



SHEFFIELD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION SERVICES

Annual Report

April 2018 – March 2019

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Introduction

Sheffield Sexual Exploitation Service (SSES) is a co-located Multi-Agency Service responsible for tackling Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in Sheffield. The service works with children and young people experiencing sexual exploitation who are age 18 and under, with some older young adults dependent on need.

Over the past year the service has continued to grow and work more holistically to support children and young people who are being exploited and to prevent young people from being exploited where they are presenting with CSE risk factors. Whilst we are making headway in relation to early identification of CSE, it remains everybody's responsibility to ensure that they understand the signs of child sexual abuse and to be aware of the referral pathways to safeguard these children and young people, many of whom are vulnerable and have a range of complexities.

This report highlights the work SSES has undertaken during 2018/19 along with the profile data of the service users who accessed the service during that time, in order for us to better understand CSE need and prevalence in Sheffield. The service works with a range of statutory and independent organisations, and Sheffield Futures would like to thank the range of partners we work with who make this robust and multi-agency way of working possible.

National Context

In February 2017, The Government introduced new guidance for practitioners working with victims of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and published the following revised definition:

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. (Child Sexual Exploitation - Definition and a guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from child sexual exploitation, DfE 2017)

In 2012 The Office of the Children's Commissioner's inquiry in to child sexual exploitation in gangs and groups interim report identified over 2,400 children who were victims of sexual exploitation by groups and gangs between August 2010 and October 2011. The same report identified a further 16,500 children who were at high risk of child sexual exploitation between April 2010-March 2011. The National Crime Agency published figures in 2014 identifying 236 children were believed to have been trafficked for sexual exploitation during 2013.

Overview of Service

The Sheffield Sexual Exploitation Service is a multi-agency team of professions, based in Star House, which is in the city centre. The team comprises of social workers, youth workers, police officers, a family support worker, CSE manager, CSE education officer and NHS nurse. This team ensures that there is a joined up approach to identification of risk through robust assessment and includes a whole range of interventions and strategies to protect vulnerable young people, support their families and ensure that those who exploit young people are prosecuted.

All concerns of CSE are referred directly through Sheffield Safeguarding Hub and do not take direct referrals. This ensures that CSE is always assessed within a safeguarding context, and addresses wider vulnerabilities and risk. The SSES gathers information from young people, professionals and communities to pursue those involved in the exploitation of children and young people. The detectives attached to the service are then responsible for bringing offenders to the prosecution stage whilst the wider team support victims through the criminal justice process.

The service works at all levels of risk from serious child protection to early prevention work - supporting children and young people with concerning behaviours which may lead to exploitative situations. The prevention arm of the service is supported by multi agency community youth teams (CYT's) which undertake low to medium risk case work and group work, once the SSES have identified the level of risk and vulnerability. High to medium cases remain in the SSES. CYTs are a specialist young people's service which supports vulnerable young people within their own communities. Both the SSES and CYT services use youth work principles of engagement and strengths based interventions to address underlying contextual factors and to empower young people to make positive choices to keep themselves safe and reach personal goals.

The SSES works to address sexual exploitation on five key principals: prevention, protection, pursuit, prosecution and participation. To achieve this, the service works with partner agencies to prevent sexual exploitation by raising awareness of issues with professionals, businesses, communities and young people. The service promotes a city wide responsibility to protecting vulnerable young people from exploitation in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board's (LSCB) priorities. The service has a training function, and supports the Sheffield Safeguarding Children Board to deliver multi agency training across the city, as well as group work with young people in schools and information events for parents/carers and professionals.

It's important to note, that other organisations in the city, namely NSPCC and Golddigger Trust work directly with young people with low level CSE risk, and the SSES work closely with these organisations to ensure that we work as part of a whole system approach to CSE.

