



SHEFFIELD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION SERVICES

Annual Report
April 2019 – March 2020

Contents

Introduction.....	2
National Context.....	2
Overview of Service.....	2
Local Governance Arrangements	3
Data & Analysis.....	4
Training.....	6
Prevention.....	6
Protection.....	7
Pursuit.....	7
Prosecution	7
Participation	8
Partnership Working	8
Case Study	8

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, as Sheffield's knowledge of Contextual Safeguarding has continued to grow and inform practice, the Sexual Exploitation Service has integrated with Sheffield City Council's Criminal Exploitation Team to become the Amber Project. Whilst we continue to identify the early signs of CSE, we have developed our processes to ensure that screening tools, pathways and processes include those young people who are at risk of or are being criminally exploited. Training has been developed and delivered to ensure professionals in Sheffield are 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 2019/20 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, latterly the Amber Project, is a multi-agency team of professionals, based in Star House, which is in the city centre. The team is comprised of Social Workers, Youth Workers, Police Officers, 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 and ensure that those who exploit young people are disrupted or prosecuted wherever possible.

All concerns of CSE are referred directly through Sheffield Safeguarding Hub ensuring 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 Service 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 Sheffield Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) priorities. The service has a training function and supports the SSCP to deliver multi agency training across the city.

It's important to note, that other organisations in the city, namely NSPCC and Gold Digger 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.

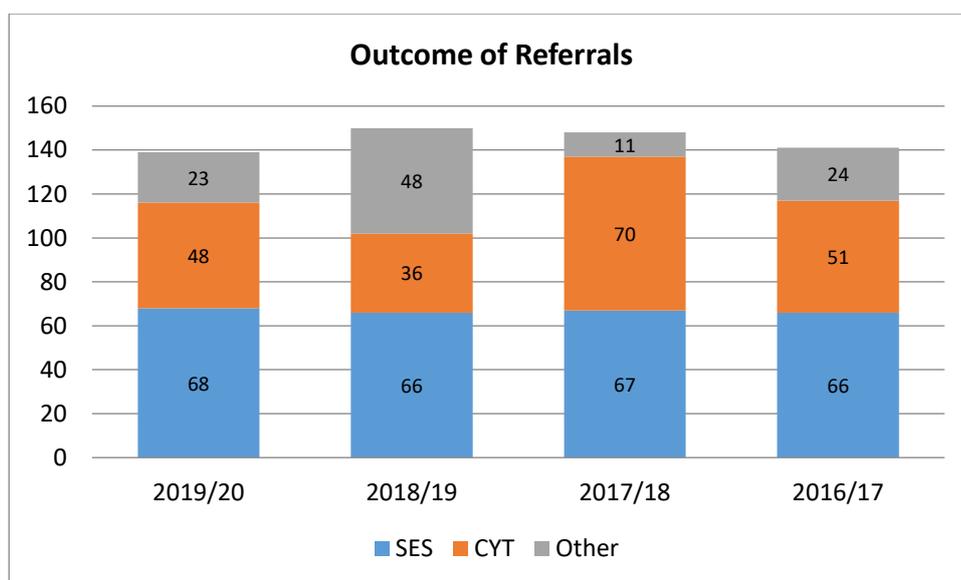
Local Governance Arrangements

Sheffield's response to child sexual exploitation is overseen by the Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership, 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 Children Safeguarding 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.

Data & Analysis

Outcome of Referrals

A total of **139** referrals were received by the Sexual Exploitation Service (SES) between 1st April 2019 and 31st March 2020. A slight drop in the total last year of 150 however over the past 5 years there has been no significant change in numbers; the lowest number received was 136 and the highest 150.



The table above shows the outcome of the referrals.

Although there has been a slight fall in the referrals, the number allocated to specialist CSE workers remains static. The number of referrals signposted to CYT has increased slightly; these cases are low to medium with the risk often around social media.

There has been a drop in the 'other' cases where a majority will 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.

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 2019/20	
South Yorkshire Police	35
Social Care	49
School	21
MAST	5
Parent/Carer	4
P&TH and Children's Homes	3
Missing Young People Team	3
Health Services	8

- 35% Social Care
- 25% Police
- 15% School/College

The 10 'Other' included referrals from out of area Social Care and Police, step-up from CYT and National Crime Agency.

