

Wakefield
Safeguarding Children
Partnership

**Multi-Agency Child Exploitation and Contextual
Safeguarding Strategy**

2021/22

Foreword:

We are pleased to present our Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP) Child Exploitation Strategy for the forthcoming year, 2021/22.

Child Exploitation is a form of child abuse that impacts on the lives of children, young people, their families and the communities of Wakefield. We know from the work we do with children and families that the impact of this form of abuse can be long lasting and destructive to children achieving a happy, healthy and safe childhood.

It is important that the work we do has a strong focus on preventing harm and that we listen to children, families and communities about how we can equip them with the knowledge of the early signs of all forms of child exploitation; how to seek help; what support is available and what we can and do to keep children safe.

It is equally important that those who perpetrate abuse are quickly identified and dealt with and that those who seek to abuse and cause harm to children and young people understand the impact their actions cause and the consequences of persisting or engaging in this form of child abuse.

This strategy builds upon the work already established to tackle child exploitation across Wakefield through our WSCP Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) arrangements. As such, this strategy outlines our continued commitment to a co-ordinated partnership approach to tackle all forms of child exploitation across Wakefield and ensure that the right resources are well trained, skilled and in place to drive the activity outlined within the document.

All WSCP partners have agreed to share ownership of and take responsibility for the effectiveness of its outcomes. An Action Plan to deliver the key target areas for each of the priorities is included and through our existing Executive and Strategic Groups we will monitor the progress of the actions.



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Overview:

The Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) and Contextual Safeguarding Strategy recognises that children and young people can be at risk of, or subjected to harm through exploitation and abuse from adults and/or other peers outside of their family network. When a child moves through early childhood into adolescence, they invariably become involved in social networks, relationships and environments outside of their school and home setting. The majority of children in Wakefield make this transition in a safe and fulfilling way. However, all children and young people can encounter individuals who exploit vulnerability and environments which place them at risk of exploitation.

Often parents and carers are disempowered by the perpetrators of this form of abuse who will try to undermine the relationship between the parent or carer and their child to further the control they have over that child. For this reason, in terms of the identification, responding to and management of MACE and Contextual Safeguarding risks, parents are often part of the solution and this strategy outlines the need for full engagement with parents and/or carers by professionals.

Throughout all the work of Wakefield Safeguarding Partnership, the voice of the child should be effectively represented in accordance with the guidance set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) (WTSC18) as outlined below:

'Children may be vulnerable to neglect and abuse or exploitation from within their family and from individuals they come across in their day-to-day lives. These threats can take a variety of different forms, including: sexual, physical and emotional abuse; neglect; exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups; trafficking; online abuse; sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation. Whatever the form of abuse or neglect, practitioners should put the needs of children first when determining what action to take' (WTSC18; 9)

By the very nature of vulnerability and exploitation the different themes of exploitation are invariably intertwined. This strategy considers vulnerability and contextual safeguarding from a holistic and 'whole system' perspective. The risks and vulnerabilities of the child are seen as a complete picture so their needs can be addressed in a way that improves their long term outcomes, as opposed to reducing risk in one particular area of vulnerability.

Extra-familial exploitation and abuse does not discriminate and impacts across culture, age, gender or geography (both offline or online) and as such incorporates a number of areas of criminality. Exploitation also often occurs without the child's immediate recognition and/or with the child believing that they are in control of the situation and can therefore be difficult to identify. Further, the nature of life in the 21st Century is that online and offline domains are no longer two distinct and separate areas. The relationship between the two is now fluid and interchangeable and as such we need to be able to recognise and respond to this effectively.

This MACE and Contextual Safeguarding strategy aims to build on existing structures in place across Wakefield to bring together expertise, knowledge and skills to deliver services in a co-ordinated way across the following strands of exploitation:

- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) including County Lines
- Children Missing from Home (MFH)
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)
- Modern Day Slavery and Human Trafficking (MSHT)
- Online Child Exploitation
- Wider Contextual Safeguarding

It is of note that this list is not exhaustive and that the WSCP MACE and Contextual Safeguarding strategy will evolve over time to address the changing dynamics of exploitation and address future and emerging threats and risks.