Local Governance Arrangements

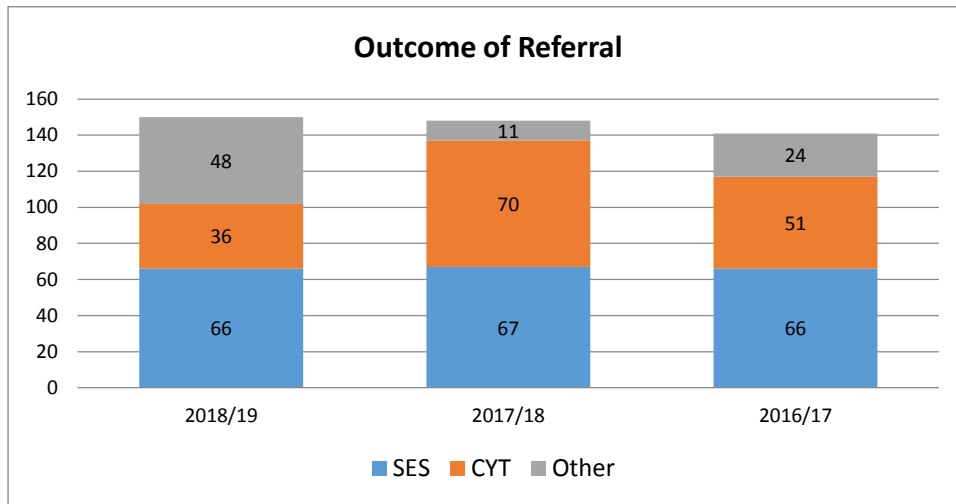
Sheffield's response to child sexual exploitation is overseen by the Sheffield Safeguarding Children's Board, for whom tackling the issue has been a priority since the late 1990s. Governance structures which provide oversight of services' work to address sexual exploitation have been streamlined and the Vulnerable Young Persons Executive Board – chaired by the local authority's Director of Children's Services, has replaced the Child Sexual Exploitation Strategic Board. This group reports to Sheffield Safeguarding Children's Executive Board. Membership of the executive board includes representatives from the statutory sector – police, health, education and social care, as well as the voluntary sector – Sheffield Futures. The Sexual Exploitation Service provides quarterly performance updates to the executive board.

Beneath the Vulnerable Young Persons Executive Board is the Vulnerable Young Persons Operations Board, responsible for implementing the city’s aims and objectives for tackling sexual exploitation.

Data and Analysis

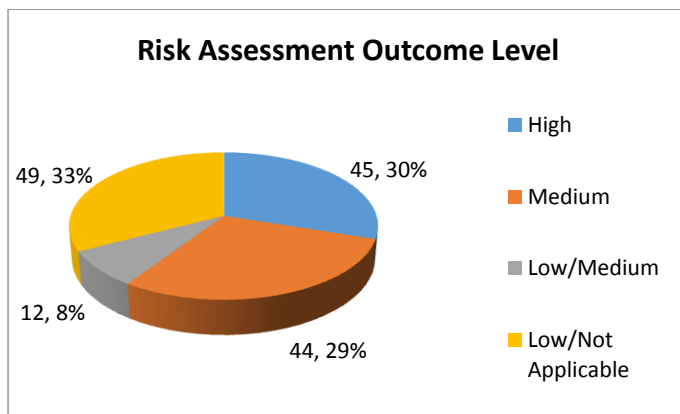
A total of **150** referrals were received by the Sheffield Sexual Exploitation Service (SSES) between 1st April 2018 and 31st March 2019.

OUTCOME OF REFERRALS



The above table shows the outcome of the referrals. The number of referrals received has increased very slightly over the three year period, and the numbers allocated to SSES remain static. The notable differences are CYT and Other and the significant increase in Other. There has been an increase in the number of very low level CSE cases which fall under the level 1 ‘universal’ threshold of need; these include cases of teenage pregnancy (where no CSE concerns are raised) and worries about the use of social media which are being addressed by school and parents. There is also a noticeable rise in cases where other agencies are already involved at a significant level; in some cases providing specific counselling support or mental health input (including young people who are admitted) and the added pressure of another worker becoming involved is too much. On other occasions referrals needed signposting to other services (criminal exploitation, Door43) as the risks did not sit with CSE.

The 150 cases were risk assessed by SES as:



All the appropriate high risks were allocated to SSES case managers (reasons not allocated; secure accommodation or several other appropriate services already involved).