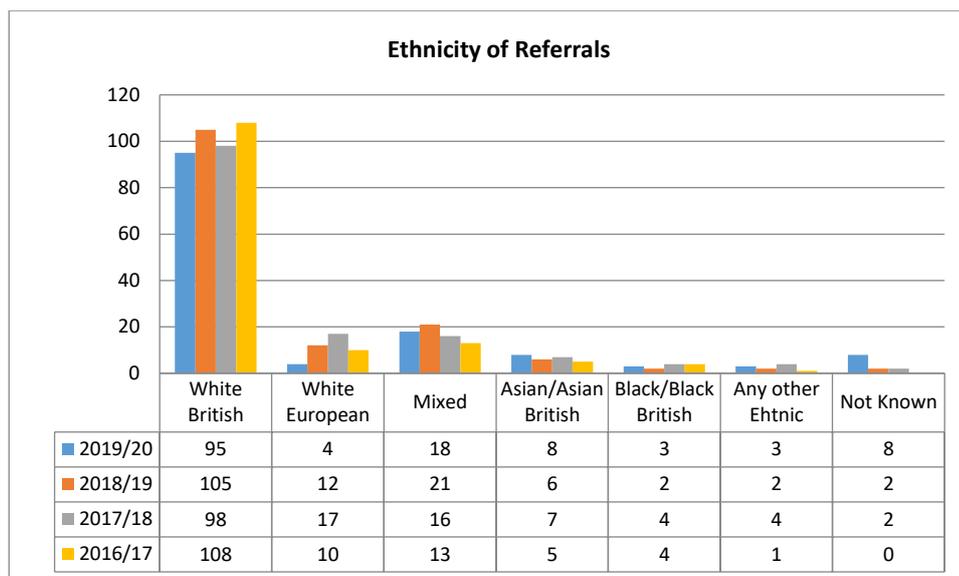
Adult Safeguarding	1
Other	10
Total	139

Referrals from Social Care, South Yorkshire Police and School equate to 75% of the total referrals. In 2018/19 73% of the total referrals came from the same three agencies.

Gender of Referrals

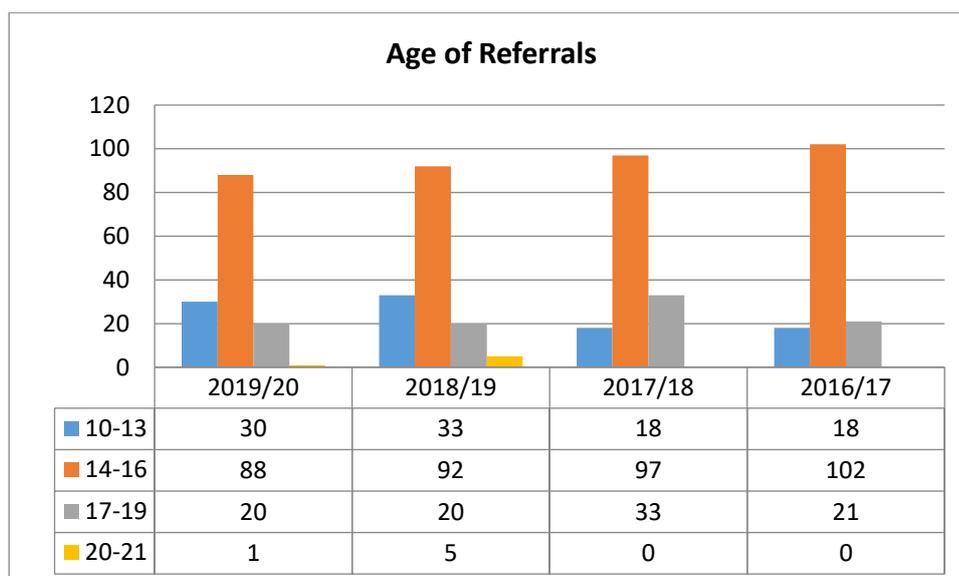
Of the 139 referrals, 92% were for females. In 2018/19 the gender split was 91/9 and 2017/18, 90/10 so no notable difference.

Ethnicity of Referrals



The majority of the referrals are White British with 68% of the total referral in 2019/20. There has been a slight increase in Asian/Asian British and a slight drop in White European although nothing significant.

Age of Referrals



Looked After Status

Of the 139 referrals in 2019/20, 21 (15.1%) are looked after in either residential care, foster care or out of area. The number of LAC referrals in 2018/19 was 22 (14.7%) and 2017/18, 27 (18.2%) so a slight decrease in comparison.