Vision:

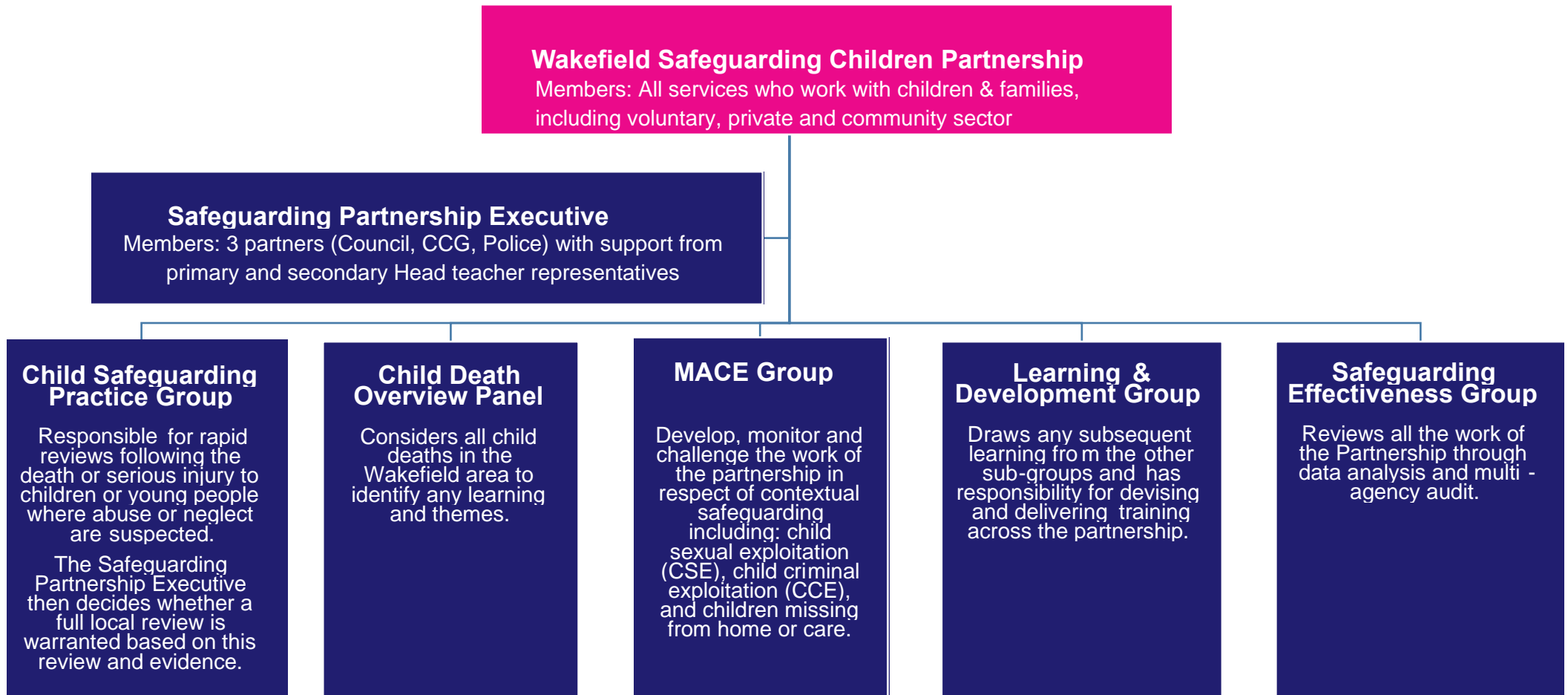
WSCP's vision for our MACE and Contextual Safeguarding arrangements is that:

“All children in Wakefield who are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse are effectively identified and protected by services which are delivered in a co-ordinated and informed way that consistently responds to the risks and improves the outcomes for our children, their families and the wider community”.

In order to achieve this, we have set out four clear priorities over the next three years. It requires a clear coordinated action plan to be delivered across our WSCP and is driven forward within our local communities. It involves looking at Child Exploitation and Contextual Safeguarding from a 'whole system' approach and focuses on creating strong partnerships that can deliver creative problem solving action plans to create safe spaces for the children and young people of Wakefield both online and in the real world.

Partnership Structure:

The Multi-Agency Child Exploitation and Contextual Safeguarding strategy sits within our wider Safeguarding Children Partnership arrangements. The strategic arrangements are overseen by our MACE Sub-Group that reports into the WSCP Executive. Underneath the Sub-Group, we have a Vulnerable to Exploitation Operational group, Child Vulnerable to Exploitation (CVE) Victim and Perpetrator Risk Assessment Meetings (RAM) that operate across the district of Wakefield.



