

# Multi Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) and Contextual Safeguarding Strategy 2024/27



# BeAware

Be Aware, an online knowledge hub set up and run by NYSCP in collaboration with young people, parents and carers and professionals across North Yorkshire, to help prevent and tackle child exploitation.

Here you will find relevant and up to date information and resources in relation to all themes of exploitation as well as information on all of our Multi Agency Child Exploitation processes.

[www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/beaware](http://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/beaware)



## Forward



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**Child Exploitation** is a form of child abuse that impacts on the lives of children, young people, their families and the communities of North Yorkshire. 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, safe childhood that enables them to achieve in life.

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 of our previous strategy and our NYSCP Multi-Agency Child Exploitation arrangements (previously VEMT) which have been in place since 2015. As such, this strategy outlines our continued commitment to a co-ordinated partnership approach to tackle all forms of child exploitation across North Yorkshire and ensure that the right resources are well trained, skilled and in place to drive the activity outlined within this strategy.

# Overview

## The Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) and Contextual Safeguarding Strategy

recognises that while traditionally safeguarding young people focused on risks within the home, some children experience abuse and exploitation outside the home (extra familial harm). Harm can occur in a range of extra familial contexts including schools and education settings, peer groups, within community spaces and in the online world.

Children may experience this harm from other children and/or from adults. When a child moves through the transitions of early childhood into adolescence, and onto adulthood they invariably

become involved in social networks, relationships and environments outside of their school and home setting. The majority of children in North Yorkshire 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. We know that children will not always recognise that they are being groomed, nor will they always recognise what is happening to them as abuse and for some children the abuse they experience is believed by them to be consensual and they do not see themselves as victims.

*“Anyone working with children should see and speak to the child, listen to what they say, observe their behaviour, take their views seriously, and work with them and their families and the people who know them well when deciding how to support their needs. Practitioners should also be aware that children may find it difficult to always speak about what they need, what is happening to them or what has happened to them”.*

*(WTTSC 2023)*

Often parents, carers and the supportive networks around young people are disempowered by the perpetrators of this form of abuse who will try to undermine safe and positive relationships to further the control they have over that child or young person.

For this reason, in terms of the identification, responding to and management of MACE and Contextual Safeguarding risks, parents, carers and the supportive networks are often part of the solution

and this strategy Recognises the role that parents and carers can play as relational safeguarding partners. North Yorkshire Safeguarding

Children Partnership recognise the need for strong partnership working and a shared responsibility when working with children, particularly working as whole family approach and listening and acting upon the voice of the child, as highlighted in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)

Extra-familial harm, 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. This MACE and Contextual Safeguarding Strategy aims to build on the success of the MACE and Contextual Safeguarding Strategy 2020-2023 and build on existing structures in place across North Yorkshire. It also reflects the [Tackling Child Exploitation \(TCE\) Multi Agency Practice Principles](#) and the reflective work undertaken by partners across North Yorkshire to explore these principles in the local context for responding to extra-familial harm. It is these discussions which have been influential in the development of this strategy.

The strategy aims 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 (including county lines, financial exploitation and organised crime groups)**
- **Children Missing from Home (MFH)**
- **Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)**
- **Modern Day Slavery and Human Trafficking (MSHT)**
- **Online Child Exploitation**
- **Peer on peer exploitation/ teenage relationship abuse**
- **Radicalisation and extremism**

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

# Vision

NYSCP's vision for the MACE and Contextual Safeguarding arrangements is that:

