

Scotland's National Action Plan to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation

Ministerial Foreword



Aileen Campbell

The safety and wellbeing of all children and young people is a key priority for the Scottish Government. Child Sexual Exploitation is an abhorrent crime and can have a devastating impact on its victims and their families. We are committed to taking forward any appropriate action that can help prevent abuse arising; better support victims and enable law enforcement agencies to pursue and prosecute those who would prey on our children and young people.

Of course, the vast majority of children in Scotland live safe, healthy and happy lives, and our world renowned children's hearings systems and child centred approach are key to delivering this.

Child Sexual Exploitation is as much a reality here in Scotland as it is around the world – a reality that we, as a nation, must tackle collectively. All children and young people have the right to be cared for and protected from harm, and to grow up in a safe environment where their rights and needs are respected.

I am therefore pleased to publish 'Scotland's National Action Plan to Tackle Child Sexual Exploitation'. It represents a comprehensive and ambitious strategy for addressing this complex challenge. It builds on work that has been happening across Scotland, bringing together examples of local best practice with national strategy, and will help us ensure that we are taking the necessary steps to put our commitment to protecting all our young people into action.

Importantly, this is **Scotland's** plan. The protection of children's wellbeing is the responsibility of all those in society, including the Scottish Government, Police Scotland, local authorities, third sector organisations, communities and families; Similarly, the actions in this plan belong to a wide range of organisations. Scotland's children and young people deserve no less than a full and collective commitment to delivering this Action Plan.

This programme of action is a milestone in our conversation, not a conclusion. This government is absolutely committed to protecting children and young people's wellbeing and has already implemented a range of work with partners to ensure we remain vigilant to abuse. We will continue to work together to ensure that the National Action Plan is implemented and further advances the progress already made.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those who worked in partnership with the Scottish Government to develop the plan. Their commitment and expertise have proven invaluable to its development – and will be essential to its success.

Aileen Campbell

Scotland's National Action Plan to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation

Historical context and principles underpinning it.

The Scottish Government has been working in partnership across agencies to develop a plan to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation that is innovative, challenging and ambitious in scope. One of the main aims of Scotland's National Action Plan is to support culture change throughout children's services agencies, and society at large, to ensure that Child Sexual Exploitation is recognised as an issue that needs to be properly tackled and addressed.

Child Sexual Exploitation is an abhorrent crime. It is a form of child sexual abuse, and it must be understood in that context. Child Sexual Exploitation cannot be considered in isolation. Many of the young people who become victims have been vulnerable and at risk from an early age, and remain vulnerable to other forms of abuse and neglect. While Child Sexual Exploitation is a complex issue, our approach to addressing it should have the same principles – children and young people are at the centre of everything we do, and only by continuing to work in partnership can we best protect them.

And these principles are reflected at the core of the plan, in an infrastructure in which the principles of Getting it Right for Every Child – of putting the child at the centre, and multi-agency partnership working – are recognised as key to delivering best practice. Scotland's National Action Plan will allow us to identify and consolidate the best practice already in operation, and build on it.

This Action Plan marks a significant milestone in the continuing fight against Child Sexual Exploitation, but we must recognise that it represents neither the beginning or the conclusion of efforts in Scotland. This Action Plan represents a long-term vision with a long-term strategy. Scotland's children and young people deserve no less than a plan that is considered, thoughtful and based on solid evidence. It also gives them a central role in influencing the plan moving forward.

Progress toward combating Child Sexual Exploitation has been made at both local and national level across Scotland for some time. A change within the 2014 refresh of the National Child Protection Guidance saw clear and specific reference to Child Sexual Exploitation to provide support to front line practitioners using GIRFEC principles. We also published Scotland's first comprehensive national child protection risk assessment framework, which helps practitioners in their task of assessing those children at risk. We have also delivered a national learning and development framework for frontline practitioners to fill any gaps in their knowledge, and to achieve the high standards of service Scotland's children and young people can expect to receive wherever they live in Scotland. This is particularly important for tackling historically overlooked areas such as Child Sexual Exploitation.