MACE Sub-Group

- Chair: Head of Safeguarding, Quality & Learning, WMDC CSC & Detective Chief Inspector, WYP
- Membership:
 - CCG Designated Nurse
 - Safeguarding & Quality Service Manager
 - WSCP Manager
 - Liaison & Diversion Service Manager
 - Youth Service Team Manager
 - Performance & Business Intelligence Manager
 - Turning Point Operations Manager
 - Housing Needs Service Manager
 - Young Lives Consortium (YLC)
 - CVE Missing Team Manager
 - WYP Detective Sergeant
 - YJS Team Manager
 - Service Manager for Alternative Provision
 - WYCA Safeguarding Advisor
 - Parents Against Child Exploitation (PACE)
 - Wakefield District Housing Manager
 - WDMC Licensing Manager
 - School Representative

Vulnerable to Exploitation Group

- Chair: YJS Team Manager
- Membership: YJS Police Officer, YJS Intensive Supervision and Resettlement Team: Case manager, Pupil Referral Units: Head of Safeguarding, Next Generation (Lightwaves): Manager / Lead worker, Children in Care: Lead Nurse, Missing and CVE Team: Team manager and Case manager, Families Achieving Change (FAC) Team: Social worker and family worker, Early Help: Co-ordinator, Early Help: Case manager / Practitioner, Early Help: Social Worker, Young Lives Consortium: Coordinator, Turning Point: Case Worker, Liaison & Diversion: Coordinator, Liaison & Diversion: Police officer, Wakefield Police, Early Action Team: Police Sergeant, Children's Social Care: Senior Social Worker, Wakefield Youth Work Team: Youth and Community Development Worker, Wakefield Youth Work Team: Project Worker, Parents against Child Exploitation (PACE): Children and Families Worker, WDH, Education Services: Lead Safeguarding Adviser

CVE - Victim RAM

- Chair: Social Care manager Michelle Leadbeater
- Membership: Social care, Police, Liason and Diversion, Spectrum Health, Youth Offending Team, CAMHS, PACE worker, Education and 0-19 health service for Children in Care.

CVE - Perpetrator RAM

- Chair: Detective Inspector Paul Oldham
- Membership: Police, Social Care, Probation, WDH, WYP Civil Case Officer, Liason and Diversion, MAPPA, Wakefield Counsel legal services and Wakefield licensing.

Strategic Priorities:

This MACE and Contextual Safeguarding strategy has identified four key priorities across our partnership. These four priorities will be underpinned by a detailed action plan that holds partners to account for their plans to fulfil the actions set out across our priority areas.

1. Identification and coordination

Embedding a culture within organisations that recognise the root cause of CVE, the signs and risk indicators through coordination, established pathways and the governance structure

2. Protect & Support

Protecting children and young people who are at risk of exploitation providing targeted support

3. Disrupt through investigation and prosecution

Services and communities work together to prevent children & young people being exploited with a particular focus on partnership investigation leading to effective disruption and prosecution

1. Identification and coordination

Embedding a culture within organisations that recognise the root cause of CVE, the signs and risk indicators through coordination, established pathways and the governance structure

No	Action	Oversight	Timescale	RAG Rating
1	Partners and communities to understand the signs, symptoms and locations of child exploitation and raise concerns early, alerting statutory services where necessary.	MACE Sub Group	March 2022	
2	All partners recognise the diversity of all communities in Wakefield and ensure services are responsive to the needs of different communities.	MACE Sub Group	March 2022	
3	Potential perpetrators of child exploitation are identified early in a range of settings and shared in a timely and appropriate manner.	MACE Sub Group	March 2022	

2. Protecting children and young people who are at risk of exploitation providing targeted support

No	Action	Oversight	Timescale	RAG Rating
1	Appropriate services commissioned to support children who have experienced child exploitation to span across child and adult services.	MACE Sub Group	May 2022	

2	Our partners and communities effectively respond to children who go missing and or vulnerable to exploitation.	MACE Sub Group	March 2022	
3	Our partners and communities seek to divert young people into positive activities.	CVE Victim RAM	March 2022	

3. Disrupt through investigation and prosecution

Services and communities work together to prevent children & young people being exploited with a particular focus on partnership investigation leading to effective disruption and prosecution

No	Action	Oversight	Timescale	RAG Rating
1	Our partners and communities understand their unique contribution to the prevention and disruption of child exploitation	MACE Sub Group	March 2022	
2	Partners have an effective data set of children exploited and perpetrators of exploitation to drive effective disruption activity.	MACE Sub Group / Perpetrator RAM	March 2022	
3	Appropriate active use of civil and criminal legislation to prosecute offenders.	MACE Sub Group / Perpetrator RAM	March 2022	