

Children and Young People's Scrutiny Board

Child Exploitation Update

July 2024

Child Exploitation Team Manager
– Children's Services

Achievements 2023-2024

- ▶ Positive JTAI feedback January 2024
- ▶ Multi Agency partnerships and exploitation forums – continue with high challenge and support – review of MACE completed
- ▶ Regular local exploitation profiles written, being shared and scrutinised in strategic forums.
- ▶ Child Exploitation and Missing Children performance surgeries in place - monthly
- ▶ Cross-border working embedded with good practice being shared
- ▶ Multi Agency Case Audit (MACA) – Child Criminal Exploitation – Summer 2023
- ▶ Progression of NRM/Modern Slavery referral practice
- ▶ Exploitation toolkits from primary schools

Achievements 2024 (so far)

- ▶ TSCP Safeguarding Conference – key note speakers for exploitation
- ▶ Operation Sweep – joint with Home Office County Lines Taskforce (see attached document)
- ▶ Implementation of Philomena Protocol (for missing children) jointly with Devon and Cornwall Police and Devon Children's Services
- ▶ Contextual Safeguarding Working Party
- ▶ Recognition of good practice from National Working Group (NWG)
- ▶ Implementing national learning regarding Child Financial Exploitation/Extortion (CFE)

JTAI comments - 30th January 2024

- ▶ The risk to missing children and the link to exploitation are well understood and the partnership has made significant progress in this complex area of practice.
- ▶ Most contacts and referrals indicate a shared understanding of thresholds by staff across agencies and clearly focus on what information is most valuable. For example, PPNs are submitted once a child goes missing and when they have been found, and research is added to police systems once they have had a return home discussion. This adds richness and detail about the children who go missing and other children and adults who may be at risk or of concern, and about possible 'hot spots'.
- ▶ The risk to missing children and the link to exploitation is well understood using multi-agency panels, and a thorough understanding of wider networks, places and spaces where children may be vulnerable. This is noteworthy progress from the very weak understanding prior to the re-establishment of a Torbay-specific safeguarding partnership in 2020, and demonstrates how a strategic approach to systems, processes, communication and training are driving positive change for children.

MACA - Child Criminal Exploitation Summer 2023 - What is working Well?

- ▶ **Multi-agency working in complex situations**
 - ▶ *Good interaction with children and families*
- ▶ **Embedded local missing and exploitation forums and processes**
- ▶ *Good information sharing and discussion between lead agency representatives*

MACA - Child Criminal Exploitation Summer 2023 - Areas for Development

Child Exploitation toolkit creation, review and sharing

- Review practice guidance
- Multi-agency tool that can be used by any professional
- Sharing toolkits and suitable agency 'markers' on case records
- Review and updating toolkits – performance needs to improve

Partnership information sharing

- Improve agency markers on case records
- Sharing new and updated toolkits
- How are 'return home conversations' shared into relevant agencies?

Partnership working, complexity, and drift

- Support for practitioners to map key agencies and explore alternative planning and support options when the child and/or family are not consenting to Children's Social Care
- Promotion of Professional Difference Policy
- Communicate with other included services
- Improved management oversight across agencies to support complex situations and ensure planning is progressing
- Prevent drift and delay in exploited and missing children being regularly seen – creativity and tenacity required from professionals

MACA - Child Criminal Exploitation Summer 2023 - Work Plan

- ▶ Work plan to address areas of improvement monitored by strategic group – progressing well under review of CYPEG (Children Young Persons Exploitation Group)
- ▶ Continue to learn from national and local good practice – embedded into CYPEG (Children Young Persons Exploitation Group)
- ▶ Children and families feedback and voices to shape future delivery - ongoing
- ▶ MACE review – completed including up to date Information Sharing statement
- ▶ Review toolkit practice guidance and update “How To” guide and FAQ’s – plan to sign off July 2024
- ▶ Tools for direct work / mapping / assisting discussion –resource library being developed
- ▶ Training across the partnership – now back on track