In January 2013, Aileen Campbell, Minister for Children and Young People, responded to the Public Petitions Committee inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Scotland, and announced the development of a programme of action to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation. Ms Campbell pledged four specific strands:

- to pilot improved identification of potential victims, many of whom do not recognise themselves as victims of abuse;
- to improve the way child sexual exploitation is identified by Scotland's new single police force to make this form of abuse more visible
- to encourage victims to come forward through a new National Confidential Forum, providing a safe space where victims can share their experiences, and
- the establishment of a new expert group to capture the lessons of sexual exploitation cases elsewhere in the UK, harnessing the expertise of the public and third sector, and make recommendations to the Scottish Government for further action and research.

Scotland's first national Ministerial Working Group on Child Sexual Exploitation was established as a consequence. Taking its membership from a range of expert partners from across the public and third sector, it was specifically tasked to examine the issue of Child Sexual Exploitation and to develop a National Action Plan by examining the recommendations from the Public Petitions Committee, alongside their own expertise in child protection.

Significantly, the plan reflects the strength of GIRFEC in Scotland's Child Protection approach. The protection of our children and young people is the responsibility of us all. And key to this Action Plan is the imperative for strong, effective partnerships and joint working. The approach of joint working reflects the principle that the duty to keep Scotland's children safe is one that is shared across society – in communities, families, government, social care and the justice system, and the plan was co-produced in partnership with these organisations.

Scotland's National Action Plan

Scotland's National Action Plan has been developed with specific areas of focus for tackling Child Sexual Exploitation:

- Prevention of abuse (with specific measures for dealing with particularly vulnerable children) ;
- Disruption and prosecution of offenders through legislation; and
- Supporting children and young people affected by CSE.

Prevention of abuse (with specific measures for dealing with particularly vulnerable children)

Child Sexual Exploitation poses a risk to all of our children and young people we want to stop any instance of Child Sexual Exploitation happening in the first place. A significant proportion of the plan contains multi agency actions that can be defined as preventative.

In order to prevent Child Sexual Exploitation as effectively as we can, we must do our best to understand as much about it as possible; the scale, nature, locus, victims and perpetrators of it. It is imperative that we have a solid evidence base, and that the Action Plan continues to develop on the basis of that evidence. And the evidence must relate to both victims and perpetrators of Child Sexual Exploitation.

The full scope and scale of Child Sexual Exploitation in Scotland remains unknown. We know that it will be difficult to ever know accurately and in full what might be taking place. We also know that victims of sexual exploitation are not always easy to identify as in some cases they may not always see themselves as victims. For that reason, a fundamental element of the plan is to promote the use of data information gathering tools. A national rollout of a data monitoring tool for local authorities is will take place over the coming months. This toolkit is designed to enable local areas to gain a better understanding of the scale and nature of child sexual exploitation in their areas - thereby improving data on local prevalence. The self-evaluation tool helps local areas to determine how well they can respond to child sexual exploitation in terms of support and prevention.

And the Action Plan reminds us that we must also look at the learning development that is available to practitioners at local level. It is essential that those people who work with children and young people, from teachers and social workers to medical staff, are properly supported and developed to recognise Child Sexual Exploitation, and those children who may be at increased risk from it. It is also important to recognise and build on the often effective work that has taken place across Scotland in recent years in supporting practitioners in that aim, but there is more that can be done. The Action Plan aims to ensure that scrutiny is applied to how Child Sexual Exploitation services are delivered, as well as how staff are supported in that delivery. It will allow us to identify and consolidate best practice already in operation, and build on it.

All children are vulnerable to Child Sexual Exploitation, but some are more so, such as those who are looked after and accommodated. That is why we have developed specific provision for more vulnerable children. But we must also recognise that a genuine and deep seated cultural change needs to happen in order to recognise that Child Sexual Exploitation poses a threat to all of our children and young people, and we must develop our response to it accordingly.

Disruption and prosecution of offenders through legislation.