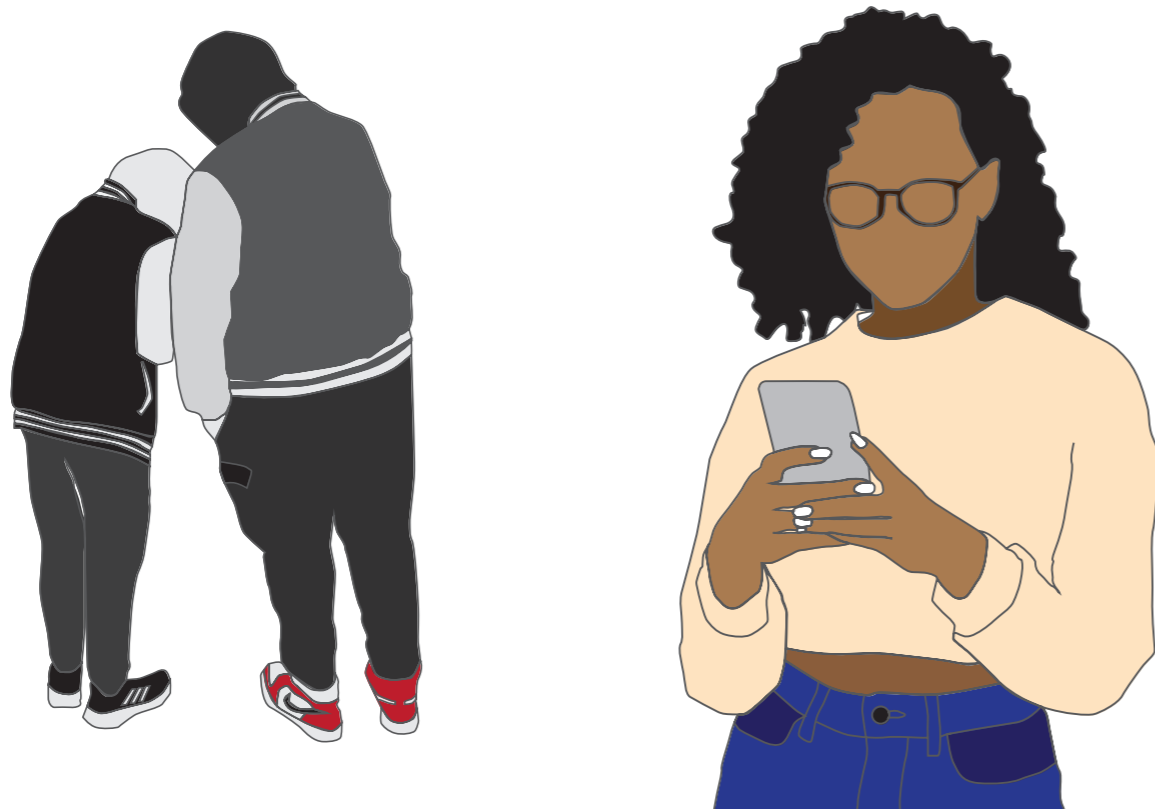
*“All children in North Yorkshire who are being exploited and are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse are effectively identified and protected by services which are delivered in a coordinated and informed way that consistently responds to the harm and risks and improves the outcomes for our children, their families and the wider community”*

It is important to acknowledge and emphasise that whilst this strategy relates specifically to children; by definition up to the age of 18, we recognise that for children who reach the age of 18, exploitation does not stop. Therefore, this strategy aims to ensure a safe and seamless transition for those vulnerable young people requiring continuing support to adult support services.

In order to achieve this, we have set out **four clear priorities** over the next three years:

## Prepare • Prevent • Protect • Pursue

These priorities require a clear coordinated action plan to be delivered across our North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and in collaborating with parents, carers and young people and is driven forward within the context of, and in conjunction with 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 and strength based action plans to create safe spaces for the children and young people of North Yorkshire both online and in the real world.



# Strategy

The MACE and Contextual Safeguarding Strategy has identified four key priorities across the 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.

## Prepare

Prepare the partnership and wider community in understanding scope and complexity of child exploitation and risk outside the home.



## Prevent

Commit to a whole partnership and wider community approach to prevention, contextual safeguarding and keeping children safe from exploitation.



## Strategic Priorities

## Protect

To protect and support children at risk of or experiencing exploitation that does not label or blame them for the abuse they are experiencing.



