

# **National Action Plan to Prevent and Tackle Child Sexual Exploitation**

**Progress Report 2016/17**

**March 2017**

## Foreword



The [National Action Plan to Prevent and Tackle Child Sexual Exploitation update](#) was published in 2016 and was a welcome progress update that built on the publication in 2014. I am pleased with what has been achieved over the past year - some key pieces of work have been completed and I am positive about progress going forward. As we know, preventing and tackling CSE requires a coordinated, multi-agency response and the action plan reflects this, as does the membership of the National CSE Group. This report details the progress made since the publication of the update, as well as outlining the impact.

A couple of key achievements I want to briefly mention are the Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) [definition and summary](#) and supporting [Practitioner Paper](#), as they are important pieces of work ensuring the workforce across Scotland have a clearer understanding of the complexities of CSE. Another was the development of suggested indicators to test the success of the action plan, as going forward this work will provide us with crucial key evidence to demonstrate whether the actions and activities contained within the action plan are improving outcomes for children and young people affected by CSE. As the indicators have only just been identified, this year the report is purely narrative and I look forward to the inclusion of the evidence from the indicator work in the group's next annual report.

I was encouraged when Minister asked the National CSE Group to take forward overseeing the implementation of the national action plan with the Scottish Government, following the closure of the CSE Ministerial Group. As the chair, I am very pleased to be working with colleagues who collectively bring many years of experience of working in children's services and knowledge and skills in the complex area of CSE. Today we understand more about the complexities of CSE than we ever have and continue to battle this hidden and challenging issue.

I want to personally thank all those involved with taking forward the actions, along with all the members of the National CSE Group – your efforts to help combat the sexual exploitation of children and young people are greatly valued.

I'd like to end with reflecting on the vision of the National Action Plan to Prevent and Tackle Child Sexual Exploitation:

**We want Scotland to be a place where sexual exploitation of children and young people is eliminated – a Scotland where children and young people are protected from harm and, in a society that is a hostile place for perpetrators and facilitators of child sexual exploitation.**

This is a long term aim and one which I am delighted to be involved in working on.

Many thanks  
**Moira McKinnon**  
**Chair National CSE Group**

## Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Foreword.....   | 2  |
| The National Action Plan to Prevent and Tackle Child Sexual Exploitation Progress Report<br>2016/17 ..... | 4  |
| Introduction.....   | 4  |
| Definition of CSE .....   | 4  |
| The Vision.....   | 4  |
| The Action Plan’s Intermediate Outcomes .....   | 4  |
| Context.....  | 5  |
| Child Protection Improvement Programme .....  | 6  |
| The National Child Sexual Exploitation Group .....  | 6  |
| Overview.....   | 7  |
| Progress Since March 2016 .....   | 9  |
| Impact .....  | 13 |
| Next Steps .....  | 14 |

# The National Action Plan to Prevent and Tackle Child Sexual Exploitation Progress Report 2016/17

## Introduction

Child sexual exploitation is a complex crime which happens in person or online or a combination of both. It can affect girls and boys from any background or community. Perpetrators are often well organised and use sophisticated tactics to manipulate children and young people and evade detection. Young people may not understand the exploitative nature of the experience until months or even years later which makes identification of victims more difficult. We know that young people who are sexually exploited are sometimes viewed negatively and that they are not always recognised as victims of abuse.

## Definition of CSE

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse in which a person(s), of any age takes advantage of a power imbalance to force or entice a child into engaging in sexual activity in return for something received by the child and/or those perpetrating or facilitating the abuse. As with other forms of child sexual abuse, the presence of perceived consent does not undermine the abusive nature of the act.

[CSE Definition and Summary \(in full\)](#)

[CSE Definition and Practitioner Briefing Paper \(in full\)](#)

## The Vision

We want Scotland to be a place where sexual exploitation of children and young people is eliminated – a Scotland where children and young people are protected from harm, in a society that is hostile place for perpetrators and facilitators of child sexual exploitation.

