

13 July 2015**Agenda Item: 14****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE****CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE) AND CHILDREN MISSING FROM
HOME AND CARE: ANNUAL REPORT 2014-15****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Children and Young People's Committee on the progress of child sexual exploitation and children missing from home and care work within Nottinghamshire.

Information and Advice**Strategic Partnerships and Governance**

2. Child sexual exploitation (CSE) continues to be high profile and a strategic priority for Children's Social Care (CSC), the police and the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB). Children missing from home and care also remains a high profile area of safeguarding work for these agencies. Both areas will be of ongoing potential media interest and subject to scrutiny during any inspection.
3. Within Nottinghamshire CSE work continues through the police chaired cross-authority multi-agency group. Missing Children work continues to be co-ordinated via a County multi-agency steering group and both groups report to the NSCB on a quarterly basis.
4. Within Children's Social Care (CSC) a temporary 0.5 FTE CSE co-ordinator has been in post since October 2014 and is working to both a quality assurance agenda and also supporting development work and linking with the police. This post will be reviewed during 2015/16.
5. At an operational level work in both areas continues to be driven by statutory guidance, local NSCB practice guidance and research and reports. The children missing from home and care NSCB practice guidance was revised and published in September 2014 in response to updated statutory guidance. This incorporated new definitions of 'missing' and absent which has had a significant impact. As a result of this change the police have also appointed three missing co-ordinators and an additional children missing officer post is also being recruited to.
6. An NSCB CSE audit was completed in January 2015 which highlighted examples of both good and requiring improvement practice across a number of areas. A missing from home and care survey of young people's views was also completed in early 2015 which, whilst

small scale, was a positive exercise reinforcing the importance of a quality return interview and the need for positive relationships between child and worker. Learning from both of the audit and survey has been shared with colleagues across agencies.

7. During 2014/15 specific multi-agency training events have also focussed on CSE and missing children, including a focus on looked after children. Four 'missing' events attracted 200 professionals and a similar number of professionals attended CSE events. Approximately 1,100 multi-agency colleagues also completed CSE e-learning. Events focussing on the sexual exploitation of boys were also held. CSE awareness raising has also continued through the use of leaflets and newsletters and other events.

Service Provision

CSE

8. Operationally the response to concerns about CSE continues and those children who are medium or high risk are generally considered at multi-agency strategy meetings where actions are co-ordinated. Where required specialist one to one support continues to be provided by the voluntary sector.
9. Children's Social Care is steering the implementation of a multi-agency concerns network akin to a model in the City (Operation Striver) whereby intelligence is shared by concerned agencies with the police. CSC is also taking the lead in developing a specialist service specification to incorporate universal and early help support to young people, parents and carers as well as to schools around curriculum issues. The specification will also seek to extend the availability of specialist support to young people.
10. Engaging and educating young people and their parents about CSE has continued to be a key plank of our engagement strategy during 2014/15. The theatre project toured again performing to 7,300 pupils at 41 settings and also 619 professionals, parents and carers at other events. Given the success and evaluation it has been re-commissioned for 2015/16.
11. Targeting younger pupils on CSE related issues (i.e. e-safety and keeping safe) the NSPCC continues to deliver sessions to primary schools through a Department for Education funded project. The anti-bullying coordinator within NCC complements this work through a range of activities for schools highlighting e-safety.

Missing

12. The process following contact to the police to report a child missing has changed as a result of the revised national guidance. When a child is reported missing the police deems the child either missing or absent and this guides the level of the police response with an expectation that other agencies will respond more widely. The police remain the lead agency for trying to locate a missing child and they notify the local authority of both missing and absent children. From a CSC perspective both are referred to as 'missing' to avoid confusion. The children missing officer then determines whether or not a return interview is required when the young person is found. This continues to be the vehicle for understanding why the young person has gone missing. This monitoring and tracking of compliance around this process continues to be robust (more detail is provided in the key data findings below).

