a screening process using the CSE multi-agency threshold descriptors. Where issues are identified the specialised CSE team will then lead on the assessment of new cases or, if the child already has social care involvement and is allocated to another key team, they will advise, and if needed work with, their current social worker to ensure the child receives appropriate support.

The number of social care cases recorded as being led by the CSE team has fallen from 69 at the end of March 2013 to 57 at the end of March 2014. However in addition the team's parenting officer also had an additional 6 cases and the team were supporting 44 children already open to other social care teams (these statistics were not available in 2013).

National research has shown that due to their personal circumstance certain groups of young people are at more risk of CSE than their peers. This includes young offenders; looked after children; those living where there is substance misuse in their household and those from BME communities. These groups are receiving a range of targeted preventative support incorporated within existing support packages or events - for example, LAC reviews, the IYSS support pathway and the new arrival family induction day. Appropriate training in CSE issues and the importance of supporting victims and witnesses of all ages has been provided to police officers in a broad range of roles (eg operation, police community support officers, call handlers).



During court procedures, all child witnesses have the opportunity to access technology and other 'special measures', such as giving evidence from another building rather than be in the Court room, to reduce their anxiety when dealing with unfamiliar environments and legal procedures, and to increase their confidence to when giving evidence.

## CASE STUDY: MELISSA

Melissa is 17 years old. She came into the CSE Team in 2012 following a referral from A & E, where she had been admitted to hospital after a period of serious self-harm where she had cut her neck and arms.

Although the referral did not specifically indicate CSE, it was evident from further contact with the referrer, the use of the indicator checklist and a CSE risk assessment that there were concerns relating to CSE. These included staying overnight with unknown males, alcohol misuse, changes in behaviour at home and at school.

From the basic referral information, Melissa's case was due to be closed to social care as there were no child protection concerns relating to mother's ability to protect. However, the CSE team can work with young people without meeting this specific threshold and could open the case from an early help perspective. The case was allocated to a qualified social worker to begin the process. Through the course of this work, further concerns came to light and a core assessment was considered appropriate.

Melissa then left the family home due to a complete breakdown in her relationship with her mother. During this time, Melissa was supported by the social worker in the CSE team and her mum was supported by the parent worker.

The CSE risks remained for a period of time whilst Melissa lived in semi-independent living accommodation. Throughout 2013 work was done to build family relationships including referrals to Remedi and ongoing requests for support from CAMHS.

At the beginning of 2014 Melissa was able to make a disclosure regarding a relationship with a male she had under the age of 16 years old and requested support from the police officers in the team.

Melissa also spoke to her mum about the relationships and how she had not wanted to be in the family home as she felt pushed out by her younger siblings. As a result of this work and ongoing support Melissa has returned home to the care of her mother and further work continues with them to help rebuild their relationship.

Melissa has received consistent support by the same workers throughout her 18 months with the team and in the next few months she will be introduced to a Grow worker from the Involve Project who will provide ongoing continued support.

In addition this year, through funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner, Victim Support launched a Vulnerable Victims Project to work across South Yorkshire, providing support to the most vulnerable victims and witnesses, with a special emphasis on those affected by CSE.

**"This investigation is the most complex CSE investigation the force has ever undertaken and is attracting large scale national media interest. Can I thank you for the excellent victim support your staff have provided so far, it has made a real difference"**

– Senior Investigating Officer in an email to Victim Support

The project provides emotional and practical support to victims, witnesses and their families and carers. This includes assisting in the preparation of their court appearance via direct face to face contact; pre-trial visits; accompanying those called to give evidence at court, including additional support through the use of special measures and post-court support, including work around CICA (Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority) via community-based victim support teams.

Over the year there were 416 reported incidents of children and young people running away or going missing from home, involving a total of 131 children. This is an increase on 2012/13, when there were 338 reported incidents involving 121 children or young people.

The charity SAFE@LAST are commissioned to deliver return to home interviews with young people to try to identify and address the reason for the run-away incident and to help the young person to understand the potential risks they face. They also provide an emergency bed facility for homeless young people, and an awareness raising service for primary school children through their Crucial Crew project.