Training

Type of Training	No of Sessions Delivered	Total Attendees	Organisations Include
Adult Awareness Raising	4	43	Social Care / Drug & Alcohol Service
Advanced CSE	8	107	Sheffield Futures / CYT / Say It / Roundabout
Amber Project Briefing	2	112	Sheffield Futures / Multi-Agency
Contextual Safeguarding	4	41	Sheffield Futures / CYT / NSPCC / Social Care
Criminal Exploitation	1	70	Schools
Introduction to CSE	22	324	CAMHS / Children's Hospital / Sheffield Futures / Children's Home / Schools
Trauma Informed	8	170	Sheffield Futures / Multi-Agency
Totals	49	867	

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.

The effective identification, referral and support for vulnerable young people who have been victims of exploitation, or those identified at risk, is achieved by a robust training strategy aimed at all professionals across Sheffield. 867 professionals (including midwives, junior doctors and social workers) have received CPD accredited training on Contextual Safeguarding, Exploitation and Trauma Informed Practice. Specific training was given to school Safeguarding Leads in relation to the Missing Young Persons Service.

The Basic and Advanced CSE Awareness Packages are responsive, 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. The Amber Project now has a Service Manager and Senior Fieldwork Manager overseeing the most high-risk referrals in relation to exploitation in Sheffield. Wrap around support continues as normal with the allocation of a CSE case worker and nurse.

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.

The independent evaluation on the APART (A practitioner assessment of resilience and risk tool) tool was extremely encouraging showing 'demonstrable outcomes and positive improvements' for young people across all measured areas. The report concluded that APART 'is an effective tool that can provide evidence of change over time for young people receiving support.' This tool is now embedded within the work of the CSE caseworkers and evaluation of this, and the Missing Service, is co-ordinated by Sheffield Futures Quality and Impact Co-ordinator.

Pursuit

Multi-agency meetings have been reviewed and are now conducted on a fortnightly basis (Vulnerable Young Persons Tactical/Operational Meeting) and monthly meeting (Vulnerable Young Persons Multi-Agency Meeting.) Intelligence is shared and discussed at the fortnightly meetings around young people at risk of/involved in CSE, CCE and the most frequent missing young people. Those of concern are then discussed at the wider monthly meeting which is jointly chaired by police and social care. This encourages enhanced information sharing and the pursuit of perpetrators of CSE. Safety plans and disruption tactics are devised in order to protect the most vulnerable young people in Sheffield.

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.

Prosecution

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

The Service have excellent links with the Child Assessment Unit (CAU) and support young people after police ABE interviews and follow up medical intervention.

Cases at Court can be complex, often with multiple professional involvement. 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

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.

As the service has evolved to encompass all forms of child exploitation, young people were consulted about the service name and their ideas for the development and reach across Sheffield. The Amber Project name was chosen along with the outline of an 'Ambassador Programme' which would enable a variety of professionals to receive bespoke training and be readily identifiable to young people who may need to confide in an adult about exploitation. This training package is currently being written and will be rolled out across the next year.

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 Sexual Exploitation Service has embedded a fully integrated multi-agency working ethic at all levels.

A new screening tool was developed to encapsulate all elements of exploitation (moving away from sexual and criminal) and is designed to be used by all professionals with concerns about children and young people. The tool also ensures professionals consider protective factors which may provide balance to the vulnerabilities being displayed. The screening tool and pathway are included in the Amber Project training package which was launched in January 2020.

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.

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 Nurse, she received an award for 'Best Delivery of Direct Patient Care.'

Case Study

J grew up in Sheffield as part of a large family. When she was 5 years old police officers arrested her Mum and Dad for sex trafficking offences. Unsurprisingly police officers felt the children showed signs of neglect (backed up by the home conditions which were poor) and the children were taken into Local Authority Care.

J lived with a foster carer until she was 12 years old. Her emotions became too difficult to handle when she learned what her parents had done. Ultimately her behaviour was too challenging and foster parents couldn't cope. Despite support, she was moved out of area to a children's residential home after another foster placement broke down.

J was extremely vulnerable and had low self-esteem. She was groomed by a male who went on to exploit her. J eventually disclosed to police she and a friend had serious sexual assaults committed against them by a number of males. She was moved back to a care home in Sheffield. J made friends with another young person who took her to an address where she was given alcohol. J told her worker and a referral was made to the Sexual Exploitation Service.

J was allocated a worker and her health needs were assessed by the Nurse attached to the service. The CSE worker in total spent around 12 months engaging with J on interventions around healthy and positive relationships, on-line safety and self-esteem took place alongside grooming, CSE and risky situations. The CSE worker also supported her during interviews with the police investigating the case she was the victim in and liaised directly with them in order to provide her with updates.

J is now attending college and still keeps in touch with her worker at Star House.