The other significant element of the Action Plan is the disruption and prosecution of offenders through the criminal justice system. We must balance our preventative strategy and support for victims of Child Sexual Exploitation with that of a comprehensive and robust response to perpetrators of it. Police Scotland are undertaking a wide range of activity that will support this, including the recent announcement of the National Child Abuse Investigation Unit, which will maximise the impact of the range of specialist skills and expertise that the police have in protecting children across Scotland and further improve the co-ordination and intelligence gathering around Child Sexual Exploitation. .

Scotland's National Action Plan also provides a framework within which Police Scotland will look at their data collection and management on Child Sexual Exploitation. This will complement the data collection toolkit being rolled out across local authorities, and enhances our understanding of the picture of Child Sexual Exploitation in Scotland.

And there are opportunities to ensure that Child Sexual Exploitation is fully considered in developing legislation such as the Human Trafficking Bill, and to review the provision of Civil Preventative orders related to sexual offences to ensure their effectiveness. The National Action Plan contains measures to help ensure that stringent legal steps can be taken against those who would commit such offences.

Supporting children and young people affected by CSE.

The Scottish Government will continue to work with statutory and Third Sector agencies to improve services for children affected by CSE. Real action on the ground and at local level is what is required to support victims.

Ministers will be looking to the new local Children's Services Plans to be developed under Part 3 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, to ensure that local services work together better to plan and monitor the delivery of services to tackle prevention, early intervention and support for potential and actual victims of child sexual exploitation, not least through statutory guidance.

Future Developments

Timescales for achieving actions on the Action Plan differ. A number have already been successfully achieved, while some have a longer timeframe attached. Others require more focused consideration by professionals to identify a best practice approach. It is anticipated that the Action Plan will continue to develop as different areas of focus are identified.

A Child Sexual Exploitation Sub-Group of the Scottish Child Protection Committee Chairs Forum was reconvened with refreshed membership in August 2014 and comprises front-line practitioners and academics from a number of disciplines. The remit of the group is to draw from their combined expertise and take forward a number of discrete pieces of work which require further consideration. They will also develop protocols to be used as best practice throughout local authorities and ensure consistency in the delivery of Child Sexual Exploitation services. The plan will build on the partnership working already happening, and

explore further involvement of third sector organisations with specialist knowledge with statutory agencies such as Police Scotland.

Clearly all of us working to keep children safe in Scotland are also considering the lessons to be learned from Professor Jay's report into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham, to ensure child protection measures are as robust and responsive as they can be.

This plan should not be considered a panacea or ultimate solution to tackling Child Sexual Exploitation, but as part of a larger process that involves continuing partnership working with local authorities, third sector organisations, Police Scotland, Health, Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service and Education at both senior and frontline practitioner level. These conversations will continue and Scotland's response to Child Sexual Exploitation will advance. The problem is far too important for us to take anything other than a considered, thorough and wide ranging approach.

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION ACTION PLAN

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT ACTIONS

PURPOSE	ACTION	STATUS
1. Prevention – General		
Raise the profile of CSE at a National Level among practitioners and staff working with children and young people.	1. Part of the refresh of the national child protection guidance: addition of new section setting out distinctive indicators of CSE and the need for a local protocol to govern response	Complete: National Guidance published in May 2014
	2. Ensure that under the new children's services planning duty of Part 3 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, local services work together better to plan and monitor the delivery of services to tackle prevention, early intervention and support for potential and actual victims of child sexual exploitation, not least through statutory guidance	On-going - GIRFEC guidance to be published for consultation early 2015, and Children's Services planning guidance also subject to consultation in 2015. Deadline August 2015
Improve information about victims of CSE and perpetrators for profiling purposes.	1. Data Monitoring tool created by University of Bedfordshire to be piloted in Forth Valley for use in the Scottish context to be rolled out at a National Level.	On-going - Data Monitoring tool piloted in Forth Valley to be rolled out at the National level as best practice – Deadline December 2014
Increase frontline practitioner understanding of CSE in a multiagency contact.	2. Establish a Health Short Life Working Group to develop guidance for medical practitioners on CSE	On-going – First meeting of working group to be held by Spring 2015.
Reviewing guidance on relationships, sexual health and parenthood in schools in the context of CSE	1. Ensuring that CSE is part of current revision of sexual health/wellbeing guidance for schools	Complete – guidance to be issued by early 2015
	2. The Scottish Government will work with partners and Education Scotland to develop materials on CSE that can be used in schools and services and signpost where these can be accessed.	On-going: Curricular and other resources on CSE signposted to schools for use in RSHP Education and other relevant curricular areas