Actions that will help take us forward in realising this vision are set out in the Scottish Government's [National Action Plan to Prevent and Tackle Child Sexual Exploitation](#).

## The Action Plan's Intermediate Outcomes

- The risk that children and young people are sexually exploited is reduced through a focus on prevention and early identification.
- Children and young people at risk of or experiencing sexual exploitation and their families receive appropriate and high quality support.
- Perpetrators are stopped, brought to justice and are less likely to re-offend.
- Cultural and social barriers to preventing and tackling child sexual exploitation are reduced.

## Context

Eliminating child sexual exploitation contributes to our shared vision of making Scotland the best place in the world to grow up in and to achieving the following Scottish Government National Outcomes:

- Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.
- Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.
- We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk.
- We live our lives free from crime, disorder and danger.
- We have strong resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.
- We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society.

Action to prevent and tackle child sexual exploitation is set within the wider context of activity to promote wellbeing and prevent and tackle other forms of child sexual abuse, physical and emotional abuse and neglect.

Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) is the national approach in Scotland to improving outcomes and supporting the wellbeing of our children and young people by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. GIRFEC puts the rights and wellbeing of children and young people at the heart of the services that support them – such as early years services, schools and the NHS. The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 includes key parts of the Getting it right for every child approach, commonly known as GIRFEC, including the Named Person and Child's Plan.

A Named Person will be available to children and young people across Scotland from birth to age 18, or beyond if still in school and is a clear point of contact that children, young people and parents/carers can go to for advice, information and support. The Act ensures a single planning framework – a Child's Plan – will be available for children who require extra support that is not generally available to address a child or young person's needs and improve their wellbeing.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> The Deputy First Minister announced in Parliament on the 7<sup>th</sup> March 2017 he will bring forward a Bill that will include new provisions on when and how information can be shared by and with the Named Person service. The new provisions will ensure that we address the Supreme Court's judgment of 28<sup>th</sup> July on the Named Person, live up to our objective of supporting children and young people and give them and their families reassurance that their rights are respected fully. The intention is to introduce the Bill by July 2017 and the Scottish Government will work with Parliament to agree a timetable to enable commencement in 2018.

As the Scottish Government works towards commencement of the Named Person legislative provisions, local authorities, health boards and partners can continue to progress the GIRFEC approach and continue to develop and deliver "Named Person" services in line with current policy and existing legislation on information sharing.

## **Child Protection Improvement Programme**

Action to prevent and tackle child sexual exploitation (CSE) is one aspect of the Child Protection Improvement Programme<sup>2</sup> (CPIP), which aims to strengthen child protection as a whole. CPIP is a wide ranging programme covering the formal child protection system, neglect, child trafficking, internet safety, aspects of practice within the Children's Hearings System, prevention, inspection, leadership, data and evidence as well as CSE. The Action Plan is also set within the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention, which has been ratified by the UK Government, includes a specific obligation for Governments to protect children and young people from all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse. The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 places duties on Scottish Ministers to keep under consideration how the Convention can be further effected in Scotland.

The Updated Action Plan (March 2016) builds on action set out in Scotland's first National Action Plan to Prevent and Tackle Child Sexual Exploitation (November 2014). It was developed in partnership with the Ministerial Working Group to Prevent and Tackle Child Sexual Exploitation and the National Child Sexual Exploitation Working Group. Following publication of the updated Action Plan the Ministerial Working Group was brought to a close and the National Working Group was asked to take on the role of overseeing implementation of the National Action Plan to Prevent and Tackle Child Sexual Exploitation with the Scottish Government.

CSE is a complex and evolving issue and we must continue to develop our collective response in the light of experience. We must also learn from the experience of others. We will continue to review the actions being taken forward in other parts of the UK and internationally and consider their applicability and value in Scotland in further developing our approach.