All referrals are initially sent to the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub for screening and appropriate referrals sent to SES; below are the original referring agencies into the Hub:

Referrer into Safeguarding Hub 2018/19	
South Yorkshire Police	31
Social Care	61
School	17
Parent/Carer	6
P&TH and Children's Homes	11
Other	16
Health Services	8
Total	150

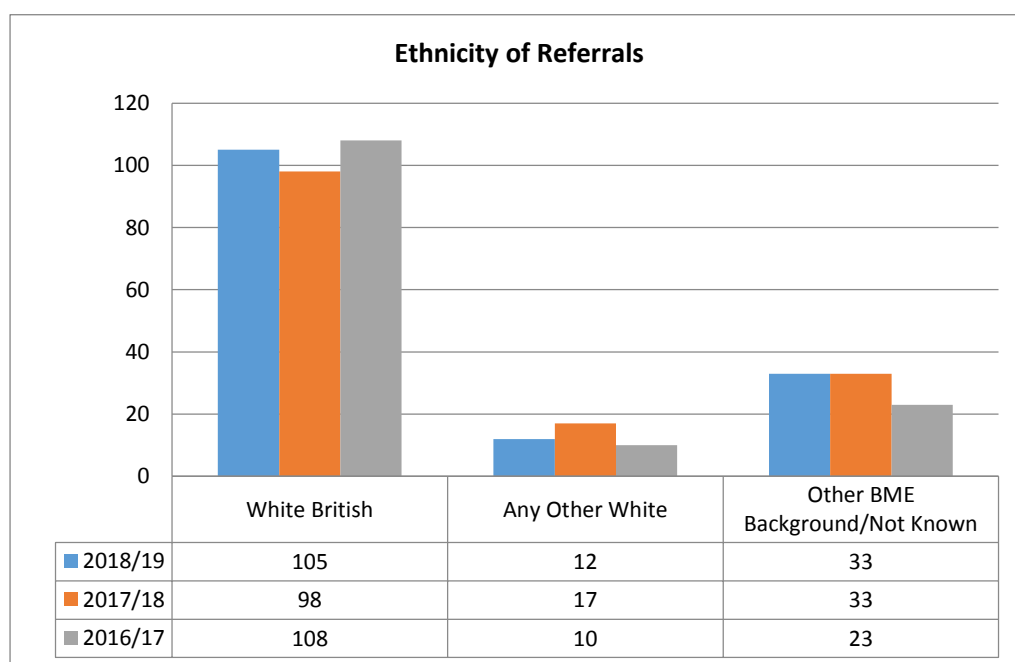
- 41% Social Care
- 21% Police
- 11% School/College

Other includes, but not conclusive, MAST, Adult Safeguarding Partnership, Missing Young Person Service, Supported Housing charities.

GENDER OF REFERRALS

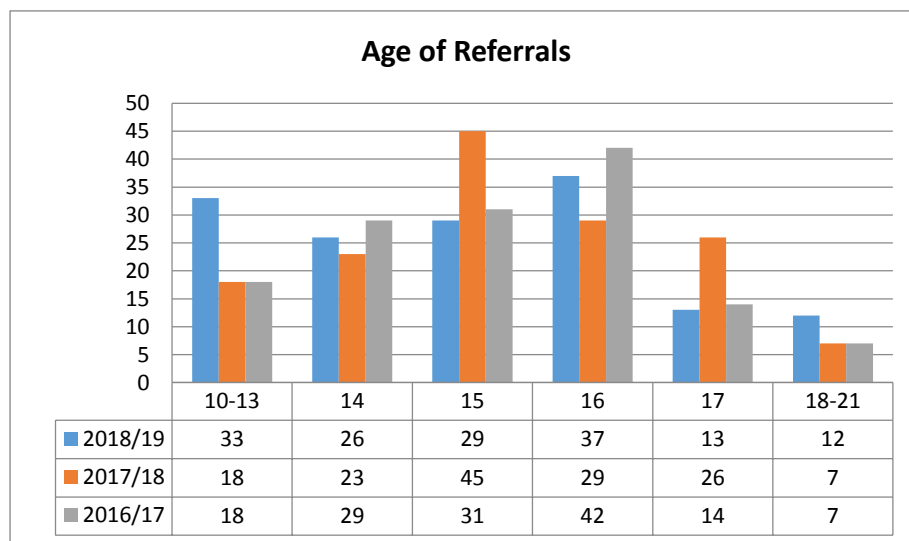
Of the 150 referrals, 91% were for females. In 2017/18 the gender split was 90/8 so no notable difference.