Establishing a link between internet safety and CSE.	1. Research to map the current provision of information resources and innovative practice at local authority level	Complete – SG have undertaken a mapping process that has been used to inform the Internet Safety stakeholder groups.
	2. .Share findings from above with all local authorities to support the development of robust internet safety and inclusion policies	On-going _– Deadline at August 2015
	3. Peer education network to be scoped for children and young people about internet safety which will have a crossover with CSE.	On-going – Deadline at August 2015
	4. .Explore options for practitioner training to include specific element on online safety and links to Child Sexual Exploitation.	On-going – Deadline at August 2015
Better understanding of the needs of children and young people who may be vulnerable to CSE.	1. A children and young people steering group to be set up in relation to CSE, where they will advise on what they think that the issues are, and how they want further support to be delivered.	On-going – first meeting to be held by May 2015
Ensuring that the Human Trafficking Bill takes full appropriate account of CSE in the context of trafficking	1. Better integrated and clearer legislation around trafficking as an offence	On-going – engagement and consultation with organisations who work with victims of child trafficking has taken place and will continue through the Bill’s passage through Parliament.
	2. Improved prosecution of trafficking and deterrence of trafficking as a crime, as well as support for victims	On-going – engagement and consultation with organisations who work with victims of child trafficking has taken place and will continue through the Bill’s passage through Parliament.
Reviewing provision of Civil Preventative orders related to sexual offences in the context of changes in England and Wales	1. Review current civil preventative orders in Scotland to identify opportunities to streamline and strengthen these measures in the context of changes in England and Wales	On-going The Scottish Government and key stakeholders are considering how the current orders might be rationalised, strengthened, and used in a more comprehensive way.

Reviewing the use of Risk of Sexual Harm Orders (RSHOs) to provide a more effective application of the provisions	1. Scope and identify opportunities to develop and ensure the effective use of RSHOs in Scotland	On-going – The Scottish Government and key stakeholders are currently looking at the utility and effectiveness of RSHOs.
	2. Further develop guidance on the use of RSHOs	On-going – The Scottish Government and key stakeholders are currently considering how the guidance on RSHOs could be further developed to ensure their effective use.
Extending the effect of relevant extra-terrestrial offences to cover the rest of the UK, so as to have a consistent, effective approach to extra-territoriality applying across the UK	1. Exploring scope and opportunities to ensure that extra-territoriality is relevantly covered by legislation	On-going – The Scottish Government has raised this matter with the UK Government as it potentially affects all jurisdictions across the UK.
2. Prevention - Targeted – Looked After Children		
Training and guidance for residential staff about CSE and their responsibilities as residential staff workers	1. Exploring the potential for CSE to be a specific module on the Level 9 Degree programme for residential staff that is in development	On-going - Deadline – March 2015
	2. CPD for current residential staff workers on CSE	On-going - Deadline – March 2015
	3. Training and guidance for foster carers about CSE	On-going - Deadline – March 2015
3. CSE – Scrutiny and Challenge		
Procedures, protocols, action plans will be reviewed and evaluated to ensure their effectiveness.	1. The National Action Plan will be reviewed annually for its effectiveness and developed as appropriate.	On-going – Review by November 2015
	2. The views of the Children’s and Young Person Steering Group will be sought and will inform Scottish Government policy on CSE.	On-going – First meeting of steering group to be held by Spring 2015.