Over the year there were 378 referrals to SAFE@LAST for a total of 137 children and young people. Of these, 74 young people engaged in a return interview. In addition a further 105 children and young people have had some involvement with SAFE@LAST project workers; 29 children and young people from Rotherham are known to have contacted the SAFE@LAST helpline/text or webchat. The actual figure is likely to be higher but some young people prefer not to disclose their location.

### **CASE STUDY: LUCY**

Lucy is 13 years old and has been a regular missing person for the last year and was working with a large number of professionals. She has been a victim of sexual exploitation, three sexual assaults, self-harms, has significant behaviour issues and regularly truanted from school.

She has accessed the SAFE@LAST refuge in the past, but then she was taken into care and had no ongoing support from SAFE@LAST due to other support being put in place. A SAFE@LAST project worker did a return interview with Lucy in January after another referral from the police and she said that she would like some 1:1 support.

Lucy accessed the refuge again and used the night's stay to collect her thoughts and feelings and then she returned to her grandparents' care. The project worker has provided Lucy with some craft activities and she has been using these to try and occupy her mind when she is stressed, instead of self harming. Lucy has been using the online diary on the SAFE@LAST website to record her thoughts and feelings.

Support is still ongoing for Lucy and she still has a SAFE@LAST project worker, as she still has periods where she goes missing, as this seems to be the coping mechanism that she has developed to cope with stressful times in her life. She is on a Child Protection plan, so support will continue for as long as she is at risk and is going missing.

### **Next Steps for 2014-15**

The impact of CSE can be far-reaching and long-term, affecting the entire lives of those affected, and resulting in a disproportionate number being involved with statutory services later on in life. In 2014-15 the Rotherham CSE sub-group are now working with partners in health to commission the development and delivery of a pathway of long-term recovery and therapeutic support for victims post abuse and in transition to adulthood.

It is important that children in care placed outside the borough are not disadvantaged or at higher risk of CSE due to these arrangements. A review will be undertaken of CSE support for children on commissioned placements and improvements made where necessary.

A new missing person's protocol for children and young people has now been developed and will be promoted and embedded during 2014/15.

The Police Young People's Partnership Officers (PYPPOs) are embedded within the IYSS locality teams and work closely with them and schools around crime and disorder. Through this work they build up positive relationships with young people – particularly valuable when young people require support around reporting or making statements. The police and IYSS are currently reviewing the role of the PYPPO to further strengthen joint working arrangements.

Data Summary - PROTECT			
Please note that there has been a number of changes in practice and recording procedures over the last 12 months therefore caution should be taken when considering direction of travel from previous years			
MEASURE	2012/13	2013/14	Direction of Travel since last yr
CSE Team			
Cases open to social care CSE Team	69*	57*	↓ 8
Number of the above who are boys	-	4*	-
Cases open to parenting officer linked to CSE	-	6*	Was within overall case numbers
Number of the above who are boys	-	2*	-
Number of other open social care cases the CSE Team also co-work or support	n/a	44*	Not previously recorded
Number of contacts made to social services regarding CSE	437	162	not comparable **
Number of children the above contacts relate to	212	157	↓ 55
Number of contacts leading to a referral	129	89	↓ 40
Number of children the above referrals relate to	119	88	↓ 31
Number of Initial Assessments completed by the CSE Team	13	59	↑ 46
Number of Core Assessments completed by the CSE Team	4	46	↑ 42
Barnardo's			
Number of cases currently open to Barnardo's outreach work (Rotherham only)	n/a	11*	new project worker
New referrals	n/a	15	
Closed cases	n/a	4	
Runaways			
Number of reported incidences of children running away from home or care (U18's)	338	416	↑ 78
Number of children the above runaway incidences relate to (U18's)	121	131	↑ 10
Number of reported incidences of children running away from home or care (Between age 10 & 16)	-	265	New for 13/14
Number of reported incidences of children running away from home or care (16+)	-	55	
SAFE@LAST			
Referrals to SAFE@LAST	-	378	Data not available for 12/13
Number of children in the above referrals to SAFE@LAST	-	137	
Return interviews following 'runaway'	-	74	
SAFE@LAST follow up visits	-	325	
Number of children involved in the above follow up visits	-	105	
GROW			
Young People referred to the project	Projects were not running in 2012/13	17	Data not available for 12/13
Young People engaged in the project		17	
Young People currently receiving support		16*	
Families referred to the project		12	
Families engaged in the project		8	
Families currently receiving support		5*	

\*as at end of March

*\*\*Contacts are now only recorded against the child subject to the concern previously, where this was the greatest concern within the family, the issue would have been recorded against all siblings  
The contents of the data and performances will continue to be developed and therefore measures may change/expand in the future.*

## PURSUE

### Identifying offenders, disrupting and stopping their activity

#### Strategic Objective 6: We will proactively identify and disrupt places of CSE activity

##### Achievements

Significant changes in practice by the police and other agencies has led to major improvements in how services to tackle CSE are delivered.