13. Professionals are working together in a very co-ordinated way, sharing information and collaborating, including through the monthly multiple missing and hot spots meetings. Health colleagues are integral to this and they are working to improve their internal responses and information sharing.
14. Efforts to educate young people about the risks of going missing are in part through the sharing of a Children's Society leaflet, discussion within placements and also during the return interview.

Key data findings (2014-15)

15. The key data findings for 2014-15 are as follows:

CSE

- ❖ 269 individual children were identified as being either at risk of CSE or actually being exploited. There are opportunities through CSC processes in the child's journey when CSE risks can be identified and 'flagged' i.e. through assessment, LAC review or return interview following missing. Not all of these children will have been exploited but professionals will have identified indicators of risk or harm.
 - Recognition of CSE has increased year on year which is positive
 - 57 LAC were highlighted as potentially being at risk of CSE.
- ❖ Police information recorded monthly confirmed that during 2014/15 75 cases were open to the police
 - Risk level 1 (exploitation involving single perpetrator on-line): 44 cases / 59%
 - Risk level 2 (exploitation involving physical contact / individual) 31 cases / 41%.

There is no information to indicate that any child was the subject of organised or group exploitation during this year.

- ❖ Of the 269 children identified, 87 were discussed at a multi-agency CSE strategy meeting
 - Age range 13 – 17 yrs
 - 90% female 10% male
 - Ethnicity reflects the population
 - 22 children were LAC.

The number of CSE strategy meetings has increased over the last couple of years which suggests that children are being appropriately identified which is positive. The level of risk which prompts a strategy meeting is usually medium or high rather than low risk.

Of the 22 LAC who were subject to a strategy meeting, the CSE concerns arose prior to being accommodated for 10 children, for the other 12 it was after being accommodated but for many of those it was soon after becoming accommodated.

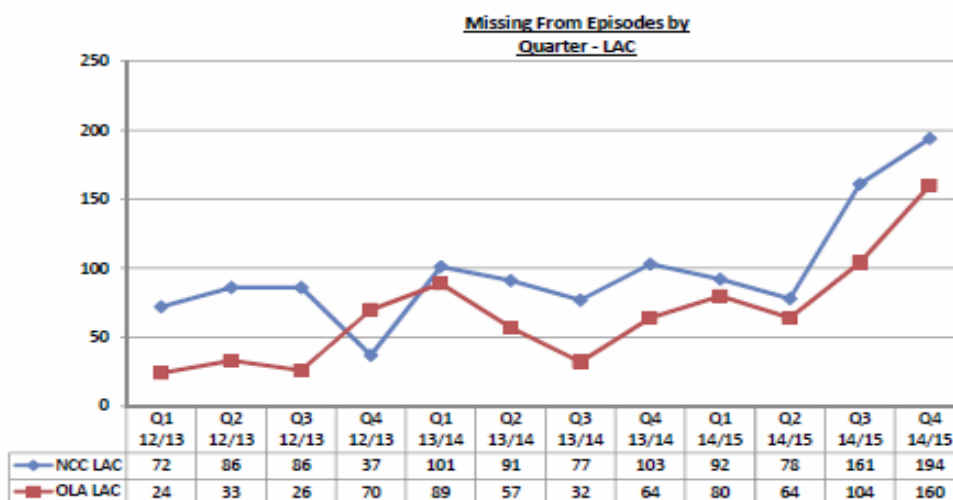
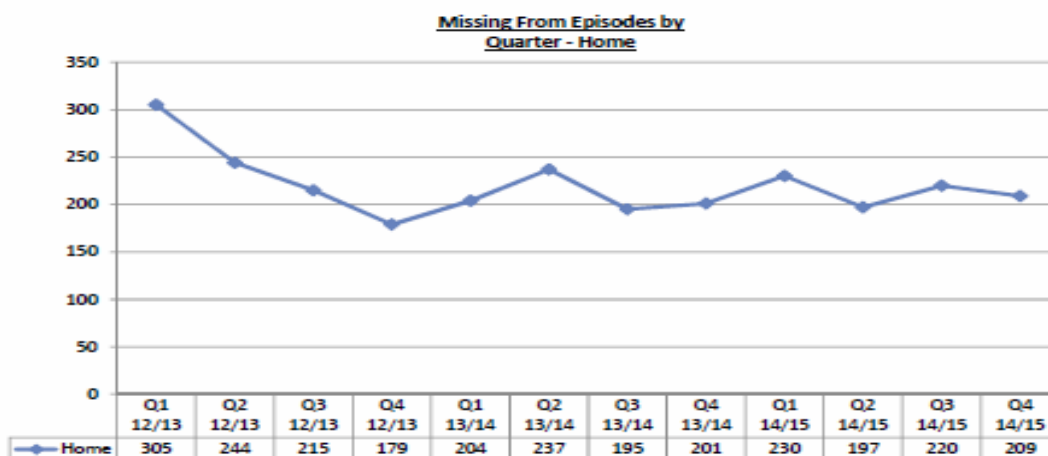
Work is continuing to improve our knowledge of the scale and nature of CSE but of the information that has been gathered from strategy meetings it suggests that 69% of the children were considered at risk of exploitation, 11% high risk and 20% medium risk. It also indicates that the focus of work in 83% of cases was about helping the child to recognise the abuse process.