POLICE SCOTLAND ACTIONS

PURPOSE	ACTION	STATUS
1. Prevention – General		
Develop a tiered training strategy to raise awareness of CSE and better equip individuals dealing with CSE enquiries.	1. Communication strategy to be developed for and with Police Scotland to deliver key messages to Police Scotland staff to increase awareness of CSE.	<u>On-going</u>
Develop robust investigative strategies to disrupt perpetrator activity and better protect children and young people.	1. Police Scotland introduced the National Online Child Abuse Prevention (NOCAP) approach, where a dedicated Internet Investigations Unit proactively polices the internet to identify perpetrators of CSA and CSE. 2. Developing a National Child Abuse Investigation Unit.	<u>On-going</u>
To gain a better understanding of the extent of CSE in Scotland through the use of effective data collection and intelligence management tools	1. Police Scotland have designed and implemented a single national database (Interim Vulnerable Person's Database) which has a specific CSE marker embedded to allow for accurate identification of individuals at risk	Complete

MULTI AGENCY ACTIONS

(Actions to be undertaken by a range of services including local authorities, Child Protection Committees, third sector organisations etc.)

PURPOSE	ACTION	STATUS
1. Prevention – General		
Better understanding of what is happening at a local level in CSE training and services for victims, so that best practice and gaps in service provision can be identified, and protocols can be created	1. Gathering of information about CSE services and training at a local level.	Complete
	2. Use of this information to identify any local level skills gaps.	On-going - National Sub-Group examining report – Deadline August 2015
	3. Develop local protocols that can be used as best practice	On-going – Deadline August 2015
	4. Information on CSE – guidance, toolkits and local protocols to be hosted on WithScotland website	On-going – Deadline August 2015
To develop a more complete understanding of the relationship between CSA and CSE	1. A full and complete definition of CSE and its relationship to Child Sexual Abuse to be determined in line with international best practice.	On-going – Barnardo’s are currently undertaking academic research in this area and this will inform the National Sub-Group on CSE’s definition. Deadline May 2015
Guidance for night time economy staff of CSE indicators and child protection procedures – particularly in ‘hot-spot’ areas.	1. Guidance for taxi drivers, hotel workers etc. who come into first hand contact with children and young people, so that they can identify CSE and take appropriate steps	On-going – Deadline August 2015
Increase frontline practitioner understanding of CSE in a multiagency context	1. Barnardo’s will provide training for trainers on CSE in three local authorities as a pilot project with a view to rolling it out at a national level.	On-going – Training is due to begin November 2014.
	2. WithScotland to create a seminar for frontline practitioners about CSE and the lessons that we can learn from Rotherham.	Complete – Seminar took place in November 2014.

2. Prevention - Targeted – Looked After Children		
National Missing Persons Strategy to be developed by the Scottish Government in partnership with Police Scotland, and other stakeholders which will highlight the connection between going missing and the vulnerability to CSE, and identify appropriate actions.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An action plan will be developed and agreed through National Missing Persons Steering Group. 1. Police Scotland are developing a national Partnership Agreement with local authorities that will outline the ways in which they will work together to minimise the harm which looked after and accommodated children and young people may experience if they go missing. 	On-going - Action plan to be developed by Summer 2015.
3. Disruption and prosecution of perpetrators through legislation		
Ensure that perpetrators of CSE are prosecuted where there is sufficient evidence to do so, and that the victims of CSE receive the appropriate protections in court.	1. Work with Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service to review support in place for victims of CSE within the Scottish Courts; identify barriers to prosecution of CSE and take steps to overcome them.	On-going – Review annually with Ministerial Working Group.
	2. Ensure that improvements made by the Victims and Witnesses (Scotland) Act 2014 to assist vulnerable witnesses give evidence effectively are fully implemented	On-going – Action to be reviewed annually following on from implementation.
4. Disruption of perpetrators		
Ensure that Scotland is a hostile place for perpetrators of CSE	1. Explore with multi-agency partners the options for a public awareness campaign to increase awareness of CSE among the general public.	On-going – March 2015
5. Supporting children and young people affected by CSE		
Children affected by CSE will be supported across Scotland.	1. The Scottish Government will continue to work with statutory and Third Sector agencies to improve services for children affected by CSE.	On-going – Review annually with Ministerial Working Group

CARE INSPECTORATE ACTIONS

PURPOSE	ACTION	STATUS
1. Prevention – General		
Provide scrutiny of how CSE services are delivered at a local level.	1. CSE is included as theme in joint children’s services inspection for 2014-15, and they will also report on common findings of CSE.	Complete - inspections under the new regime are already under way.