For example, to support the local CSE sub-group meetings, a monthly tactical assessment is now produced which informs all relevant agencies in relation to risk, intelligence and current operations. This in turn enables these agencies to better respond to current issues from their own perspective.

Rotherham Police have a robust risk assessment process in place, which enables a rapid multi-agency response to any high-risk CSE missing person cases. This has been used to good effect on four occasions over the last year, resulting in the safe recovery of the child and the implementation of preventative action.

This year has also seen an increase in staffing within the CSE team, including the recruitment of two police analysts for South Yorkshire – one of which is based in the Rotherham team.

This has enabled improved analysis of intelligence to help partners further understand the problem profile and support the identification of needs, impact and outcomes for young people in relation to CSE. This will then feed into the RMBC Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA) and the police led Joint Strategic Intelligence Assessment (JSIA).

Police intelligence systems have been reviewed and a new improved framework put in place which is linked to the police briefing systems. These improvements and on-going developments in information and intelligence gathering are enabling Police and the CSE Team to respond quickly and appropriately.

#### GOOD PRACTICE: MULTI-AGENCY RESPONSE

Child A - a 15-year-old Slovakian female - was persistently going missing from home with Slovakian males much older than her. Following one such episode, her risk level was escalated to High and she became a priority for the police and local authority.

Following a week of intense investigation, she was located and the male she was with was arrested for various sexual offences involving a child.

Child A was taken from her family following a safeguarding multi-agency meeting and placed in secure accommodation, pending the formulation of a long-term care plan, involving the family. In this case all lead agencies acted quickly and decisively to eliminate a clear and present risk, arresting the offender and working with the family to ensure the future safety and well-being of the child.

## **Next Steps for 2014-15**

We will continue to review and improve CSE intelligence gathering processes as this is critical for any successful disruption or prosecution activity.

A CSE needs analysis, which will include both victim and perpetrator profiles, is being completed to further inform the work of the partnership and ensure we are effectively targeting resources.

## **Strategic Objective 7: We will ensure perpetrators are brought to justice**

### **Achievements**

Robust investigation in relation to the disclosure of CSE offences, current or historic, has resulted in the successful prosecution of offenders. During 2013-14 police investigations into CSE-related offences have led to 41 interviews under caution, 23 arrests and five successful prosecutions.

In addition to case level work, Rotherham Police were also involved in a number of operations, some of which are still live and some of which are being led by neighbouring authorities. A summary of the operations over the course of 2013-14 is shared below. More detailed information remains confidential.

## Summary of 2013-14 Police CSE related operations

- Operation K ALPHABET – This was a two year investigation regarding the Sexual Exploitation of girls in Rotherham and Sheffield between 2004 and 2011. A 23 year old woman was jailed for 12 years, after being found guilty of a string of crimes against children, including arranging or facilitating child prostitution. And a 68 year old man was sentenced to 14 years after being found guilty of three counts of sexual assault against two girls aged 13 and 14 and a woman. The man was also subject to an earlier unrelated trial in January where he was found guilty of 12 charged relating to sex offences against children.
- Operation Klan –two Doncaster men sentenced to life imprisonment following pleading guilty to 55 child sex offences against 11 boys from across the country, some of which lived in Rotherham.
- Conviction of a local teaching assistant. He pleaded guilty to charges of sexual activity with a child between 2011 and 2012; three counts of making indecent image; two counts of sexual activity with a child while in a position of trust, and two of causing or inciting a child to engage in sexual activity. He received a three-year sentence, must sign the sex offenders' register and is banned from working with children.
- Operation Clover – Ongoing. This is a joint investigation linked to a story in the Times and allegations of abuse from 1994 to 2005.
- Operation Carriage – Annual operation targeting concerns around child safeguarding during the school prom season. Working with legal to identify appropriate action against any businesses of concern.
- Operation Coral – Investigation into CSE-related prostitution. Relatively new operation which is at the intelligence gathering stage.
- Operation Clasp - Intelligence received that girls were being taken to a small local hotel and being exploited. Police held two nights of observations followed by the execution of a warrant. All rooms searched and intelligence was gained. The owner has been interviewed under caution and further enquiries ongoing
- Operation Guardhouse – Child trafficking case involving a Rotherham child. This was led by Nottinghamshire police
- Operation Kolo – This is being led by Sheffield and relates to girls being picked up in Rotherham and taken back to location in Sheffield where there are allegations of sexual activity and assault
- Operation Courteous - A High Risk missing person operation. The girl was found safe and well, with her mother in Rotherham, and is now in out of area authority care.
- Operation Cuttlefish - A High Risk missing person operation. The girl was found safe and well in Ireland and has returned to the Rotherham area. Extradition proceedings are ongoing in relation to the male who took her to Ireland. The file is currently with CPS for consideration of charges, but this may be affected as the victim has indicated that she wishes to withdraw her complaints
- Operation Makesafe – An ongoing national operation in relation to hotels and gives training to hotel staff to help them identify incidents of CSE.