### **The National Child Sexual Exploitation Group**

The role of the National Child Sexual Exploitation Group is to provide strategic leadership and direction to the implementation of the Scottish Government's National Action Plan to Prevent and Tackle Child Sexual Exploitation and to ensure effective links are made between CSE and other relevant national policies, across Government, stakeholder and partners.

Membership of the group includes third sector, public sector and government. All members bring considerable knowledge, expertise and 'reach' into a diverse range of organisations, members, sectors and interests.

The Chair, Moira McKinnon, represents the national CPC Group of Chairs and therefore is able to make effective strategic linkages between the National Action Plan to Prevent and Tackle Child Sexual Exploitation and other developments and key strategies.

---

<sup>2</sup> [Child Protection Improvement Programme Report, March 2017.](#)

## Overview

We all share a responsibility to ensure that Scotland's children and young people are protected from Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). Preventing and tackling CSE requires a co-ordinated multi-agency response. Children and young people need information to help them build resilience and make safe choices. Parents and carers need information about how to talk to their children and how to recognise the signs that their child may be at risk.

CSE is a difficult challenge to identify and quantify. Practitioners must be equipped with the knowledge and skills to recognise sexual exploitation and respond appropriately. This must be accompanied by work to detect, disrupt and prosecute perpetrators and reduce re-offending.

The Scottish Government has made a significant contribution to tackling and preventing CSE in Scotland. This includes investing in the infrastructure of the sector alongside specific projects with significant potential to demonstrate 'what works' or scaling up proven approaches.

- Investment of £300,000 during the first 2 years in Barnardo's Scotland (year three funding levels are to be confirmed), of 3 year funding under the Scottish Government's *Children, Young People and Families Early Intervention and Adult Learning and Empowering Communities Fund* (1 April 2016 -31 March 2019), to support their work on child sexual exploitation and abuse. The award covers core and infrastructure funding to continue the reach of frontline CSE services, to ensure that children and young people at risk of or affected by sexual exploitation are identified early and receive appropriate support. Examples of work undertaken by Barnardo's Scotland supported through the fund include:
  - - Working directly with young people and their parents (1-2-1 sessions).
    - Supporting practice and Scottish Government policy.
    - Delivering awareness raising events on CSE to the community and professionals.
    - The development and dissemination of practitioner guidance on CSE and learning disability.
    - The the facilitation of three practitioner events regarding CSE and learning disability.
    - The Development of materials for the industries and businesses trading in the night time economy.
- An investment of £25,000 in the Moira Anderson Foundation was secured for 2016-17 and a further £25,000 for 2017-18 under the *Children, Young People and Families Early Intervention and Adult Learning and Empowering Communities Fund*. Funding will enable them to provide therapeutic and on-going support to survivors of childhood sexual abuse. The provision of various therapies to children and young people and their families will include: Filial Therapy, Art Therapy and Play therapy. Funding will also enable initial and on-going support to the children and young people referred to them. This will

include the provision of a named client support officer to each child/young person and their family. Client support will be the first point of contact when a family/individual is referred to their service. They will initiate a customised support package relevant to the client, their family and their situation and will be responsible for developing and implementing additional interventions to support their wellbeing and care.

- Delivery of a national and integrated marketing strategy to help generate awareness, including TV, digital and outdoor advertising, the key focus being to help parents spot the signs. This included development of a dedicated website <http://csethesigns.scot/>, which contains further information. This was followed by an innovative SnapChat partnership between the Scottish Government and YoungScot, creating the video episodes [Bad Romance](#) that directly targeted young people to raise awareness of CSE. This channel was selected because of its popularity with the target age range and it proved very successful.
- Investment to NSPCC in the form of 3 year funding from the Scottish Government's *Children, Young People and Families Early Intervention and Adult Learning and Empowering Communities Fund* (1 April 2016 -31 March 2019). The award covers funding to help expedite the delivery and implementation of their transformational project "Doing more for children", through additional posts and training in Scotland. The funding is helping to achieve the outcomes of increasing the number of counselling sessions for children, increased opportunities for children to access Childline support and an increase in the number of children who can access timely support through improved technology. To date, NSPCC have been awarded £396,000 (£198,000 for Y1 and the same for Y2). Year three funding levels are to be confirmed.