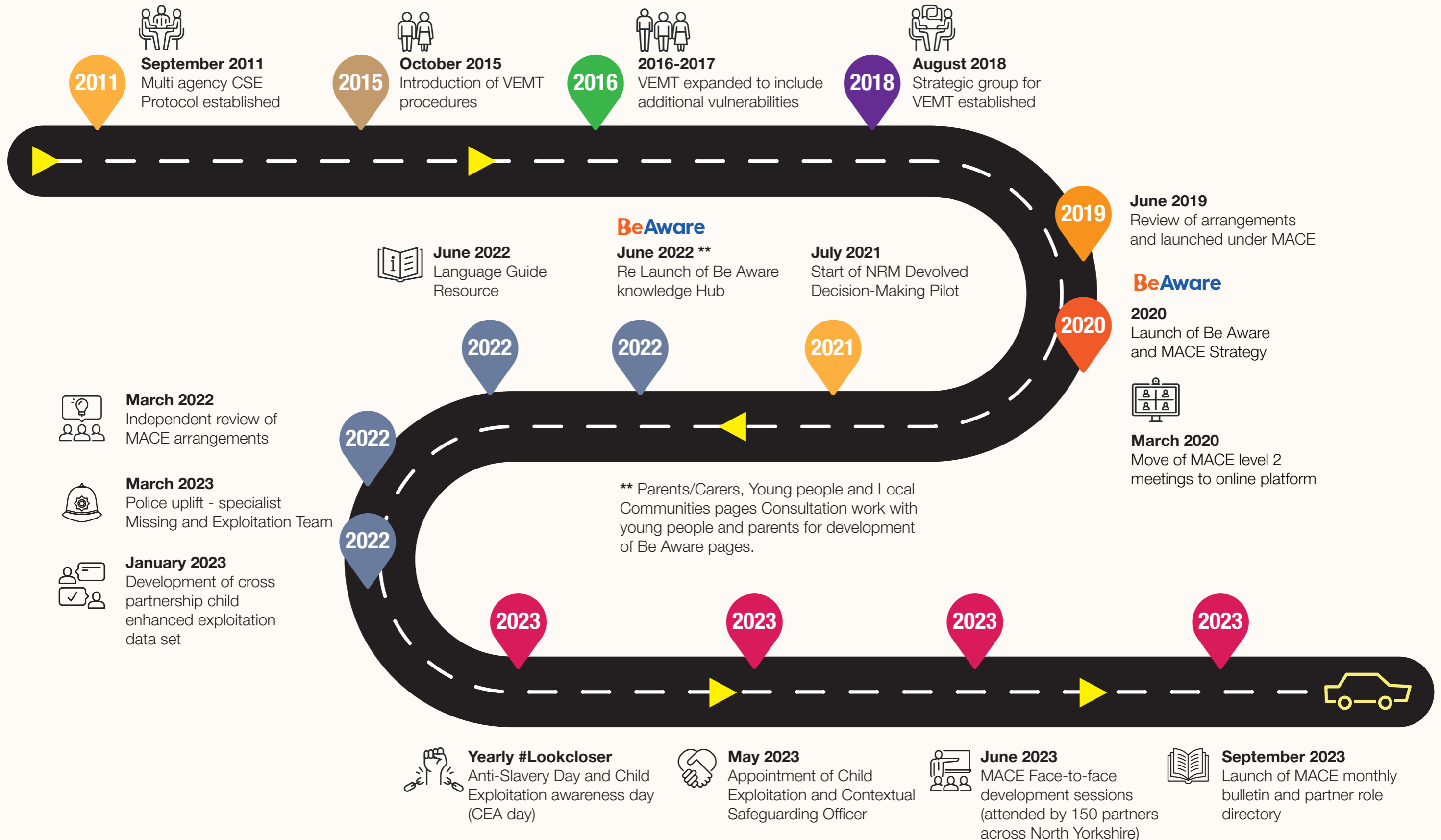
## Pursue

Actively pursue, disrupt and respond to perpetrators of exploitation, and work collectively as a partnership to disrupt the exploitation of children in the contextual spaces they are spending their time.



# The Multi Agency Child Exploitation Journey so far

Below is a 'roadmap' of the progression of the Mace and Contextual Safeguarding multi agency working arrangements, highlighting some key achievements and developments in the strategy.



# 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 Strategic Group that reports into the NYSCP Executive. The operational group oversee the operational implementation of the strategy and report to the Strategic group. MACE Level 2 meetings operate across the seven locality areas of North Yorkshire: Scarborough, Ryedale & Whitby, Harrogate, Craven, Hambleton, Richmondshire and Selby. For further information of the partnership structure, please refer to the [“Arrangements for the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership”](#) document.