ETHNICITY OF REFERRALS



The majority of the referrals are White British with 70% of the total referral in 2018/19. The 'Other BME' referrals for the past two years remain static with 22%, slightly higher than the 16% in 2016/17.

AGE OF REFERRALS



There has been a notable increase in referrals for 10-13 age groups although there were none for age 10 or 11 in 2018/19. Of the 33 12-13 year olds:

- 7 allocated to SES
- 18 signposted to CYT
- 8 assessed as very low level and not allocated

The number of 15 year olds has fallen and 16 year olds increased although they have fluctuated over the years. The peak age for referrals in 2018/19 is 16 with 25% of the total. The age 18-21 referrals include referrals from the Adult Safeguarding Partnership.

LOOKED AFTER STATUS

Of the 150 referrals in 2018/19, 22 (14.7%) are looked after in either residential care, foster care or out of area. The number of LAC referrals have fallen compared to 2017/18 where 18.9% were LAC although an increase on 2016/17 when it was 9%.

Key Achievements and Impact

- Successful implementation of a sexual exploitation worker for vulnerable young adults (aged 18 – 25 years old) together with an awareness raising training package for professionals. Close interest from National Working Group who are sharing identified best practice with other authorities.
- Development of training pathway to include contextual safeguarding ensures that professionals in Sheffield are kept up to date with the most recent research and learning.
- Missing Young Persons Team co-located with the Sheffield Sexual Exploitation Service. Increase in information sharing and referrals to other support agencies.
- A 9 month independent evaluation of APART (A Practitioner Assessment of Resilience and Risk Tool) took place. Despite the relatively short time frame, the tool evidenced demonstrable outcomes and positive impact with improvements for young people across all measured areas. The report concludes that APART 'is an effective evaluation tool that can provide evidence of change over time for young people receiving support.' It will be now embedded with further evaluation built in.

Training

In 2018/19, the SSES was able to train a range of professionals across Sheffield:

Professionals Training	Sessions	Attended
Education	23	566
Health	5	76
LAC/Care Leavers/Children Services/Sheltered Housing/Residential	10	152
Multi Agency	20	324
Others/ Voluntary Sector	11	128
Total	69	1246

There was a slight increase this year in professionals trained.

Prevention

The SSES service assesses all young people at all levels of risk, ensuring that young people with low level risk are offered early, preventative help to make positive choices and understand their own vulnerability towards sexual exploitation. Using a variety of youth focused resources and interventions, the CYTs work in a 1-1 capacity with young people identified as low to medium risk, within the context of their families and where possible their peer groups and schools. Many of the young people identified as low risk have specific concerns around their internet and social media use. The SSES work with other key partners in the city such as the NSPCC who deliver preventative and targeted group work in schools, with groups of girls and boys. Where young people require additional 1-1 support, then referrals through social care are made to ensure that their needs are assessed holistically.

Prevention work across the city also includes a range of targeted multi agency training for professionals and direct work with parents. A training pathway has been developed by the specialist CSE trainer, which aims to give all professionals across Sheffield a quick and easy way of seeing what CSE training is available in Sheffield and what level they should be directed to. The Basic and Advanced CSE Awareness Packages is continually being updated to reflect changes in policy and current affairs. There is a broader feel to the training with packages including information and recognition on county lines, gangs and harmful sexual behaviour (within the context of CSE). We continue to champion contextual safeguarding in all we do and have strong links with the Contextual Safeguarding Network and the University of Bedfordshire.

Protection

The introduction of a one route pathway through social care screening for all CSE referrals has been embedded. This has ensured that any referral requiring a joint visit by a social worker and police are identified and actioned immediately.

The role of the social workers within the SSES has developed and they now case hold the high risk referrals. This means Sheffield have a tight overview of the most vulnerable young people where the

highest social care threshold is met. Wrap around support continues as normal with the allocation of a CSE case worker, nurse and family support worker.

Regular statutory and non-statutory meetings take place to ensure there is a robust safety plan and package of support in place, which can be adapted to reflect changing needs.

The service continues to develop a contextual safeguarding approach to protecting young people by attending various mapping and intelligence meetings across the city and assessing risk in the young person's context; identifying and understanding where the exploitative situation occurs, and then addressing the factors that foster this in partnership with other agencies.