## Progress Since March 2016

### **1. The risk that children and young people are sexually exploited is reduced through a focus on prevention and early identification**

We know that awareness is a key tool to enable prevention and early identification and further to the Scottish Government's national awareness campaign, aimed at parents, children and young people, was the revision of the definition of CSE, resulting in a quality definition and practitioner paper that provided clarity and support to the workforce of Scotland.

Education Scotland has reviewed how it supports schools, colleges and education services in undertaking their safeguarding responsibilities, enhancing provided support. Barnardo's Scotland, has received funding through the Scottish Government's Children, Young People & Families Early Intervention and Adult Learning & Empowering Communities Fund, helping to support their work on child sexual exploitation and abuse and tackle the issue of CSE. The award covers core and infrastructure funding to continue the reach of their frontline CSE services, to ensure that children and young people at risk of or affected by sexual exploitation are identified early and receive appropriate support. Examples of work undertaken by Barnardo's Scotland supported through the fund include:

- Working directly with young people and their parents (1-2-1 sessions).
- Supporting practice and Scottish Government policy.
- Delivering awareness raising events on CSE to the community and professionals.
- The development and dissemination of practitioner guidance on CSE and learning disability.
- The the facilitation of three practitioner events regarding CSE and learning disability.
- The Development of materials for the industries and businesses trading in the night time economy.

Also, as part of action to ensure that practitioners are equipped with the knowledge to recognise and respond to those who may be victims or at risk of CSE, guidance for health practitioners has been developed. The National CSE Group has developed a framework of indicators to test the success of the action plan, which going forward will help to measure the impact of the actions within the national action plan. It is anticipated that the 17/18 report will include evidence from this work.

Progress against this first outcome is good and there are several actions underway, including: the creation of a data template to ensure consistent local information on CSE is gathered; a framework for Child Protection Committees; and a series of CSE regional workshops across Scotland, to share best practice, learning and developments.

## **2. Children and young people at risk of or experiencing sexual exploitation and their families receive appropriate and high quality support**

The Scottish Government provides direct support to victims and those identified as vulnerable via Barnardo's Scotland, NSPCC and the Moira Anderson Foundation, through the Children, Young People & Families Early Intervention and Adult Learning & Empowering Communities Fund.

Children 1<sup>st</sup> have been funded by RS MacDonald Charitable Trust to test the project **Stop to Listen**. All four pathfinders have developed their project plans and are moving towards implementation - plans include:

- 'whole' school workshops facilitated by multi-agency staff in the local area on the Stop to Listen approach.
- further training for social work and education staff on raising awareness of child sexual abuse.
- development of materials to raise awareness for children and young people on healthy relationships.
- training developments in trauma informed practice for social work and police staff undertaking joint interviewing.
- scrutiny of current processes and practice to ensure that responses to children and young people are child centred.

The National CSE Group asked Child Protection Committees (CPCs) to complete a self-evaluation of their existing practices and processes in relation to child sexual exploitation (CSE) and abuse. We are very grateful to the CPCs who committed wholeheartedly to this task; we received responses from the majority of CPCs, covering 28 of Scotland's 32 local authorities. The information provides us with an invaluable insight into how CSE is being tackled locally and the range of activity underway. We hope that completing the self-evaluation was also a useful process for CPCs.

CPCs reported feeling most confident in their provision of practitioner guidance, tools and training. CPCs described a wide variety of activities in these areas, such as multi or single agency work, or different types of training for different staff groups. CPCs reported much lower levels of confidence in working with local data around CSE, consulting with young people on the development of services, their experience of working with victims of trafficking and incorporating diversity in their CSE work. The findings have in the first instance helped inform the development of the CSE regional workshops, that the National CSE Group are taking forward in 2017.