For those children who are not discussed at a strategy meeting a range of other actions may follow, for example, a child in need plan or signposted to other services.

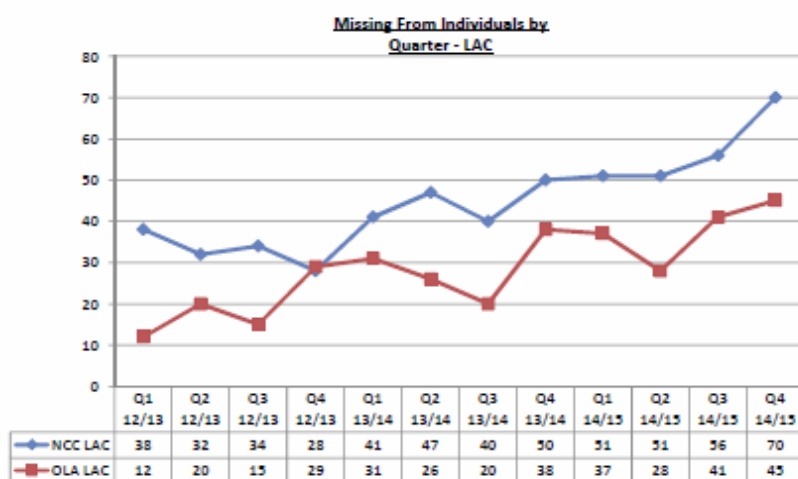
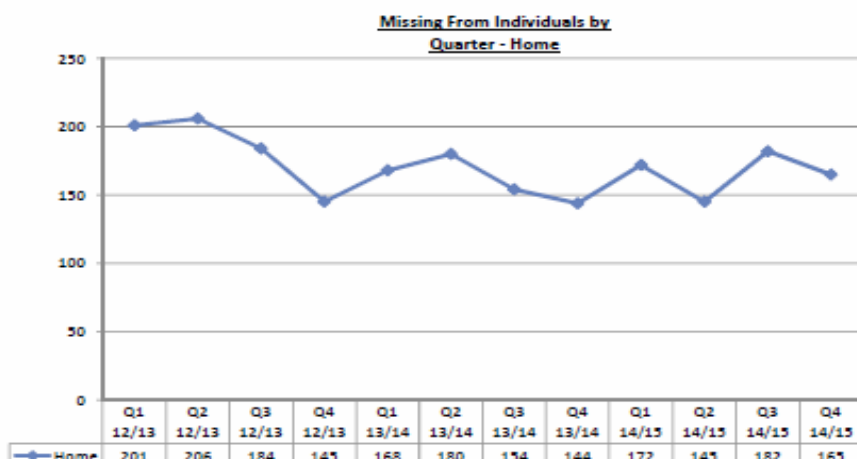
Missing