## Who attends the Meeting

### MACE Strategic Group

- NYC Head of Safeguarding Partnerships – Chair
- NYSCP Business Unit Manager
- NYSCP Policy and Development Officer – MACE
- NYC Head of Safeguarding
- NYC Group Manager: Access and Multiple Vulnerabilities
- NYC Virtual School Head
- Integrated Care Board (ICB) Designated Nurse
- NYP Det. Supt. Head of Safeguarding
- NYP DCI. Safeguarding
- NYP Intelligence Analyst Manager
- NYP Intelligence Analyst
- NYC Adult Safeguarding Manager
- NYC Head of Practice, Care and Support (Health and Adult Services)
- Head of engagement and governance
- Head of Safer Communities, Policy and Partnerships
- NYP: Police Fire and Crime Commissioners
- Officer – Commissioned Partnership Manager
- Yorkshire and Humber Regional Organised Crime Unit (YHROCU) – DI



### MACE Operational Group

- NYP DCI Safeguarding – Chair
- NYSCP Policy and Development Officer – MACE
- NYSCP Contextual Safeguarding Officer
- NYC Children Social Care Group Manager
- NYC Youth Justice Service Manager
- NYC Early Help Consultant
- NYC Specialist Social workers
- NYC Education Lead advisor for Social and Emotional Mental Health
- NYC Inclusion Team
- NYC Community Safety Partnership
- NYP School Liaison Manager
- NYC Training & Learning
- North Yorkshire Probation Service
- NYP DI Safeguarding (Exploitation and Missing)
- Harrogate District Foundation Trust (HDFT) – Named Nurse safeguarding Children
- Tees, Est and Wear Valley Trust (TEVV) Named Nurse Safeguarding Children
- YourSexual Health Team Leader
- NYC Trusted Relationship Service
- North Yorkshire Youth manager
- Ivison Trust (formerly PACE) - North Yorkshire Lead
- Children’ Society Prevention Officer
- Children’s Society Hand in hand Manager
- Barnardo’s Independent Child Trafficking Guardianship Service (ICTG)
- NYC Head of housing needs

### MACE Level 2 Locality Meetings

- NYSCP Contextual Safeguarding Officer – chair
- North Yorkshire Police
- NYC Children’s Social Care/Early Help
- Community Safety Partnerships
- Children’s Society
- Private Care Providers
- CAMHS
- Housing Providers
- Education establishments
- Trading Standards
- Youth Services
- Compass Reach/Phoenix
- Ivison Trust (Formerly PACE)
- Barnardo’s ICTG
- Youth Justice Service
- NYC Leaving Care Team
- NYT Specialist Social workers
- HDFT
- TEVV
- Sexual Health Services
- Adult services
- Change Direction
- NYC Probation
- North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue
- North Yorkshire Horizon drug and Alcohol Service
- Army Welfare

# MACE and Contextual Safeguarding Strategy Plan on a Page

## Prepare

Prepare the partnership and wider community in understanding scope and complexity of child exploitation and risk outside the home.

### Commitments

Develop and enable an informed workforce through multi-agency training and continued sharing of emerging themes and trends across the partnership

Create opportunities to share learning and expertise across the partnership utilising the voices and views of children/young people and parents/carers so we can continue to learn what works in keeping children safe from exploitation and protecting from risks of harm.

Use data to continue to develop our understanding of the nature and scale of exploitation in North Yorkshire; and the impact of the partnership response on the children who are being exploited. Use this understanding to better inform our responses to tackle it.

Use of the cross-partnership data set to look for patterns of disproportionality and under or over representation. Invite challenge from across the partnership to create greater equality.

## Prevent

Commit to a whole partnership and wider community approach to prevention, contextual safeguarding and keeping children safe from exploitation.

### Commitments

Support communities to become resilient and knowledgeable to the risks of harm outside the home and empower them to have a role in making spaces and places safer.

Raise awareness that disruption and prevention is not solely placed round the individual victim but also around the perpetrator and contextual spaces where exploitation is happening.

Increase awareness of online contextual spaces and where young people are spending their time online and the associated risks with exploitation.

Horizon scanning to identify national, regional and local emerging trends, policy, practice, and learning around Exploitation that is shared across the partnership

Empower children, young people and parents and carers to have a considered understanding of the risks of exploitation (both on and offline) and ways to keep safe.

## Protect

To protect and support children at risk of or experiencing exploitation that does not label or blame them for the abuse they are experiencing.

### Commitments

Partners commit to see victims of exploitation as children first and prioritizes their safety and well-being. Children and their families are not blamed for the harm they face.