Other work includes a partnership with Children 1<sup>st</sup>, the NSPCC and the West of Scotland Managed Clinical Network for Child Protection, who have scoped trauma recovery services, and final reports now produced for the four pathfinder areas. Future developments include scoping out models of promoting healthy sexual relationships for children and young people and consulting with young people on their views of the changes being tested in the pathfinder areas.

The Care Inspectorate have also been instrumental in demonstrating progress against this outcome, reporting on emerging themes in relation to CSE from

children's services inspections in the last 12-18 months and this crucial information is helping to inform future service planning and delivery.

Other developments include the work with local authorities, Police Scotland and the National Steering Group on the issue of missing people, as we know about the links between missing children and young people, CSE and trafficking. This action continues and specifically involves return interviews, training, prevention planning and helpline services. The Scottish Government has also consulted on the children's element of Scotland's first Human Trafficking and Exploitation Strategy and this work will be progressed over 2017/18.

Current developments include the NHS Education Scotland, Scottish Government and stakeholder development of a skills and knowledge framework for those working with adults and children and young people affected by trauma and abuse. The framework will help practitioners identify the risk of abuse and respond to keep children and young people safe. Finally, research reveals that disabled children and young people are more likely to be abused than their non-disabled peers and that abuse is more likely to go undetected or unreported. The CSE National Group are considering this research and what further action can be taken to provide better protection for this specific group of children and young people following the work already taken forward.

### **3. Perpetrators are stopped, brought to justice and are less likely to re-offend**

Under Scotland's Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), Police, Local Authorities and other agencies work together to fully risk assess and monitor registered sex offenders to reduce the risk they pose. The [Joint Thematic Review of MAPPA in Scotland \(published 26th Nov 2015\)](#) provided assurance that MAPPA in Scotland is effective and makes a critical contribution to keeping people and communities safe. Notwithstanding, the report made 10 recommendations which are of a strategic nature, requiring a national response. Among other things it recommended that Scottish Government in partnership with Responsible Authorities should develop a strategy to address the risks posed to children and young people from 'sexting' in order to build healthy respect and avoid the potential for exploitation and criminalisation. The National CSE Group will closely monitor the outcomes of MAPPA.

The Scottish Government is currently working across government and with key stakeholders to update the internet safety action plan, ensuring it is linked to the Digital Participation Strategy, and also taking steps to ensure the refreshed plan is linked to work being taken forward in schools.

As a result of the increasing number of internet related sex offenders becoming subject to MAPPA, the Thematic Review also noted that "early intervention and diversionary approaches aimed at addressing the risk posed by such offenders should be further scoped by Responsible Authorities in partnership with the Scottish Government." The Scottish Government is currently working across government and with key stakeholders to update the child internet safety action plan to ensure that

we have appropriate frameworks of training, support and information in place for professionals and families, including children and young people

As a result of the increasing number of internet related sex offenders becoming subject to MAPPA, the Thematic Review also noted that “early intervention and diversionary approaches aimed at addressing the risk posed by such offenders should be further scoped by Responsible Authorities in partnership with the Scottish Government.” The Scottish Government will therefore be providing funding to:

- Sacro for their Challenging Harmful Online Images & Child Exploitation (CHOICE) programme. It is a programme suitable for those downloading illegal images of children from the internet where there is a low risk of sexual harm and the offences are ‘non-contact’ in nature. The service is aimed at males aged 18 and over, who may be considered suitable to be diverted from prosecution, or who are subject to a structured deferred sentence, community pay-back order or other community order or licence.
- Stop It Now! Scotland and Barnardo’s Scotland through the Survivor Scotland Innovation and Development Fund to build local partnerships in order to identify and support children and young people who use the internet in a way that may be harmful to themselves or others.
- Stop it Now! Scotland through the Children, Young People and Families Early Intervention Fund to pilot and roll out their prevention toolkit of practical materials which people can use whenever they identify concerns or worries that makes them think that a risk of child sexual abuse exists.