Prior to 2014/15, there had been a decrease in overall notifications of missing children, albeit with an increase in numbers missing from care which, in part, was thought to be due to increased reporting and an ageing looked after population. The data for 2014/15 has seen a significant increase in the number of overall notifications since the introduction of the absent definition in November. The hypothesis is that the police have previously recorded some calls as 'concern for safety' and not notified them as 'missing' to social care. This has potentially led to a distorted picture, particularly of Looked After Children (LAC) absence. This will be monitored during the coming year and will provide a new base line to respond to and compare practice.

The following two charts illustrate the number of missing episodes from home and also from care as referenced above.



The following charts illustrate the points made above in relation to the number of individual children who go missing from home and by care:



The following data, where indicated, does not include other local authority (OLA) LAC who are placed with providers in Nottinghamshire. Compliance by OLAs with the children missing processes is often weak but work continues to improve this.

- ❖ 63% of notifications relate to children missing from home (912); 37% from care (525) (exc OLA)
- ❖ 79% of individual children went missing from home (585), 21% from care (159) (exc OLA)

This suggests that children go missing from care more frequently than from home.

- ❖ 18% LAC return to their placement within one hour, a further 20% within five hours, a further 41% within 23 hours and the remaining 21% in 24 hrs and above. For children missing from home this is 34% within the hour, a further 28% within five hours, a further 27% within 23 hours and the remaining 11% do not return until after 24 hours. Children tend to be missing from care longer than from home
- ❖ The peak age range is 14-17 years (78% of individuals)
- ❖ The ethnicity of children going missing largely reflects the child population

- ❖ 905 or 73% of return interviews were completed; 12% were refused or advice given. 15% were not returned
- ❖ 125 multi-agency meetings were held.

Key priorities for 2015/16

16. Any learning or recommendations from the recent Ofsted inspection will be incorporated into planning and work for 2015/16.
17. The key priorities for 2015/16 are as follows:

CSE

- ❖ Strengthening the collation and analysis of data
- ❖ Improving the availability and analysis of available data across agencies
- ❖ Monitor police attendance and other agencies at CSE strategy meetings (CSC and Police)
- ❖ Improve level of engagement of children, parents or carers at strategy meetings.
- ❖ Develop work with licensing and other bodies / businesses to raise awareness of CSE and to support disruption work (Police and CSC)
- ❖ Develop opportunities for perpetrator (including unidentified offenders) led work to prevent or reduce their ability to continue to offend (Police)
- ❖ Continue to develop the CSE concerns network and intelligence sharing
- ❖ Progress development of a specialist service to support children at risk of or experiencing CSE.

Missing

- ❖ Improve engagement of other local authorities with LAC placed in Nottinghamshire
- ❖ Continue to improve engagement with young people ensuring their voice is heard
- ❖ Continue to emphasise the need for quality as well as compliance with return interviews
- ❖ Implement an ongoing audit process
- ❖ Continue to develop the multiple missing and hot spots meetings
- ❖ Review independence issue in relation to completing the return interview.

Conclusion

18. Strategically and operationally there is a strong foundation for both CSE and children missing from home and care and recognition of and plans for areas to strengthen. The anticipated Ofsted report will also guide the future direction of work.

Other Options Considered

19. As this report is for noting, it is not necessary to consider other options.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

20. The Committee should continue to have scrutiny and oversight of the developments to further develop the response to child sexual exploitation and children missing from home and care within Nottinghamshire.

Statutory and Policy Implications

21. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That:

- 1) progress made regarding developments in the response to child sexual exploitation and missing children within Nottinghamshire is noted
- 2) a further report be provided to the Children & Young People's Committee in six months.

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Constitutional Comments

22. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

Financial Comments (SS 26/06/15)

23. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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