All perpetrators in custody and in the community who are under the supervision of the Probation Services have a robust risk management plan. Probation services are represented on the CSE sub-group.



## Next Steps for 2014-15

Research opportunities are being explored and commissioned to better understand the motivation and behaviour of perpetrators and to identify the common indicators of those considered likely to commit CSE.

Once published the findings, recommendations and lessons learnt from the independent inquiry will inform further practice improvement.

### CASE STUDY: OPERATION K ALPHABET

Operation Alphabet was one of the most complicated and lengthy investigations of its kind for South Yorkshire Police. It focused on the sexual exploitation and abuse of young girls and women from Rotherham and Sheffield and required the force to work closely with other agencies to bring those responsible to justice. The investigation involved:

- 1,067 actions for officers and staff
- 1,473 documents
- 416 reports
- 528 statements were taken
- 286 people were interviewed
- 133 interviews were carried out
- 68 technical downloads (phones, SIM cards, computers etc)
- 660 exhibits submitted to for forensic testing
- 18 officers worked on the investigation at its height

The team included a wide range of officers and experts, including analysts who examined phone records. Two Detective Constables acted as family liaison officers during the course of the investigation and trial and provided constant support to each of the nine victims, providing everything from emotional support to financial advice and helping them with housing or health problems. Through regular contact with the victims, they were able to build relationships with them and earn their trust.

One of the victims said the support provided by the family liaison officers gave her the strength to go through with a long and intensive investigation. She said:

***“They have been great. There have been times where I have not wanted to go through with this. It has been a huge relief to know that when I feel like I can’t do it, I can ring them and talk to them as they know everything I’m going through.*”**

***“The day I had to do the ID parade was the worst. I didn’t think I could go through with it but they talked me through it and supported me and genuinely cared – I couldn’t have done this without them and they gave me the confidence to carry on.”***

The team worked with a wide range of agencies over the course of the investigations, including the Crown Prosecution Service, Social Services, the Probation Service, the NHS, Sheffield City Council and several different police forces. Officers also worked closely with a range of children’s homes, Connections and Turning Point, a national health and social care provider.

In May 2014 the trial concluded with the conviction of a 23-year-old, jailed for 12 years, and a 68-year-old man was sentenced to 14 years.

## Data Summary - PURSUE

Please note that following the appointment of a police analyst the 'Pursue' data set was reviewed, quality assured and completely revised. Robust collection systems specifically for CSE data were not in place prior to this review therefore retrospective data is not available for comparison

MEASURE	2013/14
<u>Current</u> High Risk Children / Young People	6*
<u>Current</u> Open Referrals on CATS	44*
New Referrals on CATS	48
Referrals completed/finalised	105
Arrests	23
Interviews under caution	41
Victim / Witness interviews	16
Forensic submissions	24
<u>Currently</u> on police bail	3*
<u>Currently</u> on remand	1*
Charges with on offence	5
Prosecutions	5
Abduction notices served	17
Joint visits	32
Risk Assessments	37

\*as at end of March

*The contents of the data and performances will continue to be developed and therefore measures may change/expand in the future.*