Pursuit

Intelligence focussed, multi-agency meetings take place on a weekly and monthly basis. This encourages enhanced information sharing and pursuit of perpetrators of CSE. Chaired by the police, the meeting has representatives from housing, residential homes, YJS, missing from home officers, health and social care. The focus is on identifying vulnerable young people, offenders and 'hot spots' around the city, then jointly devising solutions to disrupt criminal activity and safeguard young people. Suspected named offenders are subject to a 'scoring' matrix by the police Integrated Offender Management team and dependant on this, a variety of tactics can be adopted.

Abduction Notices, a police power aimed at preventing inappropriate contact between adults and children are considered when an adult is associating inappropriately with a child or young person under the age of 16, or 18 if the individual is on a full care order. The service ensures it carefully observes local and national cases to continuously inform practice and utilise any legislative changes to achieve the aim of disruption and pursuit.

Prosecution

The Sheffield Sexual Exploitation Service continues to offer intensive one-to-one support for victims involved in police investigations and those whose case is in court.

In one particular case, a CSE worker was involved from the outset, visiting the young person with police and social workers to ensure support and maximise the information given. We have excellent links with the Child Assessment Unit (CAU) and support young people give police achieving best evidence interviews and follow up medical intervention.

Cases at court can be complex, often with multiple professional involvements. Strong joint working and co-ordinated planning ensure the young person has the appropriate support relevant for their needs.

There is a range of legislation used when the threshold for prosecution is not met. Abduction Notices continue to be used to disrupt offenders and consideration is given to applying for Sexual Harm Prevention Order's (SHPO) which is a civil order granted through the magistrates court.

Participation

The SSES have had a parent support worker as a core part of the service for many years now. This worker collaborated with MAST on an innovative piece of group work with parents and carers whose children were supported by the service. 'Listen To Us; Communicate With Us; Work With Us' became an SSCB Lunchtime Seminar for professionals which looked at messages for social workers and other staff from the parents and carers involved in the group. The seminar heard about their experience of

being service users and also examined recent national research about how to support parents/carers whose children were involved in CSE.

The seminar was well attended and had excellent feedback with 100% of participants agreeing it 'increased knowledge in relation to the issue.' Some of the parents participated in the seminars with professionals gaining 'a lot of learning' and 'listening to the parents was invaluable.'

Participation from young people is encouraged on an individual level, by supporting them to be actively involved in decision making in relation to their own care planning, and decisions that affect them, their friends and families.

Partnership Working

CSE cannot be tackled by one agency operating alone. Effective responses must be built on a holistic understanding of the problem which comes from a shared commitment to partnership working. The Sheffield Sexual Exploitation Service has embedded a fully integrated multi-agency working ethic at all levels.

The Missing Young Persons Team was co-located with the SSES in August 2018. This ensures arrangements are in place for co-ordination, completion and recording of independent return interviews after a child or young person returns from a missing episode. The intelligence and information obtained from missing young people also fits within a wider service response to vulnerable young people including links to CSE, gangs and criminal exploitation.

The SSES continually work with a range of statutory and third sector agencies, schools and higher education. The transitions worker post, which completed in June 2018, identified a range of new organisations and the need for the development of pathways with adult services to ensure that young people reaching 18 and beyond were supported through transitions into adult services across health, education, social care etc.

Funding provided by the Adult Safeguarding Partnership has enabled Sheffield to build on this transitions post and develop it alongside awareness raising across the City. A vulnerable young adult sexual exploitation worker is specifically meeting needs of 18 – 25 year olds. A training package has been developed and delivered (in the first instance) to prioritised agencies and professionals where it was felt most benefit could be obtained. Regular updates have been given to the Project Board and National Working Group (NWG) whom we have been liaising with in order to share good practice and visit other authorities who are also supporting young adults.

The specialist nurse role has been promoted so that wider health services can contact and discuss any cases / concerns linked to CSE and they are given guidance about making referrals via the Safeguarding Hub. Health practitioners, including general practitioners who utilise 'System One' are able to see the relevant CSE information recorded by the specialist nurse including the health discussion and subsequent professional liaison.

The other members of the multi-agency team utilise the specialist nurse role to gather and support their understanding of health information to support their roles in working with this high risk caseload. In recognition of the work carried out by our specialist nurse, she received an award for 'Best Delivery of Direct Patient Care.'

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