Work is also underway to ensure that certain sexual offences committed in the rest of the UK can be prosecuted in Scotland, by working towards commencing Section 8 of the [Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm \(Scotland\) Act, 2016](#). The Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act 2016 will strengthen and streamline our system of civil orders available to protect communities from those who may commit sex offences.

Other actions currently being progressed include those with a focus on developing child-centred approaches. The Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service are involved in exploring how evidence is taken from children and vulnerable witnesses. We will also use the findings of the evaluation of the National Child Abuse Investigation Unit to inform future developments in this area.

#### **4. Cultural and social barriers to preventing and tackling child sexual exploitation are reduced**

The Scottish Government’s definition of gender based violence, as contained in the Equally Safe strategy, recognises the full range of violence against women and children including domestic abuse, rape, child sexual abuse and exploitation. The strategy adopts a gendered analysis, identifying the contribution of societal constructs of gender, of masculinity and femininity, to violence against women and children.

Awareness is key to tackling cultural and social barriers and general awareness around the complexities and pervasiveness of CSE was addressed during 2016 with a successful Scottish Government integrated marketing campaign, aimed at parents and the general public, as well as children and young people. The campaign was qualitatively evaluated by an independent research agency (TNS) which found a substantial increase in spontaneous awareness of CSE when asked pre-wave and post-wave, and the campaign website was visited by 10,000 users in the first 2 weeks of the campaign launch. The Snapchat Bad Romance episodes achieved viewing figures of 11,375 on YoungScot's channel, and the release onto other social media channels have reached over 15,000 more. Furthermore, the Snapchat episodes of Bad Romance won three awards at the Drum Scottish Creative Award for: online video/film; online campaign; and most creative use of media.

The first Police Scotland campaign on CSE 'Grooming a child for sex? We're on to you' was launched in August 2016 and had a perpetrator focus with a partnership approach to ensure victims received all the support they needed. The majority of communications with the public on the subject of CSE concentrates on spotting the signs of a victim of CSE and reporting it. Police Scotland's campaign had a different focus; a perpetrator focus - with a view to preventing people ever becoming a victim.

## **Impact**

As this report demonstrates, substantial work has been taken forward since the publication of the National Action Plan to Prevent and Tackle Child Sexual Exploitation update in March 2016, with significant impact. Detection and prevention are key and our workforce have been supported with a revised definition along with supporting documents, and medical guidance has been enhanced. There has been public and third sector awareness campaigns and information circulated, via various channels, providing messages of awareness, support and signposting across Scotland. Extensive work has been taken forward that will influence future improvements, including the Care Inspectorate's children's services report and the CPC self-evaluation tool – giving us benchmarks to measure against going forward and monitor improvement. And finally, we have made considerable links to other policy areas – strengthening some which we already knew about and forging new ones – ensuring strengthened joined up work to continue going forward.

Taking forward the indicators work in 2017/18 will allow us to gather firm evidence against actions carried out, measuring the impact and informing future work - the intention is to report on this aspect in the next annual report. We will also have taken steps to test and implement our data template, so anticipate that we will be on the way to having a better understanding of the scale and nature of CSE in Scotland.

## **Next Steps**

This is the first annual report from the National CSE Group on progress against the National Action Plan to Prevent and Tackle Child Sexual Exploitation update that was published in March 2016. The intention is to follow this report with one in March 2018 for progress against 2017/18, with a final 2018/19 report in March 2019. This final report from the group will include recommendations going forward based on what we have learned between now and then and building on the understanding of the issues in Scotland.



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

© Crown copyright 2017

**OGL**

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit [nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3) or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at [www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at  
The Scottish Government  
St Andrew's House  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG

ISBN: 978-1-78652-884-1 (web only)

Published by The Scottish Government, March 2017

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA  
PPDAS263622 (03/17)

W W W . g o v . s c o t