Brief overview of local profile

July 2024

177 children

47 children with HIGH/BEING EXPLOITED toolkits

130 children with MEDIUM vulnerability toolkits

Child Criminal Exploitation – 141 children

Child Sexual Exploitation – 89

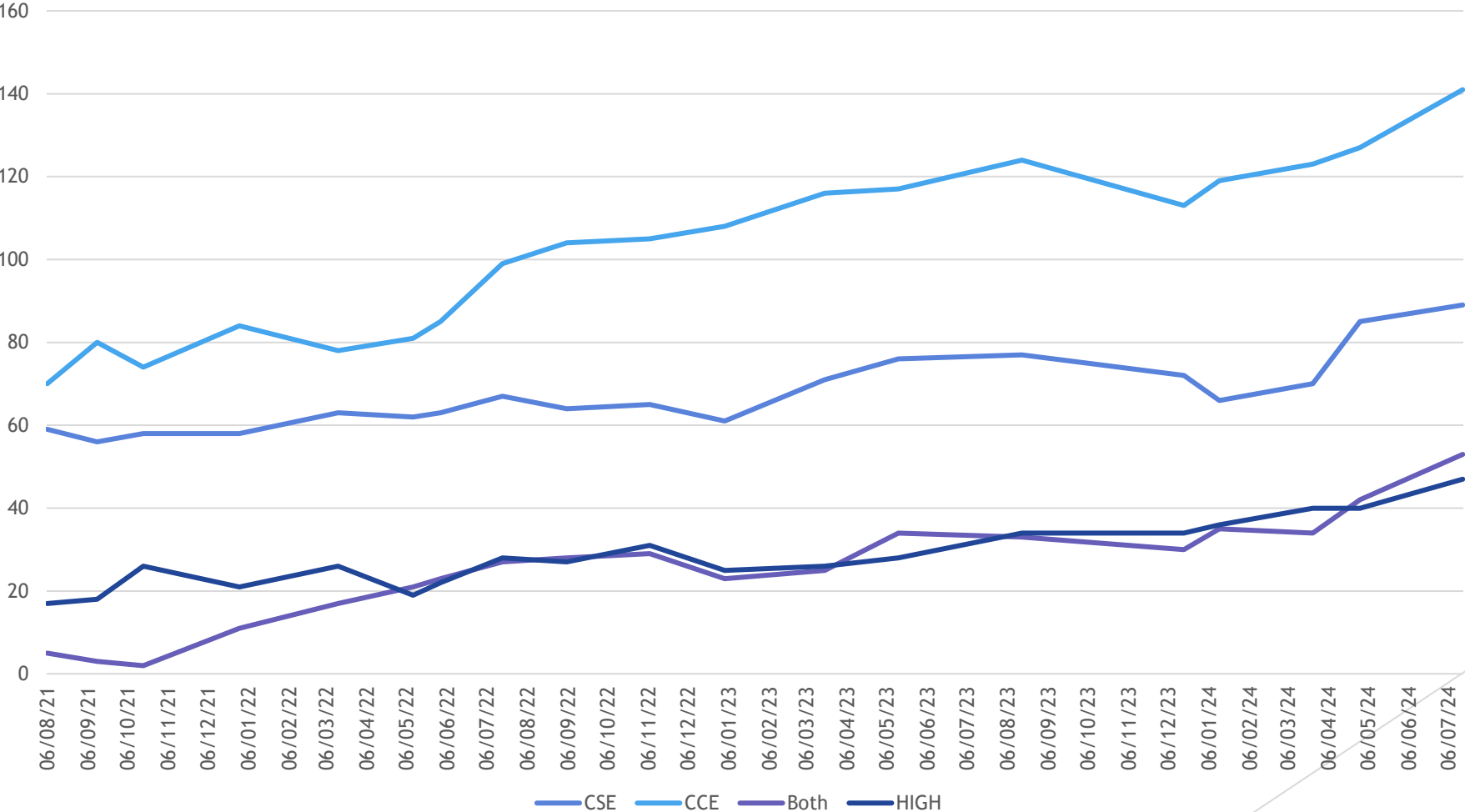
Both CSE and CCE – 53

Males 94

Female 82

Other Gender Identification 1

Identification of Child Exploitation



Challenges

- ▶ Implementing national learning at pace with current pressure on partnership resources – including organised responses to organised crime/tackling organised networks and children who require high levels of safeguarding and resource for protection
- ▶ Educational attendance/engagement, school exclusions and poor mental health of children identified as being exploited – multiple daily challenges for children which increase vulnerability
- ▶ Identification and swift responses to cuckooing and trafficking – confidence and resources (to be tackled in planned training)
- ▶ Addressing domestic abuse, substance misuse and vulnerability of parents
- ▶ Placement sufficiency (quantity and quality) for children needing environments to be safeguarded and recover from significant contextual harm
- ▶ Ever expanding forms of exploitation of children – now including sextortion/AI/crypto-currency

Next steps - Children's Services

- Toolkit performance (being up to date within 3 months) – continue to tackle
- Continue to support, train and enhance skills across all services
- Consider recommendations relating to Liquid Logic records system improvements for missing and child exploitation
- Focused work with Children With Disability Team – reducing vulnerability to exploitation
- Enhance data collection further (CFE, PREVENT, increase characteristic capture of vulnerable children and peer groups) – aim to lead nationally with data capture and understanding
- Ensure all UASC have exploitation toolkits completed to consider vulnerability when being age assessed or accommodated.

Next steps - Torbay Safeguarding Partnership

- Complete MACA Action plan ready for end of 2024 review
- Re-commissioning Child Sexual Exploitation support, Return Home Conversations and Substance Misuse
- Contextual Safeguarding framework - proposed framework by end February 2025 followed by launch and training across the TSCP
- Consider improvements to children with SEND and disabilities re: identification and response to child exploitation and missing episodes
- Continue cross border working and practice sharing with Peninsula authorities
- Extend relationships with safeguarding partnerships nationally and internationally
- Continue supportive links with National Working Group, national and local expert organisations

Thank you for your time

▶ Any questions/comments??