Partners adopt a consistent, collaborative and trauma informed approach to assessment of risk and commit to multi agency planning to protect victims from harm of exploitation.

Continue to develop an understanding of transitional safeguarding and develop a coherent approach to supporting young people affected by exploitation as they move into adulthood.

Support agencies across the partnership to effectively manage the tension where children and young people are both victims of harm and exploitation and harming other young people as part of that abuse. Understanding that in these situations young people should be seen as victims first and a safeguarding response is prioritised

Partners to understand the nature of peer networks (on and offline) around victims and the roles that they can play in children and young people experiencing harm outside the home.

Support parents, carers, and family networks to understand what is happening to the child, working with them to ensure they can best meet the child's needs and play an active part in the solutions and processes to help create safety for the child and help reduce risk of exploitation.

Where exploitation is a known factor for Out of Authority children placed in North Yorkshire, effective information sharing will be in place through MACE arrangements to monitor risk and use escalation procedures to ensure that safety plans are effective and in place by the placing Authority and Private Settings.

## Pursue

Actively pursue, disrupt and respond to perpetrators of exploitation, and work collectively as a partnership to disrupt the exploitation of children in the contextual spaces they are spending their time.

### Commitments

Perpetrators and unsafe spaces (both online and offline) are identified quickly and appropriate enforcement action is taken.

There is a multi-agency community safety approach that uses local intelligence to identify perpetrators, person of concern and locations of concern (on and offline) that disrupts exploitation collaboratively using a range of partnership methods.

MACE level 2 meetings are characterised by wider partnership attendance, good information sharing clear accountability for multi-agency problem solving plans around disruption and clear recording of outcomes

There are effective governance arrangements around identification and management of perpetrators.

Where children are being exploited through County Lines or organised criminality they are quickly identified and safeguarded as a victim first. Clear disruption activity is undertaken for those responsible for exploiting them.

“ We all need to Be Aware of Child Exploitation because we all have a responsibility to protect our children and our communities. ”



# MACE and Contextual Safeguarding Strategy Plan on a Page

## Prepare

### Outcomes

Increased confidence in early identification of risk and emerging trends of exploitation in a local context.

Continual review and update of training, resources and practice guidance. All up to date guidance is available to partners through our Be Aware Knowledge Hub.

Partners have opportunity to regularly meet face to face to develop stronger partnership working relationships to enable curiosity and create multi agency problem solving approaches and disruption planning.

Use cross-partnership data set to inform partners about what exploitation looks like in North Yorkshire with emerging themes and trends shared with partners. Identification of intelligence gaps and clear recommendations shared with MACE partners as a result.

## Prevent

### Outcomes

Partners are aware of the ever-changing picture of exploitation in North Yorkshire including risks in online spaces. MACE bulletins are shared with MACE partners on a monthly basis highlighting emerging themes and trends, alongside best practice.

Opportunities are developed to shared MACE emerging themes and trends with wider partners including education and VCS. Young people and parents and carers have access to current and relevant resources and information through our Be Aware knowledge hub, that have been created collaboratively with them.

Partners continually look for ways to listen to and act upon the voices of young people and parents/ carers and use this to directly impact on practice.

## Protect

### Outcomes

There are clear pathways for feedback from children and young people, parents' carers and family networks and evidence that they feel seen and supported.

Practitioners are trained in trauma informed practice and embed this into multi agency responses to child exploitation.

There is the development of a clear pathway and more collaborative work with adult services for young people at risk of and experiencing exploitation as they approach adulthood.

NRM referrals are submitted at the earlier opportunity and there is continued awareness raising around the NRM process.

Engagement with schools, wider partners and cross border networks to continue to explore the peer relationships of young people at risk of or experiencing exploitation.

## Pursue

### Outcomes

Effective intelligence sharing across the partnership (including exploitation cross border criminality, children using the Police).

There is attendance and engagement in level 2 meetings, evidence of clear disruption planning and outcomes from meetings is captured and shared.

Opportunities for regional collaboration and information sharing are maximized.

Strong management of risk and linking across with MAPPA and online child abuse teams.

Young people are made aware that they will be treated by all professionals as a victim and not a perpetrator if they are believed to be involved in criminal or sexual activity linked to exploitation.

*Remember; the grooming process can take place online as well as face-to-face.*



## Contact details

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